



The Best Guide on

How to hire Child Care



Dedicated to...

All the parents who work so hard to raise their children to be happy, healthy and bright.

And of course, to all the people who help them do so!

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Physician mom Dr. Alexandra T. Greenhill

3 important points

Before you begin the hiring process



#1

You are not a **bad** parent for leaving your child in the care of others

All evidence points to that facts that:

1. Each family is different, and it's a conversation to have about what each person wants and how one can make it work, instead of assuming. Some mothers do want to stay at home and raise their kids (67% said so when surveyed), but that survey also showed that one in three would prefer to continue to work. When paternal leave is an option, many dads choose to take a little or a lot of time off to be with the kids.
2. Each child is different – what may be great for one can turn out to be a challenge for another.
3. Meeting many new people develops children's Emotional Quotient (EQ) which is a stronger predictor of success in life than their Intelligence Quotient (IQ).

New research shows that kids of mothers who work turn out really well, but so do kids with stay at home moms.

- **The strongest predictor?** Kids who are loved (yes, regardless of finances or family composition).
- **Second strongest?** The “Good enough parenting” – nurturing environment where parents human i. e. not perfect, and not overly protective nor overly demanding in terms of achievement
- **Third?** Connection to community. Yes, it does take a village to raise a child, so tap into that power.

The bottom line: There is no perfect child care solution, no golden standard to aspire to. Each family's path is different and can lead to equally good outcomes.
So – RELAX and enjoy the parenting life ☺

#2

You have to align both parents vision for what is ideal child care.

All grown ups involved in decisions about child care need to have an honest chat first:

- Share your **personal experiences**, impressions and assumptions about the different childcare options.
- Discuss your belief patterns of what is **best for a child's growth** – some parents believe that mom must stay at home, others think one-on-one care and free play is best while many are firmly convinced children need organized educational activities.
- Identify your **personal preferences**. Some parents are uneasy at the idea of having another person in their home during the day or even more “intrusively”, 24/7 as is the case for a live-in nanny or au pair. Concern about illness in daycare is another.

Sometimes all of this is not uncovered until one parent has done considerable work to investigate solutions, only to discover that their assumptions were not shared! Early discussion will hopefully avoid unnecessary effort and disappointment.

#3

Being very clear on what you want will increase your success in finding it!

Make a list of what matters to you and what would make your life better. Start with what you think your child needs and then add what your family needs or would love to have. Make a detailed picture of what would work best.

Being able to explain your needs and wishes is key in finding someone compatible for your family. This includes logistics, skills and beliefs you need to make your life work – what is a MUST and what is a NICE to have?

And – don't forget that it's always possible to switch options if one is not working out for you. Life is too short, might as well make it better!

6 steps to hiring

What to do when and how

- 1 Describe what you need – the MUST haves and the NICE to haves
- 2 Review candidates and decide whom to interview on the phone
- 3 Do quick 15 min calls with the candidates you like the most
- 4 Conduct in-person interview
- 5 ALWAYS check references
- 6 Arrange a pre-hire trial session



If you are looking to hire someone who is already in the country, there are five basic steps to the helper hiring process.

Once you get more comfortable, you can do a hire (if someone is in your city) as fast as 48-72 hours. Otherwise its usual to expect this to take about 1 to 3 weeks.



If you decide on the live-in caregiver or au pair process, it usually takes several months. Your helper may or may not need a visa and a work permit depending on nationality.

1. Describe what you need – the MUST haves and the NICE to haves

- Logistics and basics, things such as location, start date and salary range
- Job expectations, for example:
 - *Child care needs, including number and age of kids*
 - *Is there more than child care (e.g. cooking, cleaning) and is it optional or required?*
 - *Any special circumstances*
 - *Any bonus abilities or interests*
- The family style, including answers to questions such as
 - *Do you prefer someone who follows instructions well or rather takes initiative?*
 - *What kind of household style do you have? Busy, Active, Laid-back, Professional?*
 - *Are you more indoors and academic or more active and outdoorsy?*
 - *What activities does your family enjoy?*

The order of things you list in your job description is important:
helpers are not uncaring when they ask about logistics - they are being practical.

2. Review candidates and decide whom to interview on the phone.

You may want to ask some additional questions by email to both assess the answers and the rapidity and engagement of the reply. A candidate who is not on task to impress at this stage is not likely to improve performance after being hired.

Verify eligibility to work in the country, CPR/First aid, driver's license, and any other requirements.

3. Do quick 15 min calls with the candidates you like the most.

It will allow you to rapidly confirm who you want to spend more time meeting in person. Call the applicants you are interested in and speak to them for 10-15 min. In this conversation, you need to:

Thank you for your interest! We thought that you may be a good fit to our needs, and wanted to find out more. Is this a good time to ask you a few questions?

- Confirm that the person is available for the location, start date, hours and rate as advertised.

***We need someone to work for us [8 to 5pm five days a week] and start [in two weeks]. Can you start then?
Are there limitations – holidays, weekends, nights, etc. – as to when you can work?
Our budget is [\$15/hour plus overtime] and that is what we can offer. Would that be acceptable?***

- Get a sense of why they are interested and what they think of the opportunity

***What made you interested in this position?
Do you have prior experience?
Could you tell me a little about yourself?***

- And finally, of course, ask if they have any questions and answer them! Then thank them for the call and give them an approximate timeline to how soon you plan to make a decision about interviews and whether they will get called if they are not selected.

***Tip: I usually ask them to describe one happy memory associated with childhood.
If they can answer that well than it's definitely a green light to proceed with an interview.***

4. Conduct in-person interview.

Look through the applicants you called and choose three up to five candidates to schedule appointments for an interview. Don't call the ones not selected yet unless you are sure you will not want to hire them under any situation.

Often done in two steps – in a public place such as a coffee place or a playground, and then if that goes well, a trial session in one's home. There is no need to have the kids present at the first in person discussion as usually “if the adults get along, children are never the issue”. The trial session will help confirm the relationship between nanny and kids.

Schedule one hour and split the discussion into several parts:

- **Introduction:** Small talk to put everyone at ease, explain the plan of the discussion, reassure person that they can ask questions at the end
- **Part A:** Get to know the person - **Key question:** Do they like children and playing?
- **Part B:** Describe your situation - **Key question:** Do they have the work ethic and skill set?
- **Over to them:** Key question to end on: “Is there anything that we haven't asked. that is important for you to share?” Then ask if they have any questions? If yes, answer them.
- **Closure:** So what do you think? As now the nanny knows the job and family and if she is still interested, she can really make her best case at this point.

Explain the timeline from here on - for example: “I have more interviews to do, but should make a preliminary decision in 1 week. Then we do a 3 hour trial period, and if that goes well, then we do the contract etc and you can start.”

Resist the urge to tell candidates you really really like that you will likely hire them until you have interviewed all whom you were going to interview. It's key as you may like the first person and then love the second one - and unless you left your options open you will be stuck!

Tip: While there are a million and a half of questions you can possibly ask, the more experienced parents interview quickly knowing that some questions are so key and that the rest you can sort out.

For example, if the person is clearly a fast learner and respects requirements, you can make sure they reflect your views on play, outings, discipline and food - their own beliefs aren't as key to find out. Most kids even within the same family are different, so there is a learning curve anyways.

Questions to choose from

- ☐ Why are you looking for work?
- ☐ What are you looking for in an employer?
- ☐ Are you flexible? Punctual? Reliable?

Work experience

- ☐ Do you have experience? Describe your childcare experiences and why they ended. How many children have you cared for at a time in your previous positions?
- ☐ What kinds of activities do you personally like doing with the kids?
- ☐ What were the best parts of your previous jobs?
- ☐ What do you find to be the most challenging part of working with children?

- ☐ Have you ever had to handle an emergency? If so, what happened and what action did you take?
- ☐ Can you tell me a time when you felt like you lost motivation in a job?
- ☐ Can you tell me about the most difficult child/family/ parent you worked with?
- ☐ What was your worst experience with a family or when caring for a child and how did you resolve it?
- ☐ Would you care for a sick child?

Communication

- ☐ How do you prefer to communicate?
- ☐ In your previous job caring for kids, what worked well in terms of daily updates between family and you?
- ☐ Can you give me some examples of unexpected issues that have come up in your previous jobs and how you and your former employer worked things out?
- ☐ How would you feel if I brought up an issue with the children and I felt very strongly that I wanted it handled a certain way? In other words, if I couldn't see a way to compromise on an issue, do you think you could work with that?

Fit with the family

- ☐ How would your closest friends would describe you? What are three strengths? Three weaknesses?
- ☐ Tell me whatever you feel comfortable sharing about your childhood and your current relationship with your family.
- ☐ What do you like to do in your free time?
- ☐ What was one of your favorite places to travel to and why?
- ☐ What are your future plans?

5. ALWAYS check references

I always call **three** references (even when I used a nanny agency who had done reference calls) as it an HR best practice to do so, proven to be worthwhile time and again. I ask them:

- ☐ Can you confirm that this person is a trustworthy, reliable and caring human being?
- ☐ How long have you known them for and under what circumstances?
- ☐ Can you give an example of something memorable about them?
- ☐ Would you hire them/work with them again?
- ☐ Was there anything that I did not ask that you think I should know?

The last question is THE most important one. This open ended query allows to keep the call short but effective at catching anything you that wasn't directly triggered by another question.

I also usually ask about advice on how to be a good employer for that person. What are the ways to make the person more effective and happier at work?

Background checks are another thing you can do, but keep in mind that many nannies and sitters are rather young, and thus most background checks come back negative.

Tip: It's really important to do these calls but less than 30% of parents actually do them.

6. Arrange a pre-hire trial session

If possible, do a 3 hour session to see how things go with the children present. Explain to the nanny that this is the last step before a hire is confirmed. This pre-hire session is usually paid.

Initially I tried to leave the kids in the care of the nanny, as the issue is that if I stayed, they always cling to mom and run away from the nanny. Leaving them behind was not any better however.

So over the years, another approach seemed to work much better - make this session similar to a playdate visit from a family friend, and include coffee or even a meal. Then there is no pressure on anyone, and things still come through in terms of how well the nanny interacts with me and the kids as well as how well the kids like her. Things just happen gradually and this makes the transition after the hire much faster and much easier on the kids. .

We chose someone!

Things you need to do
from selection to start date



1. Get from your helper (sitters or nannies):

- ☐ Home address
- ☐ Home phone number
- ☐ Cell phone number
- ☐ Take a photo or photocopy of 2 pieces of ID (passport, driver's license etc.)

2. If you are hiring a nanny, you have to:

- ☐ Get Social Insurance Number and date of birth
- ☐ Sign a contract (that usually covers: 1) start date, 2) trial period, 3) work schedule, 4) hourly wages or salary, 5) overtime pay, 6) pay period/frequency, 7) holidays, 8) vacation, 9) sick leave, 10) job duties, 11) house rules, 12) extra benefits, 13) taxes, 14) unemployment insurance and workers' compensation, 15) transportation, 16) emergencies, 17) background check, 18) work eligibility, 19) confidentiality, and 20) termination of employment.
- ☐ Set up a business number to be seen as an employer by the tax authorities
- ☐ Have helper sign a personal tax deduction form
- ☐ Set up Insurance and a WorkSafe employer account

3. Practical steps

- ☐ Plan an introduction schedule - dates, times and hours to get them onboarded

Tip: For a new sitter plan at least one extra hour on each end of the time you need to be away for. For a new nanny, on board over three days, each day starting at the same time. Day one, do 3 to 4 hours, then next day 6 hrs then day three do a full day.

- ☐ Make a copy of a set of keys
- ☐ Make 2 copies of the emergency info list (one for inside the home & one for trips)
 - Your home address & phone number (when people panic they forget!)
 - Contact info for you
 - Back up contact info for trusted people who can help when you are not reachable
 - Kid(s) names, ages and any other info: e.g. allergies

4. Optional – nice to have: Daily schedule for kid(s), favorite games and outdoor activities

- ☐ Memberships to local museums, play places, maker places, swim centers etc

Structuring onboarding - one example

Kids manage change well when adults are not anxious - otherwise they feed off the stress they perceive. So relax, treat it as a fun adventure and they will too.

As soon as you can

- ❑ Start reading books and watching movies about kids being left with sitters and nannies (all the series have them - Caillou, Franklin, etc, do a quick internet and Youtube search and your local librarian should be able to help)
- ❑ Role play it with their dolls, or you become the child and they act the mommy (eg- we say hello to the sitter, wave good by to parents (kids usually find it hard to leave if hugged) and firmly depart; then come back, big hugs (now this is great), share stories about your day
- ❑ Have them draw if they are old enough the different moments of the daily schedule - get up, brush teeth, eat breakfast, welcome nanny etc...

Day one

- ❑ Plan on starting all three days at the same time as you will normally have the person come
- ❑ Welcome them, explain how stroller works, show how to lock up,, show where local parks
- ❑ I try and to a session at the park with the nanny and child, as the kids find it reassuring to see mom knows where this stranger is taking them. Gives me a chance to chat and get to know the nanny too. If not, skip that and proceed with activities for day 2.

Day two -

- ❑ Orient the person to where things are at the house, involve the child if possible - max 30 min
- ❑ Make sure she knows emergency exits, as well as phone location, and has your numbers
- ❑ Warn the child that you will be leaving in 5 min, using a matter of fact calm voice
- ❑ Then you leave - friendly and firmly, no long tearful goodbyes, as hard as it is to do, prolonging the departure or doing the back and forth only escalates the child anxiety
- ❑ The session should be spent ideally in the home, no outings
- ❑ Come back on time, if not early, if possible grab some coffee with the nanny - debrief but also show the child, the nanny is a household member, similar to a friend

Day three

- ❑ Same as day two but a longer day. Make sure your schedule allows for calls from the nanny.

Who are the helpers?

Trends and facts
to help you choose



WHO ARE THE HELPERS?



90% WOMEN
10% MEN

- 20 to 25 years old on average
- Certified in CPR, First Aid or safety training
- Over 50% of our helpers have a university degree

AVERAGE RATE



\$14
PER HOUR

Average pay
for nannies and
sitters ranges
from \$10 - 20/hr

WHO HIRES THE HELPERS?



MOM



**MOM FINDS,
DAD APPROVES**



BOTH



DAD

HOW FAMILIES DECIDE WHAT TO PAY



2 IN 3 ask the helper



1 IN 3 ask friends



1 IN 3 use a pay rate calculator

FACTORS AFFECTING PAY RATE

1. Location (neighborhood more than city!)
2. Experience of helper
3. Number and age of kids
4. Whether housecleaning is required
5. Timing (last minute, weekend, holiday)



3 REASONS WHY FAMILIES DON'T HIRE SOMEONE

1 It's too expensive

2 Too stressful to find one

3 Can't get organized in time

4 Different Types of Helpers

Hi! I'm a

Stay At Home Mom

"I'm a happy mom and I want to help another family. I understand how difficult it is to find affordable child care during working hours, and I'm here to lend a hand."



Hi! I'm a

Granny Nanny

"I'm happily retired, but love children so much that I would happily spend a few hours with them after school, or when you have date nights (a must!)."



Hi! I'm a

COLLEGE STUDENT

“I need to money to go to school. I've plenty of previous experience. Helping a family is perfect for me to fit in between study time!”

Hi! I'm a

New Arrival

“I just moved here and I love it! Got lots of care experience and would love to help. I can also teach another language and share stories about my travels.”

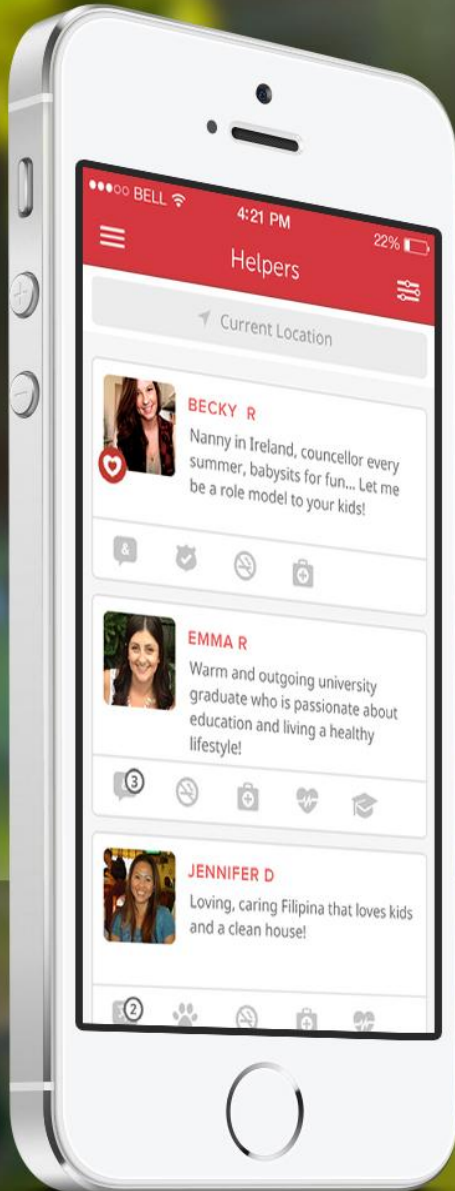


Now what?

Practical tools you can use
loved by thousands of families



WHO'S HELPING YOU?



Search for trusted helpers.
All in your neighbourhood.



“ I liked that myBestHelper matched candidates who were a good fit, and who were available at the time I needed. ”

- Angela V., Mom Of Three
Vancouver BC

www.myBestHelper.com

Built by: Dr. Alexandra T. Greenhill
Physician, mother of three



AFFORDABLE

Three simple choices.
Contact all of our
helpers. Full money
back guarantee.



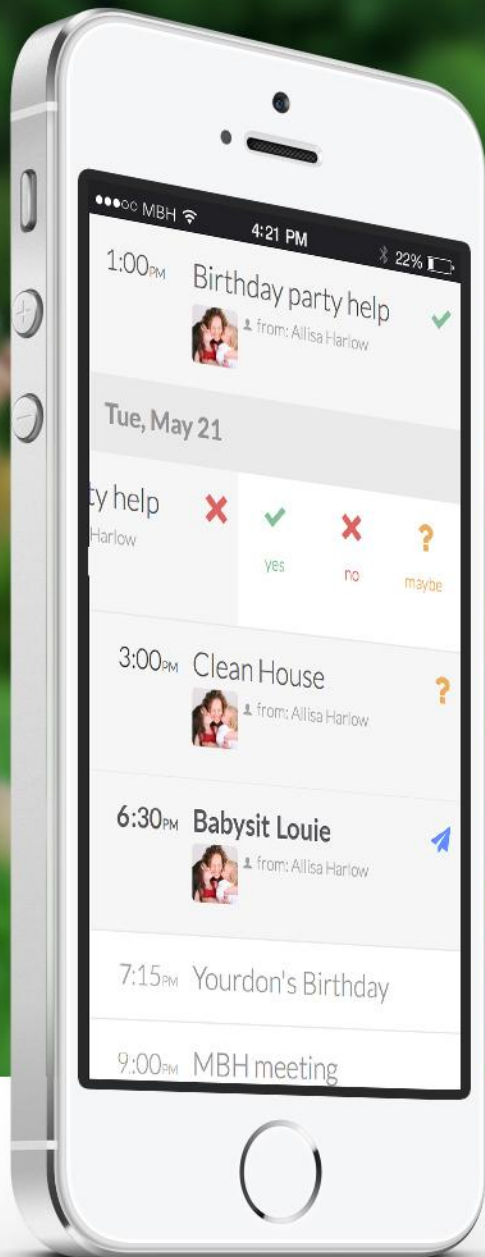
FAST & EASY






Post a job and relax while
caretakers apply. Or
search helpers and
contact the ones you like.



THE RIGHT FIT

Our Matching Wizard
suggests great people
who truly meet your
needs.



- 3:50PM  Usual nanny cancelled last minute.
- 4:01PM  Requested help on the myCrew app. "Need sitter ASAP."
- 4:30PM  3 people are available.
- 5:32PM  Help is on the way!
- 10:30PM  Paid nanny using myCrew app.

the uber-cool life tool
Organize. Delegate. Reward. *Live.*



Send requests to your contacts and groupsource your task.



Create Crews that would best fit your requests.



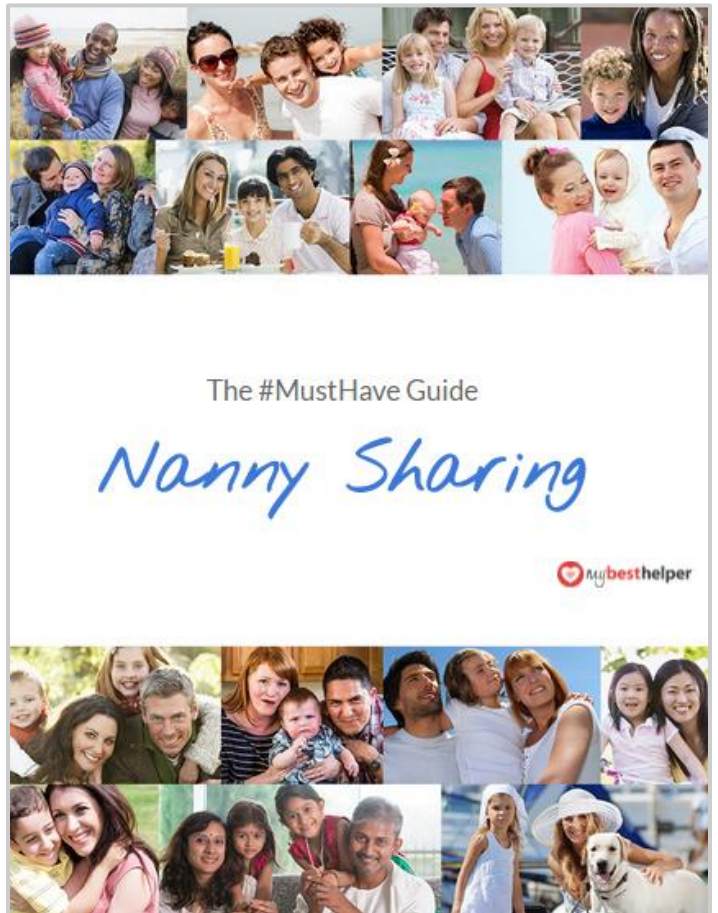
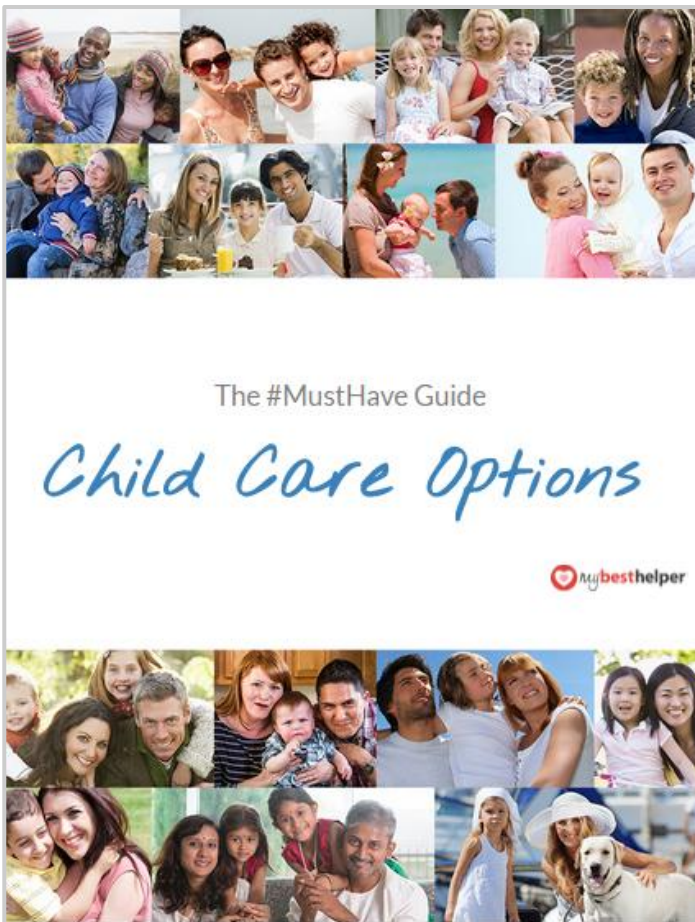
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About the Author



Alexandra T. Greenhill

CEO myBestHelper, physician and mom of three

This guide is written based on lessons learned about what really works from first hand experience as well as the thousands of families she has helped.

Passionate about making a real difference, Alexandra has served for decades on various volunteer causes including Chair of a Public School board and member of the Board of the Canadian Institute for Child Health. Her contributions have been recognized with many awards.



Queen
Elizabeth II
Medal of
Service



Cartier
Women's
Initiative
Awards
Finalist North America

We wish you the best in your search for the right care option for your family.

If you decide to follow the route of nanny, babysitter or homecare, take advantage of our job post wizard - post your ideal job with the help of our questionnaire, view parent-approved profiles and contact helpers directly.

MyBestHelper helps families find the right child care option.
www.mybesthelper.com

We'd love to hear from you!

Email: support@mybesthelper.com

Phone: 1.855.629.8872