

October 2017

NANNY MAGAZINE

teach | play | love



Celebrations

POTTY TRAINING - THEME DAYS - SLEEP ADVICE - MOONLIGHTING

NANNY MAGAZINE

October 2017 | Celebrations

Instead of
hate,
celebrate.

—
Prince



CONTENTS

TOP PICKS

27 By the Light of the Moon:
Earning Extra Income by
Moonlighting

10 Saving Every Last Dime:
One Nanny's Story Will
Restore Faith in Humanity

30 Decorating with Paper
Flowers (Raffle + Video Alert!)

19 How to Know You're with
the Right Agency (because
Not All Agencies Are Created
Equal)

CELEBRATE

23 Catering School
Get what you need
for your event without
going it alone

24 Photo Shoot Style
Know what to wear so
you look great in your
engagement pictures.

18 Showers on a
Budget
You can throw an
amazing shower
without breaking the
bank.

33 Stress-Free Party
Planning
'Nuff said.

FOOD

7 Spooky Treats
Heather Cherry brings
us easy-to-make
Halloween snacks.

NANNY LIFE

5 Poetry
An adorable read by
Nicola Manton

15 In Search of Sleep
What nannies should
know about kids'
sleep habits and
requirements by age.

13 Theme Days
Make learning fun by
picking a theme.

ADVICE

8 Nannies Ask
Should my charge be
in my wedding?

12 Winter Is Coming
Dr. Jess is has advice
on dealing with a kid
who hates the cold.

11 Ask the Agency
Nanny needs health
insurance. What to
do?

6 Potty Training
It doesn't have to be
torture for all parties.
Mr. Manny shares top
tips to keep it simple.

Photo via Blue Lace Cakes.

NANNY MAGAZINE

teach play love



Publisher's Note

**Dedicated to D.A.L.
Rest in peace. September 6, 2017.**

This issue is about celebrating life and all its milestones. What do you have to celebrate this season? A raise? An anniversary? An engagement? A birthday? How about just the simple fact of being alive. My first charge, D, was 19 years old when a suicide attempt prompted the need for life support. It took 6 weeks for D to die. D gives us all a reminder to cherish every day of life to the fullest, and that every day gives us a reason to celebrate being alive. This issue is dedicated to D's memory. May you rest in peace, darling angel. Your life was too short, but I am proud to have once been your nanny. You are one of the reasons for this magazine's being, and you have touched so many lives around the world without even knowing it. May your story continue to touch others who may feel that suicide is the only option. It's not. There is much to be thankful for and much to celebrate. I hope this issue brings honor to your memory. You are loved.

Please write me at any time at info@nannymag.com to tell me what you're celebrating with this issue, and hug your charges extra tight.

Love,
Jennifer Kuhn, Owner and Publisher

CORRECTION NOTICE: In the July 2017 issue, we incorrectly listed the credentials of author Heather Marendia-Miller. It should read "CCC-SLP." We regret this error.

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#NannyLife Calendar

This issue is all about celebrations, so let's kick it off with just a few of our favorite things to celebrate this season!



Photo via Photo Pin.

Find Nanny Magazine staffers at Nannypalooza!

Editor Amanda Duniak and Publisher Jennifer Kuhn will be staffing a booth at Nannypalooza in Columbia, Maryland on October 6 to 8. Make sure you stop by to say hello and take a picture with our team!



Photo via Create Her Stock

National Nanny Recognition Week is September 24 to 30

There's nobody better to celebrate than your amazing self! NNRW celebrates the contributions nannies make to our communities.



Photo via Create Her Stock

And of course, NM wishes you a very happy holiday season!

1. Halloween falls on a Tuesday this year!
2. Thanksgiving: November 23
3. Christmas: December 25 (as always!)
4. Hanukkah: December 12 to 20
5. Kwanzaa: December 26 to January 8
6. New Year's Eve/New Year's Day
7. Daylight Savings time ends November 5th. Yay for an extra hour of sleep!
8. First day of winter: December 21

POETRY

My Nanny and Me!

By Nicola Manton.

I wake up in the morning light,
to a sky so blue and a sun so bright,
to fluffy clouds up in the sky;
my Mommy lifts me oh so high!

Daddy peeks into my room,
he's getting ready, leaving soon.
I'm helping mommy find my socks,
we hear the key turn in the lock!

My nanny's here; right on time.
My grown-up friend, I'm glad she's mine!
Mom and dad are leaving now,
blowing kisses, they tell me how
they love me lots,
they'll see me later;
jokes about an alligator.

My nanny hugs and holds me closer.
She swings me around like a rollercoaster!
I brush my teeth and put some clothes on,
change my diaper; wow, what a stinky one!

Cinnamon sprinkled on my oatmeal,
raspberry fingers, I won't let my nanny steal!
We must get ready for our day,
off we go now, to the subway!

First uptown to see some friends
where laughing and playing never ends!
At the park, we run so fast,
then it's time for yummy snacks!

At noon, I take a little nap,
I snuggle in my nanny's lap
Reading stories, singing songs;
my nanny loves me all day long.

This afternoon we start a project;
cutting, sticking, painting, you name it!
It needs a little time to dry,
then, we can hang it, way up high.

Dinner, bath, and into PJ's,
we brush my teeth; "It's important, nanny says!
Story time, I choose our favorite.
My nanny tucks me in and reads it.

What a busy, fun filled day!
Songs and snuggles are the way
to end it feeling safe and sound,
until tomorrow comes around.





Mr. Manny

The Three P's to Potty Training: The Child

By Matthew Lister. Photo by Jennifer Lichti.

Part One of a three-part series. Stay tuned for Part Two in January!

One of the most rewarding developmental stages in a child's life is potty training. Ultimately, potty training is about independence, but is often filled with stress, anxiety, and frustration. It is only when we understand the actual processes that take place with potty training that we can ensure a healthy and positive experience for the child. There are three P's to potty training.

1.

1. First, a child must be **physically** ready. A child cannot obtain potty training readiness until the bladder, bowels, and the pelvic floor have developed to a level sufficient for them to properly work. The pelvic floor consists of muscles that support the pelvic organs, including the pelvic diaphragm, urogenital diaphragm, and sphincters and erectile muscles of the urogenital and intestinal tract. These must each be developed enough to do their jobs properly.

2.

2. Next, a child must be **physiologically** ready. It is an entire back and forth between the organs and the brain's neurotransmitters, synapses (the junction between nerve cells consisting of a tiny gap that the neurotransmitters travel across), and so much more! The neurological development has to be matured enough to have the bladder and bowel send a message to the brain, have the brain receive and interpret that message, then understand what to tell the body to do.

3.

3. Finally, a child may struggle with potty training until they are **psychologically** ready. Psychologically, toilet training is the step between being a "baby" and being a "big kid." Diapering is a very personal, nurturing, and intimate time between a child and the parent or care provider. In some cases, the warmth of the diaper is comforting or provides a sensory experience for the child. So a child needs to be psychologically ready to move on to the diaper-free phase of their life.

So, there it is: A child must be PHYSICALLY, PHYSIOLOGICALLY, and PSYCHOLOGICALLY ready to potty train for it to be not only successful, but also a positive, stress-free experience. No two children are alike, and there is no magic age when training should occur. It should always be dictated by the child's readiness, no matter how young or old. When and how a child responds and how quickly the training is complete depends on the child's readiness and the methods used.

SPOOOOKY PARTY TREATS

Halloween means sweet treats, parties, and of course, costumes! Use these easy and delicious recipes to make fun treats for your charge's Halloween extravaganza. *Recipes and photos by Heather Cherry.*



Chocolate Spiders

Ingredients:

- 12 Oreos (approximately)
- 1 package candy eyeballs
- 1 cup small pretzel sticks
- 1 small bag of chocolate chips (semi-sweet or milk chocolate, depending on taste preference)
- 1 teaspoon coconut oil
- Black sugar sprinkles (optional)

Instructions:

1. Prepare the area where the chocolate will dry. Use a grate and/or parchment paper.
2. Melt chocolate chips and coconut oil in a small saucepan on medium-low heat. Use a double boiler if desired.
3. Once melted, cover the Oreo in the chocolate. Transfer to drying surface. Break the pretzel sticks in half. Place four sticks on each side of the Oreo to make the spider's legs.
4. Place the candy eyeballs on top of the Oreo.
5. (Optional) For a furry spider, sprinkle black sugar sprinkles on top.
6. Let dry for at least four hours or until the chocolate is hardened.

Zombie Fingers

Ingredients:

- 1 bag of pretzel rods
- 1 bag (11 oz) white chocolate
- Green food coloring
- Zombie finger pretzel mold
- 1 teaspoon coconut oil

Instructions:

1. Melt white chocolate and coconut oil in a small saucepan on medium-low heat. Use a double boiler if desired.
2. Once melted, add green food coloring to desired color. Use green chocolate melting wafers to eliminate this step.
3. Carefully pour the chocolate into the mold. Do not overfill as this will distort the product. Gently lay the pretzel rod into the mold. Let dry for at least four hours or until the chocolate is hardened.
4. Repeat as many times as desired. Display in a mason jar or galvanized can.

Ghoulie Rice Krispies

Ingredients:

- 5 cups rice cereal
- 1 (10 oz) bag of mini marshmallows
- ½ teaspoon of vanilla
- ¼ cup unsalted butter or coconut oil
- Orange food coloring

Instructions:

1. Melt entire bag of mini marshmallows and butter or coconut oil on medium heat. Continue stirring to avoid burning. Remove from heat once thoroughly melted.
2. Add in vanilla and food coloring. Fold in rice cereal until completely covered. Transfer to parchment paper. Place another piece of parchment paper on top. Use a rolling pin to flatten. Peel off parchment paper and decorate with black sugar sprinkles. Let cool for 30 minutes.
3. To cut your treats into shapes: spray Halloween cookie cutters with a non-stick cooking spray, and firmly press down. One batch makes about a dozen treats using a three-inch cookie cutter. Alternative method: transfer treat mix into a cake pan sprayed with non-stick cooking spray. Flatten using parchment paper and let cool. Cut into rectangles to serve.

-Nannies Ask-

By Stephanie Felzenberg (of Be the Best Nanny Newsletter)



Photo by Jennifer Kuhn.

Dear Stephanie,

I have been with my NannyFamily for 3 years and I recently got engaged. I would love to ask my charges (2 and 4) to be in my wedding party, but I'm not sure how to approach this with my bosses. Is it unreasonable to ask this of them when being a part of a wedding can be so expensive? How should I approach the subject with them?

Sincerely,
Wedding Bells

8 | October 2017

Dear Wedding Bells,

It is a great honor and compliment to ask your charges be in your wedding. In fact, it would be insulting to not at least invite your NannyFamily to your nuptials. It is completely appropriate for you to ask the children serve in roles like flower girl and/or ring bearer for your wedding. The only expense for the parents are nice outfits and a gift.

Don't be worried about asking if the kids can be in your wedding. The entire family will be thrilled that you asked. The children will love practicing their important roles in anticipation of your wedding ceremony.

Congratulations,
Stephanie felzenberg



One Book, Endless Activities

By Kandice Cole.

Photos via Unsplash.

Young children love reading books. They especially love to read the same book over and over again, right? *Brown Bear, Brown Bear* and *The Ear Book* are in constant rotation for my 18-month-old daughter right now.

Books that capture a child's attention are great to use for more than just one reading or activity. Books provide a backdrop for activities that can build mathematical thinking, reading comprehension, scientific thinking, and developmental skills. You can also use the same book for different age groups with simple modifications.

Here are ten simple activities that you can do with the book *Brown Bear, Brown Bear*. Try them out for yourself, then create some other ones, too!

Book: *Brown Bear, Brown Bear*

Activity 1: Color and Name Match (Toddler, Pre-K)

Write the name of each animal on an index card. Color the index card the specific color of that animal (e.g., brown bear on a brown card). As you read the book, ask the child to find the card that goes with the corresponding animal.

Activity 2: Counting (Infant, Toddler)

Count the total number of animals in the book. Count the total number of children on the second to last page of the book.

Activity 3: Animal Questions (Pre-K, Early Elementary)

Ask the child to choose one animal from the book. Have them think of all the questions they have about the animal. Write the questions for them or have them write on their own. Give them a marker and ask them to circle their top questions. Each day find an answer to one of the top questions.

Activity 4: Comprehension and Predicting (Toddler, Pre-K)

Ask the child to guess what animal is coming next before you turn the page. At the end of the book, ask them to tell you the animals in the correct order.

Activity 5: Dancing Animals (Infant to Pre-K)

Make up movement for each animal. As you read the book, encourage your kiddo to do the movement for each animal.

10 fun activities with one fun book. A great way to fill the day for ages 2 to 7.

Activity 6: Speed it Up (Toddler, Pre-K)

Read the book as fast as you can. Encourage your charge to read with you just as quickly. Why not also try reading the book in different rhythmic patterns?

Activity 7: Name the Animals (Toddler to Early Elementary)

Have the child name each animal. Each name must start with the same letter as the type of animal. For example, the brown bear is named Billy.

Activity 8: Animal Scavenger Hunt (Toddler to Early Elementary)

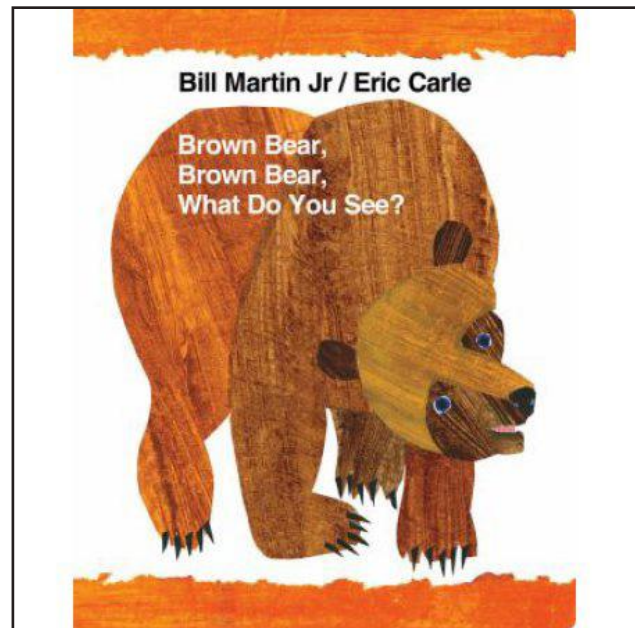
Search for printable pages of the book for this activity. Cut out the animals and tape them up around the house. Go on a "scavenger hunt" and look for the animals in the order that they are listed in the book.

Activity 9: Color Walk (Older Infant to Early Elementary)

Go outside or walk around the house. Find things that match the colors of the animals. What yellow things do you see that match the yellow duck?

Activity 10: What Do They See? Comparing Size (Pre-K to Early Elementary)

Before you turn the page ask your charge to think about how the next animal will look to the new animal. Ask, "When the green frog looks at the purple cat, will he



think the purple cat looks smaller or bigger than him?" This is a wonderful way to introduce mathematical concepts like measurement and comparison.

One book has so many possibilities! What book does your charge love to read? What activities have you done to bring a book to life? What new activities can you try? Happy reading!

Every Last Dime

Nanny Ashley Bowers and Gabe Rignoli (fiancé) are tying the knot in November 2018. Wishing you lots of love and luck from your *Nanny Magazine* team!

"Sometimes a simple act of kindness can say 'I love you' louder than words ever could, and my NannyFamily embodies this. On my last birthday, they took me out to dinner at a gorgeous restaurant with amazing food. If the night had ended there, I would have been completely grateful. But just after we finished eating, both of my bosses reached under the table and pulled out three decorated formula cans full of dimes. You see, since our engagement in 2016, my fiancé and I have had a personal challenge to save 'every last dime' for our wedding. My NannyFamily knew this and gave me the birthday gift of exactly enough dimes to purchase the wedding dress of my dreams. It wasn't even the money that melted my heart that night, it was that they had taken the time to give it to me in dimes."





Ask an Agency

Rebecca Pearcy from Windsor House Nannies in Austin, Texas, answers our readers' tough questions in this issue.

Photo via Create Her Stock.

Q: Do you require all of your candidates to take and pass a drug test prior to accepting them into your database and sending them on interviews?

A: We run a comprehensive background screening but not a drug test. If a family elects for their prospective nanny to take one, we will order it. The fee is then covered by the family per their request.

Q: I really need health benefits. How can I approach a family about offering health insurance to me or at least providing a stipend to help with the costs?

A: Offering a stipend for health insurance can result in tax breaks for the family and for the nanny. Neither party pays taxes on health insurance stipends or reimbursements, and we strongly suggest that instead of offering a year-end bonus, which is taxable, to offer a monthly stipend toward Nanny's health insurance. It is a win-win situation! It is also critical that a nanny can seek medical advice as soon as possible when they get sick, as most families do not have back-up care. If a nanny does not have medical insurance they cannot remedy the illness with the necessary steps to ensure a quick and full recovery for work. It is also incredibly easy to reimburse. The family can either write a check to the insurance company or reimburse the nanny directly. However, we advise that the family keep a paper trail of these reimbursements in the event of an audit.

Q: What is the minimum amount of experience a nanny can have to become a candidate at your agency?

A: We require a minimum of two years in-home, professional nanny experience within the past three years. Families want to hire a nanny who has recent nanny or babysitting experience, or who have recently applied their skills in caregiving. While other child related experience (e.g., teaching) should be reflected on your résumé, from our experience, families will dismiss an application if they do not see any professional in-home experience, which is why we require it.

Want to recommend an agency for a future issue? Email info@nannymag.com with suggestions!



Kids' Health

winter is coming

Dr. Jess: Outdoor winter play is important. As winter approaches, it is easy to limit children's play to being indoors. It is typically messy, cold, it doesn't seem like there's much to do, and it can get dangerous on ice. But being outdoors is an important part of childhood!

First, let's talk about a common myth. Cold weather doesn't cause cold and flu season; being inside during colder weather months does. When adults and children alike are restricted to the indoors, germs are concentrated and grow rapidly. Constant exposure to these germs, especially without proper exercise and holiday diets, is what causes colds. Being outside means your charge isn't inside with the bacteria and germs. Therefore, by getting outside, you can decrease their risk of colds and flus.

Vitamin D is also an important part of a child's development and mood. Vitamin D is absorbed from the sunlight, even when the sun doesn't feel hot. Vitamin D is important in development of bones and making serotonin, a hormone that affects mood in the brain. Vitamin D is not as easy to get from food, so the best way to absorb it is to be outdoors for about 30 minutes a day, even in winter.

Another positive aspect of being outdoors in winter is that children experience the outdoors differently. They see different environments and nature in a different light. Also, by playing outside in winter, children use different muscles than when they are playing outside in summer because they are doing different kinds of activities. By using these muscles, a child can become stronger and appreciate all that their body can do.

Having some trouble deciding what do outdoors? If there is snow, consider sledding (walking up hills in snow can be a challenge, but it is worth it to use new muscles and burn off some energy). You can also "spray paint" the snow using a squirt bottle and food coloring. Even if there is no snow in the winter time, consider going on a nature walk. The outdoors is so different and can be a great learning experience for children to see the change of seasons in nature. Just remember when you play outside to stay safe by wearing the appropriate clothing. Now get outside and enjoy winter!

with

Dr. Jessica Richards

Nanny: My charge really dislikes the colder weather. Usually he is active and outdoors, but as the temperature drops he is becoming such a couch potato! Is it important to get him outside frequently, or can we do indoor activities until the weather warms up?"

Who is Dr. Jess?

Dr. Jessica Richards is a chiropractor specializing in maternity and pediatric care, not because she enjoys drool and other bodily fluids, but because she has a passion to ensure every child grows up to be as healthy as possible. She answers medical questions for readers of *Nanny Magazine*.

DISCLAIMER

This column should not be considered medical advice. Neither *Nanny Magazine* nor Dr. Jessica Richards assume liability for this content. Please consult your charge's pediatrician or other qualified healthcare provider, with permission from the child's parents or guardians, for professional medical advice.

Enhancing Education at Home

-with-

THEME DAYS



Photo via Photo Pin.

By Pamela Hodges.

When it comes to learning at home, I'm a strong believer that it should be filled with hands-on activities and surrounded by fun. One of the ways I do this is by creating themed days for kids to enjoy. Theme days (and themed activities on a smaller scale) can make the experience more fun for everyone. Even a simple task like reading a book can be more fun when you set the stage for something different.

A theme day doesn't have to be overwhelming, especially if you follow a few simple steps! The effort you put into planning the day will be worth it when you see the smiles and laughter it brings your charges throughout the day.

Pick a Theme


The first step is to pick a theme. There are many ways that you can do this. The seasons and holidays are a great place to start for theme ideas. If these don't lend themselves to a good day, then look to the interests of the kids. Is one of them a big superhero fan? Maybe you should theme the day around superheroes. You could even involve

the kids in the decision-making process.

Making It Educational

Once you have a theme, it's time to bring education into the plans. The first step is to look for books that relate to the theme. Start by browsing the home bookshelf. Are there any books that fit in with the theme? Next, move on to the library and do a search for books related to your theme. Use your library card to reserve them to save you time. This way, all you have to do is go in and pick them up from the desk. You can browse through all of the books and pick the ones you want to read to the kids or, if the kids are old enough, you can let them choose the books for themselves.

Once you've covered the reading portion of the day, I recommend finding or making a math game that relates to the theme. For a fall theme, you might pick Hi Ho Cherry-O. For other themes, you might find inspiration on Pinterest. You can even create a simple matching game with minimal effort and can even find printable games available online.



Your theme day should have a good balance of education and fun.

Photo via Photo Pin.

Depending on the theme, you might want to look for a science or social studies activity. Before you go crazy looking for educational activities, keep in mind how much time you have. Will this be a whole day centered around the theme or just a few hours? There's no need to plan too many activities for your time slot.

Making It Fun

Your theme day should have a good balance of education and fun. This will keep everyone interested and smiling throughout your time together. One easy way to bring in a little fun is to pick out a movie that's related to the theme. This can be a good calm down activity to use at some point during the day (especially if the weather isn't all that great). It's also a good activity to use if you need to prep any of the other activities that you've planned.

Another way to make the day fun is to pick out a craft or art activity for the kids to do. Depending on your theme, there are many different ideas out there (Pinterest, again!). If you don't want to spend a lot of time prepping a craft activity, you could simply have the kids draw or paint a picture related to the theme. Sometimes keeping it simple is just as fun as a craft involving a million and one steps.

If you're going to be with the kids during meal time, you can use that as another opportunity to make it fun. Get creative with their food for the day. This can be done by carefully choosing foods or by using cookie cutters to create fun shapes. You could even introduce them to a new dish if it fits in with your theme. A quick search can help you find ideas. Everyone has to eat anyways, right? Why not make it fun?

Adding Something Extra

As you can tell, theme days can be as simple as you make them. There's no need for elaborate ideas or activities that require a lot of preparation. Sometimes just labeling the day with a theme will make it more fun. However, there is always room for extras if you want to go above and beyond. Things like invitations, decorations, and music can add that extra special touch that makes their day even more fun.

Themed days can make things more fun for everyone involved. They can make your day together feel special and unique. At first glance, it might seem like a lot of work, but it really doesn't have to be. Keep it simple and don't overwhelm yourself with too many activities. One or two centered around the theme is really all it takes to make the perfect theme day for you and your little ones!



IN SEARCH OF A

GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

NATURE OR NURTURE?

Photos and text by Rachael Kullmann of Sweet Babydreams.

A good night's sleep: the elusive dream of many with small children! Without a doubt, most of us as mothers or care-givers know the basic importance of sleep. We function better with some good shut-eye and the children we love are generally less cranky. Some kids sleep well from birth, others struggle more, sometimes without rhyme or reason. But other than just crossing our fingers that children are good sleepers, is there anything practical we can do to influence or shape a child's sleep?

The answer is a resounding YES!

Have Realistic Expectations

To start with, having realistic expectations is key. Although it would be nice if a 3-month-old baby would sleep 12 hours straight through the night, most babies at this age are not

biologically capable of achieving this goal. As a starting point, here's a rough guide to age-appropriate expectations on sleep:

Newborns (0-12 Weeks Old)

- 14-18 hours total daily sleep.
- May feed every 2-4 hours in the night, may do one longer stretch of sleep (4-5 hours).
- 3-5 naps per day.
- Awake time between each nap: 1-1.5 hours.

3-9 Months

- 14-16 hours total daily sleep.
- Slightly longer stretches at night if weight gain is good (5-10 hours)
- May feed 1-3 times a night.
- Drop 3rd nap by 8 months.

- Start eating solid foods around 6 months
- Awake time between each nap: 1.75-3 hours.

9-12 Months

- 13.5-15 hours of total sleep.
- May sleep 11-12 hours through the night, or may feed 1-2 times at night.
- 2 naps.
- Awake time between each nap: 2.5-3.5 hours.

12-18 Months

- 13.5-15 hours total daily sleep.
- Hunger is not usually cause for night waking.
- May sleep 11-12 hours through the night, if nutrition optimized.
- 2 naps a day.
- Awake time between each nap: 3-4 hours.

18-24 Months

- 12-14 hours total daily sleep.
- Drop morning nap by 18 months, leaving 1 nap at lunchtime.
- Awake time between nap/bedtime: 4.5-5.5 hours.

24-36 Months

- Awake time between nap/bedtime:

5.5-6 hours.

- Drop lunch nap between 2.5-3.5 years old.
- Toddlers and preschoolers still need 11-12 hours of sleep at night.

Generally speaking, if the child falls roughly into these guidelines, then there is no cause for concern. However, if the child is getting significantly less or more sleep, or struggling with catnapping or too frequent night waking, something may need to be optimized. But how, you may ask? Fortunately, apart from a child's natural sleep tendency, there are many other contributing factors which, when optimized, can improve sleep very simply!

Sleep Environment

The sleep environment is one of the easiest factors to optimize. The key things to look at are lighting, temperature, safe sleeping, and noise.

- Provide a pitch black room for sleep, for all naps and at night. Melatonin (the sleepy hormone) is only produced in the dark. If a night-light is required, use one that is yellow/red, and not blue/white, as these inhibit the production of melatonin, and make sleep even more difficult to achieve.

- Electronic devices also emit the melatonin-prohibiting blue light; exposure should be limited, and devices turned off at least 3 hours before bedtime.
- Ideal room temperature is 16-20 degrees Celsius (65-70 degrees Fahrenheit).
- A safe sleep environment is crucial. This means no crib bumpers, no additional toys or blankets, and the baby should be laid on his back to sleep.
- Layer clothing and use a sleep sack to keep a wriggly baby/toddler warm without needing additional blankets.
- White noise can help block outside or household noises that might wake baby.

Nutrition

One important aspect of sleep that we often forget about is nutrition. This is more than just whether or not the child is full. Research has shown that *what* children eat is just as important, and various vitamins and minerals particularly encourage good sleep.

- Tryptophan, an essential amino acid in the body, helps create the compound serotonin. Furthermore, B vitamins aid the process of creating functional serotonin, which can then be converted into melatonin, the hormone that helps regulate sleep and wake cycles.
- Protein helps to balance blood sugar



Look at the chart below to see how much sleep on average your charge needs per day and how many naps they might be taking at different ages.

Age (Months)	Daytime Sleep*	# Naps per Day
0 to 2	4 to 7	3 to 5
2 to 4	3 to 4.5	3 to 4
4 to 6	3 to 3.5	3
6 to 9	2.5 to 3	2 to 3
9 to 12	2.5	2
12 to 18	2 to 2.5	1 to 2
18 to 24	1.5 to 2	1
24 to 26	1 to 1.5	1
36+	0 to 1	0 to 1

*In hours. Excludes night sleep

and promotes consolidated night sleep.

- Iron aids dopamine production, which in turn helps us fall asleep and stay asleep.
- The minerals zinc, calcium, and magnesium are all natural muscle relaxants. Deficiencies in these minerals may have negative effects on sleep and can lead to irritability and muscle tension.

Did you know that zinc deficiency actually causes a child's sense of smell to decrease, and can make foods taste blander and unappetizing? (Have you ever tried to eat mashed potato without being able to taste it properly? Blech!) When you ensure your charge has a zinc-rich diet, not only are you encouraging a good night's sleep, but you are also helping to prevent future pickiness! Amazing.

Additionally, Omega-3 fatty acids, especially DHA, have also been shown to promote production of melatonin, encourage sleep, and reduce sleep disturbances.

Tips to Help Provide Nutrient-Rich Meals

- Homemade foods are much more nutrient dense than store-bought, jarred baby food, so try to make as much as you can yourself. (Make in bulk, freeze in ice-cube containers and thaw as needed!)
- Steaming vegetables and fruit to make purée also helps the foods retain their nutrients in comparison to boiling, where much of the important nutrients end up in the water, which is then thrown out.
- Try giving your charge their daily source of protein at lunchtime rather than at dinnertime, as protein can be hard to digest and may disrupt their little tummies, negatively impacting night-time sleep.

Sleep Associations

Sleep associations (such as feeding or rocking to sleep) are not necessarily bad in themselves but can prevent sleep from consolidating in the long-term, especially from 4-6 months of age onwards. Imagine falling asleep in your nice soft warm bed only to wake up two hours later on the cold hard kitchen floor! Not ideal, right?

Have you ever wondered why your charge wakes up after 40 minutes ON. THE. DOT? Welcome to sleep cycles! Babies naturally have sleep cycles of about 45 minutes during the day, and 2-3 hours through the night. At the beginning of the sleep cycle, they fall relatively quickly into deep sleep, however they cycle back into light sleep after about 35-40 minutes. A child that can fall asleep by themselves will be able to bridge that light sleep cycle and fall asleep again, providing a long restorative nap. A child that needs external help such as feeding or rocking to sleep will often require this help again to fall back asleep after every light sleep cycle. Not only is this tiring for the caregiver, but consolidated sleep is actually very healthy and important for neurocognitive development, especially as the child gets older.

The biggest problem with babies and children that have

developed long-term sleep associations is that they often catnap throughout the day, never sleeping much longer than 45 minutes at a time. This leads to overtiredness, which stimulates production of stress hormones, making it even harder for the child to settle easily to sleep, and encouraging frequent night waking. Working on optimizing day sleep often has the natural flow-on effect of improving night sleep!

There are lots of gentle techniques to help a child slowly learn to fall asleep by themselves. This is something I would only really recommend working on from age 4-6 months onwards, as newborns do not have the capacity to self-settle and often need more help to fall asleep. I always recommend a consistent and responsive approach, which may look slightly different for every family. Moreover, it's important to optimize all other contributing factors to ensure the process goes as smoothly as possible.

Development

Learning new skills, such as rolling, crawling, pulling up, and walking can really disrupt a child's sleep and cause even the best sleeper to regress. Babies actually practice these new skills in their sleep. Can you imagine falling asleep flat and then waking up standing at the bar of the crib? Confusing and slightly scary, right?! Plus, there are a lot of other important brain developments that happen, especially during the first year, which can make sleep regress for seemingly no reason. During these phases, it's best to stay as consistent as possible while remaining understanding and loving in your approach.

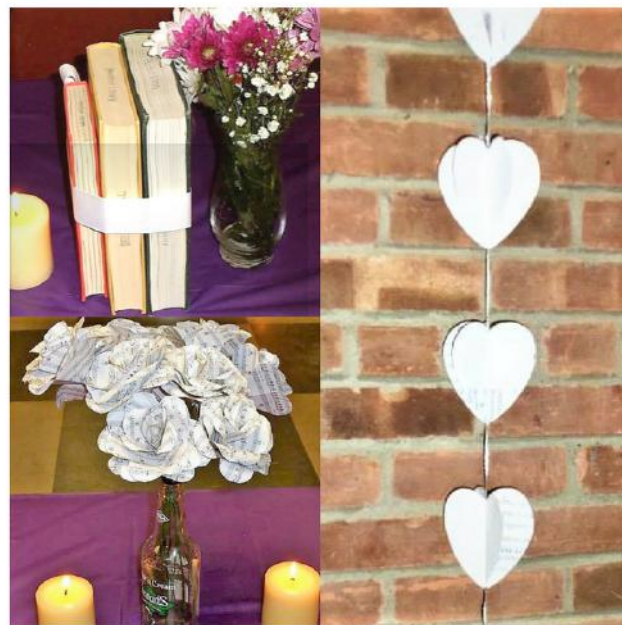
I hope that these practical tips empower you and give you a few tools to encourage healthy sleep habits in your children, or the children you look after. If you are not the parent of the child, you should also make sure that the parents are fully on board before working on optimizing their child's sleep. The support of a sleep coach can be invaluable in this situation. A sleep coach can see the connections, can offer personalised advice, and can walk you through the entire process. If you feel like you need some extra support in this area, I'd love to connect with you on a free 15-minute consult, available worldwide via Skype and telephone!

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Bridal Shower on a Budget

Save money by making some cute decor and favors on your own!



Words and photos by Danielle Smyth.

Planning a bridal shower? Showers are a wonderful part of the wedding experience, but they can get a bit pricey. Here are some tips for original, affordable décor and party favors to make your bridal shower shine.

Décor

Aim for homemade or borrowed items whenever possible. Hand-made tissue paper flowers are easy to make. With the help of online tutorials, they can be customized to suit the color scheme of your event. Having a literary-themed shower? Borrow hardcover books from the library in your colors and tie them together with a pretty ribbon for an instant and classy centerpiece.

For more literary style, accentuate the room with a garland made of romantic prose. Photocopy a favorite passage and string heart-shaped

cutouts of the pages from a ribbon to make a garland. You can also use the pages to make a paper flower bouquet. For music lovers, these projects also work beautifully when made with sheet music!

Favors

Make your party favors double as event décor by arranging them on pretty trays. Set up a candy and pastry table using store-bought treats with plastic dishes of varying styles and heights from a dollar store. If you stick to your color theme, this look will make a stunning accent. Invite your guests to fill paper favor bags with candy. Decorate the bags by stamping or handwriting the name of the happy couple and the phrase “Love is sweet.”

Another great favor is a shower-themed chocolate-covered Oreo cookie. Purchase a cookie mold with a wedding motif and fill the mold two-thirds with melted chocolate before firmly inserting an Oreo. Let cool and place in treat bags tied with curled ribbon.

Showers don't have to cost a mint to be lovely. Creativity and a bit of crafting can yield a wonderful and memorable event.

Make Me a Match

By Jill Ciganek.

How to Know You're with the Right Agency

Job hunting. We've all been there. We often wish we could stay with our NannyFamilies and their kids for a lifetime, but one of the bitter-sweet aspects of being a nanny is knowing that one day we won't be needed. Along with the heart-break of a position ending comes the daunting task of finding a new job and the perfect fit with a new family. The struggle is real.


Today, families seeking nannies and nannies alike have a lot of options when it comes to finding one another. The popularity of online sitter sites has made finding employment as a nanny easier, since you can scroll through these sites with the touch of a button. Using these sites can also lead to a lot of work on both the part of the nanny and the family. Besides the scams and underpaying ads out there,

there's a lot of legwork that goes into screening the other party to make sure they're legitimate.

That's where nanny agencies come in. An agency acts as a "match-maker" of sorts between nannies and families, and the end result is often a great fit. They take care of screening, background checks, negotiating, providing contracts, and everything else that goes into the business aspect of finding a new position. This eliminates headaches and wasted time for both parties. How do you know you've found a great agency to work with? After speaking to some nannies and agency owners, here are some indicators that you've found a great match. If you're currently on the job hunt and looking to work with an agency, this should serve as a great checklist.

1. First and foremost, good agencies do *not* charge a fee to the nanny. You should not be asked to pay any money upfront to register with an agency, nor to be placed with a family. The agency should also not receive any percentage of your wages once hired (this is when they step out). Job seekers should not be charged and if you are asked to pay a fee to apply, this should be a red flag. Families pay a fee to agencies to do all the legwork involved in finding them a nanny. This also ensures the families are serious about finding the right match in a nanny and signals that they are seeking only quality candidates.

Photo via Create Her Stock.



Love your job even more when you're with a great agency that has your back.

Photo via Photo Pin.

2. Agencies should have a detailed application and interview process for both nannies and families. This ensures the agency gets a good feel for the personalities, philosophies, working styles, etc., of both parties, resulting in better matches and saving time. It also ensures the safety of both parties. Let's face it, meeting people from the Internet without the proper background checks can be downright scary.

3. Communication should be regular throughout the process. Speaking with the agency representative should not just be a one-and-done ordeal. After the initial phone screening and the in-person interview with the agency, the agency should keep in touch with you about newly listed positions that may be a fit for you so that you can decide whether to take an interview with the family. They should also follow up post-interview with both nanny and family for feedback, and to change course if needed. In addition, the agency should continue communication throughout the process until a contract is signed and you are hired by a family. They should also remain available to you after you start a new position in the event you need support or help if circumstances in the position change.

4. Agencies should be advocates for the nanny profession. Good agencies are there to not only provide a service to families, but to nannies as well. They should treat you like a professional, and ensure the positions you are being placed in view you as the same. They should ensure the contract you sign provides for all the benefits and protections of any professional job. This includes legal pay, paid vacation and sick time, guaranteed hours, written duties and hours, possible health insurance stipend, and so much more. They should ensure the contract you sign is fair and legal for both parties.

5. Former or current nannies make great agency owners! I spoke to several agency owners who were or had been nannies. This unique perspective allows the agency owner to know what you've been through (good and bad) to ensure they are screening out employers who might not be the best fit. Having been nannies, they are more likely to understand the unique struggles and aspects of a nanny's job like no one else can.

What makes a nanny a great candidate for an agency's positions? Here are a few things most of the agencies we spoke with are looking for when interviewing nannies:

1. Dress professionally. We know the standard "nanny uniform" seems to be leggings and a tee, but for your interview with the agency, and then later a family, you should dress up a bit more. Most agreed a business suit was not standard, but dress pants and a blouse or skirt was the favored attire. At a minimum, nice jeans and a blouse should be worn (perhaps for the working interview with the family).

2. Have previous professional childcare experience. Years of experience with children varied according to the agencies, but most wanted a few years of childcare experience, preferably in a home setting, although daycare, preschool, and teaching experience are all great portfolio enhancers.

3. Have great references. All agencies will check prior childcare references. Make sure yours have wonderful things to say! Written reference letters from prior employ-

ers are also sought after, especially by potential families.

4. Educational background helps you to stand out. If you have a degree in a child or education related field, this can help you stand out. Higher net-worth families often seek out college-educated candidates. Including all continuing education and certifications you have in your application will put you to the top of the list and show you're serious about your career as a professional nanny.

5. Have clean background, driving, and child abuse checks, and the ability to legally work in the US. This is self-explanatory.

6. Have current CPR/First Aid certification. This is usually a requirement for all agencies, and many families will require it as well.

7. Have a portfolio and résumé. These items make you look professional and exceptional on your interviews with agencies and families.

These checklists should serve as a good guide if it's your first time registering with an agency. Just remember, the agency should be advocating for the nanny just as much as they are for the family. They should take the time to get to know you and what you're looking for, and they should leave you feeling that they care about making good matches and not just the bottom line. Finding a job through an agency can often lead to higher paying positions, and introduce you to families who are serious about treating their nannies well, fairly, and professionally.

Looking for a top-notch agency to start your job search? Visit *Nanny Magazine's* free online marketplace to find a list of our trusted agency friends.

nannymag.com/marketplace

Photo by Jennifer Kuhn.



DATA BLITZ

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

By Amanda Dunyak.

Paul Winchell, the voice of Tigger in *The Many Adventures of Winnie the Pooh*, invented an artificial heart in 1963.

Source: BuzzFeed

Nowhere in the Humpty Dumpty nursery rhyme does it say that Humpty Dumpty is an egg.

Source: So True Facts

The dots on dice are called "pips."

Source: National Geographic Kids

"Cluck and grunt" was 1930s slang for "ham and eggs."

Source: Huffington Post

The first item sold on eBay was a broken laser pointer. A collector of broken laser pointers bought it for \$14.83.

Source: Mental Floss



My Big Day, Their Big Day

How one nanny included her charges in her wedding.

By Sasha Pensanti

“OH MY GOD, I’m going to be a bridesmaid!” were the first words that popped out of Anya’s mouth when she saw the ring on my finger. She’s 12 now, and we’re a huge part of each other’s lives, as one can imagine.

For the last few years, I’ve spent more time with Anya and her sister Sarina than with most of my friends and family. We’ve seen each other early in the morning, late at night, and everything in between. The three of us have gone on adventures just to find fun sandwiches, worked through problems in all settings, and had a blast just sitting quietly and coloring.

I must admit, I was nervous to tell them I was engaged. I even asked permission from their parents before telling them (they were thrilled). The nanny they had before me got married and moved to another country—and it stung, you could tell. They were worried about me doing the same, long before my boyfriend became my fiancé.

“Okay, how about junior bridesmaid?” was my compromise. I very much wanted to include Anya and Sarina in my wedding, but the idea of a 12 year old being a bridesmaid seemed to go a little bit too far. This outgoing, outspoken star of a child was thrilled to take on any position in my wedding, and that didn’t surprise me in the slightest. “Actually, maybe I can be the wedding planner...” She continued to muse about her role. I knew going in it would be easy to not only get her involved, but make her

happy with whatever assignment she was ultimately given.

Her sister, Sarina, was a bit more difficult to work out. “Sarina?” I asked, “Do you want to be a flower girl?” Being much younger, this seemed like a logical place to put her. “No.” She was firm in her reply. At this point I found myself in a pickle. She wanted to be involved, but did not want to be a flower girl and have everyone watching her. Then, what? I could relate to her stage fright, but I didn’t want to exclude a child I love, and who, despite being the type of kid who doesn’t use the word “love,” I know loves me too. After a lot of back and forth, we eventually decided that she would be the “kid activity organizer.” This, as you can imagine, is a completely made-up job. She’s helping me test out fun ideas for what the kids can do at the wedding, but more importantly I’ve left an open door for her if she changes her mind.

Both girls will be included in my “getting ready” session before the wedding, along with my bridesmaids, but to make it fair to the adult members of my wedding party, the kids will only be showing up halfway through. Whether they choose to be junior bridesmaids, flowers girls, or just kid activity organizers, I’m making sure each one of them has a bag of bridesmaid goodies and a little getting ready robe, so when their hair and makeup is getting done, they will feel just as special as the big girls. Since I’m practically their second mom, or at least a really, really big sister, I couldn’t imagine my day without including them.



Catering 101

By Kimi Abdullah.

Once you've found a reason to celebrate with a catered bash, picking a caterer is one of your top priorities. What guests remember about a special event like a wedding, anniversary, retirement, or other major party is usually the reception, which means music, dancing, drinks, and FOOD! So how do you make sure you're picking the right caterer and getting value for your money?

Do Your Research

Put together a concise list of potential caterers by asking friends about events they've attended as guests, particularly if they enjoyed the food and thought the reception was well planned. First-hand reviews like that can really help you narrow it down!

Establish a Vision and Budget

Make sure your event format matches the person you are celebrating (personal aesthetic, food tastes, etc.) and what you value (unique menu options in place of elaborate floral displays, for example). If food is not something that is important to you, or your budget makes a multi-course meal cost prohibitive, then consider a cocktail-style reception in the evening with light hors d'oeuvres and advise guests to eat a meal beforehand. If great food is something that is essential, then be sure to drill down to find a caterer that adequately inspires. There is so much more available than dry chicken! Good caterers will consult with the client and transform their likes, interests, as well as their back story, into a delicious and memorable meal. In either case, make sure you allocate an appropriate

budget. That budget obviously depends on available finances. If it's a wedding, expect to spend about 50% of your budget on the reception, an amount that should be comprised mostly of food and drink costs.

Ask for References

When requesting quotes from caterers (get at least three!), ask them to provide references. Don't rely on testimonials or online reviews. When speaking with references, be sure to ask about the caterer's responsiveness, willingness to cater to odd requests, as well as their honesty and ability to deliver the delicacies desired. No one wants a caterer who says "yes" to everything but can't meet deadlines or adhere to a specific culinary vision. Finally, ask whether the reference felt they got their money's worth. Ultimately, you're making memories, and if others feel the caterer was worth it, then you may too!

Educate and Negotiate!

Caterers should be prepared to explain each line item of their quote and what their service includes. Devel-

oping menus and quotes may be an everyday task in their world, but it's not in yours, so don't be afraid to ask a lot of questions about every and any detail that comes to mind. It should be a consultative process; there should be some natural back and forth. If you understand every cost being presented to you, then you'll be in a better position to negotiate a reasonable price. My two most important rules (as the client and the service provider) are:

1. If you never ask, you'll never get what you want.
2. The answer "no" will not kill you. If the caterer says "no" to a reduction in cost, ask for a suggestion on how they can get the quote closer to your budget. It might mean adjusting your vision slightly, but give the caterer a chance to come up with alternatives. In the end, you might be delighted with their creative solution!

Whatever the theme, vision, or budget, there is a caterer out there to help bring you the party of your dreams. With a little researching and planning, you should have no problem finding the right fit for your fun day!

FASHION



photo shoot style:

How should I dress my charges
for family portraits?

By Irene Abdou.

Stressing about outfits for an upcoming photography session for yourself or your charges? Picking the right clothing is definitely a key factor in looking amazing in photos, but don't let it stress you out! Let the tips below help you plan the perfect styles! The most important factor in planning what to wear for photography sessions that include more than one person is to coordinate and complement each other so that you look put together.

Match Formality

Casual attire is great, and so is formal attire. It just depends on the look that you're going for. Make sure to match formality. If one person is wearing jeans, then no one should be wearing dress pants. To give you the most flexibility, I recommend that you choose clothing that is "nice enough"

that you would want to hang them on the walls of your home. That means discouraging t-shirts and shorts for adults.

Choose complementary colors

There's no need for everyone to wear the same shade of the same color, as that would be too "match-matchy." But do make sure that everyone wears complementary colors (colors that look good side by side) as opposed to conflicting colors. One way to make sure everyone looks coordinated is to have one or more people (depending on group size) wear a multicolor pattern, and then have other people pick a solid color from the pattern to wear.

Other color selection tips:

- Pinterest is a treasure trove. Look at family portrait pins and save color combos that you like.

- Lay a clothing possibility for each person next to each other on a bed and see how they look together. Take a picture and send to your professional photographer for feedback!

- Might you or your NannyFamily want to hang one or more wall portraits in the home? If so, choose clothing colors that complement the colors in the room(s) the portraits would likely hang.

- Wear colors that you like. Any color goes if you like how you look in it! However, if wearing a white or cream-colored top, make sure to choose a fabric that has lace, ruffles, or some other type of detail or texture so that your top doesn't end up looking like a big white blob in the photo.

When choosing your individual outfit, keep the following points in mind:

Clothing that is too tight shows unwanted bulges. Clothing that is too loose may make you look heavier than you are. Skirts that are too short make it more difficult to photograph you sitting. For maternity sessions, I encourage you to wear a form-fitting top that shows off your belly.



In this family portrait, the three children wear two different patterns. (Too many different patterns would make the image too busy, but the two patterns work well for this group of five.) The colors in the patterns all tie together and pull in the solid colors on the parents' clothing to make everyone 100% coordinated. In addition, while the mom's sweater is white, it has a knit patterned texture to it, so that it doesn't look like a white blob.

Dark colors are slimming; white and cream are “plumping.” Is there a certain part of your body that you’re sensitive or self-critical about? Consider covering it with clothing so that it doesn’t stand out.

Double the variety in your photographs by bringing a jacket, sweater, or accessory (hat, scarf, etc.) that you can wear in some photographs and take off in others. You can also use your accessories to add pops of color to an otherwise neutral palette.

Iron your clothing before your session because wrinkles will show!

One final note: of course, you want children to wear cute clothing. So does your photographer! However, if your portrait session is in the late fall or winter and includes young children, the #1 concern is to please make sure that you dress them warmly. From experience, I can tell you that if the kids feel cold, no amount of cajoling, making funny faces, or playing around with them will bring out their smiles. Instead, they’ll be runny-nosed and crying the whole time, and none of us want *that* for the family portraits. As a caregiver, you already know to dress children warmly.

Still struggling with what to wear? You’ve hired a professional family photographer, right? Take advantage and ask your photographer for expert guidance. Don’t be shy!

"Bright colors give off a fun feel, and I love this combination of aqua, purple, yellow, and pink for family portraits with young children."



COLOR THEORY

Irene’s Favorite Bright Color Combos:

- Purple, plum, and sky blue
- Hot pink, purple, aqua, yellow, grey
- Bright red, aqua, pale blue, grey
- Purple, darker blue, yellow, white/cream
- Yellow, grey, navy, white/cream

Irene’s Favorite Subdued Color Combos:

- Rust orange, forest green, brown
- Navy, grey, maroon, plum
- Rose, salmon, light blue, blue-grey, white
- Grey/cream, brown, black, blue

About Irene Abdou Photography, LLC:

Irene Abdou Photography, LLC is a boutique portrait & boudoir photography studio serving the Washington DC metro area. Recipient of the “People Love Us On Yelp” award, Angie’s List Super Service Award, and Bride’s Choice Awards by WeddingWire, our photography of babies, children, couples, families, and individuals has captured the hearts of DC-area residents for the past decade. One of our clients recently said that we made them feel like they were our only client, and it’s statements like this that mean the world to us, because personalized attention for each and every one of our clients is exactly what we’re after. Visit us online at <http://www.ireneabdou.com>.

MOONLIGHTING

IS IT WORTH IT? BY LEAH KIRK.



In a perfect world, nannies would all be paid a fair living wage with excellent benefits and perks. However, for many nannies, this is not the case. Many nannies “moonlight” to make ends meet, save money for a large purchase, or to help pay off debts. In some instances, nannies will have side jobs just for discounts on the products that they sell or to meet new people. Either way, side jobs are very common in the nanny world.

There are numerous ways to go about this and I have found that other nannies are a major source of encouragement, information, and even other potential jobs.

We as nannies have so many resources at our fingertips, yet each nanny has assorted reasons for working extra jobs. We should be lifting our fellow nannies up, as we each have a unique story to tell. I have talked with hundreds of nannies over the last few months about the diverse ways in which they make extra money. From direct sales to babysitting jobs, retail or photography businesses, and even many who make and sell their crafts and goods, there are endless opportunities to earn extra income with jobs on the side. Just because a nanny is working numerous jobs does not mean that they aren't being paid well. Everyone has different goals such as paying off debts, or major life changes such as a wedding, buying a home, or having children. Some just like having extra spending money to travel or treat themselves (because we all need to treat ourselves!).

a new job with a new family and have been using my side jobs to help pay off my student loans, my new car, and to save for the future. I had also started dabbling in direct sales. I was a consultant for Thirty-One gifts (purses, bags, totes, etc.) right after college and shortly after starting with my last job I became a consultant with Gold Canyon (candles), but it was mostly for the discounts on the products. I made an extra \$100-300 a month having parties, mostly on Facebook, or with friends and family. I wasn't blasting it on Facebook that I was a consultant and many of my friends didn't even know I sold anything unless I told them.

Some nannies have started their own direct sales businesses and some have even taken the multilevel marketing (MLM) route. The main difference between the two is the pay structure. In direct sales, you are paid a percentage of what you sell, but in MLM you are only paid if you sell a certain amount or reach a certain level in the company, usually by having your own team



Shine a light on your personal budget.

Photo via Photo Pin.

As a nanny myself, I realized in my last job that I needed to take on another job, or 3 in my case, to be able to afford to live in the DC area and pay my bills. I was a full-time live-in nanny so I didn't have living expenses, other than food, because I lived in a separate apartment provided by the family. However, I needed to be able to afford my car insurance, medical insurance, student loan payments, as well as car maintenance. This wasn't possible with the small take-home pay I got every two weeks. It was then I turned to extra babysitting jobs. I had a steady Monday night (and occasional date night) family I was with from the time their son was 3 weeks old until he was just over a year old. Unfortunately, the job ended when the family moved away. Shortly after Thanksgiving last year I realized that I couldn't continue working for the family I was with and still manage to maintain my sanity. It came down to a renegotiation of my contract in which they refused to pay a living wage, however, I left on good terms and still occasionally babysit for them. I have since started
28 | October 2017

in place. Many nannies are a part of these companies for numerous reasons. They love the products, they love the freedom to work when they want, they love building a team, they enjoy helping others, or they simply do it because they love getting "paid to party."

Other nannies are finding retail jobs, working as baristas, in grocery stores, clothing stores, or even in amusement parks or kid-themed places on the weekends. I talked with a few nannies about why they chose this route for a side job. Some loved the flexibility, others just wanted to save money. Some nannies make and sell their goods, like crocheted or knitted items, handmade soaps, paintings, and photographs, to name a few. Others have used their degrees to their advantage and have started working as English teachers for a company that allows anyone with a college degree and experience teaching or working with children to teach English to children in China online.

Some nannies will drive for Uber or Lyft, and even some



Set a goal or budget so you know what you are aiming for and make sure the time versus the payoff makes sense to you.


Photo via CreateHer Stock.

of the food or grocery delivery apps like Instacart and Seamless. There are numerous ways to go about this if you have your own car and insurance; Uber and Lyft both have apps where you can apply to be a driver. There is an application and onboarding process (usually you will meet with a representative in your area to do a small orientation), then you are able to work the hours you want. This has become a very popular way to make extra income when you are not working, the kids are in school, and even on weekends. It gives you the freedom to work as much or as little as you would like. I spoke with a few nannies who would go straight to driving after work and would drive for a few hours before going home for the evening, depending on the time of day and if there was a huge need for them in their area at that time.

Finally, other nannies are taking the tried-and-true method of using their profession to make extra money. Some babysit for other families, have weekend families they nanny for, started their own NCS (Newborn Care Specialist) businesses, have become

doulas, and others have become agency owners or started a professional babysitting business for corporate events, weddings, etc. Some have separate families they work for part-time, others just do date-night sitting for numerous families. When talking with other nannies who have stuck to the childcare route, this was a major way to save money and earn extra income.

When it comes to telling your employers about your side job, that is up to your discretion. If it's not interfering with your work for them, and if it doesn't interfere with your scheduled hours, it may not be necessary to tell them. However, if you are looking for ways to save money, earn extra income, or even just have extra money for traveling, side jobs are the way to go. There are even more opportunities than what I've covered here, but as you can see, the possibilities are endless. You should find something that works for you and allows you to be happy. A little final word of advice for other nannies working on saving money: set a goal or budget so you know what you are aiming for and make sure the time versus the payoff makes sense to you.



"In an endless garden of flowers, I will always pick you." -A.J. Lawless

DECORATING WITH PAPER FLOWERS

BY MEAGHAN KECK.

Nanny-turned-paper
flower boss Meaghan
Keck shares tips,
pics, and tutorials
for DIY paper flow-
ers perfect for any
wedding, party, or
general home decor.

You've picked "The One," and "The One" has picked you. Let the wedding planning commence! There are so many decisions to make when it comes to your wedding decor and design.

It is easy to get lost in Pinterest boards, magazines, wedding trends, and what "so and so" said. However, having a plethora of resources from which to gain ideas and inspiration from can also be extremely beneficial. Remember to take these ideas and make them your own! Don't get caught up in recreating the visual exactly.

Will it be a game changer if your decor doesn't match this year's wedding spotlight reel? Not one bit. What matters most is that your wedding reflects you and your fiancé. If the theme and decor of your wedding match your personalities and your love, then BAM - you're on the right track to one epic celebration. Remember to keep in mind the authenticity behind your decor choices. If you naturally sway toward a more classic design style, yet try to go 100% boho on your wedding day, you may have a difficult time narrowing down decisions.

Are you looking to add a non-traditional element in either a quirky or elegant way to your wedding decor? From playful

designs to realistic blooms, paper flowers are a beautiful way to add a lot of personality and uniqueness to your big day.

There are so many ways, big and small, to incorporate paper blooms. Here are some ideas to get your creative juices flowing:

1. Backdrops. Full-scale wall backdrops covered in large paper flowers, arched arbors, or wall hangings provide a focal point that won't disappoint.

2. Centerpieces. Whether you are going for a rustic, elegant, or modern vibe, you can incorporate correlating containers to your theme with paper flowers. These small containers also make great wedding favors.

3. Cake Decorations. Fresh florals adorned on cakes have become a gorgeous twist to cake decor. Paper flowers in the place of fresh gives it an alternative look.

4. Headpieces. Whether you want a full head crown or are looking to add a small detail to your hair, paper flower headpieces are perfect for you and your bride tribe. Don't forget your flower girl. Simple tieback headpieces



All photos by Megan Keck.

Watch a full-length
video tutorial of
Meaghan's lesson
on NM's YouTube
channel!



with paper flowers are adorable on little ones. This could be a fun craft to do with your charges or littles in your life.

5. Bouquet. Are you hoping to have a fresh bouquet, but the flowers you love aren't in season at the time of your wedding? Incorporating fresh and paper flowers into your bouquet is a unique idea. Talk to your florist about this possibility. If you would like to go the route of a faux flower bouquet, why not really spice things up with a paper flower hoop bouquet? Adorned with paper flowers and naturally preserved greenery, this bouquet not only serves your wedding day needs, but becomes a wall hanging for years to come.

6. Boutonnieres. Funky and fun, paper flower boutonnieres are sure to make your groomsmen giddy over their buds. Not only are these alternatives easy on the eyes, there are great benefits to incorporating paper flowers into your wedding:

- They won't wilt! Seriously, how great not to have to worry about the lifetime of your flowers.
- They become a forever keepsake.
- If you are interested in an eco-friendly wedding, you can recycle old books, maps, newspapers, music sheets, etc. to make paper flowers.
- They are completely customizable. Do you have a favorite color that is not naturally found in flowers? Color match it to cardstock and make your own!
- There is no seasonal timeframe to paper flowers. If you want peonies for your winter wedding, you can have them in paper form.

If you are new to the world of paper flowers here are some great resources for paper artists, books, and paper:

Artists:

- Lia Griffith: <http://bit.ly/1IF9Qvi>
- Tiffanie Turner: <http://bit.ly/2vxMEQ5>
- The Lovely Ave: <http://bit.ly/2vEbyN4>

Books:

- Flowersmith: How to Handcraft and Arrange Enchanting Paper Flowers* by Jennifer Tran

- The Fine Art of Paper Flowers: A Guide to Making Beautiful and Lifelike Botanicals* by Tiffanie Turner
- The Exquisite Book of Paper Flowers* by Livia Cetti
- Paper to Petal* by Rebecca Thuss

Your local craft store carries wonderful cardstock options if you prefer to use cardstock rather than crepe paper. Mixing both types of paper is also fun.

Crepe Paper:

- Paper Mart: <http://bit.ly/2iDlCNO>
- Lia Griffith: <http://bit.ly/2gkQOII>
- Carte Fini: <http://bit.ly/2xH9JQV>

Whichever way you decide to incorporate paper flowers, enjoy it! Your day will be magical and your love will brighten the room more than any decor.

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- Here's your chance to win this one-of-a-kind paper hoop bouquet.
- Write to info@nannymag.com with why you love NM for the chance to win! See nannymag.com for rules.
- **PLUS:** Download a free printable template to make your own paper flowers at nannymag.com/subscriberfreebies.





Organized + Stress Free Wedding Planning

By Kimberly Lehman,
Owner of Love, Laughter
and Elegance: Wedding and
Event Planning

Photo via Photo Pin

Congratulations, you are engaged, and planning a wedding! Or perhaps you are a family member or close friend, and want to help with the planning of the blessed event. Offering your time and service to a busy couple is a great gift. Planning a wedding is a very involved, and sometimes overwhelming and frustrating process, but it doesn't have to turn you into a bridezilla! Staying organized is the key to producing a successful wedding. Finding ways to keep your stress levels low are also beneficial to your peace of mind. Below are some tips to help you with finding and keeping your balance.

1. Consider hiring a wedding planner to help guide you through the planning process. Educating yourself about a wedding planner (or consultant or coordinator) and what they do is quickly becoming a required part of planning a wedding. Many couples these days are planning long-distance affairs or have demanding work schedules that do not allow for endless meetings with vendors and venues for their wedding. Often, couples have to make decisions quickly and without as many choices of locations, materials, or referrals of vendors as they would really like. This is where the knowledge and practical experience of a wedding planner becomes invaluable. We are able to recommend vendors and service providers that we have worked with before. We also help a client stay within their budget, often saving them money, and may advise them

on wedding etiquette questions. We can help clients shop for their wedding attire, as well as that of their wedding party. We generally coordinate all of the client's plans. But if you want to do some of the planning on your own, that's perfectly fine. Many planners will also offer a limited planning service package, or an hourly service if you just need help with a couple of items, such as finding a fantastic florist or baker. Of course, the biggest service we provide is to keep your rehearsal, wedding day, and reception on track. But I believe the most valuable service we provide is that of stress relief. We are there to lift the burden from the clients' shoulders, whether it is just making sure that the vendors have all arrived on time and are setting up the party to specifications, or calming any last minute nerves and offering words of encouragement. We take care of any details that our clients wish, from just a sounding board when they are starting to plan, to searching out the best deals on locations, vendors, and materials. Our only job is to make sure our clients are completely happy, and that the event goes off flawlessly!

2. If you decide that you are not in the market for a wedding planner or coordinator, then you should definitely have an organizational system, that you can quickly and easily access, in place. You can buy a traditional wedding

planner book or use any online service or app such as The Knot, WeddingWire, or Martha Stewart Weddings. They all have free tools and checklists that you can use to keep track of your budget, guest list, music choices, and more. Print out your sheets and create your own custom binder for your wedding. Also, consider a program like Google Docs or Dropbox to keep everything in one spot that you can email to vendors and wedding party members as needed. Or if you simply prefer a good old-fashioned blank notebook and pen to use in your planning adventure, that works well too!

3. Divide and conquer. Create a timeline of tasks that need to be completed during the planning process. Again, you can find many sample wedding-planning timelines online, many of which you can customize to the length of your engagement. The average engagement is around 14 months, but I have helped couples plan a wedding in less than 2 weeks. It really depends on how long you feel you will need to complete your planning, and how complex or simple you would like your celebration to be.

Do not be afraid to ask for help from family and friends. Most will be happy to lend a hand with gathering recommendations for florists or photographers, or going shopping for bridal party gifts! You can even make assembling invitations into a fun, little party, just don't forget to provide plenty of snacks and wine!

There will be wedding-related tasks that one person, or both, just do not wish to take on, such as choosing table linens or floral arrangements. How to solve? Consider the interests of each partner and then divide and conquer. For example, if your partner is a fan of local breweries and pub food, consider having them choose a craft beer as part of the cocktail hour, or selecting favorite appetizers to delight guests with. When neither person wants to decide on a certain aspect of the wedding, be it the flowers or the napkin fold, delegate those decisions to well-meaning family and friends.

4. Get everything in writing. When collecting price quotes and final contracts from various vendors, make sure you have more than one copy. Be sure to scan documents into a central file so that details can be updated quickly, and you can compare notes easily. Many wedding planners and coordinators will also ask for copies of contracts and price quotes, to review on your behalf, to make sure you are getting a good value for your money, and to ensure that everything that was promised, is delivered correctly on the wedding day.

5. Pinterest is also a useful tool in wedding planning. You can gather ideas and create "inspiration boards" of your favorite details for your wedding. You could have a board for wedding party attire, one for how you would like your reception tables to look, and even what food and beverages will be served. You can also find song lists, honeymoon ideas, and more. When your board is complete, print it out

and take it with you to vendor appointments so your vendors have a more comprehensive idea of your vision for your special day.

6. Balance your "day job" workload with your "wedding planning" workload. Planning a wedding is very much a full-time job unto itself. It can consume your every waking moment if you let it. Some easy ways to keep yourself in check: keep your wedding planning phone calls, emails, and errands for your lunch hour, and one hour in the evenings. Work some fitness into your daily routine by going for a 15- to 30-minute walk, doing some light yoga, or pilates. Drink lots of water, and try to get a restful night's sleep each evening. Meditation is also a great way to regain your focus. If you like to write, keeping a journal of your thoughts and feelings throughout your engagement can later become a sentimental keepsake that you can share with your spouse.

7. Take scheduled breaks from planning. Consider limiting wedding activities to one or two days per week. Be sure to spend quality time with your partner, talking about anything except the wedding. You could have a simple romantic dinner at home, or take a weekend getaway. It's about keeping the connection between the two of you strong, and remembering why you fell in love with each other in the first place.

8. You can always elope! Las Vegas, Reno, Niagara Falls, and Atlantic City are all exciting and easy destinations to reach. You can also plan something intimate and romantic with just the two of you in a secluded park, bed and breakfast, or your own home.

Remember that planning a wedding can be fun, exciting, and stressful all at the same time. It's your special day, and anything goes!



Photo via CreateHer Stock.

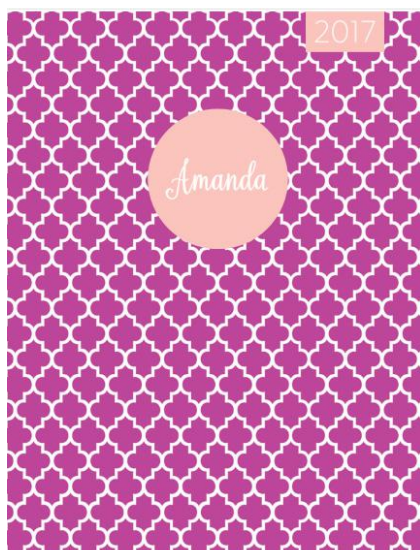
What's the Plan?

A completely honest review of planners from *Nanny Magazine*.
By Amanda Dunyak.

As editor in chief of the only magazine in the world that's just for nannies, Amanda needs great tools like these planners to keep her organized.

Planning for the future or just the day to day? You're going to need a place to keep track of your busy life as a nanny, all of the milestones in your life, and even more if you are a planning a wedding or other big celebration! Here are some of my favorite planners that I've tried and fell in love with over the years!

1.



Plum Paper
by Plum Paper
Designs
A tried and true favorite among nannies! You can customize the durable plastic cover, as well as each page inside with the categories you need into 7 different sections. The company offers 7"x9" and 8.5"x11.5" planners. For the Large ME Planner, you can start your planner at any month and choose for it to go 12 or 18 months. They also have teacher and homeschool teacher planners as well as fitness and student planners. You can also customize your planner with add-on pages for meal plans, budgeting, wedding planning, direct sales, and more. Planners start at \$32.
plumpaper.com

Rifle Paper Co.

My new personal favorite (and I even got a phone case to match)! Looking for something a little more chic? The planners made by Rifle Paper Co. are just that! The pages are so simple and clean, I almost didn't want to write in it! I love that each day of the week gives you 14 lines of room to write on, with little check boxes next to it so you can check off your daily tasks as they are completed. Get a spiral bound, hardcover, or classic 17-month planner (this one is big enough to keep track of your busy life, yet small enough to fit in your purse or diaper bag at 6.75"x8.25.") Choose from 8 different designs. Each design features sections for weekly and monthly plans, yearly overviews, holidays, special occasions, notes, important contacts, a pocket folder, and inspirational quotes throughout. Pricing starts at \$34.
riflepaperco.com/shop/planners

2.





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The photographers behind the gorgeous cover image for this issue!

Erin Condren

Also another favorite in the nanny community, Erin Condren Lifeplanners are also customizable. Choose your cover, your layout, your color scheme, and the 12- or 18-month option. There are also fun extras like stickers and a clear zip pouch with more free goodies! Sizes range from 7x9 for the simple coil planner, or up to 8.5"x11" for the hardbound, deluxe, or teacher planner. The best part about the Lifeplanner is the ability to choose your layout from vertical, horizontal, or hourly (for those super busy planning nannies!). You can add "starter packs" to your order with stickers, markers, and other fun accessories to help you personalize your daily life planner, or you can just keep it simple. There are also teacher and wedding planners for keeping track of your daily lessons with the littles or to help you plan your big day. EC planners are a bit pricier at \$60, but they are durable and stand up to the craziness of your day to day life!

erincondren.com



Staying organized has never looked so cute!



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Dabney Lee for Blue Sky

Looking for a more affordable planning option? You can always check out your local Staples or Target for some stylish yet affordable choices. One of my favorites is the Blue Sky planner. They recently partnered with the company Dabney Lee to release a trendier style of planners. From 4"x6" to 8.5"x11", these planners are simple and easy to use. Each date in the calendar offers ample writing space for all of your daily plans and tasks. Prices start at \$11.99, but check the website for sales and where else you can purchase them!

bluesky.com/designer-series/dabney-lee



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a humorous (but also serious) look at
baby fat and culture

Does This Diaper Make My Butt Look Fat?

By Lynne DeAmelio-Rafferty.

We were strolling down the street the other day, my flipflops hitting the pavement at a breaking a sweat sort of speed. Well, truth be told, I was walking. Elizabeth, four months, was sporting her onsie in the stroller sucking on her hand, chatting it up with herself and waving to inanimate objects. Suddenly this woman appeared before our very eyes. Her hair was gray and her eyes were dark and big! She squatted down a bit and stared at Elizabeth. Looking right into her eyes, Elizabeth stared back, disinterested and engrossed in the relief of her swollen gums. Her onsie was super cute, or so I thought, as I had dressed her myself that morning. I thought it accentuated every curve and baby roll with dignity and grace. It had tiny little cars scattered all over it in vivid colors. It was a super-hot and humid New England summer day and the sun had been beating down on us. She was cool, calm and collected under the awning of her stroller. That's how Elizabeth rolled, no pun intended.

I pondered what a great pair we were as I looked down at her, proudly. As my mind fluttered off for a bit and I was catching my breath, I became suddenly aware that this gawker was still there, her gray hair lightly blowing in the humid breeze. Back into the moment, I listened as the woman went on about how cute she was, and her cheeks and her rolls and her fat legs and how she wanted to eat them up and bite them. *Awkward*, I thought. *Not creepy at all*, I thought again. I was graceful and I thanked her for the compliments... and looked down proudly as if I had personally birthed this hip infant who happened to be 9 pounds the day she entered the world. Birth pride by proxy?

The gray-haired women and I exchanged smiles. There was nothing more to say. I could tell that she wanted to take her scrawny hands and squeeze Elizabeth's rolls so Elizabeth and I hurried off and went along our merry way. Elizabeth was now engrossed with the cap of her bottle that I had given her in case she got bored with her fingers. She spent time exploring the plastic clear texture within her curious mouth and hands, eating it I would if savoring a Jolly Rancher. As I was walking, thoughts of my thirst (had I brought enough water?), my day ahead (should I do my laundry tonight or tomorrow?), and the fact that my hair has been awfully dry and frizzy lately (should I go to Sally's Beauty Supply and buy another hopeful hair product for my crazy, curly locks?) fluttered in and out of my mind like a little colorful butterfly.

It was then that I began pondering the enthralled elderly woman's comments about this tiny baby's body. How very interesting that this kind of language was culturally acceptable when speaking of a baby's cute leg chub. If someone on the street (or actually even someone I know) started telling me how cute my chub was and how they just wanted to bite me, I would be a bit alarmed if not flattered! Why don't people focus more on the development of the baby or ask questions about her likes and dislikes, how old she is, etc.? Instead the body is the focus. I wonder if this will be internalized by Elizabeth. Will she take on the notion, as her little neurons in her developing brain frolic about, that she is flawed because of her little rolls?

Then I began thinking more deeply about our culture, body image concerns of even the youngest little girls, I wondered how



Photo via Pexels

and when do we go from such adorable baby chubba and squeezable delicious, consumable cheeks to judgments such as “what is this parent feeding this child?” When does adoring and loving a toddler body go from pure innocence and love to panicking and explaining to strangers, family, doctors, not to worry, that the three year old will be “outgrowing” her “baby fat” soon. It is such an interesting concept about how fat is perceived.

As I work on my own personal recovery from an eating disorder and weight fluctuations, I think about how I would love it someone told me that my rolls were so cute and adorable at that very moment. I wish I could have been as confident in my baggy cargo shorts and tank top as Elizabeth was in her tiny car onsie with most of her soft skin exposed to the world. What would the world be like for her if people viewed a growing child or adult with the same loving, adoring eyes no matter what age, size, etc.? I secretly wish someone would look at me and say, “I just want to bite those rolls and eat them up! How adorable are you?!” I would secretly be flattered, I am certain... but not until after I called the cops and filed a restraining order, just in case.

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