

January/February 2014

Debut Issue

NANNY MAGAZINE

teach play love



WINTER
FUN FOR
EVERYONE!

Emma & Niccola

"The Nanny
Diaries"
authors spill
their secrets.

HELP! MY
DADBOSS
HIT ON ME!

BECOMING A
BETTER
VERSION OF YOU

LOVING A CHILD
WHO ISN'T
YOURS

HEALTHY AND
HEARTY
RECIPES

MY CHARGE HAS
A CRUSH ON
ME!

NANNY MAGAZINE

teach play love

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Editors' Note

"YOU WILL EITHER STEP FORWARD INTO GROWTH OR YOU WILL STEP BACK INTO SAFETY."

ABRAHAM MASLOW, PSYCHOLOGIST

When we were searching for a magazine just for nannies, there wasn't one. Why, we wondered. Why are there magazines for people who like tattoos or cats? Why are there magazines for parents and teachers, but none for nannies? Not fair, we thought, so we joined forces and decided to start one of our own. People told us not to waste our time, that print is dead, that it's too much work or too much money, and that we should just forget the idea of ever moving forward with our goal.

But we didn't listen. No. Emails from nannies around the country made it clear that there was a need and a demand for this magazine. That's what kept us going, sitting in on hours-long weekly editorial calls after long days at work, commuting, on top of work calendars and social schedules. On top of Whitney's wedding. On top of everything else. That's what kept us pushing to constantly gather the best articles from fabulous writers around the country, authors who know what nannies care about. Your encouragement, enthusiasm, and support kept us moving forward through the uncertain times of our Kickstarter campaign, through the timid first phone call to solicit an interview with the authors of "The Nanny Diaries", through hateful comments posted about us on forums. We have all wanted Nanny Magazine to become a reality, and here it is. In your hands (or on your screen), you are holding the result of over a year's worth of hard work and ambition put into action.

This first issue does not come to you without a fair share of gratitude on behalf of its founders. We would like to take the time to thank all of our supporters along the way. First and foremost, a huge thank you goes out to all of our Kickstarter Backers. Without you, this dream would have stayed just that – a dream. You gave us the gas to make this a reality. In the like, we'd also like to thank all those that provided emotional support along the way – Gary and Greg, you both supported us in a way we never could have imagined, nurturing a passing idea and growing it into a passion too strong to stop even if you wanted to! The same goes with all of our friends and family along the way. And of course, we wouldn't be where we are today without the support of our own Nanny Magazine team: Jaynie and Chelle, we are indebted to you both. And finally, thank you to our street teams for spreading the news like wildfire. It is because of you that this magazine is in the hands of nannies nationwide.

We can't be more elated about this January issue and to see it kick off in such a big way! The interview with the authors of The Nanny Diaries, the Ask a Nanny column with Stephanie Felzenberg, and our hot date night ideas have to be some of our favorites in the upcoming pages. And this is only the tip of the iceberg - we have a full docket of fantastic articles and big surprises for the rest of the year, so stay tuned.!

From the seed of a dream to a reality, we, the Editors of NM, promise you that we will continue to grow this publication even when stepping back into safety may be easier. It is our hope to further foster the nannying community, legitimize your profession, and entertain and encourage you, our readers, our lifeblood, our friends. Thank you for reading and enjoy the very first ever issue of Nanny Magazine!



Winter Must Haves for You and Your Charges

BY NICOLE CLARK



SMARTWOOL KNEEHIGH SOCKS

As my charges get older, they have more of an opinion about *everything!* This includes their choice in attire. Sometimes, what they want isn't so practical, but if I can make it work, I do my best. My charge is loving dresses and skirts right now, and with the cold weather, sometimes it's hard to let her wear them. My go-to solution? Long wool socks. She gets to wear her dress and I get to make sure she's still warm. Meltdown avoided for both of us. Smartwool socks come in fun colors and patterns and they go all the way up past the knees.

CALIFORNIA BABY SUNSCREEN STICK

It may be 35 degrees out, but the sun is still shining! Your charges' faces need to be protected from the sun even when it's not summer. In fact, it's potentially worse in the winter when harmful rays reflect off the ice and snow, causing even more exposure. I always use mineral-based sunscreens because it has zinc oxide, which stays on top of the skin, creating a physical barrier against UV damage. We use California Baby. It's easy to find in most stores. And because we mainly use it for the face, the stick version is easy to apply and easy to carry.



ANY HAT WITH TWO STRINGS

There is nothing worse than losing an article of clothing that is so important to your charge's comfort in the cold. Hats are something we tend to lose because they come off at the park or they get dropped because it's being carried (in the case when it takes some convincing to get my charge to wear it). Two-stringed hats eliminate these threats. It's easy for my charge to pull down on the strings so it stays on and in the instance that I am holding it, I tie it onto the strap of my purse. No longer do I need to fear coming home with one less thing!



KIEHL'S LOTION

This is one for my charges *and* myself! The cold is harsh on the skin and can make you feel itchy, and do I even need to mention how unsightly the lizard skin look is for us adults? I especially love Kiehl's. Their cherry lotion is light in both feel and scent, but keeps your skin super hydrated, even when the weather outside is frightful.

CREWCUTS JACKET WITH REMOVABLE SLEEVES (NOT PICTURED)

Sometimes my charges get cold, then hot, then cold again. And the older they get, the bigger their jackets get! My charge has a jacket from Crewcuts; the sleeves can zip on and off, becoming a puffy vest. I love this option because when we are inside (or only outside for as long as it takes us to grab a cab), I put him in the vest, throw the sleeves in my purse in case he gets very chilly, and everyone is good to go! Not to mention, the vest can fit long after they outgrow the sleeves. He's warm, I still have two hands free. Perfect!



SNOW BOOTS

Not rain boots! Yes, rain boots are cute, but getting in and out of cars and taxis, I can't count how many times they have fallen off of my charges (and when they do, they always seem to fall into the biggest, dirtiest puddle in the city). Snow boots tie tight, are much warmer, and don't fall off. Practicality trumps all in this category!



CONTIGO TRAVEL MUGS

These mugs are a winter must-have for both a nanny as well as the charges. Contigo has saved us so many times! I fill it with coffee for me or hot cocoa for my charges. It keeps things hot (or cold) for *hours*. And the auto-seal cap makes it safe to throw into my purse with no worries of finding the extra pair of underwear I always carry covered in hot cocoa. Now *that* would be a disaster.

Buying Guide

Smartwool: www.smartwool.com

Contigo: www.gocontigo.com

California Baby: www.californiababy.com

Kiehl's: www.kiehls.com

Snow Boots: www.zappos.com

J. Crew: www.jcrew.com

Nanny Style

Day to Night Fashion

BY SARAH LONG. PHOTOGRAPHY BY KYLE CONROY.

ALRIGHT. LET'S START WITH THE BASICS: EVERYONE'S FAVORITE JEANS AND T-SHIRT COMBO.



I'm not talking mom jeans and a t-shirt from your high school's homecoming game. No, no. What we're dealing with here are your go-to skinny jeans and that perfect fitted but not too tight white v-neck tee that feels like butter on your skin. The great thing about skinny jeans is that they are wearable year round. Tuck them into boots on chilly days or cuff them with sandals for warmer weather. And do not let a single person tell you that you have to be a size 00 to pull them off. If you are concerned about bigger bottom problems, it's all about proportion (slimmer on the bottom, loose on top). Go for dark wash denim and top it off with a loose tee. Tuck it in slightly in the front and you won't believe how good you look.

This is my nanny uniform. It's easy to throw on when you wake up ten minutes before you need to leave for work, comfy to get down on all fours and run around in, and laundering couldn't be easier.



Here is my not-so-secret secret for the best nanny-by-day and dazzling-beauty-by-night outfit. Every closet needs a fitted blazer or two, a few scarves, and a couple pieces of fun jewelry. I keep a few options in my trunk so that I am always prepared for a quick change. The key to transitioning from day to night is layering! Throw on a blazer, switch out your sneakers for a pair of flats or wedges, and top it all off with some sparkles like a chunky gold necklace, your favorite wrist candy, and a dusting of blush! Now be prepared for a few cries and yells... from onlookers checking you out, not the little munchkin wanting her bottle!

A Do-It-Yourself Winter for All Ages

BY KELLY ERIN KNOWLTON.
PHOTOGRAPHY BY AMANDA DUNYAK.

You're trapped indoors on another snowy day looking for something to do. The kids are feeling cooped up. You're going stir crazy because you've exhausted your list of go-to activities. You need something new, something exciting. Feeling crafty? Looking for some simple ideas for winter DIY fun that require very little planning? Of course you are!

WINTER SENSORY BOX

Looking for a way to stay inside and still play with snow? Or maybe you live in a part of the country that does not have snow? Make your own!

Follow the directions to create the instant snow, a product made from the same material as the inside of disposable diapers, and place it in a bucket. Then just add the different marbles or gems, arctic creatures, and your charge's imagination. This activity not only provides a great textural experience, but it also allows you to teach about arctic animals and encourage role playing. Please be very cautious with the little guys; instant snow is not to be ingested.

Materials

- Instant snow (available on Amazon)
- Marbles or gems
- Toy penguins or other arctic animals

BORAX SNOWFLAKES

The perfect science experiment for older children who may be on school vacation.

Materials

- Pipe cleaners (white is best)
- Borax (in the laundry aisle)
- Pint-sized jar
- Boiling water
- Food coloring (optional)



Using the pipe cleaners, have your charges create the shape of their snowflake. Once they have created the design they need, use a string to tie the snowflake to a pencil, allowing the snowflake to hang in the borax solution. While they are working on that, mix 1 cup of boiling water with 3 tablespoons of borax in your pint-sized jar. You can tint the mixture with food coloring if you would like, or just leave it the way it is (yet another fun experiment). Hang the snowflake freely in the jar over night, and then check out how the crystals have grown the next morning!



CANVAS ART

Looking to make a fantastic Valentine's gift for your Mom-Boss or DadBoss? Here is a very simple and fun project to do.

Materials

- Blank canvas
- Painter's tape
- Finger paint of choice
- Art smock
- Back-up clothes
- Sheet of newspaper to cover the surface

Using the painter's tape, write out the word "LOVE" on the canvas and have your charge finger paint the entire canvas. Once the paint is dry, remove the painter's tape and you have a beautiful work of art to give as a Valentine.

My Boss Hit on Me

ONE NANNY'S STORY AND TIPS FOR HOW TO DEAL WITH SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

*Author's name has been withheld.

MY STORY

Shortly after becoming employed as a first-time nanny, I also had my first encounter with what it's like to be pursued romantically by my DadBoss. I have always taken my time to make myself presentable for work, but after DadBoss made it very clear that he found me "aesthetically pleasing", I tried not to draw attention to my looks. Even then the inappropriate comments from my employer did not stop. Soon enough he decided to break the physical barrier with me. When I would sit down with the kids to help them with their homework, he would come up behind me and rub my shoulders. Whenever this happened, I quickly jumped up from my seat and offered the kids a snack just to

have some excuse to get away from him, hoping he could take a hint.

But this DadBoss wasn't one to take a hint. After awhile, he started spending more time at home, lingering wherever I happened to be. He even offered for me to stay late after work one night so we could watch a movie together. On a few occasions, my MomBoss had to take business trips and would be gone for a few days. DadBoss took this as his cue to ask me to spend the night. I declined his requests politely, not just because I knew that he was perfectly capable of handling his children on his own, but because I felt utterly uncomfortable. He was crossing a line of professionalism and making me feel very ill at ease. I may have been new at nan-

nying, but if I knew one thing it was that this man was acting inappropriately toward me.

Though I knew that DadBoss's behavior was wrong, I wasn't sure what the right thing was for *me* to do. Was I supposed to alert his wife about his attempts at infidelity? Defend myself against his unwanted advances? Should I quit? What about the children? What about my reference?

After all of this weighing on my shoulders, I decided the best course of action for me was to give my notice. I absolutely did not feel comfortable in the workplace with this man constantly trying to touch me, compliment me, and get me to stay overnight. For my own safety and peace of mind, my best bet was to move on to another position.

HOW TO HANDLE SEXUAL HARASSMENT AT WORK

KEEP A LOG

If you are being sexually harassed at work, log every unwanted sexual advance in a notebook. Add the date, time, and description of what happened. Be as detailed as possible. You'll want to have something to back up your accusations if your job is at risk or if DadBoss claims that you are being untruthful. If you write these instances down immediately, the events will be fresh in your mind as you write them so you don't forget pertinent details. Your story will always be accurate because you have notes from the day of the incidents to refer to if anyone questions you.

TALK TO DADBOSS

If you feel safe doing so, have a serious conversation with DadBoss. Let him know that you are a professional and would like to keep your relationship strictly business. Tell him that his passes toward you make you uncomfortable while you are trying to do your job.

CONTACT YOUR AGENCY

If you are employed through an agency, tell them about your concerns and they will help you to find proper placement. They may also take care of addressing the issues with the family, if that is what makes you feel more comfortable.

LOOK FOR A NEW JOB

It's possible that your DadBoss won't stop making you feel uncomfortable, even if you confront him about his behavior. If you are certain that the sexual harassment will continue or that you would

feel awkward working in his house even if he quits his act, you're better off finding a new job with a family that will respect you as a professional nanny. If you are not represented by an agency, now is a good time to look into using one.

FILE A REPORT

If DadBoss continues to contact you for any reason after you have left your position, be aware. Consider filing a police report and obtaining a restraining order, especially if he is threatening you for any reason or stalking you.

DO YOU TELL MOMBOSS?

One thing that may be wracking your mind is whether or not to inform MomBoss of her husband's harassment. In this type of situation, you may find yourself stuck between a rock and a hard place. It may give you peace of mind to tell her what has been going on so she can address the issues with her husband. Bear in mind that telling MomBoss may jeopardize your job and you may be accused lying or being involved with something that can tear the family apart. If you decide to stay with this family, you could vaguely let MomBoss know that you are comfortable with her setting up a nanny camera to be able to visually see what her children are up to throughout the day. In doing this, DadBoss may back off, knowing that he is on camera. Alternatively, if he doesn't know, she could catch him in the act. Be forewarned: if he gets caught on camera he could also turn it around and accuse you of framing

"You're better off finding a new job with a family that will respect you"

him. Do not fret if you decide to let MomBoss have a blind eye on this; chances are she will find out on her own anyway.

DON'T BE DISCOURAGED

Because this happened to me in my first nanny position, I almost gave up on living my dream of being a nanny. There are plenty of nanny jobs out there in which you will be treated as a professional. It is important to leave a position that makes you feel uncomfortable before sexual harassment turns into sexual assault. Don't be afraid to protect yourself if you feel the need by getting a restraining order on the offender.

HARASSERS COME IN ALL SHAPES AND SIZES

Just because the sexual harassment I experienced came from my DadBoss doesn't mean

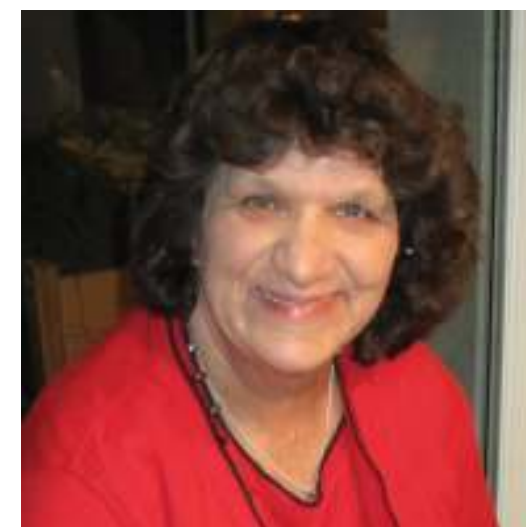
only males are responsible for sexual harassment. If anyone in the home, whether an employer, vendor, or other person, makes any comment about your sexual orientation, requests for sexual favors, or even just a lewd comment about your looks or body can be considered sexual harassment and should not be taken lightly. Sexual harassment is a real concern. Don't be a victim.

“Sexual harassment is a real concern. Don't be a victim.”

Nanny Spotlight

JINA FER MARIE SHARP

As this issue's Nanny Spotlight winner, Jinafer will receive a one-year elite caregiver membership to UrbanSitter.com, furnished by UrbanSitter. You can apply to win big for the next issue!



“I wanted to be a nanny since I first saw ‘The Sound of Music’ when I was seven years old,” says Spotlight winner Jinafer Marie Sharp. That's a pretty solid dedication to a career choice for someone so young! Jinafer was born in Santa Ana, California in 1958. She grew up in Newport Beach and later enrolled in early childhood education courses at Orange Coast College, where she worked in the childcare center on campus.

Throughout her career, Jinafer has worked as a nanny, preschool teacher, mother's helper, and babysitter. She obtained her nanny certification in 1986 and has experience caring for multiples and pets – from dogs to horses – while still maintaining her sanity.

Jinafer's favorite song to sing to kids is her own remix of “Hush Little Baby, Don't Say a Word”, but she replaces the word “Daddy” with “Nanny”. She collects Disney pins and her favorite Hollywood nanny is Maria von Trapp from “The Sound of Music”.

Jinafer became a nanny in 1986, the same year that she became a certified nanny. Since then she has worked for three families, and remains in contact with former charges who are now adults. In addition to her long career as a professional nanny, Jinafer's babysitting experience goes all the way back to when she was 11 years old!

In her spare time, Jinafer enjoys digital storybooking and attending church activities. Her number one pet peeve is smokers, and the person she has looked up to the most in life has been her mother.

To all young nannies, Jinafer has three words of advice: “Be true to who you are, and it's essential that you love taking care of children.”

Jinafer is definitely a nanny worth recognizing.

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Tuna and Sweet Potato Patties with Lemon Yogurt

BY JAMILA KHOKHAR (PIP AND LITTLE BLUE).



Feeding fish to children can be a tricky (and tearful!) affair, but with all its health benefits it's really important to have a few dishes up your sleeve that will go down without complaint. This dish is the perfect supper. It's easy and healthy, and you can even get your charges involved in the preparation. Best of all, the fish is cleverly disguised in burger form, so it's sure to be gobbled up!

These delicious fish cakes and the accompanying lemon yogurt also combine a number of heart-friendly ingredients: sweet potatoes, tuna, spinach, and garlic. Using low-fat yogurt and olive oil also helps to keep this recipe really healthy and fresh. Tasty and good for your heart: what's not to love?

INGREDIENTS FOR THE PATTIES

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| 1/2 pound sweet potatoes | 2 eggs, lightly whisked |
| 13 ounces tuna in brine (10 ounces drained weight), drained and flaked | Rind and juice of half a lemon |
| 1/2 cup sliced spring onions | A pinch of salt and black pepper |
| 2 cloves garlic, crushed | 1 egg, lightly whisked |
| | 3 tablespoons olive oil |

INGREDIENTS FOR THE LEMON YOGURT

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 cup low-fat plain yogurt | 1/2 cup diced cucumber |
| 1/2 cup fresh shredded spinach | A pinch of salt and black pepper |
| Rind and juice of half a lemon | 1 teaspoon chopped chives to decorate |

INSTRUCTIONS

Peel and cut the potatoes into roughly 1-inch cubes. In a pot of boiling water, boil until just cooked through.

Drain and allow to cool for a few minutes, allowing as much steam to escape as possible so that the potatoes can dry out. Mash roughly.

In a large bowl, mix together the tuna, spring onions, garlic, 2 eggs, rind and juice of half a lemon, salt, and pepper. Add the potatoes and mix well.

Form into 8 patties with your hands (it is pretty fun for the kids to get involved here!) and chill in the fridge to firm up for an hour or two. Tip: If you prefer to prepare in advance, these will keep uncooked in the fridge for a day or two.

To make the lemon yogurt, mix all the ingredients (except the chives) together in a small serving bowl. Top the mixture with the chives and chill until needed.

To cook the patties, heat the oil in a large frying pan on a medium heat. Brush the patties with egg on both sides and fry on each side for about 5 minutes or until hot in the middle and crispy on the outside.

Serve hot with the chilled lemon yogurt on the side.



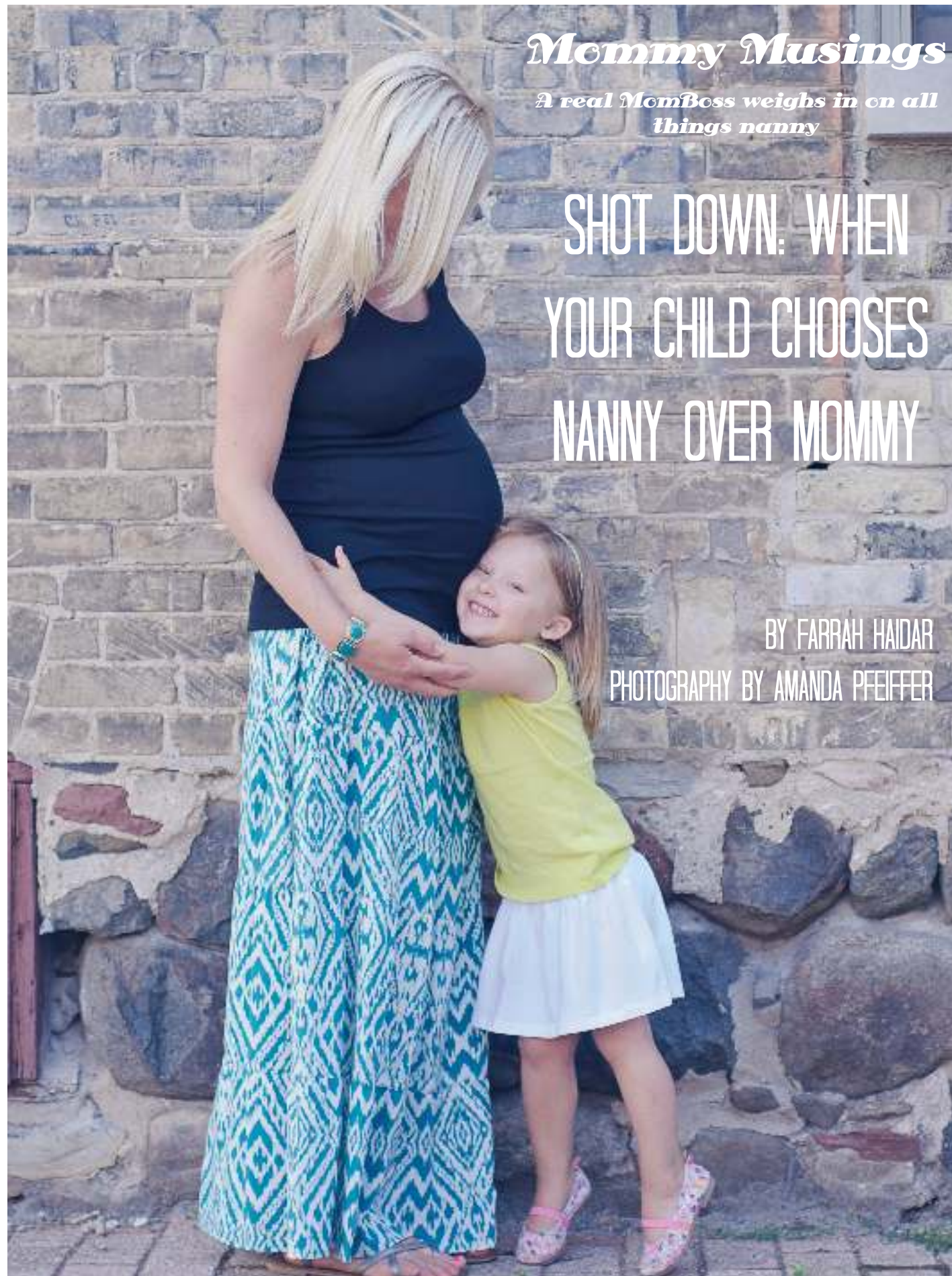
Mommy Musings

A real MomBoss weighs in on all things nanny

SHOT DOWN: WHEN YOUR CHILD CHOOSES NANNY OVER MOMMY

BY FARRAH HAIDAR

PHOTOGRAPHY BY AMANDA PFEIFFER



Every MomBoss has an unspoken fear that her children will hate her because she is out of the house. Even when we are sure that our kids are cared for by the best (that's you, dear nanny), there's always this mommy guilt. "Do I spend enough time with them? What do I miss out on when I am gone? Should I work less? Give more?" We tend to hide these feelings quite well or, at least, deal with them. However, there is always that feeling that you are missing out on your child's life, no matter how present you are when you are with them. Many of us secretly fear that because we aren't with our children all day, every day, they will begin to prefer their nanny's love to our own. And then there are the words that bring all of our insecurities rocketing to the surface.

"I don't want Mommy!" screeches your child as he clings to his nanny. Somehow, all those niggling questions get answered during this scenario. "I *don't* spend enough time with them. I *should* work less. I *am* missing out." Translation: I am losing my child. It doesn't matter if this is Mom's first or tenth child or

how great of a caregiver you are; it feels like a punch to the gut every time your own child chooses their nanny over you.

The first time this happened to me I had a wonderful nanny. Let's call her Michelle. Michelle was great. She loved my kids and I trusted her completely. While it's not your job as the nanny to play therapist to MomBoss, a few kind words *can* go a long way. I would like to share with you how Michelle turned that awkward moment around.

First, don't treat the child's behavior like it's a big deal. The more awkward you seem about it, the more it feels like you agree with that voice inside of our head that is already screaming at us that our babies don't love us as much as they love you. Just treat it like you would any other phase. Michelle played my child's hurtful comment off with a shrug. It made me feel like we were on the same team.

Second, reassure us that our kids are thinking about us even when we're not home. Tell us how many times our kids ask about us while we're gone. Tell us the stories that come gush-

ing out of them. Tell us how they pointed to our picture. Just pick something to remind us that the little one really does miss us when we are gone. Don't get me wrong; we don't want them to be miserable when we're not near, but we need to know that we still matter in their lives. Michelle? She laughed and said, "Weren't you asking about Mommy all morning?"

Third, hug your charge and tell them firmly, "It's time to go to Mommy now." This reassures us that the hierarchy of our relationship is intact. When Michelle did this, my daughter resisted, but Michelle gave her a kiss, hugged her, and said, "It is time. I will see you tomorrow." Then, she handed my kid back over to me.

Taking my daughter, I was still a bit stung. That part is inevitable. But I felt Michelle was firmly on my side and that this was just a phase. She had both my respect and appreciation, which made our working relationship go smoothly. We hire great nannies because we want our children to love them and learn from them. And, in the end, isn't that what we all want?



What's More Revealing Than Reading Someone's Diary?

NANNY MAGAZINE'S EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH EMMA MCLAUGHLIN AND NICOLA KRAUS, AUTHORS OF THE NANNY DIARIES

BY NICOLE PANTELEAKOS

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KARLEY NELSON FOREMAN



Before it was a movie starring Scarlett Johansson, *The Nanny Diaries* was a best-selling novel by coauthors Nicola Kraus and Emma McLaughlin. The book was an eye opener for nannies, their employers, and other readers around the world, and has been translated into multiple languages since its publication in 2002. Though the book was published over 12 years ago, its impact still resonates within and empowers the nanny community today, and remains its authors most well-known piece of work.

In August 2013, the authors met at Le Pain Quotidien on Bleecker Street in New York City to discuss their writing, their inspiration, and all things nanny related, especially their debut novel and its 2009 sequel, *Nanny Returns*, plus the launch of their newest collaboration, *The First Affair*, for which they went on a publicity

tour. It is clear from the first hello that the coauthors are personable, down to earth, and usually smiling.

In *The Nanny Diaries*, a sarcastically funny but also frustratingly sad novel, main character Nanny gets a job caring for Grayson, the sweet but somewhat challenging little boy of increasingly nightmarish Mrs. X and her philandering, emotionally distant husband. The couple live in the upscale Manhattan neighborhood known as the Upper East Side in an apartment bigger than some houses, where appearances are far more important than familial relationships. Meanwhile, college student Nanny is barely able to afford her small apartment and struggles to maintain any sort of relationship with friends and family as the job takes over her life, a situation that many American nannies can certainly relate to. The nov-

el ends when Nanny's job with the X family ends. The sequel picks up 12 years later when teenage Grayson X shows up quite unexpectedly at Nanny's door.

STICKING TOGETHER IN THE UPPER WEST SIDE

Kraus and McLaughlin met while they were undergrad students at New York University in a class called "Gender and Performance". Says Kraus with a chuckle, "Neither of us could make heads or tails of what that means." She continues. "I kept trying to get up the nerve to talk to Emma, but didn't. Then we ran into each other off campus and realized we were both uptown because we both nannied up there. It was unusual to find nannies who were students at NYU back then."



The two became fast friends. “We moved in together a few days later and I introduced her to her husband a few weeks after that,” Kraus says. It was not long before Kraus and McLaughlin became inspired to write their debut novel. Explains Kraus, “In the late 90s there was an article in *The New York Times* about how the newly rich were having trouble finding good help.”

“The voice of the help was never represented in the article,” adds McLaughlin. “We never found out if it was because the help didn’t feel comfortable talking or if the article didn’t care about their position, but we felt like there needed to be a response. We were nannying in the ‘gold coast’ of Manhattan, the East 60s, before helicopter parenting was fashionable, and we observed the same dynamics over and over. Frequently many of the mothers we worked for didn’t work and they also didn’t stay home...”

SPEAKING OUT ON BEHALF OF “THE HELP”

As Kraus and McLaughlin describe, their nannying days were during a time when the hiring and firing of one’s “help” was so common it was almost a sport or hobby that left many nannies out of work suddenly and unfairly. “The majority of women we worked alongside were not citizens. They were undocumented. Many had children of their own and were sending money back to them,” McLaughlin said. “We felt a responsibility to speak out. We chose the perspective of an American college student to make it as funny as it could be, but many of the women actually had heartbreaking stories. We told it in *our* voice with ‘a spoon full of sugar’, to quote our favorite nanny.”

While it’s impossible to know why *Mary Poppins* got into the field of childcare, Kraus and Mc-

Laughlin are on the same page when it comes to the reasons they did. “I hate sitting down,” says Kraus, who started as a student at Brown while studying early childhood education. Nannying “is a job where you, ideally, laugh all day. And we both get a huge kick out of kids. I loved not knowing where the day was going to take us. I saw it as a way to reinforce what I was learning.”

“All the reasons Nicki said are true for me as well,” agrees McLaughlin, adding that most of her experience to that point would have fallen under the header of childcare.

When it comes to why McLaughlin and Kraus left their jobs and when they started writing *Nanny’s* story, McLaughlin says “I think there’s a misconception that we kept a diary while we were working.” The book was actually developed about five years after their positions had ended. As for the reason she left the field, Kraus answers, “Cumulative heartbreak. I just couldn’t do it anymore.”

A BALANCING ACT

Current nannies attending college should be aware that

they are not alone in their daily struggles to balance school and work. Just as the novel’s protagonist Nanny watches as her job increasingly takes over her life, the authors remember that nannying was not ideal when it came to fitting in academics and a social life. As every nanny knows, working with kids, though rewarding, can also be emotionally and mentally draining, not to mention physically exhausting. One difficulty in particular? For Kraus, it was a challenge “working with women who didn’t understand that 3:00 meant 3:00 and Tuesday meant Tuesday,” which is certainly a huge issue for Nanny, who at

one point, unexpectedly ends up caring for a very sick Grayson X overnight when neither of his parents return home.

Also like Nanny, Kraus found jobs by perusing a parents league bulletin board in the Upper East Side. McLaughlin, on the other hand, had one-time success thanks to the *New York Times* help wanted section. But times have changed and now, as parents, they have far more luck finding childcare online, agreeing that Sittercity has been “great” for them.

THE INTERNET AND ISOLATION

Nannies know that working alone with children all day can create a feeling of loneliness. Nobody really understands what it’s like to be a nanny except for other nannies. “I think the Internet has changed things tremendously,” says McLaughlin, who thinks that online forums have gone a long way in terms of helping caregivers develop a stronger sense of a nanny community. She goes on to say, had that been the case fifteen years ago, “I could’ve posted ‘this is what happened to me!’ and have ten other nannies be like, ‘this is what happened to me, too!’” which



could have been hugely important considering the isolation many nannies face. In most other jobs, an employee has coworkers and lunch breaks to help them get through the day, but as a nanny the hours are long and often the interactions with other adults are limited. The authors agree that Facebook groups and other online forums are an excellent way for nannies across the world to meet, relate, and bond.

Though Kraus, who lives in Cobble Hill, Brooklyn, and McLaughlin, who lives in the Upper West Side, are now mothers themselves, they admit that working as nannies didn't exactly get their biological clocks ticking faster, especially as they interacted with mothers who were "sort of in denial" of just how big and important a job parenting is. Says Kraus, "I gave myself a ten-year clock; I think we knew too much. From the moment you have a baby, it's like you're on an escalator. For a lot of our friends who never worked with children and got pregnant, it was a shock for them."



McLaughlin nods in agreement. "I left nannying and was like 'it's going to be a long time.' One burden as a nanny is a further understanding of the chaos that becoming a parent is. Most of the young women, nannies, I meet have no interest in having kids. That's their choice."

NANNY TO MOMBOS

McLaughlin is now on the other side of the employment fence. Having been a nanny, she is now a MomBoss, and lends

her perspective on how others perceive families who employ nannies in the city. "I have a nanny. I live in Manhattan and there's a dearth of daycare. There's this misconception that so many nannies are employed as a status thing, but in reality, there are so few daycare centers here."

"In my neighborhood there are more daycare centers," says Kraus, thus she does not employ a nanny herself.

Though *The Nanny Diaries* was their debut, the two have now

paired up to write more than half a dozen successful novels featuring fun and fascinating female protagonists ranging in age from late teens to middle adulthood. The authors agree that one of the best parts of being an author is hearing from fans whose lives have been affected by what they've read. Says Kraus, the readers' stories that stand out the most are "the ones that make us cry. It means so much for us to hear from women who do the work."

CHANGING LIVES

"Nannies are who we wrote it for," says McLaughlin. "We wrote it to open eyes and get a dialogue going." She recalls her favorite story from a fan. "The best was in San Francisco right after *The Nanny Diaries* came out. A reader had a two year old wrapped around her and she said, 'I take so much pride in my job and you've given me a way to say this is what I do!' and that's as good as it gets. Nannies make the world go round. If I had a bumper sticker,

that's what it would say! Unless you've done it, it's so hard to appreciate the enormity of being in someone's home and making it seem like the most natural thing in the world. As the employer of a nanny, and a former nanny, I appreciate what it is for my nanny to make me feel welcome in my own home. The women who are able to do that should take tremendous pride in it."

A "REAL JOB"

As Kraus, McLaughlin, and Nanny understand, one of the most frustrating aspects of working in home childcare is that one question, the one that comes up way too often, the one that no nanny likes to hear or answer: "When are you going to get a real job?" Another of many misconcep-

tions regarding nannying is that those who do the job got into the field for a variety of reasons that have nothing to do with wanting to work as nannies. In transition between other jobs, while going to school, because there's nothing better, because they're undereducated, because they're undocumented: there are a million answers that people expect, even though none are usually correct.

"My parents were very frustrated that I was nannying. They thought I should be doing something more productive with my time," says Kraus. "But I had an innate sense that this was what I was supposed to be doing. Culturally, I think we've come so far that people respect nannies more now."

"Historically," says McLaughlin, "time spent with children, even parenting, is not something

that gets a lot of respect, and nannies suffer from that. They definitely don't get the respect that they should. To the outside world, creating a career track when there are so many variables is very challenging, which is all the more reason nannies should get respect. You're building a career out of thin air."

"And in one way or another you keep losing your job!" adds Kraus. "As the kids age, they don't need you the same way. There's no job security."

McLaughlin picks up Kraus's thought and continues, "Even with the best family, the child eventually grows. But it *is* a real job. Those hours spent with kids, that's some of the most valuable and important work there is to do. I know that the time my nanny spends with my child, I'm purposely looking for who they are, their humor, their





take on the world, what interests them. I'm looking for that person to bring themselves into my child's life, and the fact that someone's willing to share that with us makes a lot of other work seem pretty silly."

Though the book is based on their real experiences as nannies, they are clear both in person and in the book itself that the characters are not based on any specific people, but rather are composites. That said, not every family they worked with were wonderful. "Only the families we were close with knew we were writing the book. They were very excited for us," says Kraus, though they never hear from those with whom they did not have "as great relationships."

ON THE NIGHTMARE MOMBOSS

In *The Nanny Diaries*, Mrs. X is the sort of woman who could dissolve even the most easygoing nanny to a puddle of angry tears. She is frustrating, spoiled, out-of-touch, selfish, and oblivious

to the pain her actions cause her sweet little boy. When asked whether they have advice for those nannies currently working families like the Xs, Kraus says, "I don't think there's really any changing those people. I think you can start to find a new job, which is sometimes easier said than done, but that would be my advice."

McLaughlin, as a MomBoss, says, "It's my responsibility to make an environment where the nanny feels comfortable. If she was unhappy, I would hope she would reach out to me and say 'can I check in with you' about whatever it is. The key is keeping the language as professional as possible. It's about responsibility, hours, pay, clarity—even with a boss who tries to make it personal, keep it about the job, the issues you as an employee have the right to address. If you are uncomfortable in the environment, if you don't share a sensibility of how a child should be raised, this job is not for you. If you feel comfortable, it's a good learning opportunity to have a conversation, but it's good to role play it with a friend as Nanny does in the book and identify what the professional issue is. However, if some-

one is abusive, not paying you, or inappropriate, you should absolutely leave because you can't save a child; I think that's the hardest part for anyone working with children, period. You will be your best nanny when you're in a work situation in which you can thrive. You owe it to yourself and the children to do your best work."

ADVENTURES. CONVERSATIONS. AND CRAYONS

And when a nanny is in a good situation? The best part of the job is clear and universal: the kids.

"I love the adventures we had, the conversations," says Kraus. "I took care of this two year old who loved to reminisce. 'Remember when... last week...?' She loved to sit there like an old lady and talk about what

happened."

"For sure," agrees McLaughlin. "Those relationships."

"And when you get to be a part of a kid's life and how a kid's brain is formed and how they look at the world, it's a tremendous honor and one we don't take lightly," says Kraus, explaining that they are still in touch with some of their favorite former families. "I took care of this little boy who liked to see the armor at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and when we'd leave the armor he'd start talking about how everything belonged to the 'most specialist' knight. One time we attracted a tour group so enchanted by his descriptions of George Washington's desk they followed us around.

"What do you think he kept in it?" Kraus asked the boy.

His answer? "Crayons."



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Heartwarming Roasted Carrot Soup with Spinach Walnut Pesto

BY BRANDY CLABAUGH.

As the snow falls, there is nothing better than sitting down and devouring a warm bowl of soup. This simple but hearty soup requires only a few ingredients that, with minimal skill, turn into a warm bowl of deliciousness in just under an hour. How many times can you say that you have made soup in under an hour?

This soup can be served as a simple winter dinner (perfect with a slice of crusty bread) or even packed away in a thermos for a delicious school lunch. The added spinach walnut pesto is an optional topping that adds a nice dose of flavor and nutrients. When is that ever a bad thing?

INGREDIENTS FOR THE SOUP

- 1 pound carrots, peeled, tops cut off, and halved
- 1 medium yellow onion cut into quarters
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 2 cups chicken or vegetable stock
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon fresh cracked black pepper

DIRECTIONS:

For soup:

Preheat oven to 350°.

On a large rimmed baking sheet, add carrots and onion. Drizzle with olive oil and roll around to make sure all the vegetables are evenly coated.

Roast for about 45–50 minutes or until the vegetables are soft and browned.

Remove from the oven and add the vegetables to the container of a high-powered blender. Add in chicken or vegetable stock, kosher salt, and black pepper.

Secure the lid onto the blender and purée the vegetables until smooth. Pour into a serving dish.

Note: Please use caution when puréeing hot soup. If the lid is not put on tightly or held down, there will be hot soup all over the kitchen. This could result in burns.

INGREDIENTS FOR THE PESTO

- 1/4 cup toasted walnuts
- 3 cups baby spinach leaves, washed and dried
- 1 cup fresh basil leaves, washed and dried
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled
- Salt and pepper
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil

For pesto:

Clean out of the blender container and add in walnuts, spinach, basil, garlic, salt, pepper, and Parmesan cheese.

Pulse the mixture until it is thick and chopped. Drizzle olive oil into mixture while the blender is running and blend until the pesto is smooth.

For assembly:

Add soup to a bowl and serve with a tablespoon of pesto on top.

This is so easy to whip up that you can even make it during naptime or prepare it after a long day of chasing after the little ones.

31 SNOWY DAYS

WINTER ACTIVITIES FOR ALL AGES

BY STEF TOUSIGNANT.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MACKENZIE KEOUGH AND CHUCK LITTLE.

Don't let the winter's cold discourage you from having fun. Whether you're stuck inside on a snowy day or brave enough to head outdoors, we've got some fun in store for you.

FOR THE BRAVE OUTDOORSY TYPES

1. Freeze pie pans of water overnight, pop the "pucks" out in the morning, head out to the slick driveway with a couple of brooms, and voila: ice hockey!
2. Set up the Winter Olympics. Have a race to build 4 snow angels, shovel 3 feet of a snowy walkway, and make a 4-foot-tall snowman. Grand prize: extra marshmallow medals in their hot cocoa.
3. Conduct a science experiment. Color a bottle of soda water with food coloring, shake, and leave it out overnight in the snow to see what happens. (Hint: the water will freeze and expand overnight, forcing the bottle to split open magically!)
4. Make bird feeders with empty toilet paper rolls dipped in peanut butter and birdseed and see what kind of winter birds come to the yard. This is a great way to teach your charges about the migratory pattern of birds.
5. While outside, gather a few items from nature, like pinecones and evergreen branches. Once inside, ditch the paintbrushes and try a natural way to paint!
6. Color the snow. Fill a spray bottle with water and food coloring and let your charges squirt away outside on the snow.
7. Make snow candy. Pour a cup of sugar into a pot and add a bit of water, heat to melt the sugar, and pour over snow to harden. Mmmm!
8. Paint with your charges on tinfoil sheets in house, then press into the snow outside.
9. Make frozen string art. Wrap string around any object, add glue and water, and set it outside while you go for a walk. When you come back later, it will be hardened and frozen into a cool shape.
10. Make snowshoes out of recyclables. Which works better to keep your charge's feet on top of the snow: pizza boxes or paper towel rolls?



ACTIVITIES FOR THE GREAT INDOORS

Photo Credit: Mackenzie Keough

11. Make papier mâché snowmen with balloons, gauze, and glue. No need to freeze your hands off to make Frosty the Snowman!
12. Grab a few pieces of blue construction paper and some empty water bottles. Dip the bottom of the bottles in white paint and press onto the paper for an instant blizzard!
13. Have a pool party! Wear swimsuits and have tropical drinks in the bathroom island paradise while lounging at the “pool” of blue water (just add a few drops of food coloring to the tub).
14. Make your own *I Spy* book. Find similar items from around the house. Group the objects together and take close-up photos.
15. Have spring in the winter! Kids love to dye eggs. Why wait for April?
16. Make a fun blue tape art installation. Pick a room like the kitchen where you can span the distance from cabinet to cabinet with blue tape and have your charges add more and more pieces to the floor or other parts of the room. Cut shapes of paper and stick those down too.
17. Create a workbench. Use packing foam and golf tees and hammer away!
18. Make your own puzzles. Use cardboard and scissors and let the kids fit the pieces back together again!
19. Create an airport and landing strip with blue tape on the floor. Line the runway with toy blocks
20. Create your own party idea book. Decorate the dining table for different themed parties of your charges’ dreams, takes photos, and publish!
21. See if you can find 100 of the same thing in the house (for instance, 100 push pins, chocolate chips, rocks, bottle caps). If you can’t, use this as an opportunity to start a collection of 100 things and find cool way to store it.
22. Set up a pretend washing station for doll clothes and a clothesline to “dry” them. Younger charges will love hanging the clothes out to dry with real clothes pins.
23. Make marshmallow architecture using toothpicks and jumbo marshmallows. As an extra challenge, ask your older

- charges to recreate famous architectural landmarks.
24. Read *Aloha Dolores* by Barbara Samuels to your charges, then they can dress up and pose in different vacation spots just like the main character does in the book. Print your photos as postcards and send to your charges’ friends!
 25. Create art from dots. Get a huge piece of paper and let loose with the polka dotting using markers or pens. Connect the dots for your younger charges so they can discover all the fun shapes they can create.
 26. Give old worn placemats new life with decoupage glue and photos, chalkboard paint, or other materials. Personalize each kid’s placemat with their initials.
 27. Pour a couple of bags of white rice into a plastic bin. Add small winter stuffed animals, sprigs from an evergreen tree, shovels, and other winter-themed items like tiny snow plows or plastic snowflakes. Finish off with a few drops of wintergreen oil or mint mixed in for a homemade winter wonderland sensory experience.
 28. Get out the camping gear (tent, sleeping bags, lanterns, cots) and let your charges have their nap in the “great outdoors” (i.e., their bedroom).
 29. Experiment with different smells at bath time. Add vanilla, lavender, or mint extracts to the bath water. Try food coloring too!

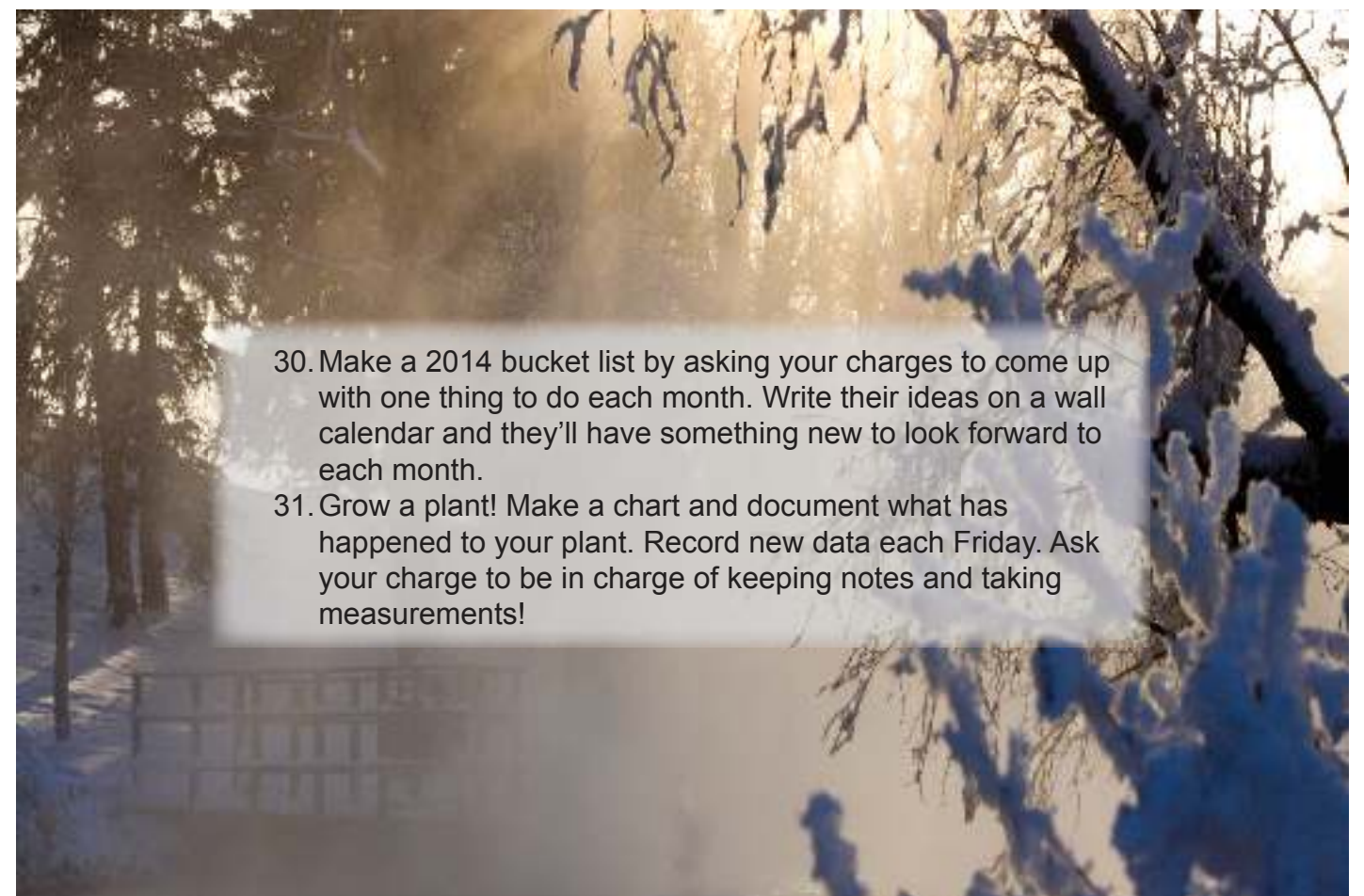
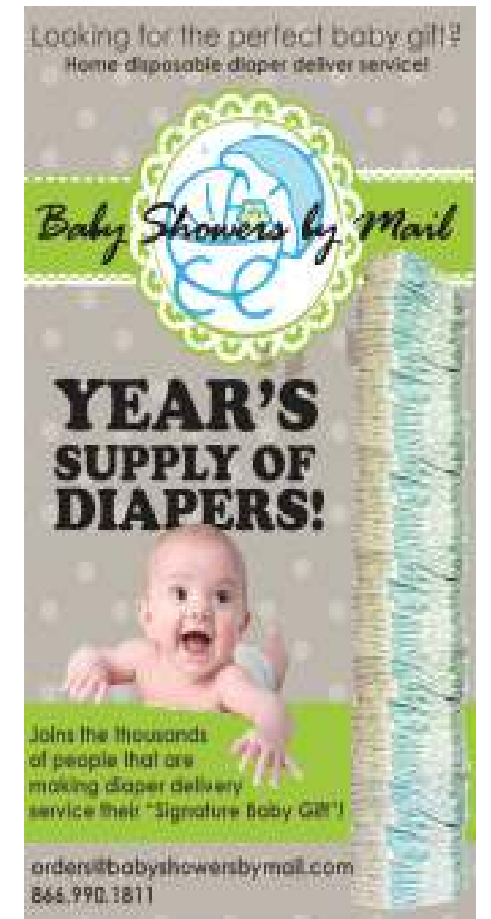


Photo Credit: Mackenzie Keough

30. Make a 2014 bucket list by asking your charges to come up with one thing to do each month. Write their ideas on a wall calendar and they’ll have something new to look forward to each month.
31. Grow a plant! Make a chart and document what has happened to your plant. Record new data each Friday. Ask your charge to be in charge of keeping notes and taking measurements!

You Have a Crush on WHO?!?

BY ERICA CHRISTOPHER. PHOTOGRAPHY BY AMANDA PFEIFFER

Dun, dun, dun... It was bound to happen. With four girls in the house, it was only a matter of time... Time for a girl's first crush.

Not just one girl, but four! Now, I am their nanny, so obviously we are not talking about budding teenagers crushing on the new boy in class. These girlies aren't even what the kids are calling "tweens". No sir. The oldest in the giggling brood I am referring to is seven! My seven-year-old charge has a crush!

Okay, I know what you're thinking. Seven-year-olds totally get crushes. Agreed. And I think that is totally normal, healthy, and endearing! But do six, four, and two-year-olds? Not in my day!

This might not be cause for alarm under normal circumstances, such as coming home blushing over Johnny-Blonde-Hair or Freddie-With-The-Skateboard. But this is an *older man*. The fourth grader who picked up the book she dropped maybe? No. Perhaps it's the kind, funny swim instructor? Nope.

Worse.

My charges have a crush on my boyfriend!

I knew I had scored a great catch, but I *never* thought I'd be

competing with four beautiful sisters with wit and brains to spare! It isn't a fair fight! Granted, their combined ages are less than mine. But that's not the point.

From the day they met him, I could tell they were all smitten. They spent a total of 8.2 minutes with the old chap and they didn't stop talking about him for days afterwards.

The second time they met, I might as well have been getting my nails done because not *one* of them knew or cared that I was still there. He's tall. I get it. Tall is good (caught *my eye!*). He's funny. I like that too. But he's not exactly a "kid person". Nevertheless, to my kiddo crew, it's like he's superman. They look at him with wonder, laugh at all of his (corny) jokes, and fight over who gets to sit in his lap.

Wait a minute... I mean, he's *funny* but not *that* funny! He's strong but not *that* strong. Come on girls, get a grip!

By the third meeting, the second oldest could not control her giggling the *entire* visit and the

third in line cried because he "talked to my sister more!"

Remember now, I am talking about children that are pre-middle school (heck, preschool in some cases!), not your local sorority chapter meeting Johnny Depp.

Then it was all confirmed.

Last Valentine's Day, we planned to pay my nanny family a quick visit. I told my boyfriend and he unenthusiastically agreed (he's a childless twenty-something, can't blame him!). When the holiday rolled around, we strolled over to the eagerly awaiting chickadees. The second the door was opened, *pounce!* Poor guy.

They were talking a zillion and one miles a minute telling him all about "this funny thing that happened" and "look at my new dress" and "I see him too, Mama!"

Whoa. That was a sight. Intriguing. Interesting. Eye opening.

Just when I am ready to save my poor significant other with my awesome nanny skills, he pulls out a "surprise" for the girls. What? I had no idea! (Kiss up!)

They all listened immediately (and more politely than I had seen in three years!). *My boyfriend* (emphasis added to remind you I am not talking about One Direction, here) then proceeded to pull out hand-signed Valentines for each girl, complete with attention paid to favorite colors and inside jokes.

Wha-what?? I hadn't even got *my* Valentine from him yet!

Impressed yet confused, I focused in on the girls. You could almost see drool forming on that first grader's lips and the first presence of blushing on that little preschooler. It was like one of those cartoon where the gushing girls' eyes turn into throbbing hearts.

I had to admit. It was cute. But what a glimpse into the future! Scary!

Then one of my charges declared, "I love you!"

All four adults in the room's eyes went wide... Uh oh.

It's totally adorable and I am not at all jealous. Well, except for that one little lady that *still* keeps that signed Valentine under her pillow a year later. That one might be getting a little out of hand.

At least their first crush is a "good guy" and not a tattooed long-haired motorcycle rider. Right? I am *sure* that's what DadBoss keeps telling himself. (Good luck with this in ~~ten~~ five years, DadBoss!)



Oatmeal Two Ways



OVERNIGHT OATMEAL WITH CHIA SEEDS

BY BRANDY CLABAUGH.

Mornings can be rushed and sometimes making breakfast seems like just too much work. This simple dish can be prepared the night before and then it's ready to eat in the morning. It's just that simple! Packed full of rolled oats, chia seeds, berries, and nuts, this make-ahead recipe is a nutrient-rich way to start your and your charges' day.



INGREDIENTS

- 2/3 cup rolled oats
- 1 cup whole milk
- 2/3 cup vanilla Greek yogurt
- 2 tablespoons chia seeds
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 2/3 cup frozen mixed berries
- 1 banana, sliced

Banana slices and chopped toasted walnuts (optional, for topping)

DIRECTIONS

Mix all the ingredients in a large bowl and scoop into two mason jars. Add a lid and let the mixture set overnight.

Top with a few extra slices of banana and chopped walnuts in the morning and enjoy a stress-free breakfast.

Yields 2 servings.

HEART-HEALTHY BAKED BLUEBERRY AND ALMOND OATMEAL

BY JAMILA KHOKHAR (PIP & LITTLE BLUE).

Even though it feels like you're indulging and eating cake for breakfast, this baked oatmeal recipe is actually packed full of blueberries, rolled oats, soy milk, and almonds, all proven to be good for your heart and low in fat to boot! Kids are sure to love this breakfast dish too and it will keep them fueled for hours.

INGREDIENTS

1/2 cup margarine (plus extra for greasing)
2/3 cup soft brown sugar
2 eggs, lightly whisked
2 cups soy milk
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
3 cups rolled oats

1/2 cup ground almonds
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 pinch salt
1 1/2 cups fresh blueberries
1/3 cup flaked almonds

DIRECTIONS

Preheat your oven to 375° and grease a 9" round pan.

In a large bowl, cream together the margarine and sugar.

Mix in the eggs, milk, and vanilla.

Stir in the oatmeal, ground almonds, baking powder, cinnamon, and salt until all ingredients are incorporated.

Arrange 1 cup of blueberries on the bottom of your baking dish. Spoon the oatmeal mixture on top, even the surface out, and scatter the flaked almonds and remaining blueberries on top.

Bake for 40–45 minutes or until the cake is springy to touch and golden on top.

Serve warm with extra fruit or soy milk or just on its own!



What Is Your Love Language?

BY CHELLE COCHRAN AND JAYNIE FAWLEY.

1. What cheers you up on a bad day?

- a. A surprise phone call from your mom saying how proud she is of you.
- b. MomBoss buys you your favorite drink from Starbucks.
- c. Your roommate does all the dishes without being reminded that it's her turn!
- d. Extra snuggles with your charge at story time.

3. You were home sick with an awful kid-borne illness. What would you like to receive on your first day back to work?

- a. A surprise text from MomBoss offering more time off to fully recuperate.
- b. A thoughtful card and flowers from the kiddos to help brighten your day.
- c. A homemade chicken noodle soup that MomBoss made just for you.
- d. A nice, lazy day of warm snuggles from your charges.

5. Congrats, it's your Nanniversary! How would you like your nanny family to recognize your special day?

- a. A photo book that captures all your special nanny moments.
- b. A gift card to your favorite fancy restaurant along with a bonus.
- c. A "No Housework" week from your bosses, where they promise to keep up on dishes and laundry so you don't have to!
- d. A special outing with your charges and your bosses.

2. Your four-year-old charge has had great behavior. How do you reward her?

- a. A day filled with never-ending hugs and praise.
- b. A special gift, like that new doll she's been eyeing.
- c. Help her clean and organize her playroom, her least favorite chore.
- d. Let her choose all the activities for a nanny-and-me evening.

4. What's your ideal birthday gift from your NannyFamily?

- a. A nice card with a note of gratitude.
- b. A gift card to your favorite store, fancy cupcakes, and an adorable handmade gift from your charges.
- c. DadBoss offers to take your car in to get the new tires he keeps reminding you that you need—and he's going to pay for it!
- d. A gift card to a bed and breakfast with instructions to spend a long weekend with your boyfriend.

6. It's your MomBoss's birthday and you've come up with the perfect gift:

- a. A beautiful card with a touching personal letter tucked inside.
- b. A fancy gift basket of her favorite snacks and beauty products.
- c. A coupon for free babysitting so she and DadBoss can have a date night.
- d. A day with just the two of you—lunch, pedicures, and a chick flick!

7. You've been thinking about finding a new nanny position for the past few weeks. What is the final straw that makes you ready to hand in your resignation?

- a. Your MomBoss criticized you *again* on the way you do her daughter's hair.
- b. They know it's your Nanniversary but there's no gift or recognition.
- c. They leave all the dirty dishes and laundry after a messy weekend for you *again*.
- d. Your MomBoss expects you to cancel an already-planned and paid for trip because they can't find backup care.

What Are Your Results?

Mostly A's: Words of Affirmation

You love to hear how much you are appreciated. Praise from others means a lot to you. You like to feel needed, wanted, and special, but not everyone shows their appreciation the same way. Don't get too bummed if your bosses or partner doesn't "love" you the way you want them to. Focus on how they may be showing their appreciation in other ways.

Mostly B's: Giving and Receiving Gifts

You feel most appreciated when you are given gifts or thoughtful items selected just for you. Focus on really listening whenever your bosses tell you they're thankful to have you; this memory can last longer than a lifetime.

Mostly C's: Acts of Service

Easing your burden is the way to your heart. You also show love to your NannyFamily by going beyond your job duties. Be careful not to grow resentful if your MomBoss doesn't notice or appreciate your efforts. Figure out her love language and enjoy the different ways she shows her love!

Mostly D's: Quality Time

For you, nothing says "I love you" like having someone's full attention. You show your love by being fully present without distractions. You may feel jilted if your bosses multitask when you talk to them. Don't be afraid to ask for time at the end of each day to sit down to talk about the day with as few distractions as possible.

Show Your Sweetie Some Love

BY KELLIE KNAPP.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MACKENZIE KEOUGH.

DATE NIGHT!

I get giddy every time I hear those two words. Who doesn't love date night?! I don't care if you have been married 50 years or are on your first date ever. Date night is by far the most anticipated night of the week for couples everywhere, or at least it should be! If date night doesn't give you the "giddies" then you are in need of some silly string and slime. Have you run out of good ideas? Do you go to the same place every week and feel stuck in a rut? Here are some ideas that might help make those boring date nights a thing of the past.



PRANKS

I'm telling you, nothing says date night like sneaking around together and pulling a prank on someone you know. Of course the prank itself should be safe and legal. Some of my best date nights were spent laughing hysterically in the car after toilet papering a friend's home or leaving a huge inflatable SpongeBob on a family member's porch. Look deep into your inner junior high child; I know you can come up with something!

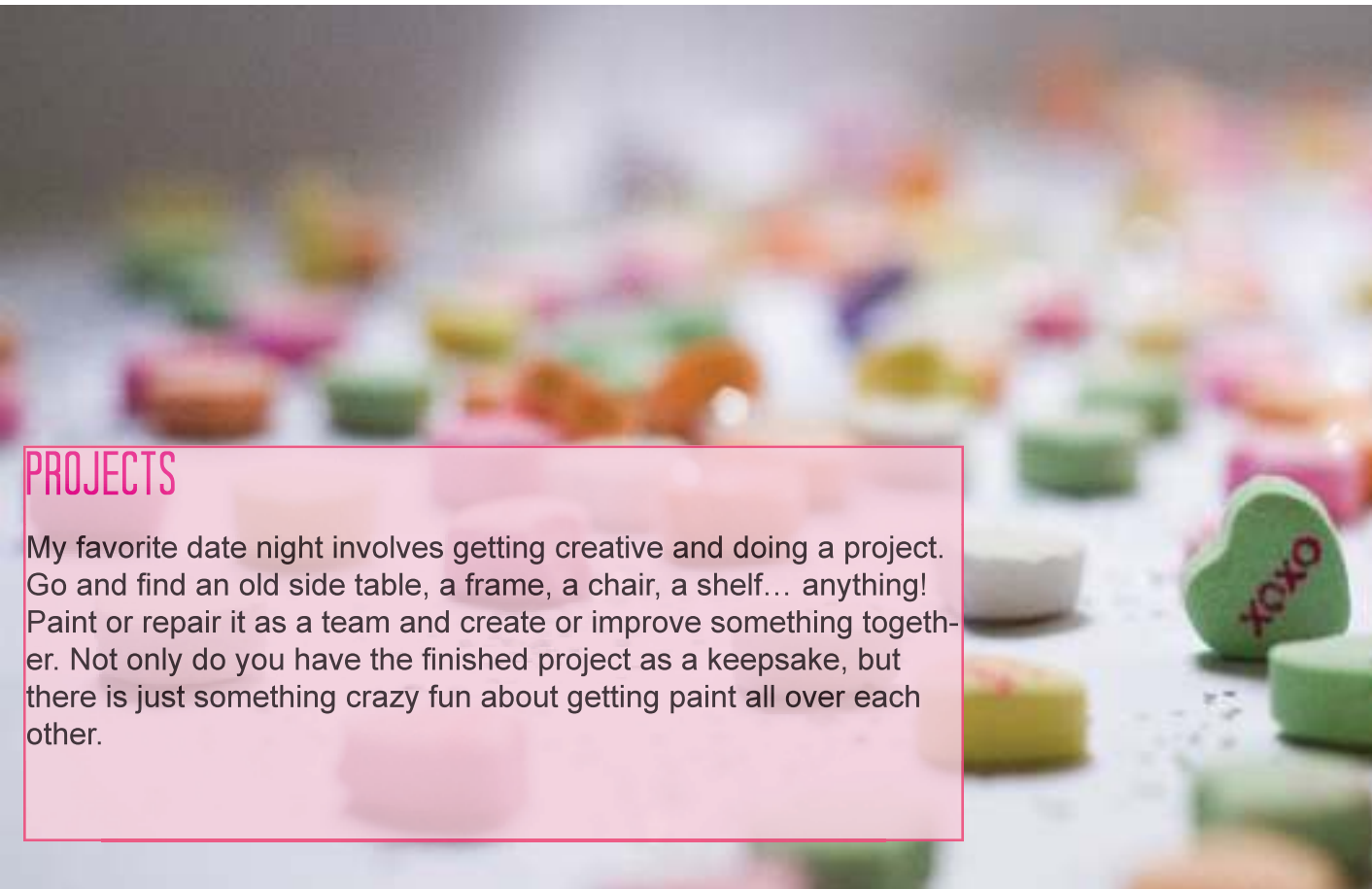
DOLLAR STORE, GARAGE SALES, VINTAGE STORES, SECOND-HAND STORES

What do these places have in common? Cheap, weird, unusual fun. Your mission, should you accept it: you each have \$3 to spend at the dollar store. What can you find to make your date night fun and entertaining? Trust me, a bottle of silly string, a can of slime, and a yo-yo can make for a pretty entertaining night. And the rest of those stores? Treasure hunt for the weirdest outfit, the ugliest sweater, or the cutest

hat. Try on your finds and take some pictures; you just went exploring! (These are all also great places to find props for pranking.)

THEMES

Do a themed night each week. One week is Mexican, another Chinese, and another Irish. The options are endless; it could be your favorite sports team, super hero, cartoon, actor... You name it. Rent movies, eat food, and dress up following your theme for that night.



PROJECTS

My favorite date night involves getting creative and doing a project. Go and find an old side table, a frame, a chair, a shelf... anything! Paint or repair it as a team and create or improve something together. Not only do you have the finished project as a keepsake, but there is just something crazy fun about getting paint all over each other.

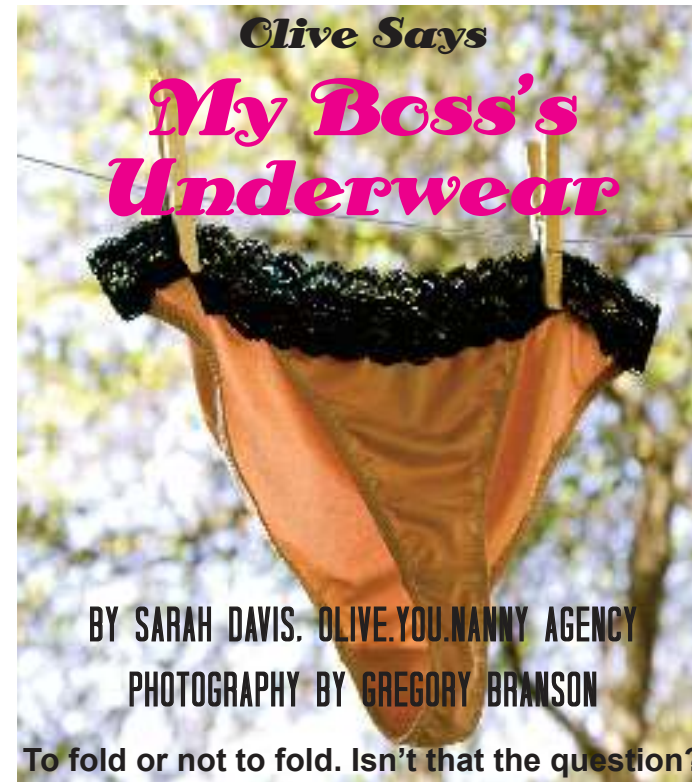
BUCKET LIST

It's time to grab some paper and write the top 10 things that each of you would like to do before you "kick the bucket". If possible, try to do one or two of those things. If it's not, find an alternative. Here is my favorite example. My brother-in-law always loved trains when he was a child, so my sister surprised him one day by transforming their apartment into a train station with train tracks all over the floor. Sounds a little corny, I know, but it was also insanely romantic.

OTHER IDEAS

Go to your local card store and read your favorite cards for each other. You don't have to spend a cent! Grab your favorite drink and watch the people around you; you learn a lot about yourself and each other doing this. Head to a bookstore and pick out your favorite title and show each other what that would be. Go to the humane society and check out the animals together. There is also nothing like watching two monkeys at the zoo going at it to make for a memorable date night. See? So many options, and you don't even need to stop by the ATM for most of them. Date night. Don't let those two words bore you. Get creative, get silly, and try new things together!

Get ready to have some fun. Trust me. I've been going on date nights with the same guy for 18 years and I'm still giddy!



I can't tell you how many times I've folded my boss's underwear wondering if this was inappropriate. It wasn't the occasional "can you fold the wash in the dryer"; it was more like "we want you to do all the family laundry". Undies and all. At first, it was no biggie. The occasional panties were okay, but when it started getting down to Mom's racy thongs and Dad's tighty whities, I just couldn't get past the fact that this was part of my job. Or was

it? I often wondered if this was standard in the nanny industry or if I just needed to suck it up and take one for the team. After all, I loved this family. I was seriously in love with the kids. I thought about compromise and all the times they've gone out of their way to do things for me: the hugs, the thanks, the random gift cards to Anthro. I decided it was time to pull up my big girl undies and carry on.



Ask a Nanny

BY STEPHANIE FELZENBERG OF BE THE BEST NANNY NEWSLETTER.

Dear Stephanie,

My eight-year-old charge has developed a crush on me. It has gone beyond sweetly drawn pictures to the point where I notice him gawking at me when he thinks I'm not looking. I know he's going through puberty and I don't want to break his heart, but this has got to stop. It just makes me feel uncomfortable. How do I respond appropriately?

Sincerely,

Crushed and Confused

Dear Crushed and Confused,

I think it is normal for kids to have crushes and they are typically short lived and blow over within a few weeks. But you do need to set boundaries and make it clear to the child that there is no chance your relationship will ever become romantic.

It is okay to tell the child that you are glad that he likes you and that you like him too, but you work as his nanny and are hired to guide and protect him, not be his girlfriend.

Keep him busy with sports, afterschool activities, and plenty of play dates with other kids his own age so he won't have the time or energy to fantasize about you.

Finally, bring it up to the parents and ask how they would like you to handle it. You want to make the parents aware of the crush so they know you are a professional who doesn't want to engage in any inappropriate behavior.

It will all work out!

Stephanie



Three Not-So-Little Words

BY KEYANNA BARR. PHOTOGRAPHY BY AMANDA PFEIFFER.

What is love? It's probably one of the most difficult things to define. Can it be seen, felt, bought, lost?

There are many schools of thought on the topic of nannies and their charges expressing love for one another. Some are all for it, believing that all children need to be told they are loved by their caregivers. Some are against it, feeling that a nanny telling a charge they love them is overstepping a professional boundary. Others are neutral. Whatever the stance, the common ground lies in the fact the children deserve to know that they are safe, cared for, and yes, even loved. Perhaps this is shown with a hug, a gift, a meal, or a note. Or perhaps you just say it, those three little words: "I love you".

It sounds simple, right? But for some nannies, "just saying it" isn't really an option. A jealous MomBoss who fears her child will become more attached to the caregiver could frighten a nanny into repressing her warmth. In such situations, what's right, what's wrong, and what's the nanny who finds herself in this tangled-up dilemma to do?

Charlotte Hilliker, a veteran in the Pennsylvania nanny industry, says it. She finds herself expressing her love for charges more openly and frequently when the charges are young.

Leila Kubli, a nanny in Arkansas, says it too. She says that she takes every opportunity she gets to tell her charges that she loves them. "It's import-

ant to me that if anything ever happened, that's one of the last things they would've heard from me."

So does Meghan Winner, a New Jersey nanny, but she has never done so specifically in front of the parents. "I always felt I would be offending them somehow."

What do some parents have to say?

Renita Duncan, a mom to one, says that she prefers that her daughter not "routinely end the day with 'I love you's' to her teacher." Instead she prefers the sentiment "see you later" to limit confusion. Her husband Derek says that he doesn't mind unless he were to see his daughter getting too attached.

Kara Braudis, a mother of two, agrees and says that while it is nice for her boys to know "a broad circle of love, it can be confusing when the relationship has to end."

When children are newly verbal, it's possible that the first time they use words to express love will not be to a parent.

Jamie Pruitt, a mom of one from Illinois, offers another perspective. She says, "you want your caregiver to love your child, but saying it is something different. I can't put my finger on it but it just is. In my heart when I hear you say 'I love you' to my child, and especially if she says it back, a little bit of Momma Bear kicks in."

Tara Lukehart, a mom of one,

says that the first time she heard her son say "I love you" to his caregiver it didn't shock her. "It made me jealous for about a minute, but it showed me that he felt safe and loved. It assured me that he was in the best hands possible when I can't be there."

Kasi Mousadakos, a mother of two, says she thinks that it's "natural" for her girls to express love to their caregivers, "especially since they spend so much time with them and form a bond."

Kim Proctor, mom to one, agrees. She says it's "comforting to know that he loves his caregiver. To me it means he is happy."

As Winner stated, "everyone

needs to know they are loved." Perhaps how they come to know that love isn't what we should be worried about at all.

It is likely that a finite answer to this conundrum will never be agreed upon, but most people will agree on one thing. We need love. All of us. Love matters. Love wins. Love never fails. All you need is love.

The dilemma here? Who should be telling children that they love them and who should not? Where do you stand on this issue? Would you ever say "I love you" to your charge in front of your employer? How would you respond if you sensed jealousy from your boss? These questions aren't so easily answered, are they?

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Do New Year's Resolutions Weaken Your Resolve?

A CLEAR LOOK AT NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS AND HOW YOU CAN MAKE THEM LAST ALL YEAR

BY REBECCA KUJAWSKI.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MACKENZIE KEOUGH AND CRYSTAL BRISBIN

Everyone around you is shouting, "Nine! Eight! Seven! Six!..." and as you raise your champagne glass to the New Year and kiss your partner, you can't help but think that this year is going to be different.

Never mind that for the past four years you've made the same resolutions over and over again—to lose those pesky ten pounds, to start getting more fruit in your diet, to read more books, and to call your grandmother in Florida more—with no success. This year you're convinced that you'll join that gym and buy apples at the supermarket, following through on all the promises you make to yourself at midnight. But will you?

In order to solve this conundrum, *Nanny Magazine* asked experts from all over the country to find out the best ways to be the happiest, healthiest you, not just this January, but for all twelve months of the year.

RESOLVE TO KEEP YOUR RESOLVE!

"From what I see from my clients, people don't follow through with resolutions," says Dr. Lisa Kaplin, Psy.D, a certified women's life coach from Chicago who runs several programs to help women stay strong and inspired. Many times, when someone makes resolutions for themselves, there is no sense of urgency. We want to write a novel, for example, but not right *now*. We constantly make excuses for ourselves, and the resolutions we wrote down in our notebooks stay there and don't translate into our lives.

So how do you get yourself to follow through? "Get really clear on *why* you want this goal," says Dr. Kaplin. "Set up small, manageable steps to work toward that goal and tackle it one piece at a time."

Motivation is the key here. If you want to get fit but have no motivation to get off the couch, then healthier habits are unlikely to form. If you would like to quit smoking, but your health just doesn't matter that much to you, then you're going to have a hard time finding a reason not to buy that next pack of cigarettes. Keep your motivation close to your heart because without it change is unlikely to happen.

Imagine this scenario. You've been sawing away on that elliptical at the gym for three weeks now, and you're feeling spectacular! That means you can take a break for a week, right? So you go home, eat macaroni and cheese, and watch *Sex in the City* reruns. It happens to the best of us. We tend to feel like we've been working ourselves so hard that we deserve a break from our new goal. The sad news is that we won't be able to pick up right where we left off most of the time. Resolutions are hard work, and mac and cheese is *much* easier.

RESOLVE TO BE EMOTIONALLY SMART

It surely doesn't help that we make these New Year's resolutions during the darkest, dreariest days of the year. People in the winter often become drowsy, unmotivated, and feel down in the dumps. How can we hope to keep our resolutions when we're struggling to wake up in the morning? Kaplin gave us some tips on how to stay emotionally strong throughout the winter.

"The best way to combat the winter blues is to get up, get dressed, and get out," she says. Kaplin herself is familiar with the long, cold Chicago winters. "A lot of mothers and caregivers will stay in pajama-like clothes, but when we dress down, it makes us feel tired. Take a shower, brush your hair, take care of yourself. Stay on a schedule. Take walks, get exercise, and meditate. Do anything that helps reduce stress and increase dopamine

in order to feel better and gain more energy."

Kaplin reminds us of the all-too-common situation of wintertime depression, also known as seasonal affective disorder. Although sometimes exposure to sunshine can help improve your mood, it is imperative that you talk to a doctor if you are feeling especially groggy during the winter months to figure out what the necessary steps are toward optimal emotional health.

The winter blues aren't the only emotional factors that we deal with throughout the year. As childcare providers, nannies are often deeply emotionally involved in their work. How can you make sure that you stay emotionally in tune throughout the year?

"Women are notorious for feeling like they're never good enough and experiencing guilt," says Kaplin. "Functional guilt is when we feel guilty about something we can change. It's important to change what

you can and to let go of what bothers you and what you don't have control over. Maybe we feel guilty that we can't see our parents enough, but we can't do anything about it. Dysfunctional guilt is feeling bad over something you can't control. For example, you might feel guilty that the child you nanny was crying when you left work today, but there's nothing you can do about it."

At times, guilt can be a call to action and to change what we must in our lives. Other times, we experience guilt that we can't do anything about, and Kaplin reminds us to just let go. Perhaps that could be a New Year's resolution for childcare providers. You will experience guilt when your charges throw a temper tantrum or when you reflect back on something you could have done better at work. However, it is imperative to focus on the positive and disregard the negative self-talk that gets you down.

NEW YEARS RESOLUTIONS FROM REAL NANNIES

"I don't make New Year's resolutions. I think that if you want to change something in your life, then just work on it all year long. Why just start doing it at New Year's?"
Angela from Ohio

"My resolutions for 2014 will be to have more personal time, saying no to people, and reading my Bible fully."
Kate from Australia

"Every year since I can remember, my New Year's resolution seemed to be the same as everyone else's: "lose weight". However, last year, my resolution was different. It was to "have more joy". I am still trying to keep it. Let's face it, sometimes being more joyful is difficult. I think it'll be a continual process that lasts far beyond the New Year."
Chelsea from Pennsylvania

"My New Year's resolution will definitely be to actively explore my interests and hobbies. I want to get certified in more areas that I am interested in, such as cosmetology school or becoming a licensed astrologist. Last year, my resolution was to have better eating habits such as ordering less when out and practicing clean eating. I lost 15 pounds!"
Amanda from New Jersey

Photo Credit: Mackenzie Keough



Kaplin finds another very common emotional issue in women: the inability to say "no" and set limits. Many caregivers have the tendency to put everyone else first, making them miserable, when in fact, if you want to be take better care of other people, you need to also be able to take care of yourself.

"The key is setting limits," says Kaplin. "Weigh out what it will cost to say yes and what the benefits are of saying no. We want people to like us, but trying to please everyone makes us overwhelmed and resentful. We're not doing them or ourselves any favors."

So nannies, for 2014, resolve to set limits, whether it's in defense of your valuable free time, your wallet, or your happiness.

RESOLVE TO BE MONEY SMART

The paycheck is important, but most nannies aren't in the field for the money. Nannies are a group of people who love their jobs, but let's face it, the childcare profession has never been near the top of the list of careers with high pay. This being the case, how can nannies resolve to be money smart this year? *Nanny Magazine* consulted Kathleen Webb, a household employment tax expert, financial advisor, and president and cofounder of HomeWork Solutions, a company that provides payroll and tax services to families employing household workers.

"First of all, everyone should save *something* from every paycheck," says Webb. "The easiest way to do this is to set up a separate savings account and have some finite amount of every paycheck deposited there every payroll." Whether it's \$25 a week or \$200, Webb urges nannies to pick a number and just do it.

"Hand in hand with this 'pay yourself first' philosophy is that you must live within your means. Credit card debt, excessive car payments, or other debt must be avoided at all costs. One might *want* the latest iPhone, but do you *need* it? Ditto those fabulous shoes, that new camera, and all the other things the popular media spends billions in advertising trying to convince us to spend money on." The fact of the matter is that we are all tempted to buy things that we don't actually need with money we don't have, but it's important to stay away from the trap of materialism this year. Your wallet will thank you.

Webb also has cautionary advice for nannies who are being paid under the table, a situation that she urges all nannies to avoid if they can. "Accepting a job under the table is always a losing proposition for a nanny, no matter the temptation of a tax-free income," she says. "The obvious loss is the benefit of unemployment insurance when the job ends."

Getting paid under the table also impacts nannies in less obvious ways. "The availability

MORE RESOLUTIONS FROM REAL NANNIES

“Last year I didn’t have any resolutions. I’ve been so bad at keeping them in the past that I opted out. Whenever I make resolutions, they’re typically consistent from year to year, which I’m thinking means that I’m not great at keeping them!”
Liz from New York

“Last year, my New Year’s resolution was to get back in school and focus hard on my studies and make good grades while still being a nanny. I had to take online and night classes, but I came out with all A’s and B’s!”
Jessica from South Carolina

of credit for larger purchases and the interest rate you pay for that credit are a factor of both your income and your financial history,” says Webb. When it looks on paper like you haven’t had a job, it isn’t going to be fun for you to try to buy a house or get a new car. Stuck in a situation in which you’re being paid under the table? Perhaps claiming taxes will be on your list of resolutions this year.

“Sadly, changing this situation almost always involves changing jobs,” says Webb, “and finding a family that shares your priorities.” Without a doubt, many nannies will find themselves wanting to transition

to being paid on the books, but isn’t that what the New Year is about anyway? Maybe it won’t be such a bad thing to have a change of pace, especially if it means protecting your financial stability.

“Anyone who is willing to invest the emotional energy and fiscal discipline to build financial equity and who takes the necessary actions to live a healthy lifestyle will be well prepared to deal with life’s financial curveballs,” says Webb. For those of us whose wallets need a little tender loving care, the year 2014 is a perfect time to start financially preparing for the future.

Whether your focus

this New Year will be on health, wellness, or what’s in your wallet, one thing is for certain: instead of writing down a list of New Year’s resolutions in a notebook that you’ll barely consult, form daily habits that are sure to change your life one day at a time.

Even if you do falter on your New Year’s resolutions again this year, it’s never too late. Starting some new goals in the middle of July? That’s okay! The rules are an illusion anyways.

Photo Credit: Brian A. Taylor

Ask an Agency

MIMI BRADY OF WESTSIDE NANNIES

Mimi Brady, Director of Westside Nannies in San Francisco, weighs in on difficult families, unrealistic expectations, and mental health screenings.

Q. DO YOU FIND THAT IT IS MORE OFTEN THE NANNIES OR THE FAMILIES WHO HAVE UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS?

A. In truth, it’s a 50/50 split. We are fortunate to predominate-ly work with both candidates and clients who have realistic expectations or are happy to listen to our advice in order to optimize the search process. However, when we *do* come across unrealistic expectations, it comes from both sides of the fence. For example, a client may assume that a nanny is willing to work many more hours per week than a single person can handle long term, or a nanny may expect that she will earn a much higher rate than what the market will allow. In either of these cases, it is our goal as agents to communicate the facts of the matter in the most positive and effective manner and to redirect expectations to help everyone accomplish their goals and find the most suitable fit!

Photo Credit: Crystal Brisbin

Q. DO YOU SCREEN FAMILIES FOR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH IN A SIMILAR WAY IN WHICH YOU SCREEN NANNIES?

A. We screen neither candidates nor clients for physical or mental health; screenings of such sort are illegal on both ends. That is, we are not able to ask a candidate about physical health or if they have any medical conditions, nor can we ask them for a mental or psychological evaluation. We do, however, run background checks, call references, and require all of our placed nanny candidates to be fingerprinted through a state program called Trustline. We screen our clients through extensive placement consultations to understand each family’s situation and needs, and we seek to learn what the family’s history has been with past nannies or household employees.

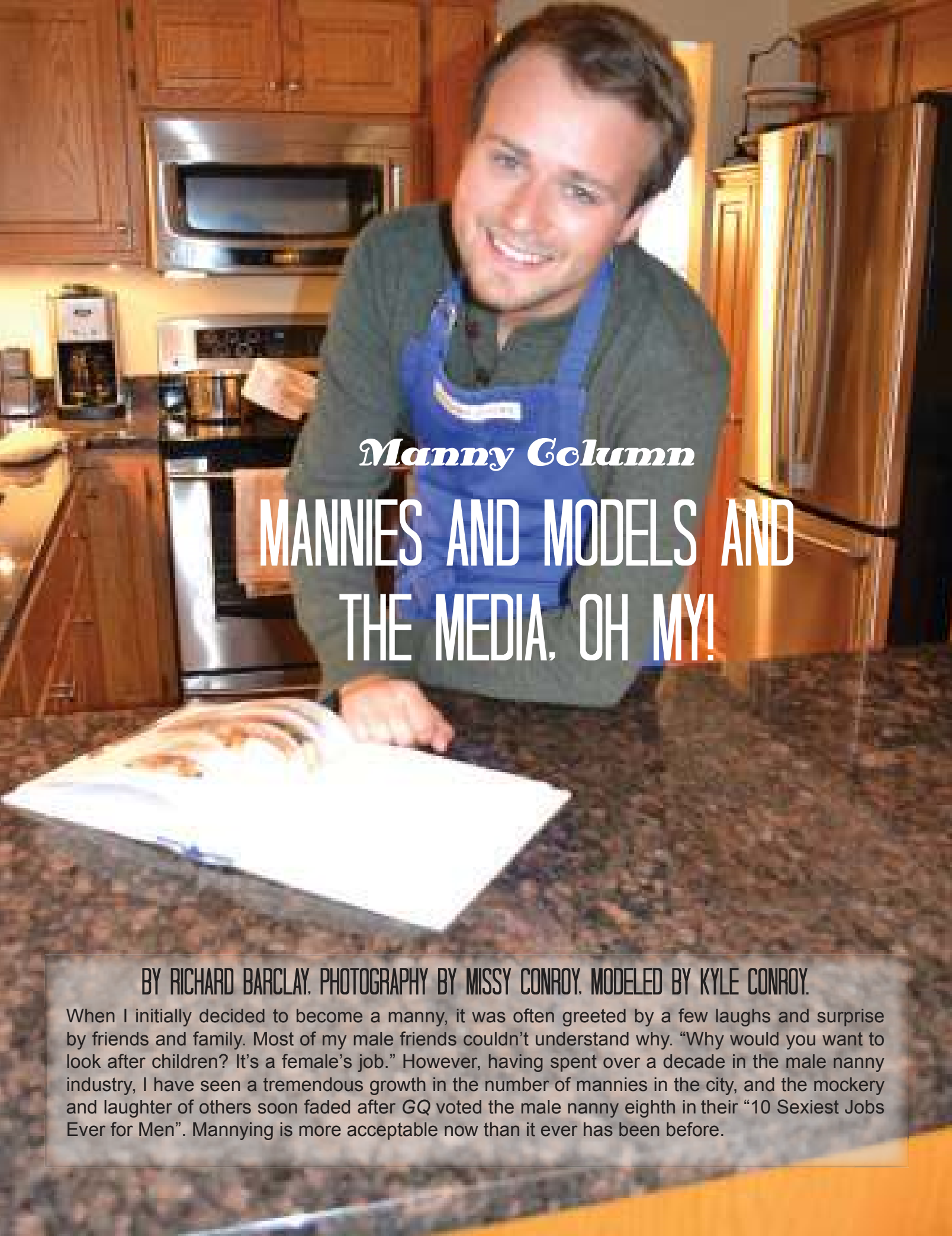
Q. DO YOU EVER TURN POTENTIAL FAMILY CLIENTS AWAY IF YOU FEEL WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO WORK FOR?

A. This is something we get asked a lot! Plain and simple, the answer is no. Why? Because what may seem like a “difficult” family to one nanny might be the perfect family for another. And as agents, it is our job and belief that there is the perfect nanny for every family, and the perfect family for every nanny. Sometimes we place jobs that are demanding in terms of hours, travel, and general duties, but we are always up front with candidates that the job itself may be difficult. Our goal is to find our nannies career-level positions, to find our clients career-oriented nannies, and to leave any opinions or judgments at the door!

DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION YOU WANT TO ASK AN AGENCY?

EMAIL INFO@NANNYMAG.COM.





Manny Column

MANNIES AND MODELS AND THE MEDIA, OH MY!

BY RICHARD BARCLAY. PHOTOGRAPHY BY MISSY CONROY. MODELED BY KYLE CONROY.

When I initially decided to become a nanny, it was often greeted by a few laughs and surprise by friends and family. Most of my male friends couldn't understand why. "Why would you want to look after children? It's a female's job." However, having spent over a decade in the male nanny industry, I have seen a tremendous growth in the number of nannies in the city, and the mockery and laughter of others soon faded after *GQ* voted the male nanny eighth in their "10 Sexiest Jobs Ever for Men". Nannying is more acceptable now than it ever has been before.



Despite what anyone may have thought about my professional choice, I loved my job. I landed on my feet for my first position, working with two boys (6 and 8), sons of a famous actress. My role was very much what I expected, getting the kids up for school and helping make breakfast and walking them to school and whatnot. I would return home and help with housework and cleaning, the normal everyday stuff. I would get a bit of time to myself some days and go to the gym. At 3:00, I would pick the boys up from school and we would do their homework first and then we would go to the park and play football or have a bike ride. On our return I would make them a quick dinner, always organic. The boys would then share a quick bath, brush their teeth, and settle down for bed when their parents would read them a story. It was a very relaxed atmosphere and the boys were always smiling, very polite, and calm. I loved this job and was very sad to leave when after a year they left London to move to Los Angeles.

In 2008, many years after leaving my beloved first position, I started Manny Poppins, a male nanny agency in London. Over the years we have found that a lot of families in London can be a little prejudiced: the sporty, fit, good-looking guys get snapped up instantly. It's quite fashionable to have a young good-looking guy pick the kids up from school. A few of our nannies are part-time models as well in addition to being nannies. Many of them have worked for brands such as Abercrombie & Fitch. This seems to work in their favor; we have no problem finding jobs for *them*. I think that part of the reasoning behind this is that if someone is seen to be physically strong and leads a health-conscious lifestyle then it gives the parents peace of mind that their child is in strong, safe hands if anything bad were to occur.

Parents are also keen to encourage their children to stick to the ever-increasing organic lifestyle of eating whole foods and getting plenty of exercise. Despite the potential prejudice on the part of families, we at the agency treat all male nannies the same and are strongly against discrimination; if the personality, qualifications, and references match our requirements, then Manny Poppins welcomes them on our books. However, the inclination to choose a handsome and fit male nanny (with all the right childcare attributes, of course) only seems to be becoming more prominent in London.

It almost seems like your average nanny can't win. Male nannies have it rough initially for choosing to work in a female-dominated field, and once they've overcome the obstacles imposed on them by their family and friends, they need to worry about the prejudices of the potential Manny Family hiring them based on their looks or physique rather than their qualifications. Despite this prejudice within prejudice, Manny Poppins seeks to ensure that all of our nannies are fairly represented and cared for, and we are eager to see the nanny industry grow and begin to establish the respect it deserves.



Photo Credit: Rachel Mason

Loving a Child Who Is Not Your Own

BY MICHELLE LAROWE. PHOTOGRAPHY BY RACHEL MASON AND BECCA DUVAL.

When you sign up to be a nanny, it's the only job you go into where the ultimate promotion is being let go because you're no longer needed. If you've done your job well, that is. And anyone who's ever been a nanny for any significant amount of time knows that you simply can't do the job well without investing your time, your energy, your talent, and most importantly, your heart.

But putting your heart into your work isn't such a new concept and it's not one unique to nannies. Consider Michelangelo. You can't look at the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel and not see his heart poured out in paint. And you can't read Christopher Marlowe's "A Red, Red Rose" without feeling his heart beat for the one he adores.

These creations are expressions of the creator's love, without question, and they've become gifts to the world. It's not so different from the children nannies care for, in a way: creations born out of

expressions of love, gifts given for the world to admire.

But unlike these masterpieces, the children nannies care for are living, breathing beings and they love back.

And they are not the nanny's creation.

IS LOVING SOMEONE ELSE'S CHILD REALLY POSSIBLE?

Sure, people love the works of a great artist, but can they love the artist's creation as much as the artist himself does?

There are different types of love: agape (unconditional love), philea (friendship), eros (romantic love), and storge (familial love). But can any of these types of love be measured? Does it have

to be?

A biological mother loves her biological children. The birth of the child doesn't define or cause the love; the love flows naturally from the parents' hearts and they choose to embrace it.

The adopted mother loves her adopted children. A piece of paper doesn't define or cause the love; it flows naturally from the parents' hearts and they choose to embrace it.

The nanny loves the children she cares for. A paycheck doesn't define or cause the love; it flows naturally from her caregiver's heart and that person chooses to embrace it.

Love isn't measured by miles. There's enough to go around. And love isn't required. It's a choice.

Colleen Jones, an occupational

therapist in a small-town public school system, former nanny, and mom to three boys adopted from Ethiopia defines the love she has for her children as being the same kind of love she has for her biological family.

But for some people, loving other people's children may not come so easily. "Some people may not have the capacity to love and care for other people's children. I love the children I nannied for. I love the children in my school. It's just different, mostly because of the long-term responsibility. I think some people are just capable of loving all children and others really just aren't," Jones says.

And that's what makes nannies different. Good nannies have the capacity to love children and the desire to put that love into practice. While it takes more than the love of children to be a good nanny, that's just where it

all starts.

GETTING PAID TO LOVE

All parents want their children to be well cared for. One of the things parents want most is to have a caregiver who is excited about spending time with their child. And that excitement is something that good nannies can't fake.

No nanny shuts her love off for the children when she's off duty. In fact, nannies go on to love the children they've cared for long after they've left a position. You either love the children or you don't, and when you do, that love is long lasting and far reaching.

"When you shut the lights off at the end of the day you don't turn your heart off too," said nanny Gael Ann Dow, a Massachusetts live-in nanny with



Photo Credit: Rachel Mason

over 28 years of experience. After spending 8 years with one family in a position that ended in 1998, she still celebrates holidays with her former charges. “I’ve spent 22 years celebrating Christmas with their family, more Christmases than I’ve spent celebrating with my own. Over the years I went from nanny, to favorite aunt, to friend. We have grown like a family and I love them like my own.”



Photo Credit: Becca Duval

DEALING WITH PARENTAL JEALOUSY

Children and nannies who share a healthy long-term relationship have something important in common. They have parents who welcome their nannies into their family and encourage the development of a healthy bond. “Parents deserve credit for setting their hearts aside and allowing other people to love their children” Dow says.

Dr. Jeanne Segal, author of *The Language of Emotional Intelligence* and cocreator of www.helpguide.org, seems to agree that welcoming their nannies into their family and encouraging them form a healthy bond with their children is important. In a recent interview with www.eNannysource.com, she shared that parents should not be threatened by the bond chil-

dren and their nannies share. She says that they should thank their lucky stars that their nanny is helping to create a loving human being out of their child.

But sometimes dealing with jealousy is easier said than done.

“You can call it jealousy or you can call it insecurity. A new mom who is not really 100% sure of what she’s doing can be intimidated by an experienced nanny who can come in, take over, and have all the answers,” says Glenda Propst, 1991 International Nanny Association (INA) Nanny of the Year and founder of Nanny Transitions, a support network dedicated to helping nannies through the transition of leaving a family.

“Every woman and every mom is different, but in every position there is a line that nannies can step over from doing the job to threatening the mother’s

role. With experience, nannies learn the boundaries, learn how to gauge mom’s reaction, and learn to develop a gentle approach,” says Propst.

Broaching the topic of jealousy during the interview can also help to get parents thinking ahead and help to set the tone for the relationship. A mom who doesn’t really want to go back to work but feels she needs to in order to stay in her career may feel resentful of the time her nanny spends with her child and may be more threatened by her nanny than a mom who knows going back to work will make her a better mom,” Propst says. “When parents are presented with the opportunity to explore their feelings it gives them a chance to think about how they may feel rather than simply reacting when they experience a new feeling.”

But sometimes nannies can get jealous too. “Sometimes nannies spend so much time with the children they desire to be loved more,” cautions Marcia Hall, 2011 INA Nanny of the Year, adoptive and foster mom, and owner of Strong Roots Family Coaching. “A nanny’s role is really to encourage the parent relationship and to reassure the parents that she wants what is best for the child, and that loving her parents most is best,” she continues.

“And it’s okay for moms to be jealous. As a mom, I know it’s normal. Nannies can help ease feeling of jealousy by encourag-

ing the parental relationship and by helping moms to feel confident.”

Propst agrees. “Asking the mom how she thinks a problem should be solved and presenting possible solutions using resources like articles can help parents to feel more involved and secure in the role.” Sometimes it’s easier for a mom to swallow advice given in an article than spouted from the mouth of a nanny who appears to have all the answers.

NANNY TURNED MOM

The art of being a nanny is loving the children like they are

your own while knowing that they aren’t.

“As a nanny you learn how much you can love the children in your care without being devastated when the job inevitably ends. I still think of those kids as ‘my kids’ but now I have my own family, so it’s a bit different,” Hall says.

“I certainly love the children I’ve worked with, but being a mom is different. I can give my own children every single ounce of energy because I know they won’t be leaving me.”



Photo Credit: Becca Duval

The Diaper Bag



KANSAS CITY NANNY **CAITLYN DUNSFORD** IS A FULL-TIME COLLEGE STUDENT WITH A **HECTIC SCHEDULE**. HER DAYS ARE FULL OF RUNNING AROUND CAMPUS, CHASING KIDDOS, AND DOING HOMEWORK. FIND OUT WHAT **LIFE-SAVING GOODIES** SHE STASHES IN HER DIAPER BAG THAT SHE COULDN'T LIVE WITHOUT!

In this edition of The Diaper Bag, we sneak a peak into Caitlyn's bag. Caitlyn is in her second year as an early childhood education student at University of Missouri Kansas City. She is a nanny for 8 children split between two families. Balancing her role as a student with her role as an active nanny and babysitter is sometimes a

challenge, but one thing Caitlyn knows for sure is that her nanny bag, a Baggu Duck bag, can totally come in handy both in the classroom and on the job.

"My nanny bag is really important to me because it allows me to be completely prepared wherever I go," Caitlyn says. Thanks to balancing in her

career with running around campus, cramming for exams, and squeezing in homework, Caitlyn knows what it's like to be busy and how important being prepared can be to alleviate the stress of any curveballs life is known to throw. "I feel so much more organized when all of my important things are in the same place!" she says

Do you want your superstar nanny bag featured in an upcoming issue? Email info@nannymag.com to find out how!

MUST-HAVE TOILETRIES

One of the families Caitlyn works for has a pool, and she work long hours. These health and beauty essentials are clutch. Keep them in a plastic zipper bag for easy see-through organization.

1. Aleve
2. Secret Outlast Completely Clean Deodorant
3. Paul Mitchell Express Style Fast Form De-frizzer
4. Hawaiian Tropic Silk Hydration Broad Spectrum SPF30



ON-THE-GO SNACKS

Being busy with schoolwork, running around campus, and juggling the schedules of two families means that packing snacks is the smart thing to do. Do what Caitlyn does and bring along snacks that are low in calories and high in fiber to satisfy you and your charges on those seemingly endless days. She also makes sure to avoid snacks that have nuts or any trace of nuts as many of the kids she works with have allergies. Keep this in mind when packing your own snacks!

1. Apple and/or Orange
2. Cinnamon Chex
3. Welch's Fruit Snacks
4. Water in Contigo Thermos



PRODUCTIVITY NECESSITIES

Caitlyn's bag is as jam-packed as her schedule, so she carries a "Nanny Binder" at all times, complete with her calendar, family profiles, release and consent forms, and time sheets to stay on track. Other must haves:

1. Spare phone charger for Galaxy 4S
2. Kindle or a book for nap time
3. Pete the Cat Children's Book
4. Library card





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