



# RECOMMENDED PRACTICES

# NANNIES

The International Nanny Association recommends these practices but has no authority to require a member to adhere to them. INA does not represent that the Association has the authority to discipline a member for a violation of the letter or spirit of what is recommended. Consequently, the INA assumes no responsibility or liability for the action of any member of the Association.

## Professionalism and Continuing Education

**Participate in personal and professional events and training.** The INA recommends that Nannies become involved in social, cultural, and educational activities not only to maintain and improve their child care skills, but also to enhance their own personal growth and development. Suggested activities include attending child development courses, seminars, and training programs on the care of children, participation in nanny-related organizations, and involvement in community affairs and child advocacy groups.

**Take steps to advance your career.** The INA recommends that Nannies consider taking the INA Nanny Basic Skills Assessment and the INA Nanny Credential Exam. Both assess an individual's knowledge of child care and their understanding of the emotional, social, intellectual, and physical developmental needs of children.

**Be honest about qualifications and certifications.** The INA recommends that Nannies provide accurate information about training and continuing education to parents and other professionals in the industry. It is suggested that certificates, credentials, and certifications obtained be fully backed up with documentation.

**Act as an advocate for children.** The INA recommends that Nannies be familiar with the signs of child abuse and neglect and that they be knowledgeable of the procedures for reporting these signs. Nannies should research and understand the laws and regulations regarding Mandated Reporting in their state or country of employment. Court-mandated reporters have a professional and ethical obligation to report suspected abuse of any child to the proper authorities. Nannies should actively promote the optimal development of a child in their care.

**Insist on being paid legally.** The INA recommends that Nannies expect employers to offer legal and proper pay for all hours worked. This will vary by country and municipality, so nannies should educate themselves on their rights and responsibilities within their own area. For the United States: Nannies are not independent contractors, but are employees of the family or agency for whom they work. Receiving legal and proper pay in the US includes but is not limited to, receiving a Form W-2 for tax purposes rather than a Form 1099, paying taxes on all taxable income, and receiving overtime if you work over 40 hours a week.

## Relationships with Children

**Respect each child as a unique individual.** The INA recommends that Nannies recognize that each child in their care is a unique individual. Nannies are encouraged to create an environment that fosters each child's self-esteem and independence. By providing structure and developmentally appropriate behavior management techniques, Nannies build trusting relationships with the children in their care.

## Relationships with Children (continued)

**Provide developmentally appropriate play and learning experiences.** The INA recommends that Nannies provide for the physical, emotional, intellectual, and social needs of the children in their care by using developmentally appropriate play/learning activities, materials, and equipment. Nannies can promote socialization in young children by providing opportunities for children to interact with their peers through playgroups, outings, classes, and age-appropriate group activities.

**Create and maintain a safe and healthy environment for children.** The INA recommends that Nannies promote the physical and emotional well-being of children. Nannies are encouraged to partner with parents to create a safe environment for children to learn, play, and explore. Nannies should be knowledgeable about childproofing techniques and should have a solid understanding of how to successfully meet a child's physical and emotional needs.

**Communicate effectively at the child's level of understanding.** The INA recommends that Nannies model appropriate language for children, that they recognize the stages of language development in children, and that they engage the children who are in their care in activities that encourage and promote language development.

## Relationships with Employers/Parents

**Request a personal interview with prospective employers.** The INA recommends that Nannies interview prospective employers in person, preferably in the family's home. Nannies should be cautious when responding to Internet-based employment advertisements, and should thoroughly pre-screen a family before meeting with them in person.

**Respect the family's right to privacy.** The INA recommends that Nannies show good judgment in maintaining confidentiality about the private lives of the families for whom they work.

**Support the child-rearing philosophy of the employer.** The INA recommends that Nannies recognize the ultimate authority of parents in making decisions about the welfare and care of their child/children, by respecting the parent/employer's philosophy of child-rearing.

**Develop positive relationships with the family.** The INA recommends that Nannies work cooperatively with the family, perform duties as agreed, communicate openly and effectively, show sensitivity to family situations, seek constructive solutions to problems, and maintain a consistent, positive attitude. Nannies should also document events, activities, and anything unusual that happens throughout the day in the way that the employers wish.

## Relationships with Employers/Parents

**Require a written work agreement.** The INA recommends that every job starts with a descriptive, written work agreement detailing all the conditions of employment. INA offers resources to help with this to members within the Nanny Family Handbook. A work agreement should include:

- Information about the employee and employer
- The time frame of the agreement and schedule
- How amendments can be made to the agreement
- How the agreement can be terminated
- Nanny's duties and responsibilities
- Driving rules and responsibilities, if any. (The agreement should outline whether the nanny has use of the employer's car during working hours, or if the nanny will receive mileage reimbursement for work-related driving should she use her own car. It should also include information about insurance and responsibility if there is an accident.)
- Employer's legally required tax obligations
- Probationary periods, if applicable
- Terms of notice, termination, and grounds for dismissal
- The compensation package, including:
  - Hourly wage
  - Health benefits
  - When and how payment will be made
  - Compensation for overtime worked
  - Additional benefits such as paid holidays, vacation time, bonuses, and sick leave
  - Some agreements will also include disclaimers or statements about the use of nanny cameras, family relocation, use of vehicles, house rules, and confidentiality agreements.

**Request a trial period.** The INA Recommends that Nannies consider asking for a trial period with family in order to determine if it is a good professional fit.

## Relationships with Agencies

**Obtain an explanation of services.** The INA recommends that Nannies obtain a full and complete explanation of agency services, expectations, requirements, and fees before registering with an agency. It is recommended that a nanny use caution when an agency states they require a fee from the nanny to be placed with their agency.

**Be accurate and truthful.** The INA recommends that Nannies provide accurate and truthful information about their references, letters of recommendation, background, education, special skills, abilities, and prior work experience.

## Relationships with Agencies (continued)

**Request descriptive information about prospective employers.** The INA recommends that in addition to the basic details about a particular nanny position, Nannies should ask about the employing family's specific needs and child care preferences. Nannies are also encouraged to ask for references that they can contact regarding the family with whom they are contemplating employment.

**Review potential employers.** The INA recommends that Nannies investigate potential Nanny Employers. Checking up on the family through social media, and asking to speak with former nannies, can be effective tools.

## Relationships with Online Recruiting Sites

**Be cautious with online services and tools.** The INA recommends Nannies err on the side of caution when working with online recruiting sites.

**Read online reviews.** The INA recommends Nannies look through reviews if available about Nanny Employers before starting the interview process.

**Use care in communication online.** The INA recommends that Nannies not give personal contact information to the family until after the Nanny has completed initial conversations with them within the internal company messaging system. It is also recommended that the Nanny avoid sharing personal details about themselves (such as home address, Social Security Number, Passport or Driver's License number or other governmental ID information) until the Nanny has spoken with the family in person and is in the hiring process.

**Conduct a phone interview prior to an in-person interview.** The INA recommends Nannies have a phone consultation prior to meeting the family in person, and to conduct initial meetings in a public place such as a coffee shop, restaurant, or library meeting room. Only when the Nanny is comfortable in proceeding should they enter the Nanny Employer's home.

**Practice safe interview strategies.** The INA encourages Nannies to be safe when traveling to a potential Nanny Employer's home. The Caregivers should always tell a trusted family member or friend the estimated start and end time of the interview, and the exact address where they will be.