

## My Summer Vacation with Mary Poppins

School will soon be out for the summer and you may be busy researching day camps and asking other parents what they are going to do for child care and summer activities.

Have you thought about the convenience and peace of mind that a summer nanny could give you and the fun she or he could bring to your children? Many college students and elementary school teachers work during the summer as nannies. Some even have American Red Cross lifeguard certifications and may be accomplished athletes or even coaches. Summer nannies can work with the children on reading, writing and math and build on what your children learned this past year and prepare them for their next grade. Or maybe the nanny will be just like a cool big brother or sister and hang out at the pool with the kids, kick a soccer ball around or may even be up on the latest computer games.

A summer nanny should be expected to keep the kids active and enjoying their summer. Many summer nannies will take the kids out and about town; going to the movies, the zoo, the children's museum maybe even a day at the beach in Galveston or a visit to Moody Gardens would be a great excursion and give the kids a chance to expend some of their youthful energy.

Nannies are also available to travel with your family and play with the children so that you can have some adult time. If baby needs to take a nap and the older children want to play on the beach or go to an amusement park the nanny will stay back at the house or hotel room while the older children or parents enjoy some "big people time."

If you think you might find this an attractive option, here are a few points to keep in mind.

- Get to know the nanny before leaving her on their own with the children. Spend a few hours at home with the nanny to see how well your children relate to her and to determine how well the nanny will follow your directions.
- Check the nanny's references and question the references about how well suited the nanny is to be working with children and particularly with children of the same age as yours.
- You may want to consult with a nanny agency regarding payroll tax obligations.
- Be sure to make a clear job description and discuss your expectations with the nanny before the first day on the job.
- If you plan to take the nanny on vacation with you, remember that it is not her vacation and you will need to pay her appropriately as well as pay for her transportation, lodging and provide her with all her meals. You should also make sure that she gets some time off to relax and unwind.

With a caring adult taking care of the children your summer can be more pleasurable and relaxing.

Patricia Cascio is the owner and director of Morningside Nannies and has been referring nannies to Houston families since 1983. She has been a member of the

board of directors of the International Nanny Association since 1998 and served eight terms as INA President. She is the mother of four grown daughters and the grandmother of five. Morningside Nannies places summer nannies as well as full time, long-term nannies, part-time nannies, infant care specialists and professional nannies that work as babysitters for evenings, weekends or as back-up childcare providers. For more information: [www.morningsidenannies.com](http://www.morningsidenannies.com)