

NANNY MAGAZINE

SPRING 2026

10 TIPS
FOR
RAISING A
RESILIENT
GENERATION

HOW TO
AVOID
BURNOUT

ETIQUETTE FOR
CAREER NANNIES

ALL ABOUT
WORLD
SCHOOLING

FROM
NANNY TO
FAMILY
SUPPORT
SPECIALIST

CREATING CONSISTENCY
BETWEEN NANNIES AND FAMILIES

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Nanny of the Year



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SPRING 2026





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Spring has always felt like a season of renewal—of fresh starts, new growth, and the quiet, steady work that happens beneath the surface before something beautiful blooms. In many ways, that mirrors the work we do as nannies.

The impact of a nanny is not always loud or visible in the moment. It's found in the early mornings, the consistent routines, the comforting presence during hard transitions, and the intentional choices we make each day to nurture, guide, and support the children in our care. It's in the patience we extend, the boundaries we hold, and the love we give freely—often without recognition, but never without purpose.

This season, we are celebrating the professionals who show up with heart and intention, even when the work is demanding. We are also taking a closer look at growth—what it means to evolve in your role, advocate for yourself and the profession, and continue learning in an ever-changing world. Whether you are new to nannying or a seasoned professional, there is always room to stretch, refine, and deepen your impact.

You'll find this issue filled with inspiration, practical tools, and stories that reflect the strength and diversity of our community. From navigating career advancement to fostering meaningful relationships with families, our goal is to equip and encourage you in every stage of your journey.

As you move through this season, I encourage you to pause and recognize the seeds you are planting each day. The work you do matters. The care you provide shapes futures. And even when the results aren't immediately visible, trust that something meaningful is taking root.

Here's to a season of growth—for the children we care for, the families we support, and ourselves.

Warmly,
Michelle LaRowe
Editor-in-Chief, Nanny Magazine



Michelle



Jami Dennis
ABC Nannies & Domestic, Inc.



Namrata Thakkar
Raising a Resilient Generation



Patricia Padilla
A Day in the Life

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All About World Schooling



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What it's Like to be a High Profile Nanny



Introducing the International
Nanny Association
Nanny of the Year

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EVENTS

Nanny Camp by Adventure Nannies hosts an annual camp each fall. To learn more, visit <https://adventurenannies.typeform.com/to/W56ZmxE/>.

The Nanny Holiday Ball, organized by My Nanny Circle, is held each December in New York. To learn more, visit <https://www.mynannycircle.com/>.

The US Nanny Association will hold its annual virtual conference in 2026. For nannies who are seeking to learn on their own time, the virtual event is a great opportunity for nanny-gear training. Visit <https://usnanny.org/conference/> to learn more.

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TO ADD YOUR EVENT



INDUSTRY CALENDAR

International Nanny Training Day will be held on April 11, 2026, with events held across the globe. National Nanny Training Day is held to recognize the needs of young children and to raise awareness of the positive correlation between nanny training and quality care. This national initiative is part of Week of the Young Child, an annual celebration sponsored by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. On Saturday, April 11, nannies from all over the globe will gather virtually to learn, be supported, and be inspired. Visit <https://nannypalooza.com/nntd.html/> to learn more.

NannyCON will be held on April 25 and 26, 2026, in London, England. NannyCON is a weekend of learning, self-care, professional development, networking, and connecting with others in a supportive and positive atmosphere. NannyCON is an international childcare and wellness professional development conference focusing on high-quality childcare professional development, self-care, wellness, and fun for nannies and childcare professionals. Visit <https://nannycon.net/> to learn more.

National Nanny Recognition Week (NNRW) is held each September. NNRW is a week during which families, businesses, and the media will be encouraged to focus on the positive aspects of the nanny profession, the important role nannies play in the lives of families, and the wonderful contributions they make in the lives of the children they care for. Local events are happening in cities across the world, including the United States, Europe, Australia, and Switzerland. From a neighborhood brunch to a mail campaign by nannies for nannies, NNRW's reach is far and wide. To learn more visit <https://nnrw.org/>.

Nannypalooza will be held October 2-4th, 2026 at the DoubleTree by Hilton Columbia, MD Twin Knolls Rd, Columbia, MD. Nannypalooza offers nannies a great way to learn new things, recharge their batteries, and network with others in their profession. Visit <https://nannypalooza.com/the-conference.html/> to learn more.

The Association of Premiere Nanny Agencies (APNA) Annual Conference will be held October 14-16, 2026 at the Grand Bohemian Charlotte in Charlotte, NC. Once a year, agency owners and staff from across the globe gather for one weekend to recharge, connect, and energize. APNA's annual conference provides an opportunity for agencies to immerse themselves in new knowledge, learn new skills and techniques, connect with like-minded business owners, and take away immediate plans they can implement to succeed in the private service industry. Visit <https://theapna.org/> to learn more.

Nanny Tees Self-Care Retreat will be held June 4-7, 2026 in Dallas, Texas at the Omni Las Colinas Hotel. Learn more at <https://www.nannysteetees.com/retreat>.

The International Nanny Association (INA) The 2027 Annual Conference location and dates will be announced soon. The INA is the umbrella association for the nanny industry, with the mission to elevate and nurture the quality of childcare throughout the world by establishing standards, increasing awareness, promoting information, and providing support. Visit <https://nanny.org> to learn more.

The Newborn Care Solutions Enrichment Conference will be held in 2026. Dates and location to be determined. With a focus on developing newborn care specialists, this is an event not to be missed. To learn more visit <https://newborncaresolutions.com/ncscon/>.



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ASK THE NANNY

Dear Stephanie,

I love being a nanny, but the emotional demands of this job can be intense. Between the long hours, having no breaks during the workday, managing children's big feelings, and navigating tricky dynamics with parents, I find myself feeling exhausted, irritable, and overwhelmed. I want to be warm, patient, and emotionally present for the children without burning out. What practical strategies can I use to protect my energy and sustain myself working long-term at a demanding job working as a nanny?

Burned-Out Nanny

Dear Burned-Out Nanny,

Burnout in private childcare is common because the role is both emotionally and physically demanding. The key to longevity is taking care of your own emotional and physical needs while treating your position like a professional career that requires structure and boundaries.

First, protect your basic needs. Consistent sleep, hydration, nutrition, exercise, socializing with others, and having some fun during time off are non-negotiable. If you are working long days without breaks, that is a job design issue, not a personal resilience issue. Build quiet time into the children's routine and take a break when possible. For example, when the baby naps, be sure to take some time to use the bathroom, eat a healthy meal or snack, and rest before continuing household tasks.



Second, be clear about your job expectations and personal boundaries with parents. When job expectations aren't clearly defined, stress increases. Make sure guaranteed hours, overtime pay, and your specific job responsibilities are clearly outlined in writing. It's much easier to maintain clear boundaries from the start, than to fix hurt feelings or resentment later.

Third, pace your emotional and physical energy. You do not have to be "on" at a high level all day. Maintaining a calm, steady presence is more sustainable than constant enthusiasm. Model emotional regulation rather than absorbing everyone else's emotions.

Finally, build support outside the home. Peer connection with other nannies, professional development, and interests unrelated to childcare protect your identity and reduce isolation. Warmth and patience can be renewed—but only if you take time to recharge. A well-supported nanny isn't less dedicated; she or he is more able to do the job well for the long term.

Best of luck,
Stephanie

Stephanie Felzenberg has worked as a career nanny, family assistant, and household manager for over thirty years. She holds a bachelor's degree from Rider University, earned the US Nanny Association's Newborn and Infant Care Credential, and completed specialized newborn care training with Newborn Care Solutions. She also served as newsletter editor for both the International Nanny Association and the US Nanny Association. Stephanie is the founder of the blog *Be the Best Nanny*.



AGENCY ADVICE

From Jami Dennis

Co-owner of ABC Nannies & Domestic Inc.

I am the mom of a toddler who hired my first nanny. This is my first time having an employee, and I am unsure how to address concerns with my nanny without rocking the boat. They aren't even really concerns or things that are wrong—just my preferences for the way I would like things done, like providing foods I know my child will eat, alongside new ones that will help to grow her palate. How do I navigate getting the care I want without risking upsetting the person who is providing care for my child?

Hello! What a great question—I'm happy to help. This is a common scenario for many first-time nanny employers, and it's commendable that you're seeking guidance to navigate it thoughtfully.

Drawing from my twenty-plus years in the household staffing industry, as well as my personal experience employing nannies for my own children over the course of a decade, I can offer the following insights on how to get the care you want (and deserve) for your child and maintain a great relationship with your nanny:

Document Preferences Clearly

I encourage every nanny employer to provide their new nanny with an outline of their child's routines, dietary preferences, and any specific care instructions on day 1. Then, update it regularly. This simple document can serve as a reference for your nanny and help ensure continuity in care for your child.

Set Regular Check-Ins to Encourage Open Dialogue

In my experience, establishing open lines of communication early on is key to a successful nanny-family relationship. Creating an environment where your nanny feels comfortable sharing their insights and suggestions is extremely important.

An easy way to make this happen is to schedule regular check-ins with your nanny; some families opt for brief daily conversations lasting a few minutes, while others prefer more in-depth weekly or bi-weekly meetings. Regular check-ins offer a dedicated space for both you and your nanny to share observations about your child, address any lingering concerns, and ensure you are aligned.



Consistent, open dialogue not only builds trust but also allows you, as the employer, to proactively make adjustments to your child's care as your little one grows and develops.

Frame Feedback Collaboratively

Your nanny is your partner and there to support you as a parent. Approach each conversation with this in mind. When discussing your preferences, try to use inclusive language that fosters collaboration. Here's an example:

"I really appreciate the healthy meals you're preparing for our child. Moving forward, could you help us expand their palate by including at least one or two new foods, in addition to their favorites, at each meal? We'd really appreciate it! We don't want to raise a picky eater."

Express Your Appreciation (And Often)

And last but not least, one of the best ways to get the care you want for your child is to consistently acknowledge your nanny's efforts, their contributions, and the positive impact they have on your family. Ensuring your nanny feels valued and respected enhances their commitment and increases their willingness to openly receive and implement feedback.

Jami Dennis is the co-owner of ABC Nannies & Domestic Inc., a premier household staffing agency serving families in Colorado and Arizona. With over two decades of experience in recruiting, business leadership, and family support services, she also operates three successful Jovie childcare franchises in Denver, Boulder, and Fort Collins, Colorado.

FINDING YOUR NICHE

NANNY/ FAMILY ASSISTANT

PATRICIA PADILLA



Patricia Padilla has spent the last seventeen years working as a nanny and family assistant. She is the proud mother of two young adults—Brianna, twenty-one, and Caleb, nineteen—and she has been married to her childhood friend, Josue, for nearly twenty-seven wonderful years. Patricia lives in Mesquite, Texas, and works in University Park, where she cares for a two-year-old, a five-year-old, and an eight-year-old. She is employed by a work-from-home mom and a dad who works a few blocks from home. Patricia shared that being a nanny has been a deeply rewarding career and that she takes great joy in supporting families and helping to nurture children into healthy, respectful, and well-rounded individuals.

Before I Leave for Work

My alarm is set for 5:40 a.m., and I get up, take a shower, and get ready for work. By 6:15 a.m., I grab my lunch from the fridge and head out the door. On my way to work, I stop at a local coffee shop to enjoy breakfast, do my daily devotional, and send a family group text to wish everyone a great day.

While I am Working

I arrive at work for an 8 a.m. start and am greeted at the door by my sweet two-year-old charge. He shows me his favorite morning toy and guides me to the kitchen, where Mom and his big sister, age five, are sitting. The eldest, age eight, has already left for school. After we chat and I get a morning update, I go upstairs and start the children's laundry. We play and move the laundry over and get ready for our 9 a.m. snack. During morning snack, we listen to music, and I cut up fruit and veggies for the day. We end our snack time with a dance party to the kids' favorite song, "The Chicken Wing Song" by Keiron Raven.

Around 10 a.m., we get big sister ready for her dance class, and her dad arrives to take her to class. I move laundry around and head out for a walk with the toddler.

Around 11:30 a.m., I prepare lunch for the children and greet big sister as she returns home. At noon, the family shares lunch together while I go upstairs to put clothes away, straighten the kids' bedrooms, and have my lunch.

After lunch, it's nap time for the toddler, and either Mom or I puts him down for his nap. I keep the monitor handy while engaging with big sister. She loves it when I listen to her practice piano, and we enjoy playing card games and doing puzzles together.

Around 2:15 p.m., Mom heads out to pick up the eldest son from school with the five-year-old. While they are gone, I pick up toys and straighten up around the house.

Once they arrive around 3 p.m., the kids have an afternoon snack, and we head outside to play, while mom takes the monitor and continues on with her work.

At 4 p.m., Mom and I have a catch-up chat, and I am relieved of duty, ready to head home.

What I Do After

On my drive home, I call my mother and chat with her for a while. I also take the time to listen to news on the radio. When I arrive home, I greet my husband, and we sit and talk for a few minutes. I change my clothes and relax before preparing dinner and spending the evening with my husband and daughter. It's lights out for me by 10:30 p.m. so I can awake refreshed for the next day.

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FROM NANNY TO FAMILY SUPPORT SPECIALIST: HOW IN-HOME CHILDCARE ROLES HAVE EVOLVED IN A POST-PANDEMIC WORLD



Prior to 2020, the expectations placed on a professional nanny were relatively well understood within the private childcare industry. Families hired nannies to provide attentive, developmentally appropriate care for their children while managing child-related tasks within the home. While every position had its nuances, the foundational structure of the role remained largely consistent: Nurture the children, support their routines, and partner with parents in child development.

Then the pandemic happened.

Almost overnight, the traditional boundaries between home life, school life, and professional life disappeared. Dining rooms became offices. Kitchens became classrooms. Bedrooms became therapy rooms. Parents became remote employees. Teachers became virtual instructors. And nannies became something else entirely.

In the years since COVID-19 disrupted the global workforce, the nanny profession has undergone one of the most significant evolutions in its modern history—not in response to childcare needs alone, but in response to a fundamental restructuring of how families live and work.

The Shift Toward In-Home Care

One of the most immediate impacts of the pandemic was a dramatic shift in parental preference away from center-based childcare and toward individualized, in-home care arrangements. As many licensed childcare centers closed or reduced capacity, families sought safer, more flexible options within their own homes. This created what industry observers described as a “fundamental shift to more in-home care,” with increased demand for nannies and nanny-share arrangements replacing traditional daycare enrollment (Axios, 2022).

By
Michelle LaRowe

Simultaneously, remote and hybrid work arrangements changed how families used childcare altogether. While childcare workers themselves could not perform their roles remotely, approximately 32% of childcare establishments increased telework for some staff during the pandemic as family dynamics shifted (US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2024).

This disconnect created a new reality: Parents were physically present in the home but still professionally unavailable to manage the daily logistics of family life.

Remote Work Changed the Nature of Childcare Needs

Post-pandemic labor trends continue to reflect this tension. According to a 2025 Federal Reserve Bank of Boston report, the increased availability of remote work opportunities has altered parental reliance on traditional market-based childcare and expanded the prevalence of work-from-home arrangements between 2019 and 2023.

At the same time, inadequate childcare options are impacting more working families than ever before. As of August 2024, there were 22% more workers affected by childcare disruptions compared to pre-pandemic levels (KPMG Economics, 2024).

In practice, this has meant that families are no longer hiring nannies solely to supervise children while parents are at work—they are hiring professionals to manage the operational flow of the household while parents attempt to work within it.

The Emergence of the Nanny / Family Support Specialist

In my work with families through Morningside Nannies, we began noticing this shift as early as 2021. Job descriptions were evolving in real time. Parents were requesting assistance with:

- School logistics and virtual learning support
- Household organization and inventory management
- Children's scheduling and transportation
- Meal preparation for the family
- Vendor coordination and errand running
- Managing after-school routines in hybrid work environments

In other words, families were not simply looking for childcare—they were seeking infrastructure.

This evolution has given rise to a hybrid role increasingly referred to as the nanny / family support specialist. Unlike traditional nanny positions, these roles extend beyond direct childcare responsibilities to include household support that enables dual-career households to function effectively in a post-pandemic environment.

This is particularly important given the rising cost and complexity of childcare arrangements. As companies implement return-to-office mandates, many families are facing increased childcare expenses that now outpace inflation, forcing them to reevaluate how care is delivered within the home (MarketWatch, 2025).

The nanny has become the professional who bridges the gap between caregiving and household management.

What Is a Family Support Specialist?

At its core, the Family Support Specialist role remains firmly rooted in childcare. Unlike household managers or family assistants whose primary focus may be administrative or domestic in nature, the nanny / family support specialist is a childcare professional first—someone whose training, experience, and professional identity are centered on child development and caregiving. What distinguishes this role is not a departure from childcare responsibilities but rather the integration of targeted household support that directly enhances the well-being of the children in their care.

Family support specialists may assist with tasks such as preparing children's meals, managing school communications, maintaining organization in shared child-focused spaces, coordinating activity schedules, or supporting routines that reduce stress within the home environment. These responsibilities are not intended to replace domestic staff but support the developmental needs of children by ensuring that their daily lives run smoothly and predictably. In this way, the family support specialist functions as both caregiver and operational partner—helping dual-career households maintain consistency, structure, and emotional stability for their children in an increasingly complex post-pandemic home environment.

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Redefining Professional Boundaries

Importantly, this shift does not represent a devaluation of the nanny profession—it represents an expansion of it.

Today's family support specialist must be capable of:

- Navigating parent presence during the workday
- Supporting children's emotional regulation in high-stress environments
- Managing routines across school, extracurricular, and therapeutic settings
- Communicating effectively with parents working from home
- Coordinating logistics that reduce parental cognitive load

These competencies require a level of professionalism, discretion, and executive functioning that extends beyond traditional childcare training. As the home has become both a workplace and a living space, the nanny's role has expanded into that of a household systems manager—someone who ensures that the day-to-day operations of family life continue seamlessly despite competing demands.

A Profession in Transition

Although employment projections suggest a modest 3% decline in childcare worker positions between 2024 and 2034 due to demographic shifts such as lower birth rates (US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2024), the number of annual openings remains significant, with approximately 160,200 roles needing to be filled each year due to workforce turnover.

The opportunity for professional nannies lies not in resisting change, but in adapting to it.

For caregivers willing to embrace expanded responsibilities—and for families willing to clearly define expectations—this new model offers a pathway toward more sustainable and mutually beneficial employment relationships.

Looking Ahead

The post-pandemic household requires more than childcare. It requires coordination, structure, support, and stability. As our industry continues to professionalize, we must acknowledge what many of us have already observed in practice: The modern nanny is no longer solely a caregiver, but a critical partner in family functioning.

The future of in-home childcare belongs to the family support specialist. And the profession is stronger for it.

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FEATURE STORY

MORE THAN A MATCHING SET: BORN TOGETHER BECOMING THEMSELVES

BY JENNIFER AUCOIN

One of the most common things I hear when caring for twins is, “It must be so much easier with twins—they play together all the time.” While that statement is often said with admiration, my experience caring for seven sets of twins over nearly three decades has shown me a more complex truth. Twins may share a bond from the very beginning, but they still need space to become fully themselves.

Twins arrive together, yet they are never meant to grow as a single identity. One of the greatest responsibilities caregivers and parents have in twin families is learning how to honor both the connection and the individuality that coexist within that relationship. I often remind families that twins are siblings first, twins second, and individuals always.

Early in my career, I cared for a set of twins who looked nearly identical but could not have been more different. One was naturally adventurous, climbing, exploring, and eager to try new experiences. The other was observant and cautious, preferring to watch before participating. One afternoon while choosing outfits for an outing, I noticed something small but meaningful. The more adventurous twin excitedly chose bright colors and accessories, while the quieter twin carefully selected something simple and comfortable. When given space to choose independently, their personalities became visible in ways that daily routines had previously masked. That moment reinforced a belief that has guided my twin care ever since. Individuality is not something we create. It is something we protect.

When twins are born, life naturally becomes about efficiency. Feeding schedules, sleep routines, diaper changes, and milestones often happen simultaneously. Families and caregivers begin to think in terms of the twins, and while that is understandable, it can unintentionally shape how children see themselves. Over the years, I have watched twins with completely different personalities be treated as a unit simply because it feels easier or more natural. Yet their differences deserve recognition and space to develop.

I have come to believe that the twin bond is strongest when it is built on choice rather than dependence. Choice only exists when individuality is supported. Independence does not weaken the twin bond. In fact, it strengthens it. Twins who feel secure in who they are as individuals tend to form friendships outside the twin relationship, develop stronger confidence, experience less comparison, and communicate more effectively with one another.



In practice, supporting individuality often comes down to small and intentional choices. I encourage separate decision-making whenever possible, whether it involves clothing, activities, or problem-solving approaches. Language also matters. I make a conscious effort to address twins by name rather than collectively. This subtle shift reinforces the message that each child is seen and valued as an individual.

I also support separate interests. Even when twins share hobbies, I look for opportunities for personal exploration. Sometimes twins naturally choose different paths, and sometimes they need gentle encouragement to discover what truly belongs to them as individuals.

One moment that stayed with me involved a family with twins and an older sibling. The sibling quietly expressed feeling like she was on the “outside” of the twins’ relationship. There wasn’t a big event leading up to this, yet the feeling was real. That conversation changed how I approached sibling dynamics in twin families. I began intentionally creating opportunities for connection that extended beyond the twin pair, whether through one-on-one outings, pairing one twin with a sibling for shared activities, or rotating special time with parents. These moments often transformed family dynamics in meaningful ways.

Connection within a family should be intentional for everyone, not just the twins. Twins have a built-in companion and emotional support system that siblings may perceive as different from their own experience. Acknowledging that reality allows families to create balance rather than comparison and helps siblings feel equally valued within the family unit.

My Montessori background has deeply shaped how I approach twin dynamics. Montessori philosophy emphasizes respect for the child, observation without comparison, and supporting independence as a pathway to confidence. This perspective aligns naturally with twin care. Observing each twin as a separate individual allows caregivers to respond to authentic needs rather than expectations created by comparison.

The goal in twin care is never separation. The twin bond is one of life's most unique relationships and deserves celebration. The real work lies in creating balance, a space where twins can be deeply connected while also feeling fully known as individuals. In my experience, when individuality is intentionally supported, the entire family system becomes more harmonious. Twins feel secure in themselves, siblings feel equally seen, and parents often experience reduced comparison and pressure.

Caring for twins has been one of the most rewarding parts of my career. It has challenged me to look beyond efficiency and routines and instead focus on identity, emotional development, and the subtle dynamics within twin families.

When people say twins are lucky because they always have each other, there is truth in that sentiment. Yet what stays with me most is not the matching outfits or shared milestones, but the quiet moments when each child steps into their individuality with confidence. Twins may arrive together, but their lives are meant to unfold as separate journeys that intersect in extraordinary ways.

When families and caregivers protect individuality while honoring connection, twins grow not just as a pair, but as two whole people who carry their bond with them as a gift rather than an expectation. Perhaps that is the real beauty of twinhood: not sameness, but the freedom to become fully oneself while walking through life beside someone who understands you in a way no one else can.

Jennifer Aucoin is a career nanny, family assistant, and early childhood specialist with nearly three decades of hands-on experience supporting children and families across diverse developmental stages. Her work includes caring for seven sets of twins from infancy through school age, shaping a specialized perspective on twin identity formation, sibling relationships, and balanced family dynamics within multiple birth households. Guided by a Montessori-inspired philosophy, Jennifer is passionate about fostering independence, emotional confidence, and individuality while strengthening family connection. Known for her thoughtful, relationship-centered approach, she offers insight-driven strategies that empower parents and caregivers to navigate complex family systems with empathy, intention, and practical wisdom. She has raised two children of her own, and she currently resides just outside of Boston with her wife. She is working for a wonderful family with her seventh set of spectacular twins and their amazing big sister!

Nanny Magazine is the premiere trade publication for the in-home childcare industry. Nanny Magazine's readers are nannies who care for children ranging in age from newborn through age 18 and industry related professionals.

Nanny Magazine will cover:

- Current nanny industry trends, issues, and events
- Industry related news
- Hot topics affecting the nannies and children
- Useful products and resources that are of benefit to nannies
- Practical advice by industry professionals
- Nanny and industry leader profiles
- Advertisements geared towards professionals in the nanny industry.

The magazine covers everything from a nanny's relationship with their charges to their complex relationship with the parents. The magazine offers provoking features on hot topics, advice for nannies who are experiencing ethical dilemmas on the job, and relevant information about tax laws and legally binding contracts.

Deadlines are as follows for the digital publication:

- Deadline: September 15 for January 1 Winter Issue
- Deadline: December 15 for April 1 Spring Issue
- Deadline: March 15 for July 1 Summer Issue
- Deadline: June 15 for October 1 Fall Issue

Website and print submissions are accepted on an ongoing basis.

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ETIQUETTE FOR NANNIES

The Professional Edge That Sets Career Nannies Apart

In an industry that has evolved dramatically over the past decade—especially in the post-pandemic era where many nannies have stepped into expanded roles as household managers and family support specialists—one foundational element continues to distinguish true professionals from casual caregivers: etiquette.

And I'm not talking about knowing which fork to use at a formal dinner.

Nanny etiquette is about understanding that when you step into a family's home, you are entering both a private space and a professional workplace. Navigating that dynamic with grace, discretion, and emotional intelligence is essential—not only to maintaining a positive working relationship, but also to sustaining long-term success in this career.

As someone who has spent over thirty years in this field—as a nanny, placement agency director, and educator—I can tell you that etiquette is often the very thing that determines whether a placement thrives or quietly dissolves.

The Home Is Your Workplace—But It's Still Their Home

One of the most unique aspects of in-home childcare is that our work takes place in someone else's personal environment. This requires a level of mindfulness that extends beyond traditional professional boundaries.

Professional etiquette begins with respecting family norms, routines, and preferences—even when they differ from your own.

This may include:

- Adhering to house rules around food, screen time, or discipline
- Maintaining agreed-upon schedules and routines
- Asking before inviting guests or making changes to the child's environment
- Being mindful of shared spaces and personal belongings

Remember: Consistency is one of the greatest gifts you can offer the children in your care. Aligning your caregiving approach with the family's values—while offering your professional insight appropriately—demonstrates both competence and respect.

Communication Is a Professional Skill

Clear, respectful communication is the cornerstone of any successful nanny-family relationship. Etiquette in this area includes everything from tone and timing to medium.

For example:

- Avoid discussing sensitive topics in front of the children.
- Use agreed-upon communication methods (e.g., daily logs, apps, text updates).
- Bring up concerns privately and constructively.
- Refrain from emotionally charged messages during or after working hours.

In my work with Morningside Nannies, we often remind candidates that how you say something is just as important as what you say. A thoughtful approach to communication can prevent misunderstandings and foster trust—while impulsive or overly casual exchanges can erode even the strongest relationships.

Confidentiality Is Not Optional

Nannies are privy to intimate details of a family's life—medical information, financial circumstances, parenting struggles, and more. Professional etiquette requires that this information be treated with the highest level of discretion.

This includes:

- Not sharing family information with friends or on social media
- Avoiding public conversations about the family's schedule or habits
- Respecting privacy even after your employment has ended

Confidentiality is not just courteous—it is a professional obligation and, in many cases, a contractual requirement.

Dress and Presentation Matter

While the dress code in a home environment is typically more relaxed than in an office, your appearance should still reflect professionalism and readiness for the day's responsibilities.

Choose attire that is:

- Comfortable and appropriate for active childcare
- Modest and functional
- Free from offensive language or imagery

Your presentation communicates your respect for the role and the family that has entrusted you with its children.

Reliability Is the Ultimate Courtesy

Showing up on time—physically and mentally—is one of the simplest yet most impactful forms of professional etiquette.

Families structure their entire day around your presence. Chronic lateness, last-minute schedule changes, or inconsistent follow-through can create stress that reverberates throughout the household.

Professional nannies:

- Arrive prepared and punctual
- Provide ample notice when requesting time off
- Follow through on agreed-upon duties
- Respect the family's time as they would expect their own to be respected

In short, reliability is not just about logistics—it's about trust.

Navigating Boundaries with Grace

In long-term placements, it's natural for emotional bonds to form. You may celebrate birthdays together, attend milestones, or even join the family on vacations. However, maintaining professional boundaries remains essential.

Etiquette in this area means:

- Avoiding oversharing personal challenges
- Not assuming access to family resources or privileges
- Keeping financial and employment matters formalized
- Remembering that kindness does not negate professionalism

Striking this balance ensures that your role remains sustainable and respected over time.

Final Thoughts: Etiquette as Career Insurance

In today's competitive market—where families are increasingly seeking highly skilled caregivers who can serve as collaborative partners in raising their children—etiquette is more than a soft skill. It's a career asset.

Professional etiquette signals that you understand the gravity of your role, the trust placed in you, and the importance of maintaining a respectful, structured working relationship.

For those of us who believe in elevating in-home childcare to a recognized and respected profession, etiquette is not optional—it is essential.

Because at the end of the day, being a great nanny isn't just about what you do for the children.

It's also about how you show up for the family.

Michelle LaRowe is the executive director of Morningside Nannies and editor-in-chief of Nanny Magazine. A 2004 International Nanny Association Nanny of the Year, she is a leading advocate for professionalism and education in the in-home childcare industry.





10 TIPS FOR RAISING A RESILIENT GENERATION

NAMRATA THAKKAR

Namrata Thakkar is a British-Indian author and behavioral philosophy expert whose work, including *Behavioral Philosophy: Inside the Labyrinth of Life* (2024), examines the ethics of emotional discipline and modern human behavior. Her writing provides a practical framework for navigating conflict and building long-term harmony in both professional and family life.

Raising resilient children isn't about following the latest parenting trend. It's built in the daily rhythm—in the car, at the playground, or around the dinner table—when adults respond to children with consistency, calm, and care.

For nannies especially, resilience is built in the small moments: how conflict is handled, how routines are respected, and how children are spoken to when emotions run high. Holistic parenting isn't abstract. It's visible in daily behavior.

This guide offers practical, nanny-friendly principles for supporting children's emotional, social, and personal development—without feeling overwhelmed.

1

Create Security Through Inclusion, Not Control

Children feel safest when they know where they stand and feel involved in their world. Including them in age-appropriate decisions—what to wear, which book to read, how to spend an afternoon—builds confidence and cooperation. In many family-centered cultures, children participate naturally in daily routines rather than being managed separately from adult life.

Nanny Tip: Invite children into simple choices and shared tasks: setting the table, planning snacks, deciding the order of activities. These moments reduce power struggles and help children feel respected.

2

Build Emotional Regulation Into Daily Routines

Children don't learn calm by being told to "calm down." They learn it by experiencing predictable rhythms and regulated adults. Simple grounding practices—pausing before transitions, acknowledging feelings, slowing the pace—help children manage emotions with ease.

Nanny Tip: Before moving from one activity to another, pause for thirty seconds. Name what's happening next. This small reset can prevent meltdowns and anxiety, especially for younger children.

3

Use Language That Supports Emotional Growth

The way adults speak to children becomes the way children speak to themselves. Tone matters as much as words. Nannies who speak clearly, kindly, and without sarcasm help children feel safe expressing emotions—even difficult ones.

Nanny Tip: Get down to the child's eye level. Listen fully before responding. Replace "You're okay" with "I see you're upset—tell me what happened." Emotional validation reduces escalation.

4

Discipline With Calm, Not Fear

Effective discipline teaches understanding, not obedience. Children respond best to consistent boundaries paired with calm explanations. Physical punishment or yelling may stop behavior temporarily, but it undermines trust and emotional safety.

Nanny Tip: State expectations clearly. When boundaries are crossed, explain consequences calmly and follow through consistently. Children learn fastest when consequences are predictable and fair.

5

Be the Example Children Learn From

Children notice everything—how adults handle frustration, speak to others, and recover from mistakes. Modeling respectful behavior teaches more than correction ever could.

Nanny Tip: If you make a mistake, name it. Apologize when appropriate. This shows children that accountability is normal and safe.

6

Support Cultural Identity and Belonging

Children benefit from understanding their cultural background, traditions, and family stories. This sense of identity provides emotional stability and confidence.

Nanny Tip: Ask parents about cultural practices they value. Support them through language, food, stories, or celebrations whenever possible. Consistency between home and care builds trust.

7

Build Resourcefulness through Financial Awareness

Even young children can begin learning about money through simple choices and responsibility.

Nanny Tip: If appropriate, help children manage small allowances or savings jars. Let them decide how to spend or save. Learning through experience is more effective than lectures.

8

Grow Alongside the Child

The nanny role is demanding. The most effective nannies reflect on their own reactions and adjust over time. Growth doesn't require perfection—only awareness.

Nanny Tip: Notice what triggers frustration for you. Small changes in tone, timing, or expectations can dramatically improve daily interactions.

9

Teach Responsibility Through Contribution

Children gain confidence when they feel capable and helpful. Including them in household tasks builds life skills and cooperation.

Nanny Tip: Assign age-appropriate chores and treat them as contributions, not punishments. Praise effort, not perfection.

10

Create Emotional Closure at Transitions and Handovers

Children experience stress not just from activities, but from unfinished emotional loops—especially during shift changes or handovers. Smooth handovers help children feel secure and prevent behavioral “spillover” later in the evening. Nannies who intentionally close the day reduce anxiety, regressions, and attention-seeking behaviors after parents return.

Nanny Tip: Before a parent arrives, take one minute to recap the day with the child: “Today you handled homework really well and helped clean up. Next is dinner with Mom/Dad.” This helps the child mentally transition and feel grounded rather than abruptly “switched.” When possible, briefly share highlights and boundaries with parents in front of the child. This reinforces consistency and shows children that the adults in their lives are aligned.

Raising resilient children isn't about doing everything right. It's about showing up consistently, responding thoughtfully, and creating environments where children feel safe, capable, and valued.

For nannies and parents alike, the most powerful tools are presence, patience, and example. When children experience these daily, resilience grows naturally.



Namrata Thakkar is a British-Indian author and behavioral philosophy expert whose work, including *Behavioral Philosophy: Inside the Labyrinth of Life* (2024), examines the ethics of emotional discipline and modern human behavior. Her writing provides a practical framework for navigating conflict and building long-term harmony in both professional and family life.

WHAT IT'S REALLY LIKE TO BE A HIGH-PROFILE NANNY

BY ALLISON GOREN

I didn't set out to become a nanny for nearly a decade and a half. I certainly did not imagine that this work would shape the way I lead, parent, love, or build an agency of my own.

I became a nanny in college while studying communications. My first job was with triplets, one of whom had a tracheotomy and a G-tube. Their mother was a physician. She watched me carefully, then told me something that changed the course of my life: "You should go into medicine." She saw something in me before I fully saw it myself.

I enrolled in an accelerated registered nurse program, fell in love with the operating room and NICU, and was studying for the NCLEX when I was offered a job I could not turn down. I was twenty-one years old when I accepted my first newborn care specialist position for an ultra-high-net-worth family in South Carolina. Twin boys. A private home. A world I did not yet have language for.

At the time, I believed this would be temporary. A season. A fascinating detour before a "real" career in the NICU or OR. But something inside me already knew the truth. I loved children, yes. But more than that, I loved the way this work mattered. I loved the intimacy of being trusted. And I could not reconcile returning to a hospital where six patients needed me all at once, when I had learned what it felt like to give one family my full presence.

Very quickly, my life began to look nothing like my peers'.

While my friends gathered in apartments to get ready for nights out, my evenings were spent rocking babies, planning schedules, and moving quietly through homes designed by renowned architects. My friendships thinned not because of drama, but because our lives no longer intersected. I could not always answer my phone. I did not have

spontaneous plans. I belonged to a very small group of people who did this work, and there was no HR department, no rulebook, no place to process what the job required.

My photos didn't look like theirs either. While their social media was filled with fun nights out, bars, and birthday celebrations, mine captured cities, airports, private terminals, and quiet views, the only parts of my life I was allowed to show.

From the very beginning, I worked in high-profile homes where privacy was absolute and expectations were rarely explained. NDAs were standard. Information was controlled. You did not post. You did not share. You did not retell your day casually. You learned by observing. You were trusted to make decisions without oversight and expected to get them right. Much of what I learned came from working inside a tier of private homes where discretion, emotional regulation, and judgment were not preferences, but prerequisites.

I learned quickly that charisma alone meant nothing here. Consistency did. Calm mattered more than energy. Judgment mattered more than enthusiasm. Yes, you were often hired initially for your personality, your social awareness, and your ability to hold an intellectually stimulating conversation when the room required it. That opened the door. But it was never what kept you there. What sustained trust was restraint, emotional regulation, and the ability to stay steady when no one was watching. You were not there to be seen. You were there to stabilize.

Over the course of my fifteen-year career, I was once escorted across the LaGuardia tarmac by a fleet of police officers. I flew exclusively on private jets for thirty-eight consecutive months, traveling to seventy-nine cities total in three short years. The only

planes I knew during that time were Falcon 7Xs, Globals, and Gulfstream G650s. I was followed by security details positioned just far enough back that the public never noticed. I rode in bulletproof vehicles. I entered through back doors and left in separate cars so the paparazzi would not see the baby.

I was asked to turn off facial recognition on my iPhone for the duration of my employment because it was considered one less security risk. I was once instructed to tell a pop star that I was a family cousin because if she knew I was "the nanny," she would treat me differently.

I learned that spotless homes were not a preference. They were a standard.

That emotional regulation was not optional.

That how you respond under pressure matters as much as how you care for a child.

I also learned what this work costs.

It cost me normalcy. I missed holidays, birthdays, and milestones. I missed my mother's birthday and my own. I missed time with my siblings. I sacrificed the freedom most people in their twenties take for granted because my work required restraint, presence, and responsibility far beyond my age.

Most people in my life did not understand what I actually did all day. Some dismissed it as "just nannying." A few people did understand. My sister, who did the work too. My best friend Molly. The three of us lived this life together, bonded through something no one else could fully see, and we are still inseparable because of it.



My nervous system adapted. Calm but alert. Restrained without rigidity. I learned to speak less, observe more, and carry responsibility without flinching, while softening completely for the children. That kind of calibration stays with you.

When I became pregnant with my first son, I almost walked away from the industry entirely. But I couldn't leave it in the rearview mirror. I had too much knowledge. Too much experience. Too much love for the work.

It was during postpartum recovery, nursing a newborn, supported by my own NCS, that everything crystallized. I realized how much I had needed something I never had. An agency that saw me. Protected me. Advocated for me. A place to call when things felt heavy or unclear. Contracts. Legal pay. Guidance. Identity.

I had worked with the best agencies. And still I felt the gaps.

I had watched families hire for logistics instead of temperament. I had seen incredible nannies replaced without closure or acknowledgment. I had watched caregivers absorb emotional labor without support. One of my closest nanny friends in New York City spent five years with a family.

Every holiday. Every birthday. They never once celebrated hers. So I did. Because the children adored her, and someone needed to honor the weight of what she gave.

That is where Pink Nannies was born. Not from ambition, but from urgency and clarity. I didn't want to be the exception anymore. I wanted to build the standard I had needed all along.

What began as a deeply personal response to what I needed as a caregiver has since grown into a nationwide agency, built to protect families, elevate caregivers, and change how this work is done across the country.

When I founded the agency, advocacy became nonnegotiable. I committed to showing up for this industry with integrity, even when it was inconvenient or unprofitable. Pink Nannies was built not just to make placements, but to serve the industry as a whole.

Becoming a wife and a mother of three changed everything again. My children are my life. I am their voice and their safe place. A nanny invited into my home is not "the help." They receive trust at its highest level. They shape my children's emotional language, their sense of safety, and their daily rhythms when I am not there.

Motherhood made me understand, in my body, the weight of what families entrusted to me years ago. It is why I will never approach this work casually.

Family life is not built in the moments people post. It is built in thousands of small interactions that most people never think twice about. Once you see that, you cannot unsee it.

I look back at my younger self in those homes with pride and grief. Loving children deeply and then stepping out of their lives leaves a mark. That grief is not about holding on. It is about honoring what was real and letting go with respect. I remain connected to a few of the families I worked with over a decade, not out of obligation, but because it was mutually chosen.

People have told me for years to write a book. I think they sense what I finally know how to name. Even now, long after those seasons ended, the lessons remain.

People have told me for years to write a book. I think they sense what I finally know how to name. Even now, long after those seasons ended, the lessons remain.

They follow me into every conversation, every placement, every decision I make. The work did not stay inside those homes. It shaped how I lead, how I mother, and how I move through the world today. Quietly. Permanently. In the same way, this work shapes every life it touches when it's done with care.

This work changes you.

To the nannies reading this: I am in this with you. I have lived this life. I know what it asks of your nervous system, your relationships, and your sense of self. You deserve to be seen, protected, and respected.

To the families reading this: Hiring a caregiver is not hiring help. It is handing over influence. This person will shape your child's inner world and the emotional tone of your home. When this decision is rushed or treated as transactional, the cost shows up slowly, but everywhere.

If we understood the true influence we hand over when we hire a caregiver, we would never treat this work as anything less than foundational.

Allison Goren is the Founder and CEO of Pink Nannies, a nationally recognized luxury nanny and household staffing agency serving high-profile and ultra-high-net-worth families across the country. With a background in nursing and nearly two decades of firsthand experience as a professional nanny and newborn care specialist, she brings a rare insider perspective to the standards required inside private homes. Allison is a frequent speaker at International Nanny Association conferences and Nannypalooza and is an active member of the Association of Premier Nanny Agencies, where she advocates for elevating childcare as a respected, professional career. Today, she leads Pink Nannies with a commitment to thoughtful, long-term matches that support both families and career caregivers.





EXPERT TIPS

CREATING CONSISTENCY BETWEEN NANNIES AND FAMILIES

Why alignment around sleep and behavior helps children feel safe, settled, and secure

By Emma Dolan

It's 7:15 p.m. The bath is done. Pajamas are on. The lights are dimmed. With you, bedtime usually takes twenty minutes. With Mum or Dad, it stretches into ninety. The same child. The same house. Completely different outcome.

If you're a nanny, you've likely lived this. And if you're honest, it can feel confusing, even frustrating. You work hard to create calm, predictable rhythms during the day. Then everything unravels in the evening.

Here's what I've learned over years of working as a nanny, nursery teacher, sleep and behavior coach and as a mother myself: When sleep or behavior feels chaotic, it is not always about the child. It can be about misalignment between the adults.

Children don't struggle because there are more than two caregivers. They struggle when those caregivers are not aligned.

Why Children React to Inconsistency

Children are wired for safety. And safety, to a child's brain, looks like predictability. They like to know what is happening next during their day and evening. When responses change depending on who is present, the nervous system becomes alert.

Does bedtime involve rocking tonight or not? Is tidy-up optional or nonnegotiable? Will this boundary hold?

When children aren't sure what to expect, they test. They resist. They push. Not because they are manipulative. Because they are trying to understand the structure of their world.

Consistency is not about control. It is about clarity.

Why Sleep Is Often the First Thing to Fall Apart

Sleep is where misalignment becomes most visible.

It requires:

- Clear boundaries
- Repetition
- Emotional containment
- Adult confidence

But imagine this:

- One adult lies next to the child until they fall asleep, while another expects independent settling.
- Nap lengths vary dramatically.
- Night waking is handled differently each time.

In these situations, the child's brain doesn't build one clear sleep association. Instead, it stays slightly wired and alert (fight and flight). Fight and flight and sleep are not compatible.

The good news? Alignment doesn't require rigid sleep training or identical personalities. It requires shared intention.

Practical Ways to Create Alignment

This is where many families and nannies need real, actionable guidance. Alignment doesn't happen through hope. It happens through conversation and clarity. Here are practical steps you can suggest or initiate.



1. Start With a Conversation (Not a Schedule)

Before adjusting routines, ask:

- What do we believe about sleep?
- How do we feel about tears at bedtime?
- What matters most long term—independence, connection, or flexibility?
- How do we want our child to feel at night?

Without a conversation, routines will constantly clash. Frame this as curiosity, not correction. "I'd love to understand how you feel about bedtime right now so we can stay consistent."

2. Create a Simple, Shared Sleep Plan

It doesn't need to be complicated, just clear.

Write down:

- Nap timing and length
- Bedtime window
- Wind-down steps (in order)
- Exact response to night waking
- Key phrases used at bedtime

When everyone knows the plan, confidence increases. Children feel that confidence. Even using the same phrase nightly (e.g., "It's sleep time. I'm nearby.") helps build predictability.

3. Align on Boundaries During the Day

Sleep is influenced by the day. If boundaries are inconsistent during waking hours, bedtime resistance often increases.

Agree on:

- Screen rules
- Snack structure
- Tidy-up expectations
- How you respond to hitting, shouting, or refusal

Create three to five house rules written positively.

Here are some examples:

- We use gentle hands.
- We tidy before moving on.
- We say please and thank you.
- We sit at the table to eat.

When the rules stay the same regardless of who is present, testing decreases.

4. Use Shared Language

Children relax into repetition. Agree on simple scripts for:

- Big feelings
- Boundary holding
- Bedtime

Here are some examples:

- “I see you are angry – let’s stomp our feet.”
- “I won’t let you hit. I’m moving you away.”
- “It’s okay to feel angry. It’s not okay to throw.”
- “Your body needs rest.”

When language stays predictable, emotional regulation improves.

5. Schedule a Monthly Alignment Check-In

Most families discuss logistics. Few discuss emotional strategy. A thirty-minute monthly meeting prevents resentment and confusion.

Here are some questions to ask:

- What’s working well?
- What feels hard lately?
- Have you noticed sleep changes?
- Does daytime sleep need adjusting?
- Are we responding similarly to meltdowns?

This keeps small issues from becoming big ones.

Understanding the Emotional Layer

In busy households, there’s often more going on beneath the surface. Parents may feel guilty about long hours away. Evenings may feel rushed and overstimulating. Children may hold themselves together all day, then unravel when Mum or Dad get home.

This can create tension: “She doesn’t behave like this for you.”

But what’s often happening is emotional decompression. Children release with the person they feel safest with. When nannies understand this, it prevents comparison. When parents understand this, it reduces self-doubt.

Alignment requires compassion for each adult’s emotional experience, not just strategy.

When Values Differ

Sometimes the misalignment runs deeper. One caregiver prioritizes emotional coaching. Another values quick compliance.

One encourages independence early. Another prefers closeness. Instead of debating methods, zoom out.

Ask:

- What kind of adult are we raising?
- How do we want them to feel about themselves?
- What do we want them to internalize?

When long-term vision is shared, daily decisions become easier.

Cultural Considerations

In many international households, cultural expectations around sleep and behavior vary widely. Co-sleeping may feel natural in one culture and uncomfortable in another. Emotional expression may be encouraged in one family and contained in another.

Alignment begins with respect. “What feels important about this for you?” “How was this handled in your family growing up?” Curiosity builds cooperation.

What Alignment Is Not

Alignment is not rigidity. Children get sick. Families travel. Development changes sleep patterns. Sleep needs decrease. Growth brings boundary testing. Consistency is about predictable emotional responses, not inflexible schedules. At its heart, alignment is calm leadership.

Children co-regulate through adult nervous systems. If one caregiver is steady and another anxious, children feel it instantly. Often the real work is not adjusting the child’s behavior. It’s regulating ourselves.

When Alignment Is Missing

If adults don’t communicate clearly, children carry the gap. They push harder. Sleep becomes funky. Behavior escalates—not because the children are difficult. Because they are searching for clarity. And clarity must come from the adults.

When Alignment Is Strong

When caregivers communicate openly and hold shared boundaries:

- Sleep becomes smoother.
- Testing decreases.
- Emotional outbursts shorten.
- Confidence grows—for everyone.

Most importantly, children relax. They learn:

- The adults talk to each other.
- The rules make sense.
- I am safe here.

And safety is the foundation of healthy sleep and behavior.

The Takeaway for Nannies

You are not just following instructions. You are part of the family dynamics that shapes a child’s nervous system, attachment patterns, and sense of security. If something feels inconsistent, it’s worth a respectful conversation focused on collaboration, not criticizing or controlling.

When the adults align, the child can finally stop testing and start resting. And that changes everything!

Emma Dolan is a sleep and behavior coach supporting busy working families who have additional caregivers (e.g., nannies, au pairs, and family members) to create calm, connected homes. A former nanny of eight years and now a nursery teacher based in Ibiza, she specializes in children’s sleep, emotional regulation and brain development. Drawing on both professional expertise and her experience as a mother of two teenagers, she helps families and caregivers build alignment, consistency and confidence around sleep and behavior. Follow her on Instagram at [@thegentleapproachsleep](#) for practical, compassionate guidance rooted in connection and science.



Nanny Industry News

2026 INTERNATIONAL NANNY ASSOCIATION NANNY OF THE YEAR

Rachael L. Lubin

In a profession defined by heart, dedication, and quiet impact, there are individuals who rise above—leaders who not only care for children but also shape the future of our industry. Rachael is one of those exceptional professionals, and it is with great admiration that we celebrate her as the 2026 International Nanny Association (INA) Nanny of the Year Award recipient.

With more than a decade of experience and a career that has touched the lives of over 20 children, Rachael exemplifies what it means to provide extraordinary care. Her work spans from the delicate and highly specialized care of newborn triplets in a NICU setting to supporting families through international relocations and managing the dynamic needs of high-profile households. Her ability to adapt, lead, and nurture in even the most complex environments speaks volumes about her professionalism and commitment.

Perhaps most notably, Rachael's current seven-year tenure with one family reflects the trust, consistency, and deep relationships she builds—hallmarks of an exceptional nanny.

Rachael's impact extends far beyond the families she serves. She has been a driving force within the International Nanny Association, serving on the Board of Directors from 2017 to 2021, including her role as Secretary on the Executive Board. Her leadership has helped shape the very fabric of our profession.

As Nanny Track Chair for multiple INA conferences, she curated educational experiences that have inspired and elevated nannies across the globe. She also spearheaded the 2020 INA rebranding initiative, modernizing the organization's digital presence and ensuring it remains relevant and forward-thinking.

Her passion for honoring the profession's legacy is evident through her creation of the INA Historical Project, preserving more than 35 years of industry history, as well as the beloved INA Family Quilt, a beautiful symbol of connection and unity within our global community.

Rachael's leadership doesn't stop there. In 2020, she co-founded the Nanny Relief Fund, the only nonprofit in our industry dedicated to providing direct financial assistance to nannies in crisis. Under her leadership as President, the organization has raised and distributed more than \$120,000—offering hope and tangible support when it is needed most.

She is also the co-founder of HTX Nannies, Houston's leading nanny support group, where she has hosted International Nanny Training Day events that have educated and connected hundreds of caregivers.

Her groundbreaking Houston Nanny Wage Studies (2024 & 2025) have brought much-needed transparency to compensation in our field—empowering nannies and educating families, while helping to shape fair and equitable employment practices. These efforts earned her a 2023 Proclamation from the Harris County Judge, recognizing her meaningful contributions to the community.

A respected thought leader, Rachael has shared her expertise at INA Conferences and Nannypalooza, including leading important conversations around evolving industry standards and data-driven practices. Her insights continue to influence and elevate the profession at every level.

Her credentials further underscore her excellence. A graduate of the prestigious English Nanny and Governess School, she holds the title of Certified Professional Governess and Newborn Care Specialist and is a proud INA Credentialed Nanny. Her work has been featured in Forbes, Voyage Houston, Canvas Rebel, and, of course, Nanny Magazine.

Rachael's career is a testament to what is possible when passion meets purpose. She has not only cared for children—she has strengthened families, built community, and helped shape the future of the nanny profession.

We are proud to celebrate her as a 2026 INA Nanny of the Year nominee and can't wait to see what she does next.

Follow Rachael at <https://www.tiktok.com/@callthegoverness>.

People Profile

Emily Thorpe



How did you get involved in the nanny industry, and what is your current role?

I started as a weekend and summer nanny for a family in upstate New York at fourteen years old. I stayed with them for seven years and basically grew up alongside their three kids. I continued working with children through college, and after graduating, I moved to Hawaii, where (during COVID) I was given the opportunity to lead a homeschool pod of five kids. That experience opened me up to the world of homeschooling and the concept of a governess, and honestly, it sparked something in me that still drives me today. Now I prefer to travel nanny in the summers and stay based in Oahu during the school year to work on homeschooling projects and spend time with my favorite long-term families.

What is worldschooling?

Worldschooling is an educational philosophy that uses the entire world as a classroom. It blends homeschooling and experiential learning with travel and cultural immersion, so instead of reading about ancient Rome in a textbook, you're walking through the ruins and learning history firsthand. Things like currency exchanges become math lessons, and visiting a local market becomes a cultural studies class. It's very flexible, and each family does it differently, but the core idea is that real-life experiences are the education. It sits close to unschooling, but they aren't the same thing. Unschooling is fully child-led with no set curriculum, whereas worldschooling still has intention and structure behind it—it's just rooted in the world around you rather than a classroom.

How did you come up with this idea to offer this?

It was really a natural path that opened up. I was living in Dahab, Egypt, at the time, a small expat village known for its watersports and slow, laid-back lifestyle. I was already tutoring different expat kids in homeschool subjects and English, and there were enough students that I saw the opportunity to open my own program. I followed the worldschooling philosophy of using our unique location as the classroom, and we focused on learning about a different continent each week, so it was quite literally a worldschool. It felt like a natural next step and confirmed that this was the work I wanted to keep doing.

From there, it became part of how I present myself when offering governess services. I let families know about my niche in worldschooling and alternative education, and it tends to really resonate. The families I work with are usually already traveling with their kids, so the philosophy feels like a natural fit.

How does worldschooling practically work?

Since the pandemic, there has been a huge surge of interest in alternative education. A lot of families got a taste of homeschooling during the pandemic and never went back, and that really accelerated the worldschooling movement too. More families are questioning whether their child actually needs to sit in a building for eight hours a day to get a quality education, and honestly, some of the most curious and well-rounded kids I've ever worked with have been worldschooled.

In terms of how it works practically, I am usually the one to introduce the concept. As I actively seek travel nanny and governess work, I make sure to highlight my niche in worldschooling, and a lot of families either resonate with it immediately or are already loosely familiar with it. Some families hire me as a travel nanny for the summer while they're based in a specific city or country; others bring me on for a longer-term governess position where we travel together for months at a time. It's worth noting that the worldschooling community is actually thriving across a range of income levels. A lot of worldschooling families are remote workers, traveling expats, or families making intentional lifestyle choices on a budget, so sometimes my role looks like running a program for a group of kids in a hub, like I did in Dahab. Other times, I'm hired by a family with the means to bring on a private governess. The arrangement always looks a little different, but the philosophy stays the same.

Describe the niche? Are you a nanny? Educator? Governess? Both? What is the job description?

I describe my niche as a governess specializing in worldschooling and alternative education, with a secondary niche as a travel nanny. The two really go hand in hand. A governess is different from a nanny in that education is a core part of the role, not just childcare. So, I'm equal

parts caregiver, educator, and travel companion, and I love that there's no one-size-fits-all job description. Every family and every assignment looks a little different.

What makes a good worldschool leader?

First and foremost, flexibility. Things will not go as planned, and you have to be able to roll with it and still create something meaningful out of whatever the day gives you. Beyond that, I think you need a genuine passion for alternative education and a creative approach to learning. A good worldschool leader can look at a fish market or a subway map and see a lesson in it. You also need strong intuition about children, being able to read what a child needs, what excites them, and what overwhelms them, then adjust accordingly.

How do you come up with a curriculum?

I start by conducting an assessment, talking with the parents to understand their expectations and goals, and observing the children to understand their interests and learning styles. I also look at our location to see what's available—museums, libraries, local classes, outdoor spaces—and build from there. I create weekly themes. Core subjects like math and language arts stay consistent, but for everything else, I like to play around with our location and maximize the learning potential. In Paris, for example, we had a fashion week where we learned about different styles, prints, and designers, checked out books on fashion from the library, went out to tea in our most stylish outfits, and designed our own looks during art time. I like themes because they give us clear learning objectives while keeping things exciting and location-based. If we're learning a language, I'll do active listening challenges out in public. If we're near the water, we're doing a snorkel scavenger hunt for coral identification. The world becomes the classroom, and I have the creative freedom to make it come alive.

What do you like best about your job?

The enchantment. When something really sparks a child's interest and you can see it light them up, that never gets old. I love being able to curate experiences that are memorable and meaningful, knowing that what we did together might stay with them for the rest of their lives. I also genuinely love tailoring education to each child.

What do you like least?

The balance can be really hard to find. Some assignments require twelve-hour days, which leaves minimal time to plan, take care of myself, and reset. It's rewarding work and takes a lot of dedication. When you're the nanny and the educator, you have to be really intentional about your time and make sure you're able to take care of yourself to prevent burnout.

What is your educational background?

I have my BA in communications from Coastal Carolina University. Since then, I've taken multiple courses to build on my nanny and governess resume, and I'm a consistent reader of books on homeschooling, unschooling, alternative education philosophy, and child development. I think staying current with the literature is just as important as the hands-on experience.

How do you give back to the nanny community?

I cofounded the Honolulu Nanny Network with my cofounder Grace. Honolulu has plenty of nannies, but the community isn't as built up as other major nanny hubs, and we're working to change that. Beyond that, I'm active in online spaces and networking events where I share my advice and experience with other nannies. My inbox is always open to anyone who needs guidance. You can find me on Instagram at @emily_worldschool_nanny.

Where have you traveled? Favorite place and why?

I've traveled to twenty-five countries, many for both leisure and work. My two favorite places are Costa Rica and Tunisia, and they couldn't be more different, but what I love about both is the same: incredibly diverse landscapes, amazing food, and rich culture. Tunisia is a hidden gem with stunning architecture and some of the warmest, most genuinely helpful people I've ever met. Costa Rica captured my heart with its beautiful beaches, lush jungle, and big mountains, and honestly, it reminds me a lot of Hawaii, which is probably why I live here too.

Do you encourage other nannies to do this? Why?

I do encourage every nanny to educate themselves on how children learn and get to know the different educational philosophies. Once you open your mind to different educational frameworks, it becomes such a beautiful thing to offer a child a tailored experience that actually fits how they learn best. I personally gravitate toward worldschooling because I'm a traveler at heart, but I think every nanny should explore different philosophies and find what resonates with them.



What else should we know?

Every family has a different educational philosophy, and my job is to honor that while bringing my own expertise to the table. Just as there is a different approach for each family, there is for each educator, and mine is worldschooling. I deeply respect and draw from many other philosophies to craft an experience that is truly tailored to each child. At the end of the day, I'm here to listen, adapt, and create something that works for that specific child and family. I think that's what sets a great governess apart.



Emily Thorpe is a career nanny, governess, and alternative education advocate with over ten years of experience supporting families across twenty-five countries. What began as nannying evolved into a deep passion for child-led, experiential learning after she ran a homeschool pod during COVID-19 in Hawaii. Since then, Emily has worked as a traveling nanny and governess, specializing in worldschooling, crafting immersive curricula rooted in culture, place, and real-life experience. Some of her favorite accomplishments include launching her own worldschool in an expat village in Egypt and curating a Paris-based curriculum around museums, cultural excursions, and language immersion. Emily is also the cofounder of the Honolulu Nanny Network, a professional community dedicated to supporting and connecting nannies across Oahu. Looking ahead, she is dedicated to continuing her passion for worldschool education as a travel nanny while becoming an active member of the homeschooling community on Oahu, where she is working toward opening her own school.

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