



# RECOMMENDED PRACTICES

# NEWBORN CARE SPECIALISTS

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 growth activities.** The INA recommends that Newborn Care Specialists become involved in social, cultural and educational activities not only to maintain and improve their newborn and infant child care skills, but also to enhance their own personal growth and development. Suggested activities include attending newborn and infant development courses, seminars, and training programs on updated practices in the care of newborns and infants, participation in newborn and infant related organizations and involvement in community affairs and infant or newborn advocacy groups.

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

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

**Insist on being paid legally.** The INA recommends that Newborn Care Specialists expect clients to offer legal and proper pay for all hours worked. This will vary by country and municipality, so Newborn Care Specialists should educate themselves on their rights and responsibilities within their own area.

**Act as an advocate for newborns and infants.** The INA recommends that Newborn Care Specialists be familiar with the signs of child abuse and neglect and that they be knowledgeable in the procedures for reporting these signs. Newborn Care Specialists are court mandated reporters and have a professional and ethical obligation to report suspected abuse of any child, infant or newborn to the proper authorities. Newborn Care Specialists should actively promote the optimal development of an infant or newborn in their care.

**Grow your knowledge of how to successfully meet a child's physical and emotional needs.** The INA recommends that Newborn Care Specialists possess a solid knowledge of newborn and infant growth, development and age-appropriate milestones, as well as research-based knowledge on formulas, breastfeeding, postpartum mood disorders and psychosis, brain development, sleep, illness, first aid, hygiene, preemies, multiples, and basic infant care.

## Professionalism and Continuing Education (continued)

**Keep detailed notes.** The INA recommends that Newborn Care Specialists keep detailed journals with details on care for the infant or baby, as well as other nursery duties such as, but not limited to:

- Feedings and medications
- Infant or baby laundry
- Emptying nursery trash bin
- Sterilization of bottles and breast pump parts

## Guidelines

**Follow guidelines from governing bodies in the country of employment.** The INA recommends that Newborn Care Specialist follow the guidelines provided by the American Academy of Pediatrics or the respected pediatric resource or governing body in the country in which they are based, and to educate parents on these guidelines.

**Acknowledge that not all parents will agree with recommendations.** The INA recommends that Newborn Care Specialists acknowledge that parents may disagree with recommendations for the care of children. In that event, it is recommended that both parties discuss these differences. If they are unable to resolve the disagreement, the Newborn Care Specialist should either follow the parent's instructions (utilizing written instructions and a liability release which states that the parents shall assume all responsibilities for the resulting decisions) or remove themselves from the position in a professional manner, in accordance with their contract terms.

## Relationships With Newborns and Infants

**Respect each baby as a unique individual.** The INA recommends that Newborn Care Specialists recognize that each newborn or infant in their care is a unique individual. Newborn Care Specialists are encouraged to create an environment that fosters each newborn's growth and development.

**Provide developmentally appropriate play and learning experiences.** The INA recommends that Newborn Care Specialists provide for the physical, emotional, intellectual, and social needs of the infants or newborns in their care by using the developmentally appropriate play/learning activities, materials, and equipment.

**Create and maintain a safe and healthy environment for children.** The INA recommends that Newborn Care Specialists promote the physical and emotional well-being of newborns and infants. Newborn Care Specialists are encouraged to partner with parents to create a safe environment for infants and newborns to learn, play, and explore.

## Relationships With Parents

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

**Provide non-judgemental support.** The INA recommends that Newborn Care Specialists remain neutral when providing information and resources, and support the parent's decisions regarding their newborn in a supportive, non-judgemental fashion. The INA also recommends that if a Newborn Care Specialist finds that he/she cannot do this, they assist the family, if possible, in finding a replacement caregiver who can provide the support the family needs.

**Require a written contract.** The INA recommends Newborn Care Specialists start every job with a descriptive, written contract detailing all the conditions of the job including:

- Information about the employee and employer
- The time frame of the agreement and schedule
- Explanation of fees and costs, including deposits
- NCS's duties and responsibilities
- Some agreements will also include disclaimers or statements about the use of video cameras, use of vehicles, house rules, and confidentiality agreements.

**Remind parents of the nature of advice.** The INA recommends that Newborn Care Specialists remind all parents that advice given should not take the place of that of medical professionals and that all changes to treatment should be discussed with a medical professional.