

Crooked Online Nanny Scams--Thursday, June 21, 2007- The Ombudsgod!

Both families and nannies should be aware of con artists that surf the many nanny personnel sites hoping to fool you into sending them money.

Many Americans have a difficult time balancing their jobs and their families. For this reason, many parents hire nannies to watch over and care for their kids. There are no worries over the nanny to child ratios, and nannies often come to live in your house at least arrive just as you leave your house for work. The problem here is finding an experienced and dependable nanny. No mother in her right mind is going to leave her child in the hands of a total stranger unless they can provide excellent references. In the last few years, several websites have been created to help bring nannies together with families in need of such services.

If you are in the market for a nanny, you simply register on the site as a family and then search their database for nannies that fit the conditions you specify such as age, sex, race, and skills. This is a great way for both nannies and families to convene, communicate, and develop a relationship that may or may not result in a job offer. This process does have its risks because of the possibility of fraud. In this article, we will attempt to reveal how this scam works both ways.

How nannies get conned

Scam artists register at these nanny matchmaker services masquerading as a family in search of a nanny. They will describe themselves as well-off and willing to pay a good salary in exchange for child care services. To close the deal and get the prospective nanny's attention, they advance a generous amount of money in the form a money order or check. Right away, the scammer pretending to be a family will say that they sent too much money by mistake and request that a part of the advance be returned by Western Union, PayPal, or other electronic means. The idea here is that the original money order or check has not cleared the bank yet. If the nanny sends some of the money back, he or she has just been swindled by a classical money order scam.

Expert con artists know how to use need and desperation and turn it to their advantage. Many nannies are eager to take these jobs and being sent a huge amount is meant to let their guard down and make them think they have won the lottery. It is easy to see how many people fall for this scam. As the old adage goes: "If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is." People do not send large sums of money to other people they do not know or trust. If this situation ever happens to you, think before you act. You may save yourself from being swindled.

How families get duped

Scam artists have conjured up techniques to rip off families in search of a nanny as well. What they do is register as a nanny with exemplary qualifications and references. Families will then contact them and begin to develop relationships via e-mail to get to know them on a personal level. These phony nannies will assure a family that they have all the required paperwork including a work VISA. The scam comes shortly after you have hired the nanny. You get a last minute request for funds to cover some unforeseen circumstance. It could be anything from travel tickets to a loved one sick in the hospital. You may feel you have talked with them for very long that you know them well enough to trust them. Think before you send any money. Scam artists can be very convincing and deceptive. NEVER send a stranger any money. You should also do your homework on the nanny by checking out those references early in the nanny screening process. If they seem suspicious to you, there are many other excellent nannies for you to choose.

There are many forms of internet fraud going on nowadays. It is up to you to educate yourself on what is or is not legitimate. Hopefully, our advice will minimize your chances of becoming a victim of the crime of theft by deception.