

CARE MAP METHOD™ · FREE GUIDE

The Nanny Hiring Kit

The screening call, the clinical interview,
the reference check, and the trial day —
what to ask, and what to listen for.

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HOW TO USE THIS KIT

Map before you act.

Most families hire a nanny backwards: they interview, fall for someone, then check references hoping for confirmation. This kit reverses the order so every step informs the next.

Work through it in sequence. References come before the full interview, because what you learn from them should shape what you ask in the room. The trial comes last, because an interview shows you how someone presents — a trial shows you how they care for your child.

01	Screening call	15 minutes. Narrow 15 candidates to 5.
02	Reference check	Before you meet. Targeted questions only.
03	Clinical interview	Values, scenarios, and practical fit.
04	Trial days	Two paid days, a week apart.

STEP 01

The 15-minute screening call

A short phone call before any in-person meeting. Its only job is to find out who deserves more of your time.

ASK

- Tell me about your most recent position — how long, what ages, why you left.
- What age group do you work best with, and why?
- Tell me about a challenging moment with a child and how you handled it.
- A toddler is mid-meltdown and won't be comforted. What do you do?
- What are you looking for in your next family?

GREEN LIGHTS

Specific, detailed answers
Genuine warmth about a particular child
Mentions emotional or developmental needs unprompted
Asks questions about your children

RED FLAGS

Vague answers about past jobs
Focus only on tasks and logistics
No questions about your children
Pressure to decide quickly

STEP 02

The Gold Targeted Reference Check™

“Was she good?” gets you “she was great.” Every time. The value of a reference comes entirely from how specific your questions are.

ASK EVERY REFERENCE

- How did they respond when a child was upset? Can you give me a specific example?
- My child is sensitive and slow to warm. How do you think this nanny would do with that?
- Did you ever see them when something went wrong — an injury, a meltdown? What did they do?
- Were they ever alone with your children? Any concerns at all?
- How did they handle it when they disagreed with something you asked?
- What kind of family would not be a good fit for this nanny?
- If you moved and needed a nanny in a new city, would you recruit them to follow you? Why or why not?

LISTEN FOR

Hesitation before answering. Answers that stay general when you ask for specifics. Praise that's all about reliability and nothing about the children. The last question is the most revealing one on this page — enthusiasm or a pause both tell you a great deal.

Make sure at least two references are former employers, not friends or family.

STEP 03

The clinical interview

Three parts. You're not looking for perfect answers — you're looking for calm, specific, child-centered thinking and genuine self-awareness.

PART 1 · VALUES

- Tell me about the child you felt most connected to. What was it about that relationship?
- What does a child need from a caregiver beyond physical care?
- Tell me about a time you handled something wrong. What did you learn?

PART 2 · SCENARIOS

- My child is having a full tantrum. Walk me through exactly what you do.
- My child won't let me leave and I have a meeting. What happens next?
- My child falls and is bleeding, and you can't reach me.
- My child tells you something and asks you not to tell me.

PART 3 · PRACTICAL

- How do you approach screens, and what would you do if you disagreed with my rules?
- What's your backup plan when you're sick?
- Why did you leave each of your previous positions?

STEP 04

Trial days: what to watch

Two paid days, about a week apart. The gap matters: review what you saw the first time, then watch specifically for it the second. Watch across all four Care Map domains.

EMOTIONAL

- ☐ Initiates warmth rather than waiting for your child to come to them
- ☐ Comforts distress quickly and calmly
- ☐ Stays patient when your child tests limits

BIOLOGICAL

- ☐ Handles meals, naps, and hygiene proactively
- ☐ Follows allergy, medication, and safety protocols without reminders
- ☐ Supervises closely during higher-risk moments — bath, stairs, outdoors

SOCIAL

- ☐ Engages at your child's developmental level
- ☐ Plays and talks rather than supervising from a phone
- ☐ Communicates clearly and openly with you

ENVIRONMENTAL

- ☐ Respects your routines and household rules
- ☐ Keeps the space safe and reasonably tidy
- ☐ Arrives on time and adapts when plans change

WHEN TO GET HELP

Where a guide stops

This kit gives you the structure. What it can't do is tell you which of these answers matters most for your child — the sensitive one, the spirited one, the one with medical needs, the one who hasn't settled with anyone yet.

That's the part a Care Map Assessment does. In 90 minutes we map what your family actually needs across all four domains, then build your screening, interview, and onboarding plan around it.

ONE-TIME

Care Map Assessment

\$250

90 minutes · written plan · your Care Map system

ONGOING

Childcare Expert Access

\$150 / month

Monthly call · your nanny can join · full library

Book at guides.caremapmethod.com/childcare-expert-access

Or text (818) 308-1358 · info@caremapmethod.com

Tammy Gold, LCSW, MSW is a Columbia-trained psychotherapist, founder of the Care Map Method™, and author of *Secrets of the Nanny Whisperer* (Penguin). She has placed, trained, and supported nannies and families for twenty years, and appears as a national parenting expert on TODAY, Good Morning America, and CBS.