



Finding Child Care in Your Home: A Guidebook for Families

Provided by
Child Care Aware of New Hampshire
A Program of Southern New Hampshire Services
1-855-393-1731 extension 2531



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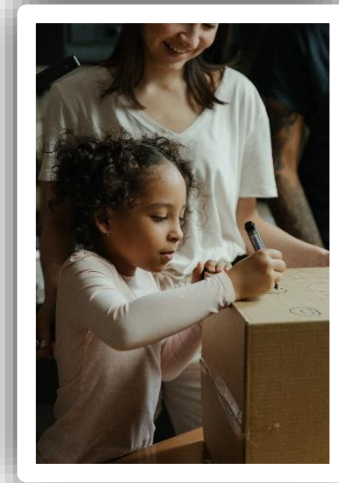
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*“Everyone longs to be loved.
And the greatest thing we
can do is to let people know
that they are loved and
capable of loving.”
~ Fred Rogers*

INTRODUCTION

For many families, having someone come to their home to care for their child or children is an attractive child care arrangement. Many people prefer the individual attention for their child, especially for infants. Parents can have child care when they need it, rather than adhering to the schedule of a center or family child care home, which is especially beneficial to parents who work long or unusual schedules. Parents do not have to spend time transporting their child to and from care, and children have the benefit of being in familiar surroundings. For families with several children, hiring an individual to come into the home may cost less than paying for child care outside the home.



This information is provided as a service to parents who are considering the option of hiring an in-home child care provider. We know that searching for someone to come into your home to care for your child can be a very stressful experience. Finding the right person can be a wonderful partnership and we hope that this information will be helpful to you.

WHEN LOOKING FOR AN IN-HOME CAREGIVER...

It is important to define what your priorities are in looking for a caregiver. Consider the following characteristics. Decide what is most important to you. Remember that it is virtually impossible to find someone who will fit all your preferences.

- **Age:** How old is the caregiver and how does their energy level, experience and qualifications relate to their age? Is their age a good fit for you and your family?
- **Education:** What is the caregiver's level of education, educational experience and educational background? Do they have courses in early childhood education, child development, nursing, social work or other related courses?
- **Experience:** What is the caregiver's experience working with children? What age groups have they worked with in the past and does that fit your family's needs?
- **Skills:** What additional skills and tasks may be required of your caregiver? Do they have experience or knowledge in cooking, cleaning, transporting children, taking care of animals/pets, homework assistance or other duties as assigned? Are they willing to take on additional roles?

- **Personal Preferences:** Are the person's habits compatible with your family's values? Does the caregiver smoke, like pets, etc.?
- **Personal Compatibility:** What are the most important attributes you are looking for in a caregiver? Sense of humor, outgoing personality, quiet, flexible, creative, neat, organized?
- **Scheduling Availability/Flexibility:** What days and hours will you need the caregiver to be there? Are they willing to work extra or different hours if needed?
- **Commitment:** Will the caregiver arrangement be short term or long term? Do you have a plan if the caregiver isn't a good fit or is no longer available?

It's important to choose the best fit for your children and family as the caregiver will be an important part of your child or children's lives. It's important to get to know the individual and make sure they fit your schedule and overall needs. Trust and compatibility with your family is also essential.



COMMON CONCERNS

Conflicts can arise between caregivers and the families. Having someone new in the home creates a strain on everyone. A period of adjustment is normal and it can take a few weeks to a few months to adjust. Here are some common problems that may arise when families and caregivers go through the adjustment process.

- **Incompatibility:** The provider and the family do not share the same values or life styles.
- **Inappropriate Behavior:** The provider exhibits behavior that is not acceptable to the family. Examples may include: Spends long hours on the phone, watches television all day, etc.
- **Jealousy:** The family may have trouble sharing the child(ren)'s affection with another person.
- **Caregiver Needs Not Met:** Caregiver is taken advantage of, parents are often late, withhold pay, cancel the provider, increase hours, do not communicate with the caregiver about changes, etc.
- **Loss of Privacy:** Parent(s) have difficulty having another person in their home.
- **Confusion of Roles:** The provider takes parental power or the parent(s) undermines the caregiver's authority.
- **Wrong Child Care Option:** Parents hire a nanny when what they really want is a housekeeper.

- **Scheduling Conflicts:** Parent(s) demand more time of the provider than they are willing or able to work or parents do not give the caregiver the number of hours that they are expecting. The caregiver is not available for the agreed upon schedule.

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES

Having a clear understanding of what duties or roles you wish your caregiver to perform can prevent some misunderstandings in the future. Communicate your wishes clearly from the beginning. The following lists are examples of duties that you may wish your caregiver to perform. Develop your own list or adapt this one to meet your needs. Decide how often these duties must be performed: daily, weekly, monthly, occasionally as needed, etc.

Child Care Duties:

- Supervision of children
- Planning activities (indoor & outdoor)
- Meal preparation
- Bathing and dressing children
- Help with or supervision of homework
- Transportation to and from activities
- Accompanying the family on trips
- Supervision of play dates with children's friends

Possible Household Duties:

- Cleaning child or other room(s)
- Straightening up toys
- Vacuuming, sweeping or mopping
- Dusting
- Laundry
- Grocery shopping
- Running errands
- Preparing family meals
- Caring for pets
- Caring for plants





SALARY, BENEFITS AND SCHEDULE

The rate that caregivers are paid varies depending on a number of factors such as the training and experience level of the provider, the duties that they are being asked to perform, the number of children that they are caring for and the geographic location. Full time salary can range from \$200 or less to as much as \$500 per week, with live-in providers generally being paid less than live-out providers. Part time pay generally ranges from \$10 to \$15 per hour. Another option is to offer room and board in exchange for a set number of hours of child care (especially good for a college student if only part time care is needed).

Parent(s) should consider paid vacation and/or sick time for a full-time provider. Health insurance may be partially or completely paid by the parent(s). Bonuses are often given during the winter holidays, and extra incentives may be given if the family is especially pleased with the performance or if the caregiver goes above and beyond the call of duty.

Your caregiver should have a set schedule. A typical full-time schedule ranges from 40 to 50 hours per week. The provider should be paid extra or receive extra time off for extra hours worked. Providers should have at least one or preferably two consecutive days off each week.

TAXES

Parents who hire an in-home caregiver are an employer, and as such should withhold Social Security and Income Taxes and pay Social Security Tax and possibly unemployment taxes and Worker's Compensation on their provider. Generally, if a provider is paid more than \$1,100 in a year, Social Security and Medicare taxes need to be withheld and paid; if a provider is paid more than \$1,000 in a quarter, federal (and state, if applicable) unemployment taxes and New Hampshire Worker's Compensation will need to be paid. The IRS Information Line can answer tax questions at 1-800-829-1040. Forms and publications can be ordered by calling 1-800-829-3676 (request Publication 926 "Household Employer's Tax Guide"). Contact the New Hampshire Department of Employment Security for information on Worker's Compensation at 603-224-3311. It's always advisable to consult your financial professional regarding these requirements.

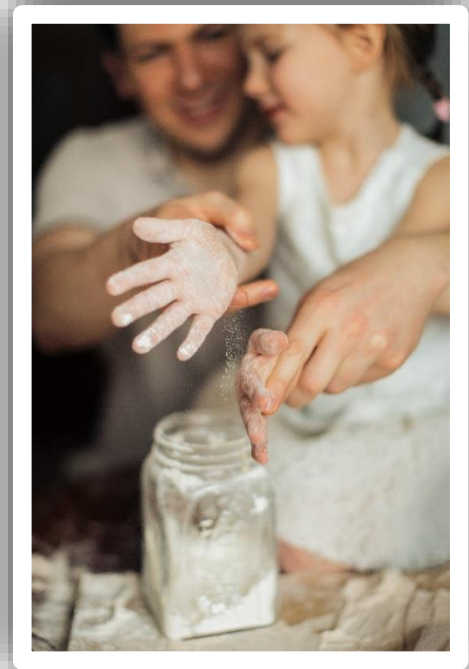
FINDING A CAREGIVER

There are several ways to find a caregiver for your family.

- **Word of Mouth:** Let people know that you are looking for a provider. They may know of someone who is qualified for the position.
- **Placing an Advertisement (Please see attached sample ads on Pg. 12):** Many parents are hesitant to place their own ad. However, this may be the best way to get the most applicants to choose from. Ads can be placed in your local newspaper or online. Craigslist is becoming a popular mode of advertising and it's free! Make sure, however, that you screen people over the phone and only interview those who sound qualified. In placing an ad, be specific about what your needs are. You should include the basics of what you will need such as schedule, age and number of children, qualifications required, etc. You may also want to mention any perks such as travel opportunities, pool, memberships, etc.
- **Social Media:** Facebook and other social media platforms have private, closed groups or pages that offer caregiver services specific to the State, region or town. Most towns and cities offer a community group in which local caregivers often post their caregiver services. Many pages and/or groups allow families to post an advertisement, as well.

Caregiver Websites: There are a variety of websites in which providers can create profiles that describe their caregiver services. Their profile can share their work experience, education level, hours of availability and other qualifications. Families can create a profile to highlight the care they are looking for. Caregivers and families can be matched through specific searches on each site. These websites sometimes have a cost associated with the services. Examples may include Care.com, sittercity.com, nannylane.com and urbansitter.com.

- **Check Local Newspapers/Online Search Engines:** You may find someone who is advertising for a position that may meet your needs. Read other ads for information pertaining to salaries in your community and to get ideas if you want to place your own ad. Using Google or other search engines may lead you to various child



care provider and job search websites. Please use caution when using online advertising, as scams are possible.

- **Child's Elementary School, Middle School or Current Child Care Program:** If your child is currently attending a child care program part time, many programs keep a list of child care teachers who are willing to work additional hours or work nights and weekends. Elementary Schools and/or Middle Schools may also keep a list of teachers who are willing to work additional hours or summer hours. These individuals are background checked and usually have additional qualifications.
- **Community Colleges and Universities (Please see attached list on Pgs. 13-15):** Students often need to work, and many have experience caring for young children and/or have taken or are enrolled in Early Childhood Education or Child Development courses. Place ads on student bulletin boards, and/or contact the Financial Aid, Work Study or Job Placement office to list your opening or contact the Early Childhood Education department for students.
- **Churches and Synagogues:** There may be a member interested in providing care.
- **Local Employment Office:** There may be a list of qualified child care providers looking for work, or you may be able to list your opening with them.
- **Senior Citizen Center:** There may be an active older adult who may interested in doing child care.
- **Women's Center:** You may find a homemaker looking for work.
- **Other Community Bulletin Boards:** Your position may be seen by a wide variety of people, thus leading to more applicants to choose from.
- **Using a Placement Agency (Please see attached list on Pg. 12):** Nanny placement agencies can match you with a prescreened provider. They attempt to match your family with a provider who meets your needs, and they may also offer support and training for providers, and are a third party that may be able to help resolve any conflicts. Agencies charge fees for their service to parents. These fees are approximately \$800 to \$1,000 or more. Parents generally pay the salary directly to the caregiver.



Using an Au Pair Placement Agency (Please see attached list on Pg. 12): An Au Pair is a young adult from a foreign country who will live with your family for one year and provide child care while experiencing American culture and also providing your family with the opportunity to learn about their culture. There are

several agencies that are legally authorized to place Au Pairs with American families. Their fees are approximately \$4,000 to \$5,000. The Au Pair is also paid a weekly stipend of about \$150.

INTERVIEWING

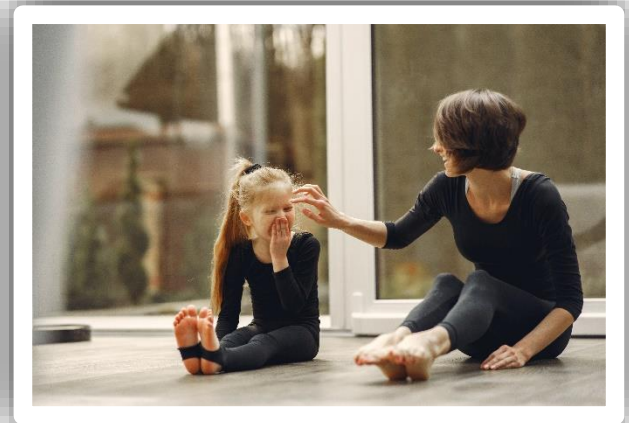
When the person calls about the position, you should get basic information such as name, phone number and where they live. You should review the basic requirements of the job such as the hours needed and number and ages of children. You may want to tell them what the job pays, or you may prefer to wait until the interview to discuss salary. It is a good idea to prescreen them over the phone.

You may want to ask about:

- Their experience working with or caring for children, the ages of the children they've cared for, previous training they have taken and any educational experience they may have
- Work experience such as what their last job was, how long they worked there, why they left
- Why they are interested in working with children
- Schedule availability

Based on this phone conversation, you should be able to tell if you are interested in interviewing them. You should ask them to bring a resume and references to the interview.

Sometimes people will call you about the position but want to provide care in their own home. Other callers might need to bring their child with them. You should think about whether or not you would consider these options ahead of time.



During the personal interview, you can ask questions about how they would handle specific situations with your child and what sort of activities they would do with your child. You can also ask more specific questions about their reasons for seeking the job, their work history, habits and personality. A lot can be learned by observing

the person as well; were they on time, do they appear clean and healthy, are they easy to speak with and understand, is their mode of transportation reliable, etc. Take notes during the interview so you will remember your impressions. If possible, they should get to meet all members of the family (both parents, any siblings, as well as the child(ren) to be cared for).

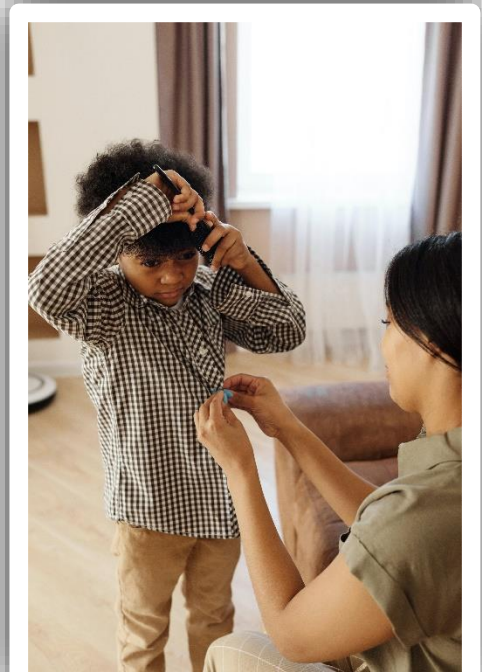
Sample questions to ask during the interview may include (it's OK to repeat the same questions that you asked over the phone):

- Why are you interested in caring for children?
- What are your long range career goals; is child care a long term interest, or just for now?
- How long do you think you might be able to commit to this position?
- Tell me about your experience working with/caring for children. (Ask for details)
- Tell me about any relevant training. Would they be willing to attend trainings in the future, especially First Aid/CPR?
- How do you handle children when they misbehave, a child who is crying, and toilet training?
- What would you do on a typical day with my child?
- Are there any scheduling, health or personal issues that could conflict with your ability to do this job?

REFERENCES

Always check references! Ask for a phone number with all written references and call to speak with the person. If a candidate does not have references, do not hire them! If the references are unfavorable, ask for others. Some employment problems can be employer problems rather than employee problems; go with your instincts, and don't hire anyone you're not comfortable with.

When contacting references, ask how they know the applicant and how long they have known them. If it is a former employer, ask what type of job they did, if they were reliable and responsible, etc. Ask any reference how they think the person would do caring for your age child. Even people who have not seen them work with children may have a sense as to what kind of a caregiver they would be.



HIRING A PROVIDER



Try to interview at least three people, so that you have a choice. After meeting with them and speaking with references, invite the ones that you are still interested in to spend a little time with your child while you are at home. Observe how they interact with your child and how your child responds to them (keeping in mind that it often takes children a while to get used to a new adult). Ask any additional questions that you have thought of and ask them if they have questions for you. If there seem to be two candidates that you really like, consider using one for back-up care in case the primary child care provider is not able to work, or you could even devise a schedule for them to job share.

It can be a good idea to come up with a written contract outlining the hours expected, the rate of pay, the duties required of the provider and other details that have been agreed on. This contract should be signed by the parent(s) and the caregiver. The parents should also write up permission for the provider to transport the child (either on a regular basis or in emergencies only) and permission for the provider to administer first aid and obtain emergency medical treatment. A copy of the child(ren)'s immunization record should be kept with these forms. Parents also need to post (and possibly keep with emergency authorization as well) telephone numbers of where parents or other emergency contacts can be reached in an emergency. The child's full name, date of birth and address are also important for the caregiver to know. Emergency services such as the child's doctor, the local hospital and poison control should be provided. This information should be posted near the telephone, and possibly kept in the diaper bag or in the caregiver's vehicle.

As with any type of child care, parents are responsible for monitoring the quality of care that their children are receiving. It is a good idea to occasionally come home at a time when the caregiver is not expecting you, just to see how they are interacting with your child when you are not around. Communication between the parent and the caregiver can help prevent any serious problems from arising and can help both of you work together to ensure that your child receives the best care possible. Having a provider come to your home can be a very special and rewarding experience for both you and your child!

SAMPLE ADS

Caregiver needed: Caring, experienced, w/ references, to care for two lively preschoolers. Live in or out, Salary negotiable. Hours M-F 7a-6p occasional overnight.

Housekeeper/Child Care Wanted: Mature reliable person to care for our home and children M-F w/some weekends.

Infant care: In-home provider wanted. Professional couple seeking loving experienced person to care for newborn. Spacious basement quarters, own phone.

Nanny needed live in or out M-F 7-7 for newborn and 3-year-old. Competitive salary and 2 weeks paid vacation yearly. Must be non-smoking w/minimum one-year child care experience.

LOCAL NANNY AGENCIES

This list is for informational purposes only; Child Care Aware of NH, a program of Southern New Hampshire Services, does not recommend or endorse any particular nanny placement agencies.

Nanny Poppins Agency
Statewide
(888) 849-6090
<https://nannypoppinsagency.com/>

NH Nannies
13 Clifford Street
Exeter, NH 03833
(603) 944-3282
<https://www.nhnannies.com/>

AU PAIR AGENCIES

This list is for informational purposes only; Child Care Aware of NH, a program of Southern New Hampshire Services, does not recommend or endorse any particular au pair agencies.

- **Au Pair in America:** 1-800-928-7247 or <https://www.aupairinamerica.com/>
- **EF Au Pair:** 1-800-387-1463 or <https://www.ef.com/ca/pg/au-pair/>
- **Au Pair USA:** 1-800-287-2477 or <https://www.aupairusa.org/>
- **Au Pair Care:** 1-800-428-7247 or <https://www.aupaircare.com/>
- **EurAuPair:** 1-800-333-3804 or <https://www.euraupair.com/>

COLLEGES

Belknap County

Lakes Region Community College
379 Belmont Road
Laconia, NH 03246
Phone: (603) 524-3207
Website: www.lrcc.edu

Cheshire County

Antioch University New England
40 Avon Street
Keene, NH 03431
Phone: (603) 357-3122
Website: www.antiochne.edu

Franklin Pierce University
40 University Drive
Rindge, NH 03461
Phone: (603) 899-4000
Website:
www.franklinpierce.edu

Keene State College
229 Main Street
Keene, NH 03435
Phone: 800-572-1909
Website: www.keene.edu

Keene Academic Center
88 Winchester Street
Keene, NH 03431
Phone: 603-357-2142
Website: www.rivervalley.edu

Coos County

White Mountains Community
College
2020 Riverside Drive
Berlin, NH 03570
Phone: (603) 752-1113
Website: www.wmcc.edu

Grafton County

Dartmouth College
Dartmouth Green
Hanover, NH 03755
Phone: (603) 646-1110
Website: www.dartmouth.edu

Franklin Pierce at Lebanon
24 Airport Road, Suite 19
West Lebanon, NH 03784
(603) 298-5549
Website: www.franklinpierce.edu

Lebanon Academic Center
15 Hanover Street
Lebanon, NH 03766
(603) 443-4200
Website: www.rivervalley.edu

Plymouth State University
17 High Street
Plymouth, NH 03264
Phone: (603) 535-5000
Website: www.plymouth.edu

Upper Valley Educators Institute
194 Dartmouth College Highway
Lebanon, NH 03766
Phone: (603) 678-4888
Website: www.uvei.org

White Mountains Community
College-Littleton
646 Union Street, Suite 300
Littleton, NH 03561
Phone: (603) 444-1326
Website: www.wmcc.edu

Hillsborough County

Franklin Pierce at Manchester
670 North Commercial Street
Center Tower, Third Floor
Manchester, NH 03101
(603) 647-3500
Website: www.franklinpierce.edu

Manchester Community College
1066 Front Street
Manchester, NH 03102
Phone: (603) 206-8000
Website: www.mccnh.edu

Nashua Community College
505 Amherst Street
Nashua, NH 03063
Phone: (603) 578-8900
Website: www.nashuacc.edu

Rivier University
420 South Main Street
Nashua, NH 03060
Phone: (603) 888-1311
Website: www.rivier.edu

Saint Anselm College
100 St. Anselm Drive, Box 1729
Manchester, NH 03102
Phone: (603) 641-7000
Website: www.anselm.edu

Southern NH University-Manchester
2500 North River Road
Manchester, NH 03106
Phone: (603) 668-2211
Website: www.snhu.edu

University of NH- Manchester
88 Commercial Street
Manchester, NH 03101
Phone: (603) 641-4101
Website: www.manchester.unh.edu

Merrimack County

Colby-Sawyer College
541 Main Street
New London, NH 03257
Phone: (603) 526-3000
Website: www.colby-sawyer.edu

NHTI-Concord's Community College
31 College Drive
Concord, NH 03301
Phone: (603) 271-6484
Website: www.nhti.edu

New England College
98 Bridge Street
Henniker, NH 03242
Phone: (603) 428-2000
Website: www.nec.edu

University of New Hampshire-
Franklin Piece School of Law
2 White Street
Concord, NH 03301
Phone: (603) 228-1541
Website: law.unh.edu/

Rockingham County

Great Bay Community College-Portsmouth
320 Corporate Drive
Portsmouth, NH 03801
Phone: (603) 427-7600
Website: www.greatbay.edu

Strafford County

Great Bay Community College-
Rochester

5 Milton Road, Unit 32

Rochester, NH 03867

Phone: (800) 522-1194

Website: www.greatbay.edu

University of New Hampshire

Thompson Hall, 105 Main Street

Durham, NH 03824

Phone: (603) 862-1234

Website: www.unh.edu

Sullivan County

River Valley Community College

1 College Place

Claremont, NH 03743

Phone: (603) 542-7744

Website: www.rivervalley.edu

