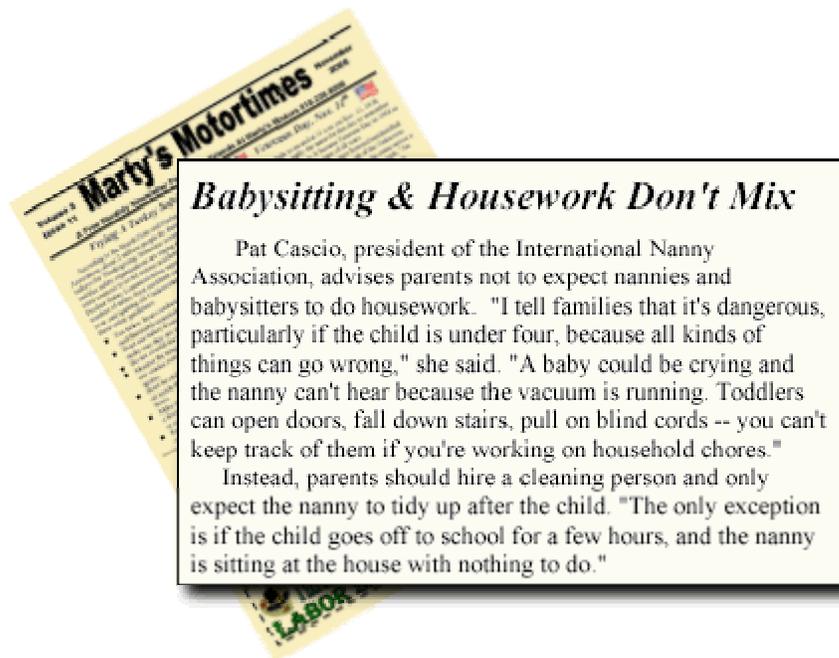


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Problem: You've given your nanny money before, and she keeps asking for more. How do you cut her off?

Solution: Sit down with her and say, "When I gave you money last time, I thought I was helping you. But if I keep giving you money that you don't work for in return, I'm not doing the right thing. I'm feeling awkward about it," suggests Dave Ramsey, a financial coach based in Nashville. Does your nanny need to learn about budgeting or take on extra work? Support her as she does those things, but don't help her yourself. Is her pay too low? Check average salaries at www.nanny.org.

If your nanny continues to ask for handouts, it's probably time to part ways, says Pat Cascio, president of the International Nanny Association and the owner of Morningside Nannies, in Houston. Your nanny might be developing an unhealthy "I deserve more" attitude because she sees that your family is financially comfortable.



In Search of Super Nanny-- Parents.com May 2007

Finally, be on the lookout for bogus references -- such as a friend masquerading as a former employer. "That's the biggest problem we run into when we screen nannies," says Pat Cascio, president of Morningside Nannies, an agency in Houston. Fakes often give themselves away by bungling details about employment dates and children's ages. Make sure information from the reference and the caregiver match up.

Make sure she loves kids. It goes without saying that you want a sitter who is in the business because she adores children. But how do you know for sure? Listen to how she

talks about kids she's cared for in the past. "Sometimes nannies bring photo albums they've made or describe how they still get holiday cards from the children," Cascio says. When you're close to making a decision, invite the candidate to spend a couple of hours with your kids. This isn't always an easy situation -- both parties can feel scrutinized and self-conscious, so take the awkwardness factor into consideration as you check out their interaction. One way to make it less forced is to give the encounter a little structure. If you have a baby, have the nanny give a bottle or feed her. With an older child, enlist him to give a house tour or suggest they play a favorite game. Then, without getting in the way (maybe do a little inconspicuous housework), pay attention to the overall vibe and try to pick up on some of the specifics: Does she seem engaged, interested, and confident? Does spending time with your children seem to make her happy? Do your kids seem to respond well to her?

Background Checks for Nannies: How to do It -- and Why - April 19, 2007-
RevolutionHealth.com

"When you are hiring privately, you'll find a good percentage may have problems," says Pat Cascio, owner of Morningside Nannies in Houston and the president of the Houston-based International Nanny Association, a nonprofit organization with 340 member nanny agencies.

To turn up bogus references, Cascio asks the prospective nanny a question that only an employer could know. For example: Did your employer ever give you something for Christmas or your birthday? When she calls to check references, she asks the same question to the persons listed as a reference.