

# NANNY MAGAZINE

October-December 2016



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**THE ABC'S OF NANNY CHARACTER**  
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**THE TECHNOLOGY ISSUE**

*teach | play | love*

# NANNY MAGAZINE

teach play love



Our technology issue is digital too, so you can take it with you anywhere you go.

## Editor's Note

Where do I even start to describe what I love about this issue? This is our last issue of 2016, and a great way to finish out our third volume. Can you believe we've published consistently for three years now? It's hard to fathom that before *Nanny Magazine* came around there wasn't a magazine for nannies. It has been our pleasure to serve you for these three years, and we hope you've enjoyed reading.

This issue is our technology issue, and articles delivering on the theme include a piece by Stephanie Magrisso on the best websites for nannies to find jobs, Jill Ciganek's piece on how nannies can keep kids safe online, Jo Anna Becker's piece on whether or not kids should have their own smart devices, and Amanda Dunyak's piece (in which she interviews a nurse) describing the pros and cons of exposing kids under 2 to technology. We also interview the developer of the popular Nanny Day app and offer a legal perspective on nanny cams. Amber Ketchum weighs in on nutrition matters by giving tips on how to maximize (and not abuse) the popular calorie tracker MyFitnessPal.

Other articles in this issue focus on activities for kids for those days when inclement weather is keeping you indoors (by Kaley Kellenburger) and an exciting list of new hobby ideas (knitting, anyone?) written by Amber O'Neil. Also fun: read the Nanny ABC's. Print it, read it, love it. We think you will.

Enjoy this issue, and enjoy the cooler weather and the holiday season. We'll see you on social media!

-Jennifer

### EDITOR IN CHIEF

Jennifer Kuhn

### WEB EDITOR

Amanda Dunyak

### MARKETING AND SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGERS

Kerrie Bascomb and Stephanie Magrisso

### FOOD EDITORS

Amber Ketchum and Josie De Hoyos

### SOCIAL MEDIA ASSISTANTS

Ash Ashjazadeh, JoAnna Becker, and Sarah Blomberg

### NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Jill Ciganek

### CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Michelle Galetta and Nicole Panteleakos

### CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Jo Anna Becker, Sterling Chillico, Jill Ciganek, Amanda Dunyak, Stephanie Felzenberg, Christina Galetta, Michelle Galetta, Kaley Kellenburger, Amber Ketchum, Barbara Kline, Stephanie Magrisso, Sarah Elaine Milkintas, Amber O'Neil, Lynn Wariara.

### CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS

Amber Ketchum, Jennifer Kuhn. Cover Pexels.

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

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FREE to read online!**  
**Tell your friends!**  
**Happy Holidays to all!**

Photo Credit: Pexels

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## A NANNY'S ABCs

Forget what you  
think you know.

BY LYNN WARIARA.

Photo Credit: Jennifer Kuhn

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# -Dilemma- Personal Tablets?

**Should a child have his or her  
own devices?**

**By JoAnna Becker.**

Technology is everywhere in today's society, and more and more often, children are not only using technology, but asking for their own tablets, smartphones, and other devices.

There can be many benefits to giving children their own devices. There are thousands of apps available for education, creativity, or just plain fun. According to Sue Downey, a nanny from Norristown, PA, kids can learn a lot from having their own tablet. "I think it can be a good way to teach kids how to care for electronics, how to use them appropriately and when to use them. Technology is here to stay; we have to find ways to teach kids how to use it and not have it take over their lives."

For older children, the benefits of having a tablet can be more immediate. Many middle and high school textbooks are now available in digital form, and can save kids from lugging heavy books to and from school. Laura Lewis Brown of PBS suggests that if children have access to technology, parents and caregivers engage with children as they use technology, asking questions and making observations as the child plays, which can help improve comprehension. Of course, as with anything else, if kids are irresponsible with their tablets or other technology, don't be afraid to take it away.

Conversely, there are many reasons not to purchase tablets for children as well as to limit technology use in general. First, tablets can be expensive, and children can be careless with their belongings. Additionally, according to LittleThings.com, just some of the downsides are that technology use can be addictive, can affect sleep patterns, and has been linked to childhood obesity. Janice St. Clair, a nanny in Cambridge, MA, has this to say: "I think any way we can limit screens is better than providing free access. Kids, especially young kids, need free creative play in nature and with concrete items to develop competence, confidence, critical thinking, connection with the world and with others, and a multitude of other vital life skills. Screens are addictive and limiting. Boredom is a springboard for creative play, and providing screens short-circuits learning that we need to make our own entertainment and find someone to play with."

Ultimately, parents have to choose whether their children are ready for the responsibility that comes with technology as well as deciding in what ways to supervise and limit the use of that technology. However, moderation is key, and as Brown notes, parents shouldn't "underestimate the learning power of reading a book with your child or spending time exploring the outdoors."

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<http://www.littlethings.com/reasons-not-to-give-children-technology/>

# Screens Before Two

## Exposing Kids to Technology: The Advantages and Disadvantages

BY AMANDA DUNYAK.

There has been a long-winded, often controversial debate amongst parents, doctors, teachers, and scientists about how much screen time is too much screen time and about what age is appropriate to introduce it. It is common for school-aged children to be using computers and tablets for their everyday lessons and homework quite frequently now. Children can be found in front of televisions and tablets across the country, enjoying some down time. For children over the age of two, this has its benefits, but as long as it is in moderation (recommended two hours a day maximum).

But many doctors and scientists say that screen time of any sort before the age of two is not good. In 1999, the American Academy of Pediatrics issued a recommendation discouraging screen time before the age of two, saying that “excessive media use can lead to attention problems, school difficulties, sleeping and eating disorders, and obesity.” In fact, it can be detrimental to a child’s development due to the rapid development of a child’s brain during their first years, being that a child that young cannot process and connect the things they are seeing.

Since then, the AAP has tweaked this statement, saying “Look at our world. It has changed...and so we have to approach the world as it is and figure out ways to make it work.” New policies are expected to be announced this fall.

In the meantime, Nanny Magazine spoke with a pediatric nurse regarding her take on the topic. Should children under the age of two be getting any screen time at all, even if

it’s short-lived and educational?

“Children under the age of two should not get any screen time. It is not appropriate for them, even if it is deemed to be educational,” says Stephanie Dreher, RN, BSN, a pediatric nurse from New Jersey with two children of her own. “Children at this age need contact with people. They need to feel and touch a puzzle to see how it goes together, as opposed to dragging something with their finger. Children need to turn the pages of a book, hold it, feel it. Children need to learn how to hold a crayon and color a picture instead of dragging their finger across a screen to color it in electronically. By using a tangible item, like a crayon, children will learn how to make different strokes, use different colors, and learn how to actually color in between the lines of a picture. All of this is taken away when they are on any type of technology. Interaction with a live person who is teaching them how to do these things, teaching them how to communicate and form social bonds cannot be replaced with a tablet.”

When asked when she thinks it’s appropriate for a child to have screen time and how often, Stephanie says that after the age of two she believes it’s okay to have some, but no more than one hour of television a day and no more than 30 minutes on a computer or tablet daily. “PBS and Sprout have age-appropriate television shows that are geared to help children learn, and a tablet can be introduced with some educational programs to help the child learn letters and numbers.” It seems the new AAP guidelines see to some advantages of a child having screen time before age two.

A close-up photograph of a child's hand petting a small brown dog on a couch. The child is wearing a grey long-sleeved shirt and pink pants. The dog is lying down, looking towards the camera. A pink stuffed bunny toy is visible in the foreground. The background is a textured, light-colored couch.

# **FACT**

**A baby's brain triples in size during the first year of life.**

**SOURCE: [HEALTHYCHILDREN.ORG](https://www.healthychildren.org)**

## Risks vs. Rewards

When asked what are some of the developmental risks of screen time too early in a child's life, Stephanie says, "Children are learning and absorbing everything in their first years of life. By the age of two you form your personality. If a child has spent the first two years of their life in front of a piece of technology, how do you expect them to go out and socialize in the world? Children will start to be imaginative at this age and it is a very important part of play. If you are constantly stimulating the brain with technology, the child will never get a chance to use their own brain to come up with ideas on how to play and what to play. It is actually very important for a child to pretend the floor is lava and the dragon is living in their closet!" Stephanie adds, "Just looking at a cell phone screen stimulates the brain more than 15 cups of coffee does! It is also very damaging to the eyes. We already have an extreme obesity issue with children as well as a high autism rate, especially in New Jersey, where I am from. The last thing children need is to sit still and become even more antisocial."

What about if the television is on in the room, but the children are not actually watching it? "Even if the TV is simply on in the room where the child is playing, there are negative effects. For example, a study found that when an adult TV program was on in the room where babies or toddlers were playing, the children didn't play as intently or as long as when the TV was off. 'Background TV' also affects how a child interacts with his or her parents. When the TV is on, parents tend to be more distracted and less attuned to their children and their needs, reducing the quality of the interaction. Young children are better able to complete complex and sophisticated tasks when they work with an adult or older child. When parents are attentive, children are also more likely to engage in independent goal-oriented play, higher-quality play, and more-focused play." (Center4research.org)

While the AAP has claimed that children who are exposed to screen time before the age of two are at risk for lower cognitive development, the debate is out that more research needs to be done on this topic. A study done by Christopher J. Ferguson, an associate professor and department chair of psychology at Stetson University, and his coauthor M. Brent Donnellan showed that complete abstinence from screen time actually resulted in lower cognitive development (Time). So what's the answer then? A study presented by Deborah Linebarger of the APA in 2014 found that "parent-toddler interactions around media were most crucial for toddlers' language development and that media that shows real characters in real situations are associated with better language development." Linebarger says, "When you have a show like Blue's Clues specifically where a character talks directly to the child



through the screen, that is exactly how you do language intervention. That models how to have a conversation." Interestingly enough, she says that shows like Sesame Street and Baby Einstein are not appropriate for children under the age of two because "it doesn't tell a narrative tale and it is filled with an enormous amount of information coming at them quickly," making it harder for children of that age to make sense of what they are seeing and hearing (USA TODAY). "While there is no research showing that when children younger than two years old use these devices independently, it enhances their development, research also shows that when parents and other trusted adults make screen use an interactive, shared experience, it can become a tool for learning, and the potential negative effects can be reduced." (Zero to Three)

## What Can You Do?

A PDF of recommended guidelines on how to use media with children under the age of three can be found at the website [zerotothree.org](http://zerotothree.org), a resource for parents and caregivers who may be on the fence about allowing screen time. Setting limits and making sure children are having enough experience out in the real world is key. Adult-child interaction while viewing media is also another key factor. Adults should discuss what is happening and help the child apply it to a situation in their own environment. Bring the screen to life with something tangible! If there is an apple on the screen, give them a real apple to hold and discuss its properties. A tiger? Take them to the zoo! Helping them understand the words and pictures they are hearing and seeing can make the screen time more meaningful and enhance the experience into one of actual learning. If you start using media in a healthy way now, it will be easier to keep the pattern as the children get older, and hopefully they will do the same when left to their own devices.

Set limits and follow through!

#### What to Avoid

Studies show that having the television on as background noise can have a negative effect on children's language development, cognitive development, and executive functioning. Matthew Lapierre, an assistant professor of communications studies at the University of North Carolina, Wilmington, conducted a study to find out how much background television children are exposed to in a day. "To the authors' surprise, in the survey of 1,454 parents with at least one child between the ages of 8 months and 8 years, the scientists found that children were subjected to nearly four hours of background TV a day." (Time.)

"The thing we find most concerning is that if a child has a television on in the background, then he is hearing things that are supposed to elicit his attention like loud noises, sound effects and beeps, so even if they aren't watching directly, they aren't able to engage in play behaviors or interactions with their full attention and have more meaningful experiences." (Lapierre, TIME).

Many parents whom I spoke with regarding this topic have claimed to have the television on all the time at their house, even if their children aren't watching it. They believe that their children can play freely and are not as interested in it when it's always on, as opposed to restricting it and having their children sit in front of the screen like zombies when it is on. These parents claim that their children's language skills have developed faster because of background TV as well, with children imitating many of the songs and motions that they are seeing or hearing. Something else to avoid that has proved to be harmful is letting children have any screen time, whether tablet or television, within 2 hours of bedtime. This can hinder the child's ability to fall asleep. Eliminate any screens in the bedroom areas so that the child will not link bedtime and screen time together.

Adults, put your phones down! Be present when you are with the children in your care. Give them your attention and in turn teach them how to give others attention, without getting distracted by a screen. In the digital age we live in now, this is all too common a problem, as screens are replacing the quality of the interaction we have with the people around us. And finally, do not use screen time as a babysitter. It should never be a substitute for play or face-to-face interaction. We all have bad days, sick days, days when you or the child may need a break. If you tend to go over the recommended limit (one to two hours a day), it can start to become a habit, children will begin to expect more screen time or correlate more screen time as a reward for bad behavior.

#### Nanny Responsibilities

Nannies should be on the same page as parents when it comes to screen time, but should never abuse it. If the parents do not wish to have any screen time, the nanny should abide by their wishes, although it is certainly acceptable to have a talk with them regarding more-recent studies and how to use media appropriately. If parents allow an unlimited amount of screen time, remember they are not paying you to sit in front of a TV with their child all day. If you must use it, use it setting guidelines with the info provided to you here and use it in moderation. The children you care for have such a gift by having a nanny. They have someone who is physically there for them when their parents cannot be. This means they have someone to form a bond with and a connection with, to learn from and take social cues from, someone to teach them about the world around them, and someone to help them to explore that world. Don't let tablet and TV time take your place!

"Research" and "studies" have a tendency to make parents panic a bit. They may also, in some ways, put parents and caregivers down by telling them what is right and what is wrong. What works for one family may not work for another. Every child is different. Every child processes information differently and learns differently. Parents and caregivers can use their judgement on what will be best

for their children as to whether to introduce screen time or not. It just helps to have some of the above points in mind when you're introducing media so that it can be a healthy experience for all involved.

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# App Time

Inside "Nanny Day:" The App You Didn't Know You Needed

**NM's Interview with Fredrick Samanta, Creator of the App You NEED Now.**

**By Stephanie Magrisso.**



Photo Credit: Courtesy Fredrick Samanta.

**Communication. It is the key component to everything we undertake in our daily lives. Relationships, friendships, daily interactions, careers. When your career happens to involve being a nanny, communication becomes even more vital. Speaking with MomBoss or DadBoss about pick up and drop off times, what medication needs to be taken, if bedtime or meal time has changed, errands that might need to be run,**

**and a myriad of other tasks can easily become lost in a sea of sticky notes and text message malfunctions. It seems only natural that someone created an app for that. And luckily, someone did. Fredrik Samanta, creator of “Nanny Day,” launched his app to aide communication between a nanny and their NannyFamily in 2015. I was lucky enough to chat with him and get the inside scoop.**

NM: What inspired the idea for Nanny Day?

Fredrik: As the father of two small children, I had employed nannies in London and Zurich. We logged working hours and handled most communications using sticky notes in the kitchen and via text messages, which led to the occasional loss of information and misunderstanding. From friends I had also heard about miscommunications about responsibilities

and the accounting of holidays, for example. I figured there would be an app to support this type of working relationship but there wasn't, so together with a team of developers I launched one.

NM: As the creator, can you tell me a little about your background?

Fredrick: My background is in marketing and e-commerce. I have been involved in a lot of digital product development of apps and websites.

NM: Can you tell me about the features of Nanny Day?

Fredrick: Nanny Day has two main features. “Times” is about working hours, holidays, and other types of time off. Having all this information in a single place benefits everyone. Being able to export the timesheet to Excel enables application of hourly rates or submission for tax purposes. “Notes” is the other function and it covers everything that should be done throughout the day or at some point in the future. One of my friends told me about an incident when there was a misunderstanding about who was giving their child medication. Such an important task can be entered into the notes and the person who gives the medicine can tick it off as completed. Notes can obviously also be used as a calendar for playgroups and other activities.

NM: I see there is a “check in” feature for the nanny to clock into work. Is this GPS driven? Or can the nanny check in from any location?

Fredrick: The clock-in is how the nanny marks the start of the working day. Like everything else in the app, this is done on a trust basis. I think it is important to build relationships based on trust. So if the nanny

comes in on time at 9:00 but is required to pitch in straight away, then they might not have time to clock-in until the crisis is averted. Then it obviously has to be done retroactively.

NM: I see there is a \$4.99 monthly fee for the parent but not the nanny. How does that work?

Fredrick: We think it is fair that parents pay once for the whole family and that the nanny doesn't then also need to pay.

NM: Do you have any helpful tips for a new user?

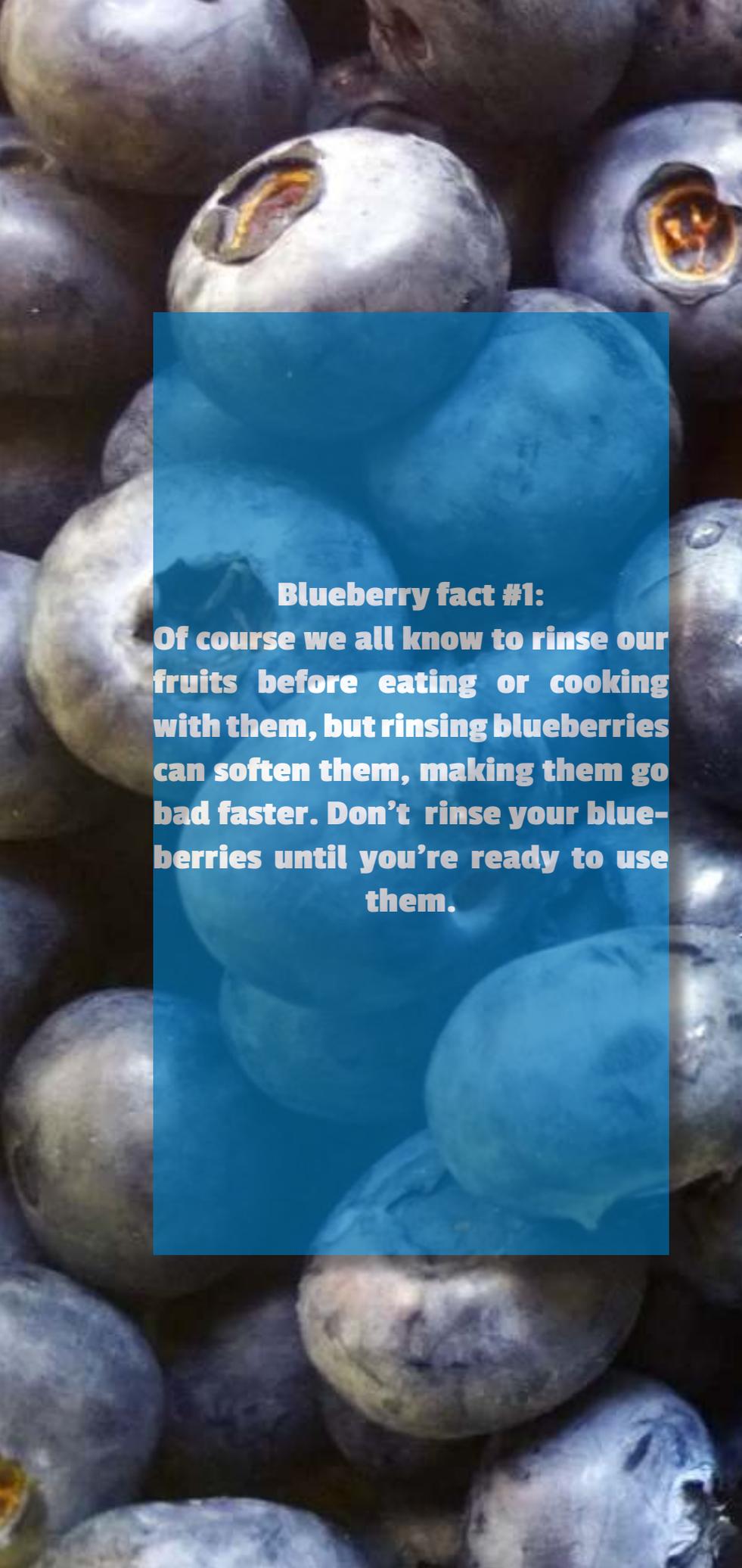
Fredrick: The most important thing is to get off on the right foot. Parent and nanny should sit down to go through the app and to agree how it will be used. Is the nanny responsible for clocking in and clocking out or does the parent want to be involved in the entry process? What types of activities should be logged as notes? How should holidays and public holidays be entered and accounted for? Agreeing on these main points will help the nanny to feel confident about making decisions and sharing updates.

NM: What is the biggest benefit for users and why should people get this app?

Fredrick: The main overall benefit is that Nanny Day helps to build a trusting relationship between parent and nanny. By having correct information shared everyone's mind is more at ease.

Although “Nanny Day” is an app meant to aide the tracking of administrative functions a nanny and their NannyFamily encounter, I love the idea of it being another tool for encouraging a trusting relationship. If you and your NannyFamily decide to try it out, send us your thoughts via social media!

**B** **L** **U** **E** **B** **E** **R** **R** **Y**  
**A** **L** **M** **O** **N** **D**  
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**Blueberry fact #1:**  
**Of course we all know to rinse our fruits before eating or cooking with them, but rinsing blueberries can soften them, making them go bad faster. Don't rinse your blueberries until you're ready to use them.**

**Fresh Blueberries and almonds add a boost of nutrition, fun texture, and flavor to these easy, lighter cookies. They're a fun after-school snack that kids can help make and decorate with this easy Greek yogurt-based frosting.**

**Makes 12 Cookies**

**Ingredients:**

- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup unsweetened applesauce
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup cane sugar
- 1 egg white
- 1 cup whole wheat white flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tablespoon apple cider vinegar
- 1 teaspoon almond extract
- 2 tablespoons raw almonds, chopped
- 1 cup fresh blueberries

**Frosting**

- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup vanilla Greek yogurt
- 1 teaspoon milk

**Instructions:**

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. In a large bowl, combine applesauce, sugar, egg whites, apple cider vinegar, and almond extract.
3. Add flour and baking powder to the same bowl, mixing into the wet ingredients.
4. Add chopped almonds and fresh blueberries, gently folding into the dough.
5. Portion out 1-ounce scoops onto a pre-greased cookie sheet and bake cookies for 12 minutes.
6. Remove and let cool.
7. Combine milk with yogurt. Put into a plastic bag and cut off the corner.
8. Create a zig-zag pattern over the cookie to "frost."
9. Store in an airtight container in the fridge or freeze for up to one month.

*Recipe and photo courtesy registered dietitian Elizabeth Shaw of Shaw's Simple Swaps. Check out her blog at <http://shawsimpleswaps.com/>.*



# Looking for a Job?

**We Review the Top Job Sites for Nannies: Here's**

**What We Found** BY STEPHANIE MAGRISSO

One of the most rewarding aspects of being a nanny stems from the relationship you build with your charges. Often times, your NannyFamily becomes your second family. Sometimes we aren't so lucky and find ourselves with a family that isn't a great fit for all involved. Or perhaps you're a new nanny looking for the perfect NannyFamily to work with. Whatever the circumstance, we are faced with the same challenge: finding the right NannyFamily. The task can feel daunting. Luckily, technology and the Internet brings potential NannyFamilies to your fingertips. I set up accounts and checked out some of the most popular search engines for you and weighed in on how they stack up.

## **Sittercity**

My first stop brought me to Sittercity.com. It is great site that provides user-friendly options. Setting up a profile was simple. Entering data such as your availability, location, pay rate, qualifications and certifications, and a personal bio are just

some of the basics they allow. The site has been around since 2001 and is affiliated with the International Nanny Association. They do have the option to pay for a background check and a DMV check, but the cost comes at your expense. While I think it's important to provide this information (and looks more impressive if you provide it), I couldn't find an option allowing the potential NannyFamily to pay. It's certainly worth checking out!

## **Care.com**

Next up, my favorite and perhaps the most well-known online search engine, Care.com. I've actually had an account with them for several years. Despite working for a NannyFamily that I love, I still sometimes pick up side jobs via Care. It has a huge audience. With advertisements in all media arenas, you are presented with an enormous pool of potential families. The site allows for testimonials from previous NannyFamilies and even has a feature that allows payment via the website. Care.

com has also expanded their options to allow searches for senior, home, and pet care. They even have a special section dedicated to military families. They offer a link specifically focused on infographics chock full of information. It covers all the bases when you are trying to find the perfect NannyFamily and then some.

## **eNannySource.com**

I then checked out a site I didn't know much about but was referred to by other nannies. I was impressed with eNannySource.com. While all sites I was able to visit were similar, I was particularly struck by eNannySource.com, which has been in business since 1994. According to the site, they were once a nanny agency that found "most families can screen nannies just as well as nanny agencies. They just need a little help." Also affiliated with the INA, the regiment of profile questioning is a little more extensive. I was asked my willingness to do medical testing and also given



Nanny Magazine does the legwork for you.  
Check out our review of the top nanny job search websites.

Photo Credits: Pexels

the option to state my religion. eNannySource.com offers nanny training, an option I couldn't find with the other sites.

### **UrbanSitter.com**

For all the big city nannies out there, the UrbanSitter.com focuses solely on families and nannies in large cities. I loved the idea of this as the adventurer in me has always dreamed about moving to a larger city than the one I currently reside. I felt as though using a search platform that narrows the field down for you would help speed the process along. Unfortunately, the only way I could connect myself to the site was via my LinkedIn or Facebook profile. This is problematic for those who aren't comfortable with their social media websites being exposed or who simply do not have one.

There are, of course, less-formal means of searching online for your perfect NannyFamily. The use of social media is the next best thing to word of mouth. Websites such as NextDoor, Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn allow us to connect with neighbors, friends, and friends of friends without all the initial invasive questioning. And while these sites may add an extra glimpse into the everyday information about you or your potential NannyFamily, it removes the security of a third party's safety, an option that is often important to all parties involved. This isn't a path I would choose for my search but may work well for you.

In my more than 13 years of being a nanny, every job I've had was birthed through word of mouth. That's not to say I haven't tried using online resources (and still do for side work). Regardless of what has prompted your search for a NannyFamily, a plethora of online search platforms exist. But don't take my word for it, check them out for yourself!

# Data Blitz

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

BY AMANDA DUNYAK.

1. A twillionaire is a twitterer with a million or more followers.

Source: *DidYouKnow.org*

2. On October 18, 2013, NASA discovered Asteroid 2013 T135, which has a 1 in 63,000 chance of colliding with the earth in 2032.

Source: *BrainyHistory.com*

3. Between 1700 and 1900, a number of life-sized automatons were created, including a famous mechanical duck made by Jacques de Vaucanson that could crane its neck, flap its wings, and even swallow food.

Source: *ScienceKids.co.nz*

4. Twinkies originally had banana-flavored filling, but switched to vanilla when WWII brought the banana trade to a halt.

Source: *MentalFloss.com*

5. The push-button phone was invented by Bell Telephone company on November 18, 1963.

Source: *GrabLists.com*

6. Spiders and spider webs are considered good luck on Christmas.

Source: *KaplanInternational.com*

# Nannies Ask

BY STEPHANIE FELZENBERG

OF BE THE BEST NANNY NEWSLETTER.

Dear Stephanie,

I see other nannies at the playground who are looking at their smartphones or talking on the phones more often than I think they should be. Sometimes they are taking pictures of their charges and posting them to Twitter (I know because I follow them on Twitter). I don't know how I feel about this. Shouldn't the nannies be more engaged with their charges than their cell phones?

-Digital Dilemma

Dear Digital Dilemma,

Safety of the children should always be the nanny's number one priority. While cell phones are useful in emergencies and keeping in contact with employers, during a nanny's workday, making personal texts, phone calls, and visiting social media should be limited to a nanny's down time when the kids are napping and the nanny is allowed to take a break.

Just as we would be horrified seeing a life-guard looking at their smartphone while a child is swimming, parents don't want their nanny focused on Twitter or Facebook while their child is on the monkey bars or in the pool. And even if a child is playing indoors, the nanny can't interact with their charge when texting their boyfriend.

Everyone knows the dangers of texting while driving. But more than 1,500 pedestrians were estimated to be treated in emergency rooms in 2010 for injuries related to using a cell phone while walking. Statistics show the number of pedestrian cell phone-related accidents are on the rise, yet nannies can be seen talking on their mobile phones while pushing a baby stroller or crossing the street with kids all the time. Even when taking a walk, nannies should interact with their charges rather than ignore them by making personal calls.

Nannies are also role models for children. Phones are not toys. They should not be used to entertain nannies or children on the job. Smartphones often become electronic babysitters for kids but a babysitter without discretion can lead to text bullying, gossiping, sexting and other such phone use behaviors.

In 2011, I interviewed 27 nanny placement agency owners and staff about cell phone use on the job. Many agency staff discourage personal phone usage completely while working. Others believe it is fine only during the nanny's down time while the kids are

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napping. But they all encourage nannies and parents to discuss appropriate personal cell phone use on the job.

Although I don't think it's necessary to ban nannies from using smartphones completely, I do think parents should create personal phone use policies or at least discuss appropriate use of the cell phone during the nanny's workday. Using mobile phones to take photos of the kids, to keep in touch with employers, make play dates, and in case of emergencies makes having cell phones useful. But sometimes it's just too much.

Sincerely,  
Stephanie

## References

1. When Does Personal Cell Phone Use and Texting Become Too Much on the Job?  
<https://bethebestnanny.com/2011/08/04/when-does-personal-cell-phone-use-and-texting-become-too-much-on-the-job/>
2. Distracted Walking: Injuries Soar for Pedestrians on Phones  
<http://researchnews.osu.edu/archive/distractwalk.htm>



# Online Safety for Kids

By Jill Ciganek

## A Nanny's Guide to Keeping Kids Safe Online

As nannies, one of our biggest responsibilities is keeping our charges safe. This encompasses everything from car seat safety, to choking prevention and CPR knowledge, to applying sunscreen, and so much more. But the digital age we're living in brings about a whole new array of concerns and uncharted territory when it comes to keeping kids safe. There are so many new potential dangers out there that we can't even see. And it's not just older kids with their own cell phones that need our protection. The age at which children start using smartphones, tablets, and PCs is becoming younger and younger.

The use of technology by children is something that is directed by our charges' parents, but no matter what your bosses' policies are regarding when and how their children are permitted to use technology, nannies should be well versed in how to ensure their charges stay safe online.

In this article, I'll discuss ways you can work with your charges and their parents to create a safe online experience.

**Know and Respect House Rules:** One of the first and

most important things to know as the children's nanny is their house rules around technology use. You should discuss things like how much screen time your charges are allowed per day and what devices, websites, and apps the children are permitted to use. Some families may have a central PC or tablet that the children can use that is different from the PCs your bosses use for work. Older kids may have their own smartphones. It's important that rules the parents establish for when and how their children use technology are consistent and followed when you're around. And if the parents want your time with the kids to be tech-free, especially if you nanny infants or young toddlers, it's important to respect that as well and keep them off your phone.

**Maintaining Privacy Online:** We teach our kids stranger danger in the real world and this is something we should reiterate when going online. Remind kids only to interact with their real-life friends and people they know online and not to give out any personal information (address, phone number, etc.) to people they don't know. Parents and

caregivers should monitor and show an interest in what their kids are doing online. They should have access to their kids' social media accounts and check their friend lists and know who they're interacting with. Parents and nannies should also ensure that kids feel they can come to them anytime they experience something online that makes them uncomfortable.

**Use Browser and Smartphone Safeguards:** After establishing rules around Internet usage and discussing online safety with your charges, there are several ways you can use built-in safeguards to act as watchdog and protect kids when your eyes aren't on them (we all know nannies have eyes in the back of our heads, but we still can't see everything).

•**Browser Settings:** If your charge has access to a computer, talk to your bosses about changing the settings on the web browser. This is something that is free, easy, and can be set up for each different user of the family machine. Settings can be customized for Internet Explorer under Tools>Internet Options>Content>Family Safety. From here you can filter out objectionable content on the Web, set time limits, and limit the apps and purchases the kids can make.

•**Smartphone Lock:** Obviously, one of the first things you should do to prevent kids from accessing your phone or the family iPad without your knowledge is to ensure the devices are locked with a passcode. This simple step can be really effective for small children. In addition, the iPhone specifically has some settings that can allow you to further protect kids.

First, you can lock the phone so that the child can only use a certain app or program on the phone and will be locked out of all other features. This is called Guided Access and can be found under Settings>General>Accessibility>Guided Access. You'll set a passcode, then tap the app you want to enable Guided Access on, and the child will only be able to use that app or game on the phone. You'll have to provide your passcode to exit this mode.

Secondly, iPhone also allows you to set restrictions, just like Internet Explorer. Go to Settings>General>Restrictions. Here you can filter out what apps your kids are allowed to access as well as set restrictions on the type of websites, songs, and more that they have access to by filtering out adult content or listing specific sites.

Android smartphones have some similar capabilities. You can "pin" an app to your phone so that is the only thing the child will be able to access (go to Settings>Security>Advanced>Screen Pinning). In addition, the Android app shop offers an app called "Kid Mode" made by Zoodles, which will turn your smartphone into a restricted-access device that's safe for little hands. And did

you know that Amazon actually sells a kids' version of their popular Kindle tablet? The device comes pre-programmed from the factory to a safe kids-only mode!

**Stick to Kid-Safe Sites:** We all know searching Google can sometimes lead you down a dangerous rabbit hole, even when your search terms are completely innocuous! Well, there are actually web search engines that are completely kid friendly and have already filtered out all questionable and adult content. KidzSearch, GoGooligans, and KidRex are just a few. Adding a shortcut to one or a few of these on the family PC, tablet, or your smartphone would definitely be worth it the next time your charge wants to Google that crazy bug or book title they're looking for and you don't want any surprises!

THERE ARE SO MANY NEW  
POTENTIAL DANGERS OUT THERE  
THAT WE CAN'T EVEN SEE. AND  
IT'S NOT JUST OLDER KIDS WITH  
THEIR OWN CELL PHONES THAT  
NEED OUR PROTECTION.

**Paid Software and Monitoring Apps:** In addition to using all of the free resources out there and actively monitoring what your charges are doing online, there are also software programs and applications you can purchase that filter and monitor children's online activity 24/7. This is something that will obviously and ultimately be left up to the parents' discretion, but if your bosses feel they'd like the added security of having a record of what their children are doing online, there are programs that they can purchase and install on their children's smartphones, tablets, or computers that will filter content and even generate reports of their children's usage (websites visited, etc.) back to them. One of the most popular programs is called Net Nanny, but there are many others available for both phones and computers, including versions made by antivirus manufacturers like Norton and McAfee. Ultimately, it's up to the parents if they want to purchase and apply these types of controls.

Ultimately, we as nannies don't want to see any harm come to our charges. By being involved in what they do online and working with their families, we can minimize the risks associated with them being a part of the World Wide Web.

# Ask the Agency

*This month, Barbara Kline of White House Nannies in Washington, D.C. answers some of our technology-related and nanny screening questions. Do you have what it takes to join the ranks of one of the country's most-esteemed agencies?*

*Do you have a burning question for an agency? Email [info@nannymag.com](mailto:info@nannymag.com).*

## **Question: In what ways does Whitehouse Nannies use technology to enhance the nanny or family application and placement experience?**

Answer: "Technology has changed the way we all do business. The following are a few examples:

1. Applications are online and easy to fill out and submit.
2. Applications are sent directly to our email and can be reviewed immediately.
3. Our website is filled with information and FAQs for nannies and families.
4. We send online newsletters for important information and trainings.
5. Our blog is filled with relevant entries for families and nannies.
6. We can use Skype to speak live with applicants before meeting them in person.
7. Texting allows constant communication with our temporary caregivers and clients, whether onsite or not.
8. iPad and iPhone allow us to staff more jobs.
9. What would we do without Google Maps?
10. Social media, like Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and Instagram, allow us to share updates about local events, news, and activities with our clients and caregivers."

## **Question: What are the top three things you see on a nanny's application that automatically disqualifies that candidate?**

Answer:

1. No childcare experience
2. Criminal history
3. Smoking

While there is no one ideal applicant, there are certain skills and traits that make a nanny candidate stand out. The following are some of things we look for:

1. At least 5 years of experience working as a nanny
2. Track record of long-term relationships with families (3 years+)
3. Background in early childhood education
4. Glowing letters of recommendation
5. Clean driving record
6. Ability to cook well
7. A "can-do" attitude
8. A loving, nurturing disposition."

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# -QUIZ-

## Are You Too Out There? Overdoing It on Social Media

By Christina Galetta.

Answer “yes” or “no” to each of the following questions.

1. I have posted photos of my charges on at least one of my social media accounts.
2. I have posted videos of my charges on at least one of my social media accounts.
3. My charges are in almost everything I post on my social media accounts.
4. I have included personal information about my charges, my employers, my daily schedule of activities, or my place of employment on at least one of my social media accounts.
5. I frequently use social media when caring for my charges.
6. I have been told I may want to post less about my charges or my job.

### SCORING

If you answered yes for 1 or 2 questions: Good job! You're not too out there. You know it's important to respect the privacy and safety of the kiddos in your care, and you would never blast your employers online because you know that even if you delete it, it's still out there in cyberspace!

If you answered yes for 3 or 4 questions: You're a little out there. You might want to consider having a conversation with MomBoss about what her expectations are on this front to make sure you're not crossing any professional boundaries.

If you answered yes for 5 or 6 questions: Yup, you are way too out there! Reign it in, Nanny, or risk losing your job. You're sharing way too much about your charges with people your employers don't know. This may go against the privacy agreement in your contract.

# 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.

**I suspect my NannyFamily placed a nanny cam somewhere in the house, but I am not certain. Should I ask?**

by Sterling Chillico

It is legal for an employer to record an employee in public areas (i.e., never the bathroom) without sound, however, some states are all-party consent states, meaning that a recording of your voice may not be taken without your consent. (think when you call a customer service department and you hear a recorded message that says something like, "This call is being recorded for quality assurance and training purposes." That is the company's way of informing you that your voice is being recorded and if you remain on the line, you implicitly give your consent.)

While it may be eerie to be recorded, put yourself in the parent's shoes. They are entrusting their most precious thing to a person who is ostensibly a stranger. If you are new to the family, the filming may just be temporary until they are more comfortable with you. If you have been with the family for a while and feel they are suddenly starting to film you, that may be a sign that the trust is broken and you should start looking for a new job. If you think they are filming you and you ask them, would you really believe them if they told you no?

Personally, I'm a big fan of open communication. You could always ask them how they feel about your service and your relationship with the family. Take that opportunity to learn how you can improve in your role as a caregiver and voice any concerns or requests you have as well.

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.



# Just for fun!

## **Need a dose of inspiration? Lynn Waricara has 26 ten-second inspiration quotes for the nanny's life. Check out these ABCs of nanny success!**

**ATTITUDE:** A great attitude goes a long way. An attitude carries an altitude of how you will proceed with your day. An attitude is contagious and as a nanny you become a role model to the children that are under your care, so a positive attitude is vital.

**BELIEVE:** As a nanny, you must believe in what you do. A great nanny is unable to reach her maximum potential unless she can believe in her skills.

**COURAGE:** It's defined as a quality of mind or spirit that enables a person to face difficulty, danger, pain, etc. Courage is a characteristic a nanny must have in order to be effective in caring for children. You cannot be afraid or else the children pick up on it and adopt it as their own characteristic.

**DETERMINATION:** You must be deter-

mined to make a great impact in the children's lives. You must be able to have the capacity to establish the right guidelines in a child's lives.

**EFFERVESCENCE:** You have to portray an enthusiastic behavior toward the children you care for. Children need to know that they can be free to express themselves without being put down.

**FRIENDLY:** A nanny who shows kindness will find it easier to relate to children. In order to build a trustworthy relationship with the children, you have to be friendly.

**GREGARIOUS:** You have to be sociable and willing to be in the company of other nannies.

**HONESTY:** They say honesty is the

best policy. Being able to be honest with your clients is a valuable characteristic that no money can buy. Honesty creates an open line of communication.

**IMAGINATION:** You have to be creative and able to come up with ideas on how to keep the children busy and entertained with educational activities that teach developmental skills.

**JOYOUS:** A happy caregiver makes a happy child. A sad countenance relays insecurity to the children, so making sure you are happy in the presence of the children is very important.

**KNOWLEDGE:** A nanny who is knowledgeable can be very valuable to the family he or she works for. Take time to keep yourself updated on safety concerns, healthy cooking, news, and more.

**LOVE:** They say love is what makes the world go round. A nanny without love is like a day without the sun. Love promotes growth from the inside out. Children need to be loved.

# The Nanny's ABCs

By Lynn Wariara

Photo Credit: Pexels

**MATURITY:** A nanny must also prove that he or she can be able to psychologically respond to a circumstance or situation in an appropriate manner.

**NURTURING:** Children need to feel nourished emotionally, so it is important for a nanny to cultivate a nurturing spirit.

**OPEN-MINDEDNESS:** Being able to be receptive to ideas at a moment's notice is essential. Children love to come up with creative, imaginative ideas, and having a nanny who can be pliable and open-minded is ideal.

**PATIENCE:** Patience is having the ability to bear with children's unpredictable behaviors. This is one of the most important characteristics for a nanny to have.

**QUINTESSENTIAL:** If you can represent the most perfect example of what a caretaker should be, it will definitely be of value to the children you care for. They will carry that example for the

rest of their lives and will probably practice the views they have learned from you to the people around them.

**RESPONSIBLE:** A nanny has to prove to be accountable and have the capability to make mature, rational decisions.

**SUBMISSIVE:** A teachable spirit goes a long way. Being able to listen to your employers is valuable. Remember, you are hired to enhance THEIR family values, not to propagate yours.

**TIME MANAGEMENT:** Without having the ability to manage time, developing an effective schedule or routine is impossible. Children are most responsive to routine, so the ability to be time conscious is a plus.

**UNIQUE:** What positive characteristic draws children to you? You cannot be a strong or effective nanny if you are looking to compare or compete with other nannies.

**VIGOROUS:** A nanny has to possess physical and mental strength.

**WITTY:** Laughter is medicine to the soul. Being able to characterize humor is important to children.

**X-RAY:** Examine yourself daily. Are you emotionally and mentally stable and capable in giving yourself wholly to children without losing your cool in a moment of difficulty?

**YIELDING:** Be a nanny that is willing to give yourself as required to the children's needs.

**ZEALOUS:** You cannot be an effective nanny unless you are passionate about what you do. When you are zealous about caregiving, it becomes more than just a duty; it becomes a true passion.

## 4 Ways to Keep Kids Engaged and Active Indoors

By Kaley Kellenburger.

Yuck! It's cold, rainy, or snowy outside and you're stuck indoors! What do you do? The kids have more energy than ever (of course!) and need to burn some steam. Try out these games and tips for keeping them moving and engaged.

Before getting started, make sure the space you're using is tidy enough to do each activity so no one gets hurt. Be clear about rules and expectations so everything is understood. Answer any questions about the activity before you start. Most importantly, have fun!

1.

## Yoga

Encourage the kids to stretch their bodies by practicing yoga. It's a great way to work on flexibility. Most yoga moves are fairly simple and easy to do. If you aren't a yogi, don't worry, there are many yoga videos out there that are geared toward children and even follow a story line to keep them engaged. Don't forget, it's not about being perfect; it's about trying your best.

For younger kids, try a "follow-after-me" approach by moving your body and asking them to copy your lead.

## Act It Out

2.

Introduce classic charades! Write clues on a piece of paper for charges who are old enough to read. They could even assist in them writing down. The rules can be flexible but make sure they are clear in the beginning. You may choose to play silent charades or do both talking and moving. There can be teams or it can be a big group activity. If you're one-on-one with a kid, you can still play!

For younger kids, come up with a theme (such as animals or TV shows).

3.

## Follow the Leader

For a bit of a twist on charades, try follow the leader. Take turns walking, dancing, or crawling around the space. Give a few examples before you allow the child or children to become the leader. This activity encourages creativity, leadership, and listening skills.

For younger kids, try simple movements first, like standing on one leg, waving an arm, etc.

4.

## Obstacle Course

If you have a larger space, this is a great activity. If you're crunched on space, you can make a shorter course or you could make it a series of actions. Start with something simple such as walking around the stuffed animal and add other tasks. Enlist the kids to help with setup. Be creative with the toys and objects you have available.

For younger kids, try doing a series of actions. For instance, you could give them clues saying first do this and then do this.

Enjoy coming up with new rules and games within games. Be creative and have fun!

Photo Credit: Pexels



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# -#NANNYLIFE STYLE-

## **Holiday Lifestyle**

**How to Create Fashionable, Inclusive  
Festivities That Speak to the Modern World**

*By Michelle Galetta.*

***Fash-ion - /'faSHən/: a popular trend, especially in styles of dress and ornament or manners of behavior.***

As this is our technology issue, I started to think about how modern tech communications have changed the way we are able to celebrate the holidays. With the advent of smartphones, Skype, and an app for just about everything, it is easier than ever to learn about cultural traditions and the corresponding holidays that accompany different areas of the world. We can now even celebrate with family and friends halfway around the globe in real time. In this issue I have compiled some simple, fashionable accents to help you incorporate the less-is-more style into your holidays as well as allow for versatility with any occasion you happen to celebrate.



String (or “fairy”) lights can be bundled, hung, or laid out delicately as the celebration requires. Their flexibility and size makes the strings perfect for adorning a smorgasbord, highlighting precious heirlooms, or serving as an accent piece to a cultural display.  
\$35.00 (lights.com)



Photo Credit: Unsplash; products from vendor sites



### Winter Ornaments

Add a craft to the festivities, suitable for multiple holidays and uses. These are available in 17 winter designs, like flowers and intriguing animals, including an adorable Narwahl.  
\$8–\$16.00 (Amazon.com)

### Papers to Impress

Use an e-commerce resource like Etsy to get your hands on homemade invitations and paper products for place cards or parlor games. A multitude of colors and styles are available, sprinkled with seeds, flowers, and even glitter for either an upscale gathering or a simple party.  
\$8.00 for 10, WhiteDragon Paper (etsy.com)



Looking for an excuse to purchase new duds? Unexpected shades of blue and gray dominated the catwalk at the 2016 New York Fashion Week, with the unsurprising shades of autumnal mustards and orange hues also making an appearance. Try a splash of these colors in subtle ways by adding a pair of kitten heels or a chunky scarf.

# TABLE

Looking for ideas for healthy recipes you can make with your charges?

Featured in **THIS ISSUE:** a delicious recipe for blueberry almond cookies.

AND  
Check out [www.nanny-mag.com](http://www.nanny-mag.com) for more ideas to spice up your holiday feast.

### Next-Level Nanny:

Follow NM on Pinterest to find even more delicious and kid-approved recipes.

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Submit yours online for editorial consideration by visiting [www.nannymagazine.submittable.com](http://www.nannymagazine.submittable.com). Or email [submissions@nannymag.com](mailto:submissions@nannymag.com).



### Chalkboard Table Runner

Flexible event décor can be tailored to any holiday as a backdrop to the theme of the day or a place to share good wishes and keep younger attendees entertained. \$12.00 (uncommongoods.com)

### Darling Bud Vase

Colors, scents, and cultural items are extremely important to both religious and secular holiday festivities all over the world. These delicate vases can be filled with anything the festivities require, be it a sprig of traditional flora, ritual food items, pinches of incense, or ancient tokens of peace and prosperity. \$20.00–\$38.00 (uncommongoods.com)



### Gobble Gobble

The average weight of a turkey purchased for the big Thanksgiving feast in the United States is **15 pounds.**

[extension.illinois.edu](http://extension.illinois.edu)

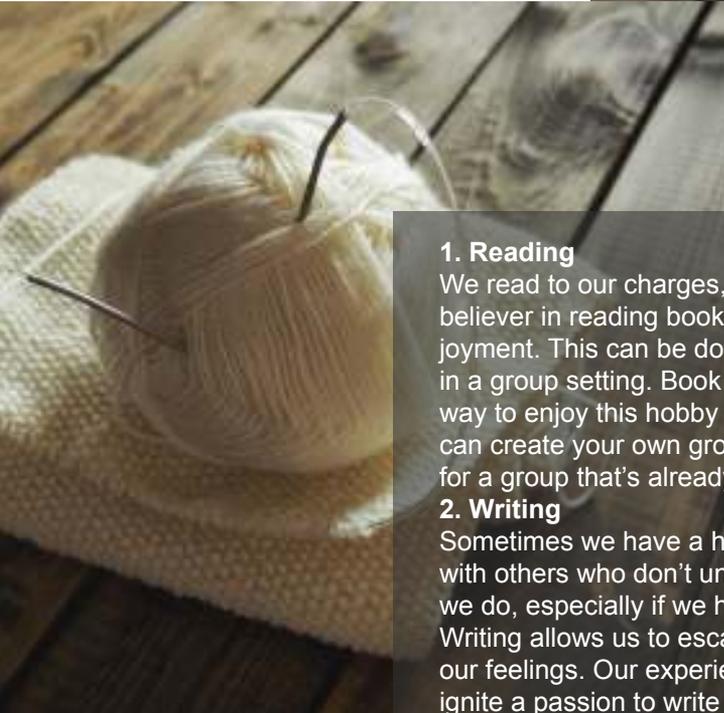
# Hobby Lobby

It's never too late to learn a new skill or find a new way to spend your precious free time.

By Amber O'Neil.



Photo Credits: Pexels



## 1. Reading

We read to our charges, but I am a big believer in reading books for my own enjoyment. This can be done by yourself or in a group setting. Book clubs are a great way to enjoy this hobby with others. You can create your own group or check with for a group that's already established.

## 2. Writing

Sometimes we have a hard time dealing with others who don't understand what we do, especially if we have a bad day. Writing allows us to escape or process our feelings. Our experiences might even ignite a passion to write to the point of publishing an article or a book.

## 3. Dancing

Dancing is a great way to exercise! Line dancing, square dancing, and ballroom dancing are just a few types of dancing to choose from. This is a great way to meet new friends. All you need to do is to search for a dance studio near you.

## 4. Yoga

Yoga, like dance, is very beneficial to your health. Different classes can help you to experience and decide which style of yoga you like best.

## 5. Culinary Skills

Baking and cooking can be done in a group setting or by yourself. It is a great time to try new recipes or to enjoy

time-honored classics that are special to you. You can even take classes. Personally, I love baking holiday cookies with my grandma.

## 6. Get Crafty

A great way to express yourself, even in a group setting, is through arts and crafts, like painting, drawing, or photography. New social classes allow you to relax with friends while painting and drinking wine or eating cookies. See if there is a class near you.

## 7. Sewing, Knitting, and Crocheting

Once you have learned to do one of these activities, you can do it by yourself or in a group. This has the added bonus of being able to keep, gift, or sell the items you make.

## 8. Volunteering

There are so many ways to volunteer! What are you passionate about? Simply search to find out if there is a group in your area where you can volunteer that allows you to work with the group you want to work with.

## 9. Outdoorsy Activities

Get a group of friends or family members together and decide what you want to do and where. It is very important to do these activities in a group in case of emergencies.

## 10. Learn a New Language or Instrument

Learning is not easy, but it is worth it in the end. There are multiple ways to learn a new language. You can take classes, get computer software, immerse yourself where the language is prevalent, or ask a friend who knows the language to teach you. Learning an instrument usually requires a teacher. You can try to learn it by yourself, but that makes it harder to learn.

Remember, having at least one hobby allows you time to enjoy yourself, which in turn keeps you healthy by reducing your stress levels.

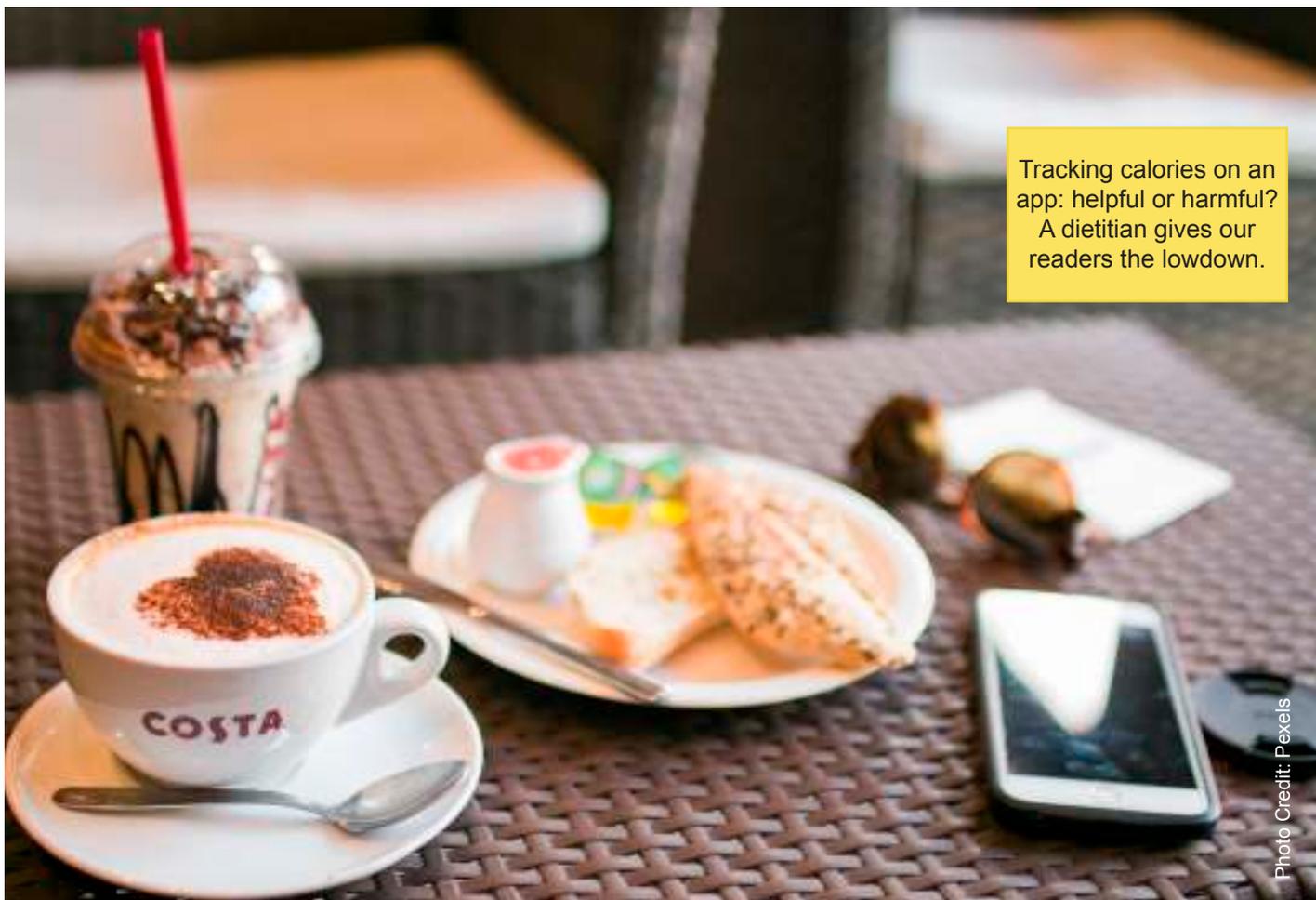
*We nannies spend so much time caring for others that it seems there is rarely any time for us to relax and pursue our own hobbies. It is vital to our well-being that we enjoy. This time of year has a tendency to take the best out of us, so maybe you're at a loss for new activities you can try. Well, here is just a small list of hobbies that you can pursue by yourself or in a group, and some of them cost nothing at all.*

# Is Tracking Calories on an App Right for You?



Photo Credit: Jennifer Kuhn

**By Amber Ketchum, MDS, RD.**



Tracking calories on an app: helpful or harmful? A dietitian gives our readers the lowdown.

Photo Credit: Pexels

The introduction of nutrition apps and online programs in the past few years has completely changed the way we look at the way we eat and how we lose weight. Today it seems like everyone is tracking their food, exercise, and sleep habits through MyFitnessPal, Lose It!, Fitbit, or other similar apps and programs. These apps have helped many people lose weight and reach their health goals, but while they work beautifully for some, sometimes they aren't the best choice for others. If you're on the fence about tracking your calorie intake through a nutrition app, here's some info to help you decide if it's right for you.

When tracking calories, your food diary will not be 100% accurate. There are many variations in the foods we eat. You can't always measure or weigh your food, so

it can be a bit of a guessing game. Is it a 1/3 cup or 1/2 cup of rice on the plate? Is it 2% or fat free milk in this latte? For people who are driven by detail, this will be frustrating. But even though you won't see perfect accuracy with these apps, they usually still provide a good estimate of your overall food intake. The main benefit these apps provide is education and accountability, which can help people make better food choices on a daily basis.

While there are some great benefits to tracking calories, there are some times that tracking is not beneficial and may do more harm than good. A big red flag to watch out for is if tracking calories becomes an obsessive behavior. Tracking food should not overtake your

life. It shouldn't be something that takes over your daily routine to the point you start to dread it each day. For some people, tracking everything they eat can become stressful and takes the enjoyment out of food and eating. This can cause discouragement rather than being helpful.

One last point to keep in mind is that there isn't a one-size-fits-all approach when it comes to losing weight or creating a healthier lifestyle. What works great for one person may not work at all for another. It's important to learn what works best for you and your body. A registered dietitian is trained to help you reach your weight and health goals, and is a great resource if you're looking to get started!

# #GOODTOKNOW-

## *The Lowdown on* POSTING PICS OF THE KIDS ONLINE

BY JO ANNA BECKER.



Photo Credit: Pexels

As nannies, we spend 40, 50, or more hours per week with adorable children whom we care deeply for. It is inevitable that we will pull out our phones and capture photos of their cutest moments. These are often sent via text to Mom-Bosses and DadBosses, but is it acceptable to also post them to Facebook?

**“Without explicit permission, nannies should not be posting pictures of their charges to social media.”**

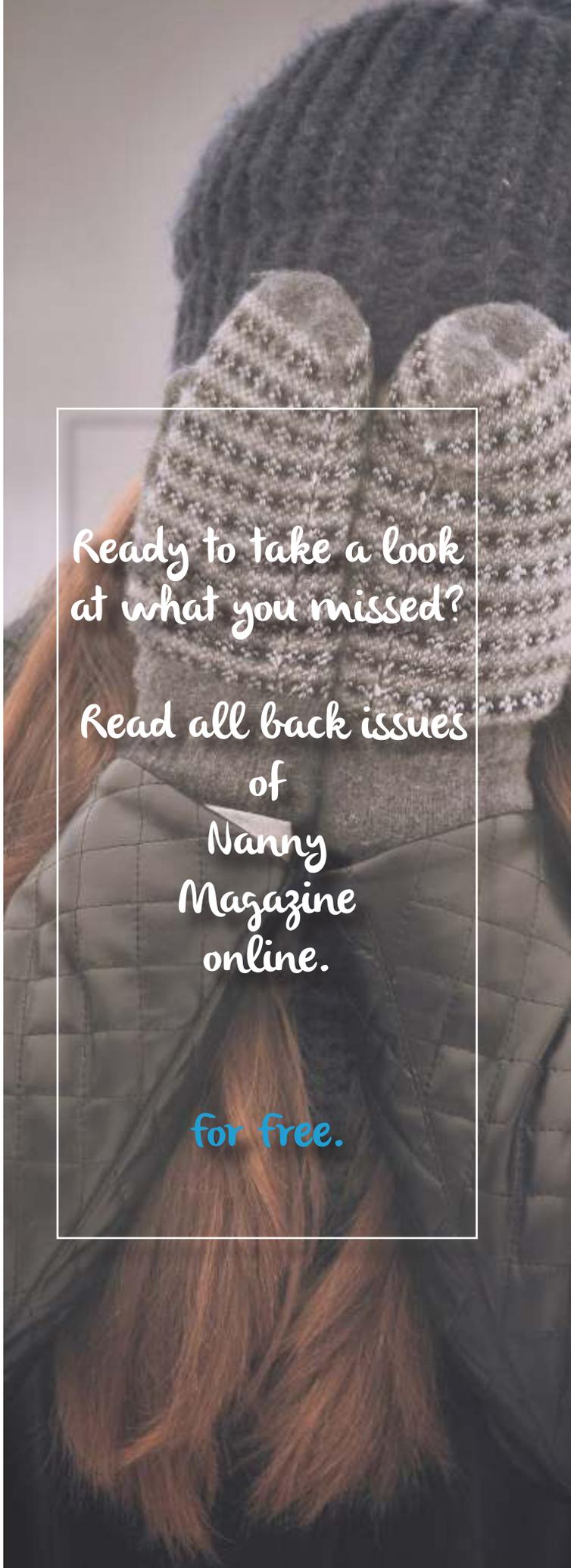
## Instagram? What about Snapchat?

Without explicit permission, nannies should not be posting pictures of their charges to social media. Therefore, the first step to determine if you should be posting pictures or videos of your NannyKids on social media is to have a conversation with your bosses, preferably at the beginning of your working relationship with them. Do they prefer you don't show the kids' faces? Maybe they only want you to share if you tag the parents in the pictures. Perhaps you have permission to share on specific social media sites or groups but not others. These are all details to work out before posting.

Another important consideration is protecting the family's privacy. Ashley Cifone, a nanny in Pittsburgh, PA, notes, "When I post about our adventures, cropping is my savior. I crop out things that reveal too much, like their house number, the decor in their house, or any street signs or landmarks nearby. When we're out and about, I try not to post about our time at a certain place until we've already left, and if it's in the neighborhood, I'll make sure that no full houses, street signs, or intersections are shown." Keeping your location tagging off is another important step in protecting the family's privacy, as most phones will automatically tag the exact location of your photo if you do not disable that feature. Additionally, many nannies use nicknames or descriptors, such as G2 (girl, 2), instead of using their NannyKids' real names.

A third consideration when you want to share a photo is respect for your employers and their children. As caregivers and employees, it is important that we never share a photo with the intention of shaming the children or the family. Pictures of children having a meltdown or showing off how messy an employer's house was when you arrived Monday morning is a violation of the trust they have placed in you. While we all have bad days at work, once something is posted to the Internet, it is nearly impossible to undo, even if you've deleted it.

In this age of everything being on social media, it is perfectly natural for nannies with an active online presence to want to share their amazing NannyKids with the world. Just remember, parents should ultimately be in charge of how images of their children are shared online.



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## **-BRAIN GAMES-**

# Tech-Based Learning Disguised as Games

By Sarah Elaine Milkintas.

Search online for educational games or apps for kids and you will be bombarded with hundreds of results. There might be some engaging and educational gems hidden in that list, but most seem to be mind numbing. I've spent some time exploring and playing with some of the top-rated apps and sites that combine fun and technology with learning to come up with a list that is sure to keep your charges engaged and having so much fun that they won't realize how much they are learning.

**Bugs and Numbers:** a math-based app with amazing graphics that allows for more than one child to make their way through the games. (Available on Google-Play and AppStore, \$2.99)

**Funbrain Jr.:** an app with numbers, patterns and letters. Five amazing and fun games to keep your pre-school-aged charge engaged. (Available on AppStore and online at [funbrainjr.com](http://funbrainjr.com), free)

**ABCYa.com:** a website with free games for pre-k to grade five, there are many sections under each grade level with many different themes to keep your kids engaged. (Online, free)

**LearningGamesForKids.com:** a website with many web based games for kids of all ages, but the preschool section has many matching, jigsaw and letter activities for young children. (Online, free)

**Sheppard Software:** This site has hundreds of free and educational games for everyone, from small children up to adults. There is a section specifically for brain games as well as sections for nutrition, chemistry, animals, and geography, among other things. (Online, free)

**LumiKids:** This is my top pick. LumiKids has four different apps, all of which are free on most devices.

LumiKids Park benefits visual-motor coordination, attention to detail, and sorting. LumiKids Beach helps with fine-motor control, planning, and auditory processing. LumiKids Backyard assists with quantities, spatial relationships, and problem solving, and helps with daily routines and fears of the dark. LumiKids Snow reinforces letters, sounds, memory recall, and problem solving. All four apps help with self-directed learning, have great and engaging characters, and allow kids to work at their own speed. (Available on Google Play and AppStore, free [Snow only available on AppStore])



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