

# NANNY MAGAZINE

April-June 2016

## THE INTERVIEW ISSUE

**YOUR JOB IS TOXIC IF...**

**SIGNS YOUR JOB IS IN TROUBLE**

**HOW TO QUIT YOUR NANNY JOB**

**WITHOUT ALIENATING EVERYONE**

**WHAT TO DO WHEN YOUR BOSS IS AN  
ALCOHOLIC**

**FIND YOUR NEXT NANNY JOB NOW!**

**NANNIES AND GRIEF**

teach | play | love

# NANNY MAGAZINE

teach play love

Looking for a new job? Read this issue STAT!



## Editor's Note

Interviewing is easily one of the most stressful parts of any nanny's career. So much depends on whether or not you get the job: your livelihood, your reputation, your sense of self. We know how very real the struggle is, so that's why the theme of this issue is dedicated to interviewing and these pages are jam packed with advice and points to consider before you schedule that next sit-down with your potential future employer.

Turn to page 30 for a candid account of how to know it's time to leave your job (and page 26 for advice on how to quit). Adele Perry shows you how to make LinkedIn work for you on page 13, and Chelle Wilson brings us a quiz to assess how ready we are to ace our interviews. Our resident nanny columnist shares advice for male nannies everywhere on how they can get the job... without being female. Off-theme articles include Michelle Galetta's summer moviethon (complete with a Pinterest board dedicated entirely to popcorn recipes!), and Dr. Colin Wong comes back with answers to important healthcare topics. And this issue presents an important dilemma: what if you suspect alcoholism in your boss?

If you're a new reader of *Nanny Mag*, welcome! There's so much in store, and you can read all back issues of the premiere magazine that's just for you online at [www.nannymag.com](http://www.nannymag.com). Write me with your thoughts if you care to share or submit your ideas for new articles or issue themes at [Jennifer@nannymag.com](mailto:Jennifer@nannymag.com). Will we see you at the INA 2016 meeting in DC this spring? If so, be sure to stop by our booth to say hello! We can't wait to meet you.

### EDITOR IN CHIEF

Jennifer Kuhn, MPS

### WEB EDITOR

Amanda Dunyak

### MARKETING AND SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER

Kerrie Bascomb

### FOOD EDITORS

Amber Ketchum and Josie De Hoyos

### SOCIAL MEDIA ASSISTANTS

Kaley Kellenburger and JoAnna Becker

### NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Jill Ciganek

### CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Michelle Galetta, Stephanie Magrisso, and Nicole Panteleakos

### CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

JoAnna Becker, Sterling Chillico, Elizabeth Conner, Justine Dixon, Amanda Dunyak, Stephanie Felzenberg, Michelle Galetta, Amber Ketchum, Jennifer Kuhn, Joshua Lapin-Bertone, Mandie Lewis, Stephanie Magrisso, Beth O'Keefe, Amber O'Neil, Nicole Panteleakos, Adele Perry, Kelci Ann Ross, Candida Vajana, Dr. Colin Wong.

### CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS

Amber Ketchum. Cover photo via Pexels.

### CONNECT WITH NANNY MAGAZINE

[www.nannymag.com](http://www.nannymag.com)  
[www.twitter.com/NannyMagazine](https://twitter.com/NannyMagazine)  
[www.facebook.com/NannyMagazine](https://www.facebook.com/NannyMagazine)

NANNY MAGAZINE PUBLICATION, LLC  
P.O. Box 7283  
Silver Spring, MD 20910  
315.316.2669

Copyright 2016, Nanny Magazine Publication, LLC. No portion of this publication may be reproduced without express written consent from Nanny Magazine Publication, LLC.

To advertise in *Nanny Magazine*, email [info@nannymag.com](mailto:info@nannymag.com). Media kit, editorial calendar, and rates available online at [www.nannymag.com](http://www.nannymag.com). For subscriptions, inquiries, change of address, and back issues, email [info@nannymag.com](mailto:info@nannymag.com).

# Come again?

You asked. Nanny Magazine listened. Print is back in 2016. Upgrade today.

<http://bit.ly/1My8N7I>



## Announcements

Now you can read the premier nanny-specific magazine in print! Nanny Mag is now FREE to read online! Tell your friends! Come visit us at INA's 2016 meeting!

Photo Credit: Pexels

## April-June 2016 The Interview Issue

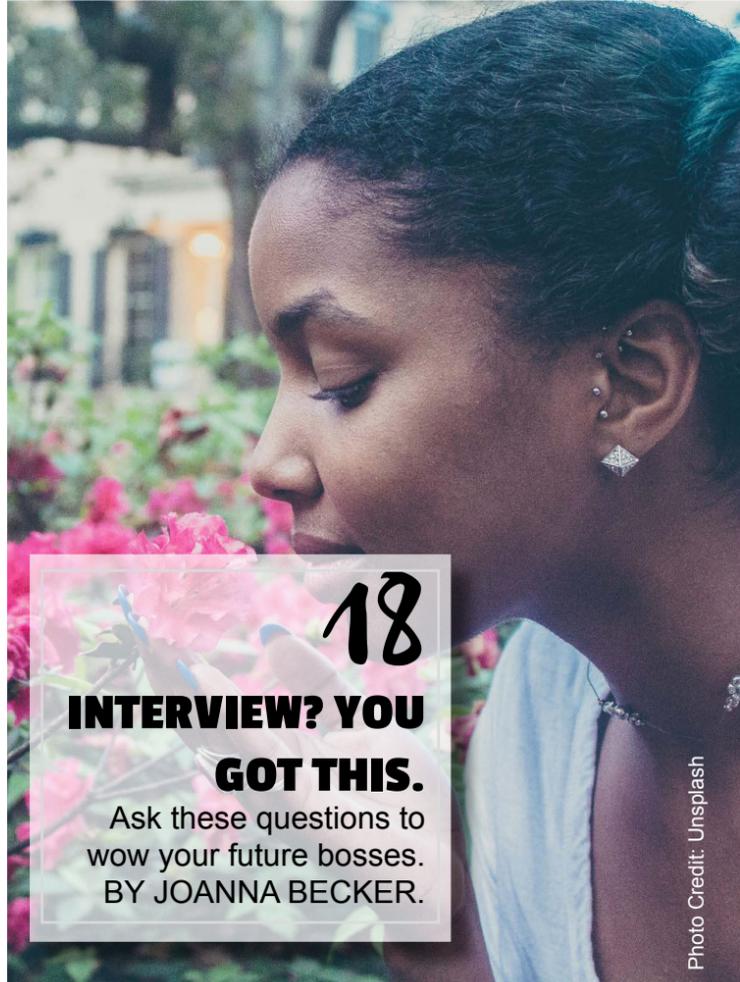


Photo Credit: Unsplash

# 18

### INTERVIEW? YOU GOT THIS.

Ask these questions to wow your future bosses.  
BY JOANNA BECKER.

# CONTENTS

## ON THE COVER

**5** GOOD GRIEF: WHEN NANNIES NEED TIME TO JUST BE SAD

**19** INTERVIEW TIPS

**35** THE ALCOHOLIC BOSS

**30** SIGNS YOUR JOB IS TOXIC (AND IT'S TIME TO GO)

**26** QUITTING TIME: DON'T BURN BRIDGES!

## KIDS

**27** Healthy Baby Pediatrician Colin Wong covers ASD, ADHD, and weighs in on whether or not you should be bringing your charges to the pediatrician.

**21** Butterfly Bites Fun in the kitchen with waffles, oranges, and more. Dietitian Amber Ketchum writes.

## DILEMMAS

**24** Ya Booze, Ya Lose You suspect your boss is an alcoholic, so what do you do?

## JUST FOR YOU

**23** Legally Speaking Sterling Chillico returns with advice for a nanny who feels she was unjustly fired. What's her recourse?

**10** Mr. Manny Beause fair or not, standing out as a candidate for a position is simply tougher for dudes.

**13** Make LinkedIn Work for You Adele Perry has the lowdown on how to set up and rock out your profile.

## FUN, FUN, FUN

**42** Quiz So, are you ready to ace your interview, or do you still need a little prep?

**9** Window Sill Gardening No yard? No problem. You can grow fresh herbs right in your kitchen. Learn how.

**40** Trick out Your Nanny Portfolio What's that you say? You don't have one? Well why not? NM helps you determine what to include.

## GOOD GRIEF

Working through sadness when your NannyFamily needs you.

By Beth O'Keefe.

A woman stood beside her older sister, who was in a hospital bed, raised fully upright so that she was propped up. The visiting woman sung to her sister and chatted with her in a one-way conversation. The bedridden sister muttered incoherently and smiled involuntarily, making no eye contact. When the younger woman bent to kiss the decade-older face, she whispered, "I love you. You are beautiful." She then slipped off her bracelet and slid it gently onto her sibling's wrist. The response was amazing: the older woman looked down at the bangle placed on her arm, touched it with her fingertips and with difficulty, formed the word, "love", spoken so softly it almost wasn't heard. But the younger woman did hear, and cherished that word. That was to be their last conversation.

Photo Credit: Unsplash

“There is a certain detachment from the tool they are paying for that says what they need should not come cluttered with things they don’t need - like boyfriends or sickness or lost keys or... or grief.”

The younger woman was, by profession, a nanny. With a heavy heart, she returned to her life, resuming her patterned routine. She felt like she was moving in slow motion while the rest of the world methodically spun around her. Before returning to work, she asked her employers to keep the loss of her sister confidential, as she did not wish to share her grief with the children. The unappealing thought of having to explain it to their young minds and laying her private life out like a bulletin board to be observed was devastating. With insensitive disregard, the parents felt that it was a good opportunity for the children to learn about death first hand and encouraged them to ask their nanny questions. When the caregiver arrived at work that next morning, even before removing her coat, the youngest child came up and asked, “So your sister is dead now? Was she murdered?”

Being an experienced nanny and summoning her greatest professional strength, she responded, “No, there are many ways a person can die. My sister was sick and it was time for her body to stop.” Having satisfied her charge’s attention for such matters, she began her workday while the little boy prepared for school. It was not until three hours later, with the two oldest in school and the baby napping, that she was able to sit down and sob. She not only mourned her loss, but also hurt from the disrespect shown to her by her bosses.

A nanny’s role is an enigmatic one and it can involve subtle confusion. Our charges, MomBoss or DadBoss, and other important people in our lives may

wonder if a nanny is a friend or buddy? A surrogate mother? An ego- and salary-inflated babysitter? A counselor or consultant? A “mother’s helper”? An employee? A contractor? The myriad professions we truly assume: teacher, nurse, taxi driver, referee, coach, artist, chef, housekeeper, secretary, manager, rarely conform to a small list of designations. Like a meatball simmering in marinara, it is not difficult for the person navigating overlapping responsibilities to meld into the montage. While you juggle many roles and battle gray areas, MomBoss or DadBoss can become forgetful that you are a person.

Often in a world fraught with white-collar bustle, the incomes that support those collars have expectations that tell them “what I pay for should do what I expect.” There is a specific detachment from what they are paying for that says “what I need should not come cluttered with things I do not need.” When they are paying for a nanny, “clutter” often comes in the form of significant others, sickness, car problems, grief. A humanity outside of payroll exists that blurs the lines of professionalism and causes those who are who would otherwise be uninvolved in our personal lives to become involved by necessity. When you need time off, when you

“You are not a tool—you are a person. You do need all that the rest of humanity needs.”

are fighting distraction at work, you have to explain. They become involved simply because you are not fully disposable to them.

Be careful here: resentment can set in. You are not a tool—you are a person. You do need all that the rest of humanity needs. And when resentment is married to grief, disaster is imminent. I know. I met disaster this year.

Remember the movie *Castaway*? There is a scene toward the end when Tom Hanks, trying to come to terms with a great and complex loss, says (and I’m paraphrasing here), “I know what I have to do now. I have to get up every morning and remember to... breathe.” Grief can be all-consuming because of the internal, invisible deconstructing and reconstructing of all that has become part of your life experience. Picture one of your charges at 18 months, with a stack of building blocks perfectly erected. What do they do first? They knock down what you have built, over and over, for months. Build, destroy, repeat! The wise nanny knows that this is part of the child’s learning process. They need to see the bit-by-bit makeup of the constructed tower, they need to see its mobility and its repetitive (oh-my-gosh, repetitive!) reconstruction in order to recall how to rebuild. They even need to see that the construction is vulnerable. They learn how to make it stronger.

The stages of grief that we have all learned about are very, very real. How does one live a normal life while wrestling with stages such as denial, anger, and sorrow? You remind yourself to breathe. You move through the daily routines out of habit, like a mechanized version of yourself, like the very human and fallible Tony Stark inside his Ironman suit. You are hugged, applauded, and encouraged for your coping skills. Nothing seems to get past the iron suit. We then enter someone else’s home



Nannies need time to grieve too.

And MomBoss and DadBoss should be respectful of your wishes about telling or not telling your charges why you’re sad.

and smile, laugh, joke, play, teach, diaper, cook, feed, do puzzles, make cookies, and remember to breathe. Is there a right way to manage this? Because we deal with children and not office mates, our vulnerability is much more fragile. Do we share? Should the children we care for see our vulnerability? What about their own?

In the past three years (and I am making myself vulnerable here), I have experienced an extraordinary amount of loss. It began with the loss of my mother, and ten days later, my father. At the time, I was working with a young family whose child was about 15 months old. When the first phone call came, I happened to be sitting at a sidewalk café in the neighborhood where I worked. As it happened, my DadBoss was just arriving to meet a friend there. When he saw my distress, he left his table joined me. As I explained that I was just informed that my mother had just passed, he went back to his table and told the man he was meeting with that he needed to

be excused, and he returned to my table. I don’t know if it was a personal meeting or a business meeting that he canceled, but I do know it was a day off for both of us. I don’t remember much else about that time except that my DadBoss walked around the neighborhood with me, offering his and his wife’s support and friendship, time off, help, food, or whatever aide I needed. I opted to continue work because I didn’t want to be alone with my thoughts. Every day I was at work, both parents constantly checked on my emotional health and offered to stay home, either enabling me to leave or to stay there with me. Their baby was young enough that just cuddling him, reading to him, or playing with him was therapeutic. Ironically, when I got the call about my dad just ten days later, I was at a bakery across the street from the café I had been at when the call about my mother came. Numb, I sat down at an outside table and tried to process, but my mind was vacant. I think it was about an hour later, when my NannyFamily came

around the corner, out for an afternoon walk. Again, I cannot recall the details of that meeting, but I ended up at their house. Instead of me spending that day caring for the child, they fussed over me like I was in their charge.

I hope you can see the obvious contrast between this and the story at the beginning of the article. In the first story, no paid time off was even offered. In fact, the parents were pleased that it fell on a weekend, so no caregiving time was lost. The MomBoss made the incident about her children’s learning opportunity rather than respecting the personhood and needs of her nanny. In the loss of my parents, my NannyFamily was respectful. They were compassionate and personal. You can imagine why I chose to keep working: they enabled me to trust them with my own humanity. The nanny in the first story here may have responded appropriately to the young boy who questioned her about the loss of her

sister, but the scenario continued to lend to the deconstructing of her own internal process. It would have been better if she had insisted either on more time off, or for the parent to respect her wishes. Under duress, she did her best, but it was unfair to her. It is ultimately your choice where and how you share your grief with your charge, not their parents'.

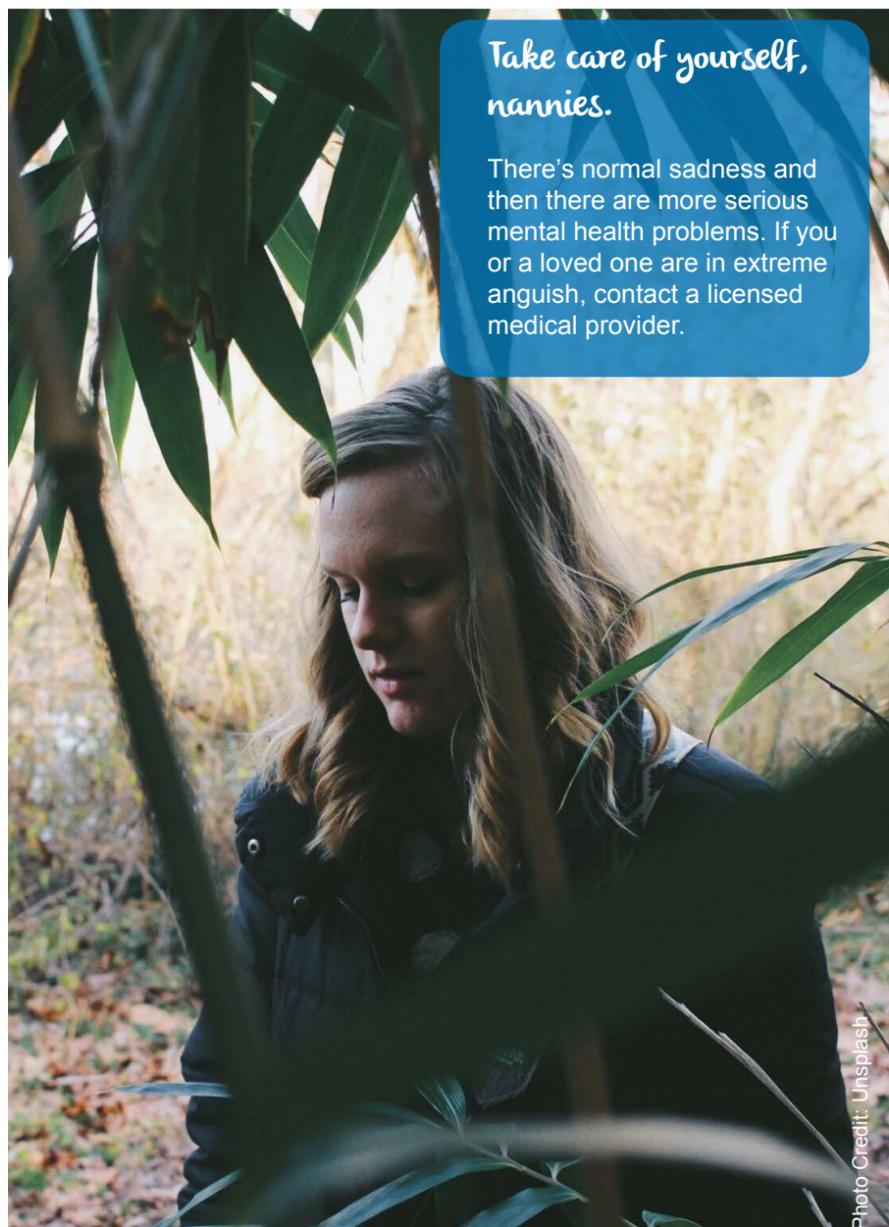
When you have the flu, you inform your MomBoss and DadBoss, you take medicine, and you rest. Often MomBoss and DadBoss prefer to eliminate the risk of passing the flu to their household. Although I certainly know of nannies whose NannyFamilies ask them to medicate and show up for work so that they are not inconvenienced. I think initially, as with a work contract or a trial period, the responsibility for self-care rests with you. This is very difficult when your ability to assess is compromised by grief (or the fuzzy head of a flu), but it is necessary to your healing. Part of that assessment rests on knowing how it will be received. If you know that your work family will not be receptive to your needs as an individual going through emotional distress, you will need to exert authority, which makes it harder.

When explaining death and grief to a child, age and maturity must be taken into consideration. Work together with MomBoss and DadBoss to create a plan that respects their views and your voice. This does not mean you have to mimic their beliefs if they differ but it is vital that you have a conversation. For example, if you believe in an afterlife or heaven but your NannyFamily does not, they may ask you to not share that belief with your charge. You may need to be more generic in response to their questions and reinforce that they should ask Mommy or Daddy. However, if you are permitted greater liberty in sharing, remember that most children are better equipped to understand intangible ideas when shown in concrete ways. Take my building blocks illustration. You might suggest painting a picture together, working with clay, or going outside at night to look at the stars to set a stage by which their inquisitive minds can explore a subject that is abstract and foreign to them. They may have experienced loss themselves: a grandparent, a sibling, or even a pet, equally viable to their young life. It is a joint effort—as is every aspect of

nannying—with the parents you work with, in adding to a child's life experience, and how that should be accomplished.

In an ideal situation, you will have an altruistic family such as I had for three years who allows you the respect you need to work through your pain. Not every one of you have this blessing. This is when it becomes critical that you recognize the need to take care of yourself. Respect your vulnerability. Care for your humanity. If you have loved ones to ask for help, do. They may not know how, so be willing to say "I need company tonight" or "I need to talk" or "I need to be alone but please check back with me" or "I need to seek counseling." Provide yourself time. Think of this strategy as your medicine. Show kindness and respect to yourself. You are human.

You are a person.



Take care of yourself, nannies.

There's normal sadness and then there are more serious mental health problems. If you or a loved one are in extreme anguish, contact a licensed medical provider.

Photo Credit: Unsplash

# Grow Your Own Food Forest

By Justine Dixson.

## Spring Planting in the Kitchen

Children need to know how plants grow and where vegetables come from. These concepts are fun for nannies to share with their charges. Gardening is fun! I have always had a passion for gardening. My late grandfather was a market gardener and I have shared my gardening knowledge with the children and families I've worked for all over the world, spanning a 25-year career. I also volunteer with Hook Gardening Club, a U.K.-based organization, where I serve as its gardening club organizer.

A scented garden is a wonderful opportunity for children to explore their senses. It doesn't have to be a large space, either! Herbs can be grown in planters, window boxes, and inside on kitchen windowsills if you do not have a garden. There are so many herbs (too many to mention), and they are a wonderful addition to any garden. Children love them as they can provide hands-on learning to allow youngsters to explore the scents, textures, and flowers they create. Lavender and rosemary (both of which can be used in cook-

ing) are favorites of mine and the bees and butterflies love them too, especially when they are in flower. Other favorites of mine are thyme, oregano, sage, parsley, and chives. Most herbs love full sun, but some herbs you grow from seed annually, like coriander, mustard, and cress, can be grown on windowsills. Involving children with growing herbs and vegetables is a very good way to encourage them to try new dishes. Most herbs can also be picked and dried (rosemary, sage, oregano, and thyme, for instance) and used all year round.

### Ideas for Eating the Fruits of Your Labor

Rosemary: remove the soft leaves and use them to season some chicken kebabs

Oregano: delicious in a tomato sauce

Parsley: add it as a decoration to any dish

Coriander: use the leaves in curries

The more you encourage children to be involved with growing their own herbs, the more they will want to taste them and explore their taste buds.



Justine with her six-year-old niece Bethany.

Photo Credit: Pexels; Photo of Justine and niece courtesy of author.



Photo Credit: Pexels

# MR. NANNY: Standing out as a Male Interviewee

JOSHUA LAPIN-BERTONE.

Want to be a male nanny? First you have to get someone to hire you and that will only happen if you ace the interview process! Some nannies may feel that their gender works against them during a job search, but there are ways around these biases. You can turn those disadvantages into assets with some creativity.

If you're a male nanny you need to be prepared for rejection. Even though it's the year 2016 and our society is a lot more politically correct, there are still many families who are uncomfortable with the idea of a man being a nanny. Many applications will receive a "no thanks" response while even more won't get a reply. Don't let this discourage you. There is a family who desperately needs your services out there somewhere. Hold out for them and don't let small-minded people get you down.

I've certainly felt depleted when I've been turned down for jobs I felt I was perfect for, but it's always led to something greater. Try searching for families who might benefit by having a male presence. A single mother with four boys could see you as a godsend. Think of it like advertising and go after your target demographic. This doesn't mean that single fathers or families with young girls wouldn't want a nanny either. I've had great success working with female-dominated households over the years.

Some parents might feel that a male nanny isn't as nurturing or experienced as a female nanny. You might have to work twice as hard to prove yourself. Emphasize your experience. If your credentials are strong, bring them all to the table. Show your potential employers that you're not new to this game. Tell them what you

have that other candidates don't.

The best interviews are the ones where you have an opportunity to interact with the children. If you can bond with the child, you're set. If you're able to do a pre-interview phone call or email, ask what the child's interests or hobbies are. Look for ways you can relate to those. A kid won't care that you have years of experience or fancy degrees, but they will love that you can play video games or have met their favorite cartoon voice actor. Look for ways to break the ice with your potential charge. I was once gifted a Minecraft t-shirt and I've worn it to many job interviews. It's always impressed the kids and gotten them to start a dialogue. A parent who is on the fence about hiring a male nanny may ultimately give in when they see how their child can quickly bond with a nanny. I've been offered jobs on the spot this way.

The parents aren't the only ones who should be asking questions during the interview. It's your time to ask important questions. One of my personal favorites: "How have some people who held the position in the past let you down and how have they exceeded your expectations?" The answers to the questions you ask reveal some expectations and sensibilities that might not otherwise come up in the interview.

At the end of the day, acing an interview as a male nanny is very similar to acing an interview in any other field. The same rules apply; look presentable and show up on time. You are the product, so find your target demographic and sell yourself to them. Remember, once the interview is over the fun really begins.

# GWIZ!

*NM's interview with author, mom, and fan of nannies everywhere, Dr. G*

BY AMBER O'NEIL

Every parent and nanny has questions on how to handle specific parenting issues. Each looks to others who have gone through the stage they are currently in. Physicians are asked over and over again on how to handle these issues. It was my pleasure to interview Dr. Deborah Gilboa, esteemed pediatrician and author of "Get the Behavior You Want... Without Being the Parent You Hate" (2015, Demos Health). Let's get to know Dr. G!

**Nanny Magazine (NM):** Tell me a bit about your background  
**Dr. Deborah Gilboa (Dr. G):** I am a mom of four boys, family physician, and a parenting and youth development expert. I have worn many hats in the past as a camp counselor, preschool teacher, and even worked in professional theater for a few years. In my role as a family doctor, I get to treat people of all ages and work a lot with families, which I enjoy. I also love speaking to audiences about parenting challenges.

**NM:** What made you decide to be a doctor?  
**Dr. G:** After the theater, I decided to become a volunteer EMT. That's when I realized I wanted to be a doctor. Once I realized I wanted to go into medicine, I researched the next steps and started working toward that goal. I took classes and eventually went to medical school.

**NM:** What is the biggest lesson you learned as a doctor?  
**Dr. G:** I have learned many things from being a doctor, especially working with a lot of parents and families. One important theme I see day to day is that everybody struggles as a parent. It doesn't matter what background you come from.

**NM:** What made you decide to become a parenting expert?  
**Dr. G:** I decided to become a parenting and youth development expert when I noticed that many of the questions I received as a physician had to do with parenting. I realized that there was a need to give honest and practical parenting advice. Since I deal with these questions every day, I decided to share these challenges with other parents who are struggling through my book and at my website AskDoctorG.com.

**NM:** What is the hardest thing about balancing work and family?  
**Dr. G:** Making sure I make a conscious decision to be where I am at that time. It makes me a better parent and feel better about what I do.

**NM:** Your book "Get the Behavior You Want... Without Being the Parent You Hate" came out two years ago. What is one piece of advice you want the reader to take away from the book?  
**Dr. G:** I want parents who read the book to understand that the only thing we can control is our kids' behaviors, not our kids. It's also important to understand that we influence kids' behaviors, so setting a good example is essential.

**NM:** Tell me a bit about the 3 R's of parenting.  
**Dr. G:** There is a pressure to make kids happy, but that's not our job as parents. Our job is to teach our kids to respect, be responsible, and be resilient. Raising kids with the 3 R's is giving them the tools they need to succeed as an adult, coworker, employee, spouse, and contributor to society.

**NM:** What made you decide to write?  
**Dr. G:** There were many people interested in a book that gave them the resources to be a more effective parent and provide actionable tactics. My book outlines not only the changes to make, but also gives the tools and resources to do so.

**NM:** Did you do a lot of research for your book?  
**Dr. G:** I did. A lot of my research came from experiences of myself and others, not in the lab like other parenting books. These are real questions and situations that parents are facing now.

**NM:** What inspired you to write your book?  
**Dr. G:** I wanted to help parents inspire their children to behave well without the negative behaviors. Because many parents get discouraged and worry about changing certain behaviors, I wanted to have a resource they could go to for help.

**NM:** What is one piece of advice you have for nannies?  
**Dr. G:** Being a nanny is a rewarding career and you have the privilege of playing a big role in a child's life. Try and find a goal that the parent shares with you and start there. Keep the lines of communication open and try to be consistent.

**NM:** Do you plan to write any more books?  
**Dr. G:** Yes, I do. I am currently working on a workbook based on the book, which will be a great resource to put those behavior changes in place. I am also working on a book for teenagers and parents.

Thank you for your time and allowing me to interview you!

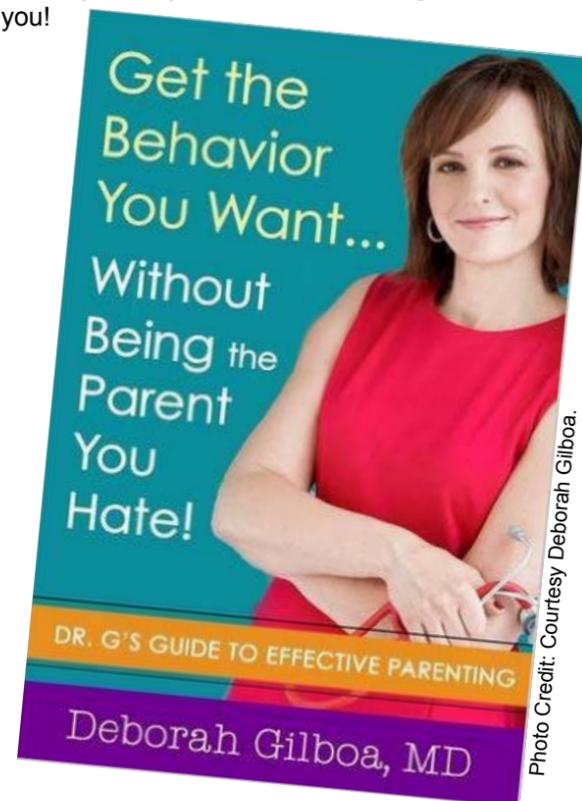


Photo Credit: Courtesy Deborah Gilboa.

# Make LinkedIn Work for You

By Adele Perry.

Adele is cofounder of the Nanny Jamboree and organizer of the Vancouver Nanny Network.

Photo Credit: Pexels

I recently joined the LinkedIn community to gain exposure and make connections in the nanny world. LinkedIn is a useful tool to boost any career by gaining exposure, making connections, and getting involved within the local community, and can help you build a larger nanny network. Regardless of whether you have a secure long-term position or if you are in search of a new one the benefits of having an account are substantial. I know there are nannies out there who have yet to see the benefits of having a LinkedIn account. It is my hope to share a little about LinkedIn networking and its benefits in hopes of convincing you to sign up so you can use this tool to enhance your career.

## What Is LinkedIn and How Does It Work?

LinkedIn is similar to Facebook except its intended use is for professional purposes. As with Facebook, users have the ability to upload a profile picture, add a brief summary, and update their status. LinkedIn is basically your

résumé uploaded onto a social networking website, which allows potential employers to find and contact you.

When you sign up for LinkedIn, you are walked through all the steps of completing your profile. These steps include uploading a profile picture (professional head shot), job history, brief summary, educational background, and volunteer experience. These are just a few of the key steps to getting your profile set up. As you browse LinkedIn, there is a lot more you can add to your profile if it's relevant to your experience. LinkedIn can connect you with contacts in your email address book and then give you the option to connect with them if you choose.

One of LinkedIn's greatest features is being able to add skills and having your connections endorse you. Adding endorsed skills relevant to your industry to your profile can really help you get noticed. Another great feature is allowing your connections to add a reference about you. A potential employer can view your

public profile and these features can enhance your chances at that next big job. Connections are also important, but it is equally important to have quality connections (i.e., not just anyone). Connections can be considered a form of clout. For example, if an employer can see that you worked for that local reputable agency it can increase your chances of getting that job.

## Isn't LinkedIn Just for Business Professionals?

Not really. LinkedIn is for anyone from big corporations to local business owners and even individuals such as independent contractors. Nannies can use it too! It is for job seekers and even those who are looking to connect with others in similar positions. I personally view all nannies as professionals and we should always conduct ourselves in that manner, so why not support the professionalism of our field by building a network through LinkedIn?

### What if I Don't Want All My Credentials Public?

No worries, LinkedIn has you covered. You can keep your profile visible to no one, which means that only you will know that you have an account. You can choose to make your profile public and choose which features to hide from the public. All features are viewable by your connections. Don't let this be the reason you don't have a LinkedIn account.

### What Are Some Other Benefits of Having a LinkedIn Account?

All professionals should have an account, especially nannies. Looking to score a job with that local agency? Connecting with them on LinkedIn is a great way to get noticed. Looking to score a new job with a great family? Let them see you are connected with or worked for a local reputable agency. That will give you a great boost! Working for a local reputable agency is one of the reasons I managed to secure my current job. Having a detailed profile really helps get you noticed by local agencies and the like. Don't be shy, show off the skills you have! It gives families and agencies a quick way to look at your profile, references, and connections to decide if you are the perfect fit for their position. You can search for jobs on LinkedIn too as there are quite a lot of nanny jobs advertised. It's free and easy. A new favorite feature is that you can save your profile as a PDF in a professional layout, so no need to create additional documents to send to potential employers. If you are a nanny in London, California, or New York, I would highly recommend signing up as there are a significant number of jobs listed for these locations. In order for prospective families to consider us as professional caregivers, we need to present ourselves professionally and this is a great tool to aid us in this.

### What Groups Should I Join? What Pages Should I Follow?

Consider following local agencies or adding them as connections. It's a great way to get noticed quickly. Just like Facebook, LinkedIn has groups too. It's easier to monitor who enters these groups compared to Facebook due to LinkedIn's profile design. There are also fewer groups to join and connect with, which helps create a wider community feel. I recommend joining The Nanny League, Nannies at Work, Nanny Care Network, and Vancouver Nanny Network.

### Tips and Tricks

Having a complete and detailed profile will attract more potential employers to your LinkedIn page. Keep it as up to date as possible. Create plenty of quality connections. Sometimes it can be a matter of who you know. Ask your friends, colleagues, and any of your connections on LinkedIn that can personally vouch for your skills to endorse you. Just be careful they don't endorse every single one, this could look fishy. If you add the words "nanny," "childcare," and "babysitting" to your skills, your name will appear in more searches and in turn will attract more employers.

Look for and connect with the local agencies. If they can vouch for you (and vice versa) this is a huge boost in your reputation as a nanny. So, what are you waiting for? Create a LinkedIn account and boost your nanny career!

Spring break? Read  
all back issues of  
Nanny  
Magazine  
online.  
for free.



## Join this group of Nannies, Agencies and Industry Services, who recognize their responsibilities to children and families...

# There's No Better Time to Join INA!

Be a member of the only organization that serves all of the in-home child care industry - Nannies, Newborn Care Specialists, Placement Services and Industry Related Businesses

Annual Conference—Reduced Registration Fees - Join us May 12-15, 2016 in Washington DC. Registration rates increase April 13th

Members Only Access to videos, articles, and webinars... more to come

INA Online Membership Directory / INA-Membership Designation/Verification - let others find you through our listing of members. Great exposure for agencies and industry services, and nannies looking for a new position

Discounts on eStore Purchases - Access to INA Publications, Forms and Tools at a discounted rate

INA Basic Skills Assessment & INA Nanny Credential Exam

INA Nanny Mentor Program

INA Nanny of the Year Award

INA Service Award Pin Program

Legislative Awareness of Child Care Issues at State and Federal Levels.

Opportunities to serve on committees and INA Board of Directors

[www.nanny.org](http://www.nanny.org) | [info@nanny.org](mailto:info@nanny.org)



## Interview Preparedness Products

By Amanda Dunyak.

Résumé? Check! Portfolio? Check! References? Check! But what else can you have in your bag of tricks to make a better impression on potential employers? Here are some of my picks for the interview-ready nanny.

# Ask the Agency



1

### Planner

To schedule all of those interviews and keep track of important dates, show your potential NannyFamily how organized you are with a professional looking planner! Plum Paper Planner's family planner is popular with nannies. Customize your weekly tabs (up to 7) with lesson plans, bills, errands, etc.

Etsy, Plum Paper Designs: \$35



3

### Professional Tote

I hate walking into an interview with my planner, portfolio, keys, and more in my hands. Don't try to shove things into your purse or risk bad weather destroying your résumé. Throw all you need into a stylish and versatile tote.

Mossimo for Target: \$36.99

2

### Nanny Notes App

Introduce your bosses to this awesome app to track their little one's day. As their nanny, you can log activities, meals, naps, medications, diapers, store photos, and more, and parents can check in on their child's day in real time.

iTunes/Google Play: Free/\$2.99



4

### Thank-You Cards

Throw these and some stamps in your bag and write out a thank you to potential employers within 24 hours after leaving the interview. Emails and texts are fine once you get the job, but a written thank you can go a long way in representing yourself as a professional who really cares about her career in the nanny industry.

Barnes & Noble: \$12.95

Mandie Lewis of the Starling Agency Nanny Placement brings over 20 years of experience in education and childcare to this issue's ask the agency column. Mandie lives in Seattle with her husband, daughter, and two kittens. Do you have a question you'd like to Ask the Agency? Email [info@nannymag.com](mailto:info@nannymag.com) to ask.

**Question: What are the main differences between interviewing with an agency and interviewing with a potential NannyFamily?**

Answer: "Have you ever interviewed with a family while their son streaked across the living room? I have! Hilarious, yes. Distracting, absolutely. Surprises like that could make it challenging to focus on whether the position meets your needs. An agency can help you understand the position before meeting with the family. This leaves room to center on the fit, rather than trying to address the fine details in an unpredictable setting. When prescreening with an agency, the focus will be on your preferences and personality. The agency will then be able to narrow your job search down to positions fitting your requirements."

**Question: Why should a nanny get a job through an agency rather than through some of the other methods that are out there?**

Answer: "Professional agencies offer a great deal of support in helping nannies find fantastic positions. A great agency will match each nanny with their ideal family dynamic and help advocate for professional compensation based on current local standards. Not only do agencies support nannies, but they also help families understand how to be the most successful employers possible. Finding an agency that values the nanny's expertise is key. An agency should take the time to get to know what each nanny is looking for. I often get to know my nanny network so well. I become completely invested in their job searches."

# Family Law Attorneys



We're here to help you manage and understand the family court process.



843-779-2529



## Nannies Ask

BY STEPHANIE FELZENBERG

Dear Stephanie,

My charges are soon getting out of school, increasing my workload significantly. Should I increase my rate for the summer months?

-Summertime Means Overtime

Photo Credit: Pexels

Dear Summertime,

Whether you have a work agreement or not, being hired as a nanny implies that your primary job duty is to provide childcare. If you are being paid as a nanny while the kids are in school, the parents are paying you to be available to care for the kids if they cannot attend school because they get sick or have breaks from school. If they cannot attend school you are not paid more. Therefore, simply being required to spend more time and energy on the charges during the summer is not reason enough to ask for extra compensation at a nanny job.

But, if your work agreement states that you were primarily hired as a household manager, housekeeper, or personal assistant and only responsible for providing childcare after school, then you have valid reason to negotiate more compensation for the added work of providing childcare during the summer.

You can renegotiate your salary and job duties at any time during employment. But it sounds unreasonable to me to ask for more money to simply care for children during the summer if your primary role is to care for children. If you do ask for more compensation during the summer, then you will have to accept a pay cut when the kids are in school the other nine months of the year.

## Ace Your Interview

By Kelci Ann Ross.

Don't schedule your next interview until you've read these tips.

Interviews themselves are tough. Add the nanny aspect to it and it's a whole new level. Nanny interviews are unique in the fact that you aren't just applying for your run-of-the-mill office job. You are applying for a handful of jobs all in one. And first and foremost you are applying for a job that requires you to be in charge of another human being's life. That alone could cause you to stress out about the interview. From researching the family before the interview to knowing when and what questions to ask, we've got you covered!

Before you even go to an interview it is advised that you research the "business" that you have applied to work for. In this case we are talking about the family. Use resources like social media, Google, and even LinkedIn to get to know who you will be employed by. This will give you a good sense of the type of people they are before you meet them in person. With that being said, make sure you check out your own social media pages to make sure that if they were to research you they wouldn't find anything that would hinder their decision to hire you.

While we're on the subject of you, let's bring to the table the one question that is almost always asked in any kind of interview: "Tell me about yourself."

You need to be able to answer this question phenomenally. This is your chance to really tell the interviewer who you truly are. You don't need to spill out a novel about yourself, but be sure to let them know where you're from and some of your major interests and activities. With this information the parents will get a better idea of who you are and if you will be a good fit with their children.

During an interview with your possible future employer it is very important to reveal appropriate body language. First, make sure that you shake hands with the parents. This common and small gesture goes a long way. Examples of improper body language would be fidgeting in your seat, fiddling your thumbs, or slouching. Sit up straight and show some assertiveness. Speak with confidence and be sure to look the parents in the eye. On another note, you don't want to seem too stiff. This could portray that you are very uncomfortable or all business and parents don't want either of those. If you can present yourself as a person with courage and a soft side it will be very appealing to the parents.

We mentioned before that the parents would be asking questions, but it's important for you to ask questions as well. The interview process is a two-

Photo Credit: Pexels

“The most important thing to remember when interviewing for a nanny position is to simply be you.”



Photo Credit: Pexels

way street. It's a good idea to ask questions so you can clear up any confusion about what would be expected of you as the family's nanny. Some great questions to ask the parents are: 1) What would my daily schedule be like? 2) Will there be a contract? 3) What is your parenting style? Asking questions will show that you are truly interested in the ins and outs of the job itself.

As a nanny you will be spending most of your time working daily with your charges. While they most likely won't be present during the interview it's a good idea to ask about the children. Try to find out their interests and a bit of their personalities. You could even go as far as asking to meet them if possible. It's important to all parties in this setup that everyone is compatible with each other. If the children and the nanny don't click, it's not going to be a good experience. If it's not a good time to meet the children you could propose meeting at a park or play gym with the parents and child. This way you would have an opportunity to interact with the children on their level of play.

Once the interview is wrapped, be sure to shake the parents' hands once again, smile, and thank them sincerely for their time. You want to leave a good lasting impression. It's also a good idea to ask when you can expect to hear back from the family with their decision. Once you get home, you should send them a quick email or note saying it was great to meet and thank them again for considering you for the position. You want to be on their radar as much as possible after the interview.

The most important thing to remember when interviewing for a nanny position is to simply be you. If the parents end up hiring you to be their family's nanny it is because of the amazing person you are! With prior preparation, you will get through your next interview with courage and no worry at all.

# Data Blitz

We've scoured the Internet to come up with these interesting facts. Learn something new this issue!

BY AMANDA DUNYAK.

1. The average number of people who apply for any given job: 118. 20% of those applicants get an interview.  
*Source: Forbes*

2. Originally, dogs (usually Dalmatians) ran in front of horse-drawn steam engines, barking loudly to alert pedestrians and vehicles so that the fire wagon could pass unhindered. With the advent of gasoline-powered fire engines, the Dalmatians were needed no more, but remain a symbol of fire fighting.  
*Source: Almanac.com*

3. Most U.S. families will continue to rely on two salaries. With both parents working in more homes, the demand for nannies will also increase.  
*Source: Nanny.net*

4. May is National Smile Month! 61% of us have been attracted to somebody by their smile alone!  
*Source: NationalSmileMonth.org*

5. 76% of resumes are discarded for an unprofessional email address  
*Source: Business2Community*

6. June is National Dairy Month. Lactose intolerant? Aside from milk and other dairy products, you can also get calcium from most green vegetables, particularly spinach and broccoli.  
*Source: KidzWorld*



Photo Credit: Amber Ketchum

## Easy Butterfly Waffles Amber Ketchum, MDS, RD. Registered Dietitian.

**Spring is the perfect time of year for enjoying the outdoors! And why not bring some of those fun “outdoor” elements into meal-time? This orange grape waffle butterfly is an easy breakfast or snack idea that kids will love to help make! Pair it with additional fruit and nuts for a complete meal.**

### Ingredients

- 1 frozen multigrain waffle
- 1 or 2 tablespoons whipped cream cheese
- 8 to 10 grapes
- 2 orange slices cut into 4 triangles, plus extra strips of orange for the “antennae”
- Additional grapes and orange slices to serve on side (optional)
- Unsalted nuts to serve on side (optional)

### Directions

1. Toast waffle according to package directions. Cut the waffle into 4 equal pieces.
2. Spread about 1 teaspoon of the cream cheese on each waffle slice and top the cream cheese with an orange triangle.
3. To assemble each butterfly, place 4 or 5 grapes in a vertical line. Place 2 of the waffle triangles on the sides of the grapes to shape the “wings.” Add small strips of orange for the “antennae.” Enjoy!

Makes 2 butterflies (1 serving)

# -Rainy Day Activities- Plan a Nanny-Themed Moviethon!

By Michelle Galetta.

**Summertime is all about the outdoors**—fresh air, long days, and activities as far as the eye can see, yet a few days of precipitation is inevitable. We at *Nanny Magazine* have compiled a definitive list of films featuring nannies for the inevitable time your craft and activities supply is lacking, or you and your charges just need to relax on a rainy day. Pick some favorites or something new and take your charges for a magical ride into the world of nannies in cinema...

If you have access to a large pot, try popping your own kernels to add to the fun!

## Classics

**The Sound of Music**, 1965, Rated G, 174 minutes  
A woman leaves an Austrian convent to become a governess to the children of a naval officer widower.

**Mary Poppins**, 1964, Rated G, 139 minutes  
A magic nanny comes to work for a cold banker's unhappy family.

**The King and I**, 1956, remade in 1999 (animated), Rated G, varied running times  
A widow accepts a job as a live-in governess to the King of Siam's children.

**Peter Pan**, 1953, Rated G, 77 minutes  
Wendy and her brothers are whisked away to the magical world of Neverland with the hero of their stories, Peter Pan. How's this one tie in with the theme? These kids have the most adorable nanny ever.

**Heidi**, 1937, remade in 1993 and 1952, Rated G, 88 minutes  
A story in which a young girl is the caregiver, a plucky little

orphan girl gets dumped abruptly into her gruff hermit grandfather's care, then later gets retaken and delivered as a companion for an injured girl.

## Contemporary favorites

**Nanny McPhee**, 2005, Rated PG, 97 minutes  
A governess uses magic to rein in the behavior of the seven spoiled rotten children in her charge.

**Nanny McPhee Returns**, 2010, Rated PG, 109 minutes  
Nanny McPhee strikes again to help a harried young mother who is trying to run the family farm while her husband is away at war, though she uses her magic to teach the woman's children and their two spoiled cousins five new lessons.

**Corrina, Corrina**, 1994, Rated PG, 115 minutes  
When Manny Singer's wife dies, his young daughter Molly becomes mute and withdrawn. To help cope with looking after Molly, he hires sassy housekeeper Corrina Washington, who coaxes Molly out of her shell and shows father and daughter a whole new way of life. Manny and Corrina's friendship delights Molly and enrages the other townspeople.

**Eloise at Christmastime**, 2003, Rated G, 89 minutes  
It may be warming up outside, but it's always a good time of year for a Christmas flick. Eloise and her nanny help plan for a winter wedding.

**Eloise at the Plaza**, 2003, Rated G, 89 minutes  
New York City's Eloise goes on various adventures

with her wonderful nanny.  
**The Beautician and the Beast**, 1997, Rated PG, 105 minutes  
A New York cosmetologist mistakenly thought to be a science teacher is offered a job to teach the children of an Eastern European dictator.

**Jack and Sarah**, 1995, Rated PG, 110 minutes  
A young American woman becomes a nanny in the home of a recent British widower.

**Au Pair**, 1999, Rated PG, 96 minutes  
Calling all millennial nannies, this one will take you back! A young college graduate mistakenly accepts a dream job, only to find out she'll end up working as an au pair to two misbehaved children.

## It's Manny Time!

**Mr. Nanny**, 1993, Rated PG, 84 minutes  
A former professional wrestler is hired to be the bodyguard/nanny for a couple of bratty kids whose inventor father is being stalked by a rival.

**Daddy Day Care**, 2003, Rated PG, 92 minutes  
Two men get laid off and have to become stay-at-home dads when they can't find jobs. This inspires them to open their own daycare center.

**First Kid**, 1996, Rated PG, 101 minutes  
An enthusiastic former boxer-turned-secret service agent is sent to take care of the President's "bratty" son at his prep school. It's easy to say they both teach each other a few things.

**Daddy Day Camp**, 2007, Rated PG, 93 minutes  
Seeking to offer his son the satisfying summer camp experience that eluded him as a child, the operator of a neighborhood daycare center opens his own camp, only to face financial hardship and stiff competition from a rival camp.

## Just for You and Big Sisters or Brothers

**Mrs. Doubtfire**, 1993, Rated PG-13, 125 minutes  
Robin Williams stars as a bitter divorcee in this comedy, shining as Mrs.

Doubtfire, using disguise to be close to his kids again, even if it means dressing up as a woman.

**The Nanny Diaries**, 2007, Rated PG-13, 105 minutes  
A bright college graduate takes a job as a nanny for a wealthy New York family, navigating the complexities of their bitter home life with her hard-won love for young Grover.

**Anna and the King**, 1999, Rated PG-13, 148 minutes  
The story of the romance between the King of Siam and widowed British schoolteacher, Anna Leonowens, during the 1860s.

**Uptown Girls**, 2003, Rated PG-13, 92 minutes  
Brittany Murphy stars as a washed-up heiress who is forced to take a job as a nanny to an 8-year-old who acts like an adult.

**Jane Eyre**, 1943, Remade in 2011, Rated PG-13, varied running times  
An English governess melts the heart of her employer and discovers a terrible secret in this classic.

Pick some favorites or something new and take your charges for a magical ride into the world of nannies in cinema...

Snack time! Check out our popcorn board on Pinterest for some fun new twists on your movie-time favorite!

<http://bit.ly/1UUPLeF>

# Legally Speaking

Nanny-turned-lawyer Sterling Chillico weighs in on your burning legal #nannylife questions in one of our newest columns. Read her responses in previous issues for more legally speaking perspectives.

Photo Credit: MorgueFile

## I was unjustly fired. What is my recourse?

By Sterling Chillico.

Absent an employment contract detailing procedures that will be followed when adverse employment actions are taken, employees are employed "at will," meaning they can be fired for good reason, bad reason, or no reason at all. However, it is illegal for an employer to fire an employee due to their race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation.

In addition to these protected classes, most states have a major exception to the employment at will doctrine: the public policy exception, which provides that an employee cannot be fired for something that is against public policy (i.e., an employer cannot fire you for filing for worker's compensation when you are injured on the job or refusing to perform a task that is against the law, for example).

If you had an employment contract and were terminated in breach of the contract or if you were terminated for your race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation, or were fired as a violation of public policy, you should contact an attorney to facilitate settlement negotiations or possibly file a lawsuit on your behalf.

This article does not constitute legal advice and should not be taken as such. If you find yourself in a situation such as this, please contact a lawyer who is licensed to practice in your jurisdiction. Sterling Chillico and Nanny Magazine Publication, LLC do not endorse this information as legal advice.



Photo courtesy Sterling Chillico.

# Dress for Interview Success

By Kelci Ann Ross.

So you've applied for a position with a brand new family and have been asked to meet for an interview. Great news! After being caught up in the excitement of it all you are now faced with the task of dressing for the interview. To some nannies, finding the perfect interview outfit is just another challenge added to their already stressful day. No worries though, *Nanny Mag* is here to help you dress for interview success!

Let's think about what parents are looking for in a nanny. Most desire a kind, warm, and softhearted person to be taking care of their children. It's very easy to reflect this type of conservative personality with your outfit. For a nanny interview it's important to not come off as harsh or intimidating. Ditch the suit and go for business casual. Here are three different interview outfit options:



Blouse: Choies Pink V-neck Long Sleeve Chiffon Blouse \$17  
Pencil Skirt: Black Pure Color Slit Back High Waist Skirt \$21  
Shoes: Point Your Toes Leopard D'Orsay Flats \$19  
Earrings: Kate Spade New York Light Pink Emerald Cut Stud Earrings \$38  
Bracelet: Accessorize Delicate Leap Open Cuff



Cardigan: J.Crew Lightweight wool Jackie cardigan sweater \$60  
Blouse: Choies Blue V-neck Sleeveless Chiffon Blouse \$17  
Trousers: Dsquared2 Flared Trousers \$112  
Watch: Skagen Women's Ditte Gold-Tone Stainless Steel Bracelet Watch 37mm SKW \$74  
Earrings: Lord & Taylor 14 Kt Yellow Gold Freshwater Stud Earrings \$75  
Shoes: Nine West Women's Girlcode Flats \$80



Blazer: Zara Mole-skin Blazer \$100  
Top: Zara Striped T-shirt \$23  
Pants: Laundry by Shelli Segal Director Mid-Rise Modern-Fit pants \$59  
Necklace: Style&co. Gold-Tone Red Stone Bib Necklace \$19

# Breakups Are Hard

By Candida Vajana.

How to quit your nanny job without burning bridges.

If you are asking yourself whether or not you should dump your NannyFamily, you have already decided to leave on a subconscious level. I have been a nanny for many years now and have had to “break up” with my employers many times. Sometimes my decision to leave was because I decided to move on, other times because we outgrew each other, and once it was because the family was just odd and locked me in their house for 24 hours. (I’ll tell you that story some other time...) Over the years I have almost perfected my routine for letting families down gently. It works well enough with rational people. Keep in mind that there will be times that families will choose to let you go rather than permit you to work your notice period, so be prepared for anything.

Leaving a nanny job is even harder than leaving any other kind of job because of the special relationships we build not only with the children but also with the parents, friends, and extended family that come with the territory. Leaving a nanny job can be seen as a betrayal by the employers who are being “dumped,” so be prepared to handle your breakup come what may.

**Breaking the News:** Have a face-to-face meeting to tell your employers you’ve decided to leave. Don’t be tempted to resign over email or text. Sitting your employers down for a candid conversation is the most professional way to inform them about

your decision. Make the time for this conversation even if your schedules don’t allow for much time.

During the meeting, be graceful, calm, and professional and express your gratitude even if you really did not enjoy the position. Thank your employers for the opportunities they provided you.

**Stick to Your Guns:** Know the reasons that informed your decision to terminate the relationship, and inform your future ex-bosses of your decision to leave. Be prepared for one of three things to happen:

1. They accept and respect your decision and are happy for you (maybe you are leaving because you are getting

married, having children, or moving away, for instance.)

2. They try to convince you to change your mind. If you are not prepared for this, you may end up leaving the meeting having signed a contract for another year.

3. They ask you to leave right away, perhaps without even allowing you to say goodbye to your charges.

**Map out Money Matters:** If your meeting goes well and the family does ask you to work the duration of your notice period, schedule another meeting to discuss all financial matters related to your departure (final payment, tax forms and payments, retirement plan distribution, etc.). Make sure you include all these details in a follow-up letter. If your meeting does not go well, discuss these issues at the same time; it would be unfortunate for you to have to leave without being paid your final wages. It has happened to me and it is very annoying—not to mention illegal.

**Send a Follow-up Letter:** I normally write a letter recapping our conversation and confirming my final date as well as the financial matters discussed above. This is important so that everyone is clear about what the plan is. Keep a countersigned copy of the letter for your records.

**Give Appropriate Notice:** Everyone asks what an appropriate notice period is. I think this depends on many factors. If you have a contract, the notice period stated in the contract should be respected. If you do not have a contract, 4 weeks’ notice is an appropriate amount of

“Be kind to yourself.”

time. You should keep in mind the family’s circumstances as well when factoring in how much time they may need to find replacement care. If you are working for a high-profile family, 4 weeks may not be enough time. Make sure you do give appropriate notice because families will talk and your professionalism will be questioned if you do not.

**Telling the Children:** Ask how the parents plan to share your news with the children and then follow their lead, even if you do not agree with it. Some families will speak to the children and will ask for you to be present; others will not tell their children at all. Unfortunately, regardless of your attachment to the children, this is not your decision to make. This may be an emotional time for everyone, so remember the parents may be feeling betrayed, the children may feel like their world is crumbling around them, and you may also feel gloomy knowing you may never see your charges again.

**Offer to Help with Hiring:** I do not offer to find a replacement but I do offer to help read résumés and to speak to prospective candidates. If I do help, I try to give my opinion without helping the parents make a decision about which candidate to offer the position to. If the family values you, they will respect your opinions and comments and most likely will pick the same candidate you would have chosen.

**Help with the Transition:** If you are able to stick around for a bit and conditions are favorable, you may be able to help your NannyFamily transition to their new nanny. You are the expert on the family’s needs and routines, after all. Find out from MomBoss and DadBoss how you may be able to assist (paid, of course).

**Train the New Nanny:** If you are fortunate enough to be able to work alongside the family and the new nanny for a few days or weeks, this will be a great opportunity for you to teach her about the children’s routines, preferences, and needs. Share information pertaining to favorite toys and favorite books, bedtime routines, and dietary habits, etc. This is definitely a sensitive topic and the nanny who has decided to leave can feel like she’s on an emotional rollercoaster. Remain professional, be graceful and tactful, respect their decisions with regard to the children, and do your best to leave on a positive note. If you have chosen to be a career nanny, how you plan breakups is just as important as how you conduct yourself with your charges on a daily basis. You will need and want a reference from each family you work for.

Leaving is not easy. We have all had to do it at some point or will be doing it soon, so make sure you take care of your own needs too. As caregivers we tend to think about others first and ourselves last. Don’t forget to be kind to yourself.

Don’t be tempted to resign over email or text.

Photo Credit: Pexels

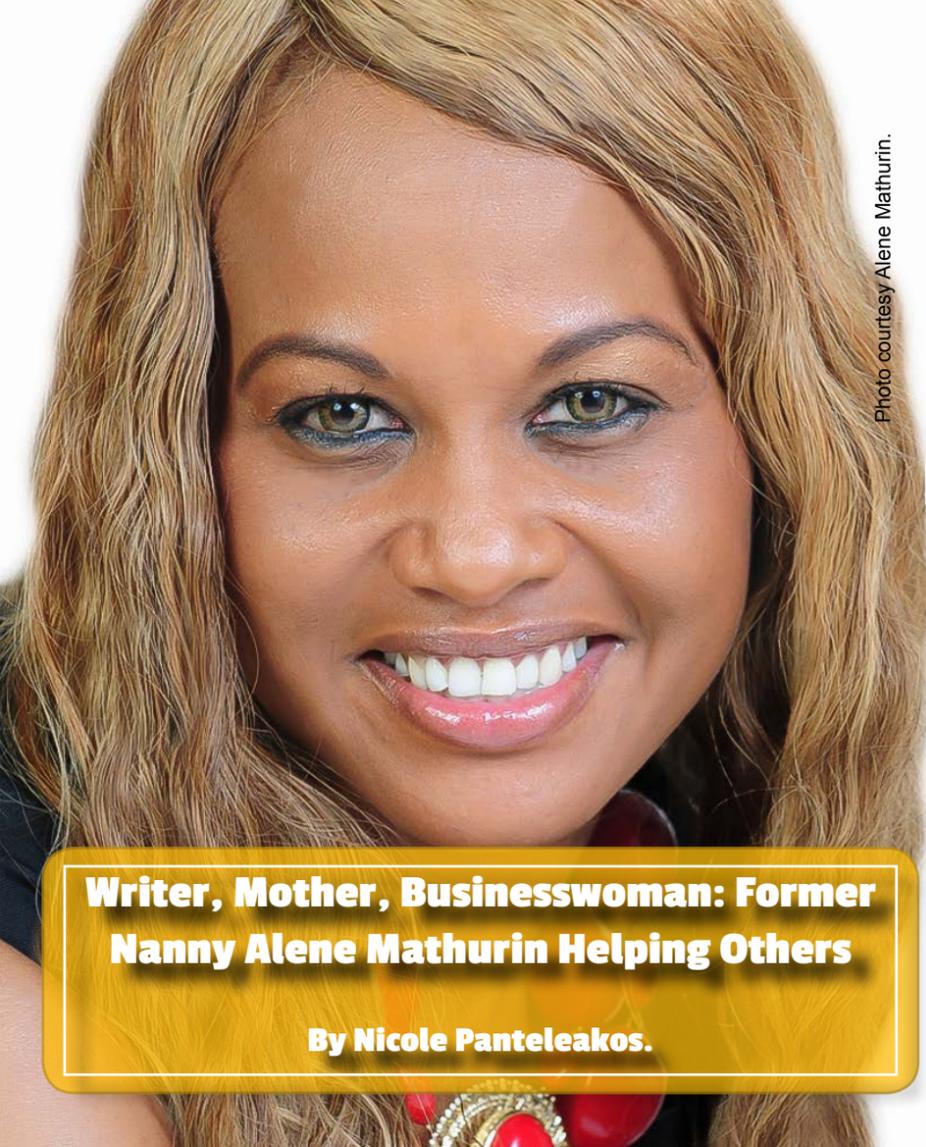


Photo courtesy Alene Mathurin.

## Writer, Mother, Businesswoman: Former Nanny Alene Mathurin Helping Others

By Nicole Panteleakos.

Alene Mathurin wears many hats: writer, mother, businesswoman, life coach, nonprofit creator, and former nanny. She has worked with children, written for children, and is currently raising her own child. Her book, *A Guide to Developing a Successful Family and Nanny Relationship*, is an excellent tool for those raising children in today's world, be they parents or nannies, because, as those in the childcare business know, communication is key.

Alene began working as a nanny in 2002 and did it professionally for 13 years. During her child-rearing career she experienced a variety of nanny positions, including full-time, part-time, traveling with families, working with twins, and providing date night care. Her first full-time nannying job was with children

who were five months old, and she continued with them until they were eight. Her last position was with six-month-old twins she calls her "little peanuts." She stayed with them until they started school full time.

Though she doesn't work as a nanny anymore, Alene says, "When someone has worked as a nanny and experienced the powerful connection and impact a good nanny can have on a child's life, regardless of the professional path that individual takes, he or she will always consider himself or herself a nanny." Think there's no way Alene could add to her impressive track record? Think again. Alene also owned a small nanny agency many years ago, through which she tried to help families "find the best possible professionals for their children," while

also ensuring that nannies ended up with "the most compatible families with whom to work." She greatly enjoyed this work. "I was able to be meticulous about finding the best nanny for a child, something every child deserves... it was a win-win situation because I added a lot of value for children, families, and nannies." She goes on to say, "The process involved in finding the best nanny for a family is a serious endeavor that requires great judgment because children are vulnerable... the other aspect that must be considered is ensuring that the nanny is paired with a family that respects and values his or her contribution."

Because she is a parent herself, Alene related to the worries of parents seeking help with their kiddos. She often relied in part on her own maternal instincts when interviewing candidates. "I implore families to be realistic about their expectations and realize that the care of the children should take precedence over any other aspect of the job." That said, Alene is clear that nannies shouldn't be afraid to ask questions during the interview process to get a better sense of who the parents are. Though she hasn't hired a nanny for her son, she did use in-home childcare for him while she worked, as this was the best, most affordable option at the time.

When asked what one piece of advice she could give to a newly hired nanny, Alene said her first priority would be in making certain that the nanny fully understands the job's demands and is able to meet the family's expectations. "A good nanny must first be able to love a child divinely, and out of this divine love comes fundamental qualities that are essential to being a great nanny, qualities such as respect, patience, and tolerance. I would further caution the nanny to respect the family's rules and ensure that she or he communicates effectively with the parents about everything involving their child's care. Nanny care is a very demanding profession, and I would remind the nanny to also allot personal time for exercise, relaxation, doctor's appointments, and so forth." All sound advice!

As nannies know, it's a job that requires more personal involvement and emotional investment than many other positions, so is it worth it? Alene thinks so. She says, "There is nothing like the embrace of the child for whom you care. There is nothing like hearing him or her say, 'one more hug.' There is something magical about the stories that come from the very active imaginations of children. There is also something rewarding about looking at

their different developmental stages and celebrating their milestones." On the other side of the fence, Alene also has words of wisdom for parents who've just hired their first nanny. "Hiring a nanny to care for a child is a very difficult process. This is a fact that must be acknowledged first. It is a process that involves trust. I strongly believe that there should be a trial period during which the nanny and family gain greater insights about the demands of the jobs, how the nanny executes various tasks, and the temperament of the nanny and parents. Parents must ensure that a nanny's contract is in place first, and that the background check is thoroughly reviewed. Developing great relationships requires respect, patience, and honest dialogue." Open communication is key, as is respect. "Also, being realistic about expectations is crucial. Both parties must respect boundaries, and the nanny must ensure that she or he follows the family's rules within the household. Parents must also consider the fact that the nanny has a life outside her or his job, just as the nanny considers the family's unique needs."

### Nanny vs. Daycare: The Age-Old Question

So what might Alene say to parents wondering if it's ideal to hire a nanny over daycare or other options? "Children who have nanny care are able to stay in their own environments, which is a very important detail. It is stressful for a child to get to know a new person, and doing so in a new external environment like a daycare could exacerbate their level of stress. Additionally there is the individual one-on-one attention the child gets from the nanny, which helps the child develop trust in the nanny. Parents who work outside the home may enjoy a greater level of flexibility by having someone in their home for eventualities such as emergencies."

Growing up, Alene didn't have the experience of having a nanny, as such a profession is not common where she is from. She was born in St. Lucia, which she describes as "one of the most beautiful places on earth," where "people are incredibly kindhearted and peaceful." That said, she had a tough childhood and was raised by her grandmother who suddenly passed away when she was only nine years old. Though this "claimed much of" Alene's childhood happiness, it also taught her to "survive in the face of adversity," which came in handy when she got to America. Her aunt helped her to become the person she is today. "She taught me essential life lessons and, in many ways, taught me about the powers of love and how to be studious in all I did." It is common in St. Lucia for extended families and even neighbors to be involved in the raising of children, much along the lines of the old "it takes a village" saying.

In addition to her handbook for parents and nannies, Alene has been busy writing picture books for children. She was inspired to write from an early age, as it allowed her to forget her reality. She created an imaginary world in which she was able to know her father and reunite with her mother, having the relationship with them that was not possible in real life. "When I became a nanny, I was able to tap into the ability to tell impromptu stories to children to avoid temper tantrums or to simply make them laugh," said Alene. She

hopes her stories will help fuel their imaginations.

It took Alene about two months to write her first picture book, *Hairy Fairy*. Her second, *The Duck Who Always Started a Fire*, took more than twice that time, but both stories "came naturally." In her words, *Hairy Fairy* is about "children overcoming a fear. It is a story about courage," which nannies can understand because a part of the job of caring for children involves assuaging their fears and helping them cope with anxieties, be it over going to the dentist or making new friends. "The Duck Who Always Started a Fire" was easy to write because children are sometimes brutally honest, so we must teach them to consider other people's feelings. Kids must be taught empathy and consideration for all." When Alene Mathurin is not writing, working, or raising her own little one, she is involved with the charity she developed, *200Backpacks*, and was happy to tell *Nanny Magazine* readers how to get involved.

"I am moved by the plight of humanity, and I have a desire to help marginalized people all over the world. I started *200Backpacks* because of my own childhood. I was not immune to poverty, and I know firsthand poverty's ill effects on families, especially on children. I wanted children to have the necessary supplies for school so they too can have equal opportunity to be the best that they can be and to perhaps change the course of their lives. For many years, I used a plastic bag to carry my school supplies, and there were days that I wished that I had a pencil with which to write. There were also days when I had a pencil but no eraser because I was so hungry that I ate it.

"Your readers can get involved by donating school supplies, clothes, and books to children. These children are the promises of tomorrow, and my story is similar to theirs. I believe that we all have a power within us, a true human spirit that begs us to consider others and to make a difference in the lives of those in need. As I type these words, the nanny communities in New York and New Jersey have mobilized their effort and collected almost 2,000 diapers to give to very poor families in St. Lucia. Their efforts are supported by the Huggies brand, a brand that has been so instrumental in recognizing the valuable contributions of nannies. It has helped my organization put together initiatives to help the nanny community. We in the nanny community recognize the need to pay it forward and help others."

Pay it forward. Help others. Concepts that are completely familiar to nannies because helping others and creating more positivity in the world is so closely connected to the job—raising children to be happy, healthy, and humanitarians—to know that they are important, but to recognize the importance of others too. Nannies help parents to raise children to be loving, kind individuals not simply because it is their job, but because it is a passion, and in order to do the best possible job at that job, nannies and parents must communicate clearly and work together, just as Alene has advised. Indeed, Alene Mathurin wears many hats and there is much we can learn from her.

# BREATHE...

**Being a nanny is one of the most rewarding, satisfying, full-of-surprises careers a person can choose. No two days are identical while you maintain a schedule of creativity, activities, naps, and communication. But sometimes, when the days feel longer than they actually are, you daydream of another career, and communication doesn't flow, it may be time to wonder, "is my job toxic?"**

**BY STEPHANIE MAGRISSO.**

## **HOW TO KNOW WHEN YOUR JOB HAS BECOME TOXIC**



Working in a toxic situation is dangerous for everyone involved. And while the signs are contingent upon your particular situation, there are several universal symptoms.

**High Stress:** All careers come with their fair share of stress. If work were always a breeze, it wouldn't be called work! It is when your level of stress reaches acidic levels, burning both your spirit and health, that you may realize it is toxic. Stress certainly comes with the territory in the nanny world but be cognizant of oddly high levels.

**Long Hours:** Occasionally MomBoss or DadBoss are running a few minutes late, causing you to leave work late. When this becomes habitual and minutes bleed into hours, this could be cause for alarm. Caring for your charge is priority number one, but time for yourself also needs to be respected. Unprecedented long days with little to no time away from your charge could also cause decay. Burnout will ultimately cause problems for both you and your NannyFamily.

**Work-Life Balance:** Every family has different needs pertaining to working hours. For some nannies, it can suddenly start to feel as though their NannyFamily is their entire life. If this is something you enjoy about your job, no problem. However, in most cases, maintaining balance in your personal life away from work remains essential. If you communicate your need for time away yet your NannyFamily remains nonresponsive, it may be time to reevaluate.

**Scapegoating:** If you find yourself in situations in which MomBoss or DadBoss is consistently placing unwarranted blame on you for things you haven't done, it needs to be addressed immediately. The same can be said for a charge (especially an older one).

**Unrealistic Expectations:** A nanny can have some pretty far-reaching job expectations. Sometimes these unexpected tasks add a little excitement to the day. Nannies are super heroes in disguise. However, you should never be expected to accomplish tasks MomBoss or DadBoss would not expect of themselves. While we are super heroes, our powers have a limited wingspan.

**Physical or Emotional Sickness:** While this symptom is pretty self-explanatory, do consider it. Your physical and emotional health is a key component to your job! If a home or person is causing you anguish (either physically or emotionally), it needs to be resolved.

These are just a few of the myriad ways to tell you are working in a toxic environment. Not all of these symptoms need be present. Above all else, trust your gut. If you are in a toxic environment, there will be a sense that something is wrong. Another great way to avoid finding

yourself in a toxic job situation is to avoid being in one to begin with. This is not always easy to identify and while toxic situations can develop over time, be sure to ask direct questions in your interview to get ahead of any potential problems. Do not be hesitant to ask questions such as:

How long did your last nanny work for you?  
Why did they leave?  
Would I ever be expected to work overtime? If so, am I compensated accordingly?  
Do you provide annual reviews?  
How important is communication and what is the most effective way for you to do so?  
Do you provide vacation time?  
What are your expectations? (And share your expectations too!)

## Is it time to re-evaluate your employers or find a new job?

While open dialogue is key in any work environment, it is essential when you are a nanny. Lines can quickly and easily become blurred. Setting boundaries not only keeps roles crystal clear, it also aids in creating a safe, pleasant environment for all parties. Address problems as they occur. If your MomBoss and DadBoss are unwilling to work with you in sustaining happy surroundings for everyone involved, it may be time to explore other options. The relationship between you and your NannyFamily is special, personal, and unique. You should never be going home night after night hating the work you've done. If you find yourself in a situation like this, chat with one of your nanny besties to figure out your next logical career step.

# Is Your Job in Jeopardy?

By Elizabeth O'Conner.

SPOT THE SIGNS FROM BOTH SIDES OF THE FENCE.



Photo Credit: Pexels

My contract year was coming to an end for my first live-in nanny job. Per our verbal agreement the time was quickly closing in on me having to make a decision to stay on for another year or not. I was wavering back and forth on whether to stay or go. I loved my two charges dearly but their toddler years were getting the best of me. I loved my bosses but I was ready for my work to not be in the same place as my home. Through the decision-making process, I learned to take a step back and look at my job from an outside perspective to see if it was time to go or not. Sometimes it takes stepping back to see if job is in trouble, or in my case if the trouble on the job was more than I wanted to handle.

Too often I hear of nannies staying in a bad job because they are afraid of what will happen to the child if they leave. They are afraid they won't be able to find another job with the same pay. Sometimes they just aren't willing to admit how bad the job truly is. All of these thoughts and fears are valid, but when a nanny is drained or truly unhappy, it is time to move on. It is no longer healthy for the nanny, the child, or the parents. I have heard time and time again from various parents that they would rather their nanny end the contract (if the nanny is no longer happy or content) than continue working out of obligation.

I get it; it's hard to step back from a child you love and may have raised for the last several years. It is not easy to sever ties with a family all the while hoping that they will write you a great recommendation for your next job. Being in the position of a nanny may be one of the hardest work atmospheres out there. In some ways you are the third member of a marriage dynamic, the second mom (or dad), and sometimes the only constant in the child's life, yet it is important that we as nannies maintain our sanity and be healthy in our decisions to stay in or leave a job. Here are some questions to ask yourself when getting ready to decide if you should stay or go in your position:

### 1. Do I dread getting out of bed every day to go to work?

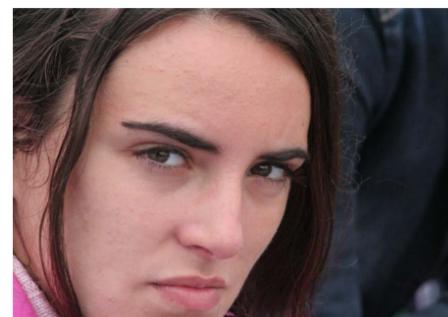
Does the joy of your job motivate you to get out of bed most days? I have mornings I don't want to get out of bed but the reason is because I stayed up too late the night before bingeing on Netflix, not because I dread facing another day with my charges. When a job stops motivating me to get out of bed by the second snooze cycle, I know it's time to think about moving on.

### 2. Do I complain about my bosses more than I compliment them?

Every relationship has its up and downs. The more personal the relationship, the more extreme the dynamics can be. The nanny-parent relationship is probably one of the more personal job relationships out there. Disagreements will arise; there is no doubt about that, but if your complaints about your boss's behavior becomes regular, it isn't a good sign. Are complaints about how late your bosses come home, how there are always dirty dishes in the sink, or the mass quantities of laundry consuming more of your thoughts than the little kiddos in your care? Are you frustrated with your employers most of the time? If so it might be a sign it's time to have a serious talk with your bosses or move on.

### 3. Am I Only Staying Because of the Money?

Money: it is a real motivator for a job. We all have bills that need to be paid, vacations we want to take, and there is fun to be had. But if money is the only thing getting you out of bed and to your job every day, it might be time to ask yourself if there isn't a better job out there for you somewhere. Working with a specific family or in a



specific industry because of the pay is not bad at all. But if you find no joy or fulfillment besides the money, it may be time to ask why you are there.

### 4. Does (Almost) Every Other Nanny Job Look More Appealing than Yours?

Being well educated in the nanny profession, being aware of what jobs are out there and what going rates are for your local community is one thing. Getting excited about every other job opportunity that scrolls through your online networking communities is another. If other jobs looks so appealing that you are constantly considering applying for them or wishing that you had one of them instead of your current one, why not take a shot in the dark and apply? See what might be on the other side of the fence. The grass isn't always greener but sometimes it is.

### 5. Do I Feel Underappreciated?

In my personal opinion this is the biggest red flag that your job is on the rocks. Usually when you feel unappreciated it's because you are. If your bosses don't show the value that you provide as an employee or your pay isn't in line with industry standards to reflect the work you're doing, then you are not being properly appreciated. When was the last time your bosses thanked you for raising their children? Being underappreciated is usually a road that is difficult to stop going down once the journey has already begun.

If you are unsure how happy you are with your current job ask yourself these five questions. Allow yourself to admit that what once was a perfect fit might no longer be a good match. Things change. Be okay with that decision and move on while things are still on good ground with your employers.



Photo Credits: MoqueFile

### Flip the Switch

Are you still on the fence? Your Mom-Boss or DadBoss's attitude or behavior toward you may also help you to make a strong decision. Take a proper inventory of how your boss has been treating you and learn to spot some other signs that perhaps your job is in trouble or less stable than you'd like for it to be. Signs to look out for may include:

- Late pay: Have your paychecks stopped coming regularly? Maybe one of your employers' jobs is in trouble and they can't afford to pay you. If this is the case, you may be one of the first expenses they plan to cut if their household money starts running out.

- Sudden unexplainable shift in hours: Did you used to drop your charges off for school or activities but now you're not being asked to? Ask yourself why. There may be a reasonable explanation, or there may be changes in the wind.

- Drastically different responsibilities: Has DadBoss tried to increase (or conversely decrease) your responsibilities while you're on the clock? If so, they may be trying to drive you out.

- Snarky comments or unfriendly attitude: This is a big red flag, especially if they used to treat you with respect and kindness.

- Weird comments from your charges: Why is little Johnny suddenly questioning the way you dress him for school or cut his sandwich? And did he just critique the way you parked the car in the driveway? Pay attention to odd comments from your charges because it could be that they are repeating what they've heard from their parents.

*Nannies take note: you shouldn't be going home feeling unhappy every day!*

## Alcohol.

Widely enjoyed by adults all over the world, but sometimes its enjoyment can become a dependency. According to the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD), "17.6 million Americans, or one in every 12 adults suffer from alcohol abuse or dependence" (NCADD, 2015). Nannies are in a precarious position; working so intimately inside a household gives us access to a family's inner workings. So what should a nanny do if they suspect that one of their bosses struggles with alcohol? We turned to the nanny community to see what participants would do.

Rachel Crittenden, a nanny in Renton, Washington, thinks it's best for a domestic employee to keep a safe distance, stay quiet, and monitor the situation. "I don't think nannies should involve themselves in their boss's issue with alcoholism. Not only is it a very touchy subject, but it could cost you your job. The very best thing a nanny can do is be there for the kids, keeping an eye on how their boss interacts with them and taking notice if any alcohol is being left where the children can get it. Protect them as much as you can. If you get in the middle of the addiction and they fire you out of fear (the fear will look like anger), you can't keep the kids safe. Only get involved if their safety or health becomes an issue."

Kelli Mencke, a Parma, Ohio nanny, disagrees and thinks it's best for a nanny in this situation to spring into action. "Because nannies are mandatory reporters of child abuse, neglect, and endangerment, I feel it is my responsibility to help or find help for the family. The first step would be determining if the actions were affecting the children. Second, I'd talk with the other parent (assuming there were two) and share my concerns. Third, if absolutely necessary, I'd report my concerns to the appropriate authorities. It's a difficult situation to be in, but I am responsible for the well being of the children in my care."

Ultimately, any nanny faced with this situation will have to do what they think is best for the children and what feels right to them. If you are facing a similar situation in your job and need help processing what you've observed, you can reach out to Al-Anon for expert opinions. Find an Al-Anon group in your area at [www.alanon.org](http://www.alanon.org).

Photo Credit: Pexels

# -Dilemma- Blame It on the Alcohol?

**What's a nanny to do if alcoholism is affecting her employers? What would you do?**

**By JoAnna Becker.**



# KIDS' HEALTH WITH DR. COLIN WONG

Photo Credit: Pexels

## Is my charge autistic or on the spectrum?

Autistic Spectrum Disorder is a poorly understood condition, even by health professionals. It is a spectrum that means some people may be only mildly affected and others be severely affected. It is described as a triad of difficulties.

- 1.) Social interaction is off. You may notice a lack of eye contact, that he or she takes things literally when not intended to be, and that they don't get jokes;
- 2.) Social communication may be lacking. Perhaps your charge points to indicate need instead of using speech or presents extreme shyness;
- 3.) Social imagination may be present or hindered. Your charge may have trouble understanding others' needs and may not be able to engage in nonimaginative play.

In addition, children with ASD often need routine and plans, cannot cope with change, have sensory issues such as trouble with noise, fabrics, or textures, and may have a highly developed knowledge of one particular topic. In some children these issues will be profound and obvious. In others, the symptoms may go ignored for years until they have children themselves.

## What is developmental delay and why should a nanny be aware of it?

Developmental delay is the failure for a child to hit certain developmental milestones that 95% of other children that age will have attained. It is a very sensitive issue for parents and you will almost certainly be asked your opinion on the matter as a nanny for a child with suspected developmental delays.



Photo courtesy Colin Wong.

When Dr. Wong isn't seeing little patients, he is at home being a dad to his two kids with his wife Catherine. Here, Wong poses for a photo with his two kiddos.

Whenever I first meet a child, I automatically do an informal developmental assessment. The CDC published a great guide to picking up warning signs. It's a good way of reassuring yourself that everything is okay. If you notice your charge actually losing skills, you should advise the parents to visit the pediatrician.

Many children with developmental delay are just slow in picking up skills, but some (about 10%) will have a condition that may really benefit from early identification and support in the first three years.

Source: [http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/checklists/all\\_checklists.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/checklists/all_checklists.pdf)

## My charge's parents have asked me to go to their physicals and check-ups. Is this advised?

Nannies are often an absolutely crucial part of the family but in the end, the buck stops with the parent. I've seen all sorts of responsibilities delegated to nannies that are simply not fair. You should encourage parents, especially dads, to be actually pres-

ent even if you do most of the caring. Parents need to inform the provider of important medical and social history as well as receive vital advice from the medical professional, which they may find uncomfortable or unpleasant coming from you.

The American Association of Pediatrics has an excellent schedule of well-child visits, which ideally includes the parents' participation. These appointments are an ideal opportunity for parents to discuss concerns, gain information, and get more involved in their child's development.

Source: <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/health-management/Pages/Well-Child-Care-A-Check-Up-for-Success.aspx>

## Should I worry that my charge is too hyper or does he have ADHD? What's normal?

How often do I get asked this? I'll give the same quick summary I give everyone: you must have inattention and hyperactivity with or without impulsivity. I've seen children reported by their parents as being absolute terrors at

home but at school or daycare they are attentive and well behaved. This is not ADHD; this is a parenting issue.

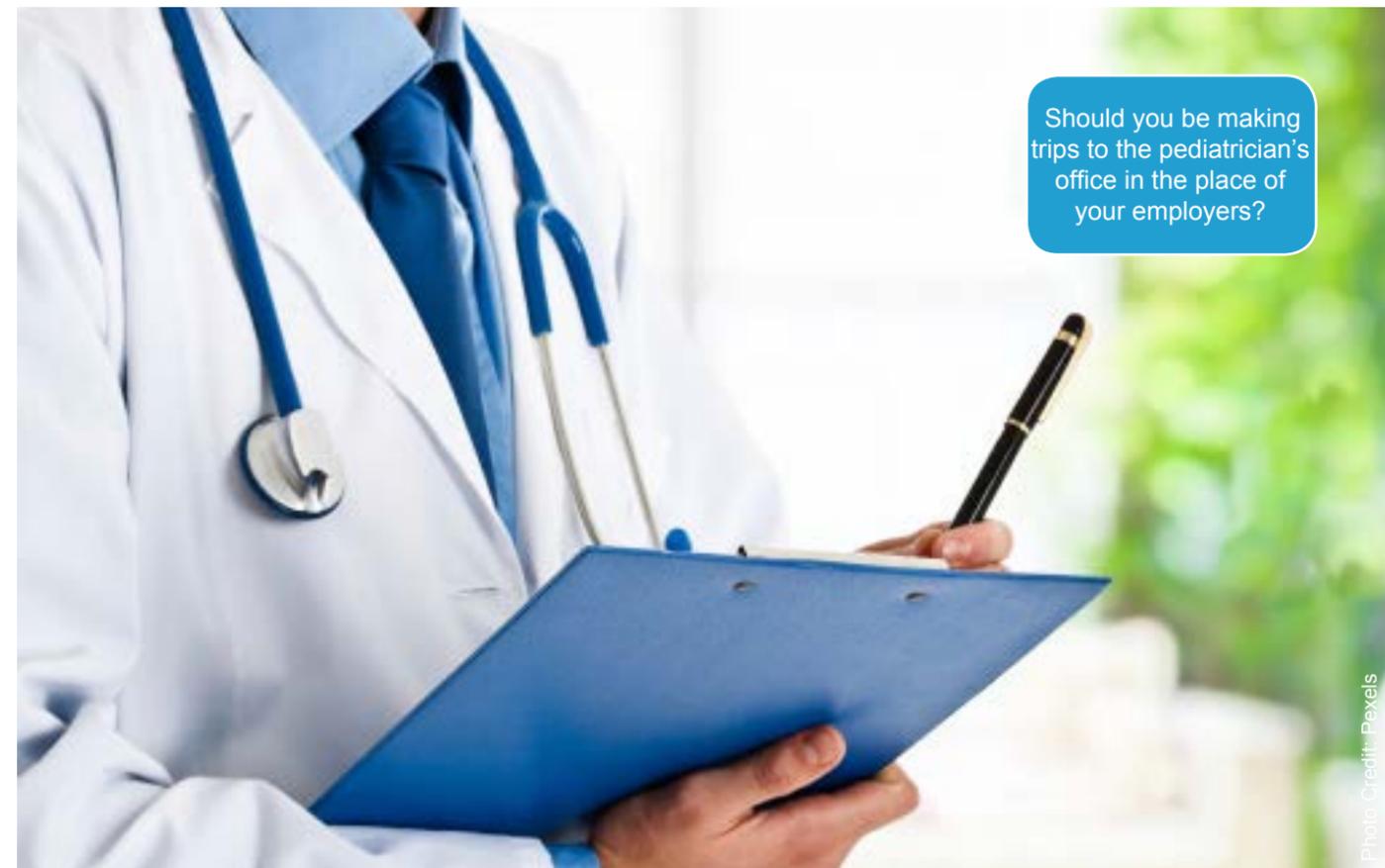
Most 3 year olds would probably qualify as ADHD but if the behavior continues into school age and the school gives the same opinion then it probably is ADHD.

With ADHD, you must change *your* behavior; your charge cannot.

Remember, if you think a child's behavior is odd, it probably is. Think about whether your charge might have autistic spectrum disorder (see above) or Pathological Demand Avoidance.

Sources: <http://www.channel4.com/programmes/born-naughty/episode-guide/>; <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/adhd/facts.html>

**Questions for future issues that you'd like Dr. Wong to answer? Email [jennifer@nannymag.com](mailto:jennifer@nannymag.com) and we'll consider passing them along to be answered for a future issue.**



Should you be making trips to the pediatrician's office in the place of your employers?

Photo Credit: Pexels



# Must-Ask Questions

Your turn to ask the questions? Nanny Magazine has your back!

By JoAnna Becker.

Photo Credit: Pexels

When searching for a nanny job, most of us prepare our résumés, portfolios, and answers to the most common questions about our work history, education, and other important factors families look for. However, entering into a nanny–family relationship isn’t like other jobs; it is entering a family’s inner circle and there must be a certain level of comfort and compatibility. Therefore, when you interview with a family, it is important to evaluate the family as much as they are evaluating you. Throughout the interview, you will likely learn many details about the job duties, the children, the parents, and the home. Asking the following questions will give you a better understanding of the nature of the job, the personality of the family, and whether or not the job would be a good fit for you.

### Learning about the Job

In addition to all of the standard details such as hours and expected duties, you’ll want to try to understand more fully what the family is envisioning for their children’s care. If they have never had a nanny before, these are questions they may not have thought about, so I like to have a few

follow-up questions ready to help guide them along.

- What qualities are you looking for in a nanny? Many parents will think of honest, trustworthy, and caring, as those are qualities we all look for in the people with whom we interact, but other key qualities might include fun loving, active, punctual, educated, or organized, among others. Be prepared to talk about how you shine in the areas they mention, as well as a few they didn’t.
- What would a perfect day as your nanny look like? This question will help you understand quite a bit about your potential bosses and their expectations. If they’ve never had a nanny, and especially if they haven’t even had their baby yet, they may have no idea what you’ll do all day, giving you a chance to wow them with some ideas. Conversely, they may have pie-in-the-sky expectations that you’ll want to address with a dose of reality. Either way, be prepared to talk about the types of activities and daily schedules you’ve used in past positions and how the children have benefitted.
- Do you anticipate needing care outside of your normal week? I prefer to discuss weekend, date night, and special event care during the interview rather than waiting until contract negotia-

tion. Some families never expect their nanny to be available to work outside of the agreed-upon hours, while some assume that their nanny will be available any time they need care. Most fall somewhere in the middle. This is also a great time to ask if the family expects to need childcare when they travel. Be prepared to talk about your availability and what kind of notice you’d like for date nights, late hours, travel, or other events.

### Getting to Know the Family

Through the job advertisement and your initial introductions, you likely already know some general information about the family including their family structure, whether parents work in or out of the home, if they have pets, and other key factors. These questions will help you learn more than just the basics about the parents and children.

- What kind of work do you do and what do you enjoy doing in your time off? These questions give you some insight into how hectic a schedule the parents are likely to have, whether there may be some additional flexibility required by their nanny, and what their stress level might be like after a long day at work. It can also let you know if they are homebodies or have an active social life outside of work. Finally, find common ground and score some points. Be prepared to share a few of your interests outside of work.
- What is a tradition your parents (the children’s grandparents) did that you want to continue with your own children? I love this question because the parents often take off their “professional interviewer” hat when they start talking about their own childhood. They may bring up bedtime rituals, weekend activities, or holiday traditions. They may discuss their religious or cultural backgrounds. Be prepared to share at least one family tradition you remember fondly from your own childhood.
- What interests do the children have or what kinds of activities are you looking forward to your children participating in? If children are old enough to show clear interests, this question will help you anticipate what kinds of activities

you might do with them. You can also have some activity ideas ready that you can share. For instance, if they say their toddler is currently in a car and truck phase, you can share an idea to use cars and trucks to develop fine motor and literacy skills. If their children aren’t old enough (or aren’t born yet!), then the answer will help you get to know the parents a little better. Be prepared to share ways you have used children’s interests to promote their development in previous jobs.

### Finding Compatibility

Some questions should be used to gauge your compatibility with child-rearing practices. What could be worse than landing a job and starting work only to discover that your childcare philosophes are on opposite ends of the spectrum? Some good questions to gauge compatibility in this arena are as follow:

- What is your parenting style? Asking this question will usually lead to a discussion about the types of parenting they’ve experienced others engaging in, from their own parents to friends, family members, or even strangers at the park. Their negative and positive reactions to these experiences will help you better understand how they will interact with their children. It is ideal to be on the same page with parenting styles, of course, but if you’re not, it will make you a more effective nanny if you know that and can plan ahead for how to deal with conflicts when they arise. If you are on total opposite ends of the spectrum, you can also make a decision now about whether you want to work with that family. Be prepared to share a little about your own childcare style.
- What methods do you use or anticipate using for discipline? Every child needs boundaries and guidance, no matter how much of a perfect angel their parents claim they are. How parents want behavioral challenges addressed can really make or break a nanny–family relationship. If your would-be bosses were raised with spankings and plan to follow the same path while you believe in positive discipline, it could be very difficult to find a middle ground. Be prepared to share what has worked for you with previous charges and your reasoning for your preferred discipline methods.
- Are there any special circumstances in your family I need to be aware of? Do they keep a kosher home? Are they vegan? Does Grandma live around the corner and come over every afternoon to visit? This question can help you get a feeling for your compatibility with their lifestyle. Be prepared to share special circumstances you might have had experience with in the past and, if applicable, your willingness to learn and to embrace whatever their circumstances might be.

Although interviewing can be an intimidating process, if you view it as an opportunity for you to evaluate the family in addition to being evaluated by them, it will give you a sense of confidence and control over your career. By digging deeper into the true nature of the job, getting to know the family, and evaluating for compatibility, you can find a family that will be a great fit right from the start!



Photo Credit: Pexels

# - ACTIVITIES -

## Mastering Your Nanny Portfolio

By Amber O'Neil.

Photo Credit: Pexels

Being prepared for an interview is a great way to show parents how serious you will take your future job with their family. Parents want to know that their babies will be taken care of while they are away from the home. One way to be prepared and wow them at your interview is to bring a portfolio with you. Think of your portfolio as a window into your nanny soul. Not sure what should go inside? Check out *Nanny Magazine's* list to start brainstorming about what to include in yours.

1. **Résumé:** Include your contact information, educational background, skills, past work history, and list of certifications.

2. **Identification:** Having copies of your identification will allow parents to run a background check on you. Safety comes first. This shows that you planned ahead.

3. **Certifications and licenses:** Include proof of classes you've taken, like CPR and first aid, to show parents that you will be able to handle emergencies. This is also a great spot to highlight any special training you may have received, like caring for kids with special needs or feeding tubes.

4. **References:** Letters of reference, contact information, and reviews (from places like Care.com) printed out and ready to go will allow parents to pick and choose who they talk to easily; they will be doing reference checks before they extend an offer to you.

5. **Sample nanny contract:** A nanny contract spells out all duties, hours, pay, and protection for all parties involved in case of a misunderstanding.

6. **Sample contact list:** This contains all medical information plus emergency contacts should the need arise. Safety is a parent's number one concern.

7. **Sample schedule/daily log:** This allows parents to see at a glance what they can expect to see their child(ren) do during the day (you may include a schedule for naps, meals, etc.). Parents want to see their kids' actively participating with the care provider. Remember to have different samples for different age groups.

8. **List of fun activities:** It is always good to have a list handy to showcase the variety of activities you can do with the kids outside of the house. This is especially good for when parents are new to the area. Make sure the activities are age appropriate for the kids.

9. **List of craft ideas:** There will be times when you can't be out and about and a prepared nanny always has some craft ideas up her sleeve. As always, make sure it is age appropriate. Keep a list of crafts you have done, and be willing to do new crafts too.

10. **Personal mementos:** This is a group of pictures of projects or the projects themselves that show that you worked hard to develop a relationship with the kids.

11. **Pictures:** Just a few pictures of things you like to do with the kids. Pictures with your charges can be used, but only if you have permission by their parents. Parents like to see that you enjoy doing the activities with the kids.

12. **Questions:** A list of questions will help you and the parents decide if this job will be a fit for everyone involved. It is also important for you to know about health issues, custody issues, and any other pertinent information.

Stay tuned for a special *Nanny Magazine* sample contract you can include in your portfolio. Coming summer/fall 2016!

Having a portfolio can help you get a job with the right family. Remember to sell yourself. You work hard and need to show how good you are.

Photo Credit: Pexels

**Earn  
extra  
income!**

# Hey, shutterbugs!

## Get your work published in NM.

Email [info@nannymag.com](mailto:info@nannymag.com) to learn more.

## -QUIZ-

# Are You Interview Ready?

By Chelle Cochran.

### 1. What should you bring with you to an interview?

- A. Social security card, proof of identification, and letters of recommendation
- B. Proof of identification, transcripts, and résumé
- C. Proof of identification, résumé, and portfolio
- D. Proof of identification

### 2. A previous job ended on bad terms and the family that is interviewing you asks why it ended. How do you respond?

- A. Tell them the horror story and how much you were disrespected and overworked.
- B. Say that you would rather not talk about it.
- C. Be honest but give little information to explain what happened, but don't bash your ex-bosses.
- D. Tell them that they are welcome to call your old boss for information.

### 3. What's the best attire for an interview?

- A. Jeans and a nice top, like what you would wear to work on a normal day.
- B. A dress and heels.
- C. Slacks and a nice top with a nicer pair of shoes.
- D. A business suit.

### 4. What should you include in a résumé?

- A. Dates of employment, a short biography, and references
- B. Dates of employment, references, and a description of your education
- C. Dates of employment, a description of your education, and hobbies and interests to let the family get to know you a little better
- D. References, a description of your education, and old employers' names and phone numbers.

### 5. What shouldn't you wear to an interview?

- A. A low-heeled shoe
- B. A blazer jacket
- C. Lots of jewelry
- D. Makeup

### 6. What's one thing that you should never agree to during the first interview?

- A. Access to your driving record
- B. A list of references
- C. A credit check
- D. Proof of education

## Answer Key

**Scoring:** If you got mostly C's then you're interview smart, you're fully prepared to ace the interview. Make sure that you bring a résumé, a portfolio to show your previous work, and an ID with you. There's no reason for the family to ask for a credit check (unless you will be handling their finances) and you should never freely give out your social security number until you are officially hired. Even if your last job ended badly, you should never talk badly about the position or your bosses; handle the way you explain the termination with grace. Most importantly, stay positive and happy!

*Add a spark to your resume!*  
**Write for the premiere publication just for nannies.**

Email [info@nannymag.com](mailto:info@nannymag.com) to learn more.

**Reach thousands of nannies. Place an ad in print, social media, or by email. Rates start at just \$35.00 US.**

Media kit available at [nannymag.com](http://nannymag.com).  
Email [info@nannymag.com](mailto:info@nannymag.com) to learn more.

**Share  
your  
message!**



Show off your Nanny Pride today!

\$12.99

Buy Them Here: [nannymag.com/tote-bag](http://nannymag.com/tote-bag)