

# What is a Professional Nanny?

By Mallette Parry

I have been thinking about this question since I have started to look for a new position in October. In my opinion a "professional nanny" is someone who is dedicated to the nanny profession. They want to get word out about any resources available to nannies. This can be NAN, INA, TCPN, NAEYC, or other local support groups. You can also find resources on the internet. There are also several yahoo groups and nanny boards online.

Recently on many boards and nanny lists, the discussion has been about Nanny 911 and the recent Dr. Phil show talking about nanny cams. Many nannies I know have written to the Dr. Phil show stressing the importance of getting the word out about the "good" nannies. Many nannies were willing to go on the show but all the show wanted was the nannies that had the "bad" experience. It is unfortunate because I would love to see good professional nannies on the show.

One of the reasons TCPN was started was so we could get to know each other better and network and support each other. We all bring something unique to our families and to the profession. I am so proud to be part of TCPN. It has been exciting to see its growth in the last 4 years. We are fortunate to have nannies that are willing to step up to the plate to keep TCPN running. This is why I feel networking is so important. As a professional nanny I need to share the information I feel has been valuable to me. I can provide information to others, but it is their decision how to use the information.

For example, I have been going to the NAN conference for the last 3 years and the first year I was the only one from MN and the last conference there were 4 of us. I talk to my friends about NAN and how I have loved every minute of it. All I can say it gets better every year.

Where would any organization be if they did not get the word out? All it takes sometimes is word of mouth, printing it in newsletters and/ or sending email.

Being professional means taking a position in which you can truly fit in and not just taking a job for fear there won't be a job. I have learned this in the last month as I am trying to find the "perfect job" I do feel there is a "perfect" job for me.

I had it with a previous family but they had to move to another state and even though they asked me to go with them, I chose to stay here. It is important to have a list of priorities in a job, and know exactly what you want and don't want. Needless to say, I am still working on my list. It is an ongoing list from all of my experience in taking care of children. It takes time to find the right family.

Being a professional is keeping updated on current issues. For example, in my last family they believed in Montessori. I researched it and bought several books to learn more about Montessori. I loved it and plan to use it in future jobs.

## Being a professional means:

- Staying current with CPR and First Aid
- Caring enough to join and be involved in professional organizations. You can belong to more than one organization
- Means spreading the word about professional organizations whenever you get a chance and not worrying about if they are endorsing your organization
- Networking
- Continuing to grow mentally – taking classes here and there whether it is childcare or just something of interest is important to keep your mind working and expanding your horizons

- Means taking care of yourself: getting sleep, eating healthy (at least trying), and being responsible
- Means being respectful of one another
- Loving children
- Loving what you do
- Dedication your life to what you believe in
- Educating yourself
- Supporting one another

I love all the support groups I belong to whether they are local, national, or via Internet. I do what I feel is important to me. I spread information to other nannies anyway I can.

**I LOVE WHAT I DO AND I DO WHAT I LOVE**

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