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# The nanny in the United States : a search for professional recognition.

Patrick J. Kearney

*University of Massachusetts Amherst*

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THE NANNY IN THE UNITED STATES:  
A SEARCH FOR PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION

A Dissertation

by

PATRICK J. KEARNEY

Submitted to the Graduate School of the  
University of Massachusetts in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

February 1993

School of Education

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A SEARCH FOR PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION

A Dissertation


by


PATRICK J. KEARNEY

Approved as to style and content by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
William C. Wolf, Jr., Chairperson

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Harvey Scribner, Member

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Fergus Clydesdale, Member

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Bailey W. Jackson, Dean  
School of Education

## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the memory of Michael B. Goldschmidt. When I could go no further in my doctoral program, or so I thought, Michael stepped in and exhorted me to do my dissertation. With his help, I finished the Proposal and then Chapters I, II, and III. Michael died before the dissertation was finished, three months short of his 50th birthday. I miss him sorely. It is sad that he will miss reading the work that is partly his creation. Without his belief in me and what I was doing, this dissertation would not have been completed.

Thank you, Michael, wherever you are. I hope it is a fine place where you will be safe, happy, and content. I love you.

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Without the urging of my committee, especially Dr. Wolf, I would not have been able to continue, nor would I have wanted to. They saw something in me that I did know I had. I would also like to thank Rhonda Helmuth, Director of the Amherst Nanny Academy, whose knowledge of the field was essential to my research. Rhonda gave me a mission, and was available to me at any time with help in this field.

I cannot end this acknowledgement without thanking the students of the Amherst Nanny Academy, schools which offer child care and nanny courses in the Northeast, and the respondent families with nannies who participated in this research. These nameless people gave their time to fill out questionnaires for my work. Thank you one and all.

## ABSTRACT

### THE NANNY IN THE UNITED STATES: A SEARCH FOR PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION

PATRICK J. KEARNEY, B. A., UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS

M.A., AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE

Ed.D., UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS

Directed by: Professor William C. Wolf, Jr.

The study investigated the perceptions and practices of nanny training school officials, employed nannies and nanny employers in New England, New York, and New Jersey. It was specifically focused on whether the training received is sufficient for the jobs the nannies perform and the responsibilities they are given. Additionally, it examined the issue of "professionalism" within the nanny industry.

The study was based upon an ex post facto research methodology and involved both quantitative and qualitative methods of inquiry. Data collection was accomplished through mailed questionnaires and in-person interviews.

As a result of the research, it was discovered that:

1. While most nanny schools are affiliated with community colleges, no degrees nor college credits are awarded.
2. There was a major discrepancy between the number of classroom hours said to be "required" for graduation and those which could be accounted for by nanny school officials.



3. Unsubstantiated classroom hours accounted for between 17% and 69% of the total "required" hours.
4. While nanny schools profess the demand to supply ratio is 100 to 1, only 65% of nanny school graduates are currently employed.
5. Employed nannies disagree with nanny school officials on whether "special skills" are needed to perform their jobs.
6. Most employers are not seeking "professionals" when hiring nannies. They would prefer to train nannies according to their own expectations.
7. The most crucial problem to be overcome in a nanny-employer relationship is that of "privacy," according to both employed nannies and nanny employers.

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# C H A P T E R I

## INTRODUCTION

### Statement of the Problem

The nanny is emerging as an important child care provider in parts of the United States. The nanny role that is emerging draws roots from England but has blossomed quite differently in the U.S. These English roots are well-defined and have a long history of evolution. The English are familiar with the role and understand its place in society. What has been blossoming in the United States is neither well-defined nor well-understood. A need exists to clarify the role and practices that are emerging and then to appraise the contributions of the nanny concept to child care in the United States.

The American parent wants child care to be as close as possible to the real thing. We want surrogate parents to take our place in the home for the eight to twelve hours per day that we are away. We want someone intelligent, responsible, and creative. We want her [sic] to love our children as we do and to build a sound and loving relationship with them, providing a kind of "extended family" relationship while still maintaining a professional demeanor.<sup>1</sup>

This definition of parental child care need by Rice (1987) in her book, The American Nanny, portrays a caregiver whose qualifications and training might meet the requirements of England's current Nursery Nurse Examination Board (NNEB), earning the title of Nanny. However, the term

"nanny" has been loosely used in the United States, at least in comparison to its traditional use in Europe, "where the professional nanny has been trained in accord with much more rigorous standards."<sup>2</sup>

The NNEB graduate, for example, must pass an examination by showing a thorough knowledge of the following subjects:

**Growth and Development**, including stages of development and observations.

**Physical Development and Keeping Children Healthy**, including promotion and maintenance of health, surveillance programs, safety in the environment, clothing and footwear, baby equipment, nutrition, childhood illnesses and ailments, first aid, care of the sick child, and development of deviations.

**Cognitive Development and Learning Through Play**, including stimulation, sensory development, development of skills, speech and language development, activities, and organization and provision of materials and equipment.

**Emotional Development**, including stimulation, bonding, parent/child relationships, family relations, emotional expression, self-awareness, loss and grief, and "other deprivations."

**Social Relationships**, including role and role conflict, the family as a social institution, the family in the community, differing cultural and subcultural patterns of family functioning, and deviations in family functioning.

**Rights and Responsibilities of Children and the Family**, including the rights and responsibilities of individuals in society, legislative and administrative framework, statutory and voluntary services to families with young children, and social deviance.

**The Nursery Nurse in Employment**, including the meaning of professionalism, relationships between occupational groups, working with managers, relationships between employers and employees, the role of the nursery nurse in the public sector, and the role of the nursery nurse in the private sector.

In addition, these specific areas of knowledge must be complemented by other, broader studies, including such subjects as communications and other creative arts, our environment, and living in society, and by hands-on, practical experience with children.<sup>3</sup>

In comparison, a typical description of the American nanny is offered by the International Nanny Association:<sup>4</sup>

Employed by the family on either a live-in or live-out basis to undertake all tasks related to the care of children. Duties are generally restricted to child care and the domestic tasks related to child care. May or may not have had any formal training, though often has a good deal of actual experience. Nanny's work week ranges from 40 to 60 hours per week. Usually works unsupervised.<sup>5</sup>

The lack of any defined training mentioned in this and other current definitions of the American nanny might be responsible for some of the perceptions the nanny has of her profession.

At a gathering of nannies, the word most often heard is "professional," as in "We need professional standards" or "I want to be treated as a professional."

Much of the undercurrent of frustration voiced at the nannies' conference was, at its heart, a response to what many perceive as a low regard for child care workers in the United States. For one thing, there are virtually no American standards - no certification boards or battery of examinations - to determine who is qualified to be a nanny.<sup>6</sup>

Thus, it is possible that: (a) a new child-care provider role will have a significant impact upon children in the United States during the next several decades, and (b) few people in need of the services will command such understanding of the role. The problem to be addressed is (1) to find out how the American nanny, the nanny training programs, and the client (employer) families perceive the "nanny concept" of child care; by (2) defining the role of the nanny in the United States in terms of the child care s/he is expected to be responsible for and the training s/he has to fulfill those responsibilities.

#### Purpose of the Study

This study examines the standards and practices of the newly established American Nanny/Industry in selected geographic areas of the United States and investigates the perceptions of nanny training school officials, employed nannies, and their employers in order to identify (a) the individual duties nannies perform, (b) the training required



of nannies to complete those tasks, and (c) if the need for standardization within the industry exists.

Five questions are addressed by the researcher:

1. What percentage of the schools' officials questioned are affiliated with a community college, state vocational college, private vocational school, or independent agency?
2. Is the length of the school program sufficient to assure students' acquisition of a reasonable level of the skills specified in the course curriculum?
3. Are currently employed nannies perceived as professionals by their employers?
4. What is the nature of the credential awarded on the completion of the course?
5. Is the program accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency? On what basis was the accreditation granted?

#### Significance of the Study

Almost no empirical research has been found on the American Nanny Industry or the American nanny by the investigator. Even less research has been done on those client families employing nannies. Therefore, in an attempt to remedy the situation, this study explores and identifies the nanny schools and agencies, the client families, and currently employed nannies in order to define the American nanny.

The purpose of this study is to gain knowledge and insight into the training and practices of nannies regarding their work roles during a time of rapid perceptual change in the field of child care. The investigation also identifies the relevance of the nanny school curriculum as perceived by school directors and graduate nannies.

This study focuses on the experiences, opinions, and feelings of nannies concerning (a) their response and (b) the perceived response of the nanny schools they attended to the duties of a nanny, the training they received to accomplish these duties, and their need for regulation within the profession. A secondary study concentrates on the client families to determine their needs concerning in-home child care.

### Terminology

Au Pair. A person hired to care for a child or children under the auspices of the American au pair program, consisting of five organizations: Academic Year in the U.S.A., Experiment in International Living, American Institute of Foreign Studies, Education Foundation for Foreign Studies, and American Scandinavian Student Exchange.

Child Care Giver. A person who assumes responsibility for the care of a child.

Child Minder. Any person who cares for a child whether or not s/he is paid, and regardless of whether or not s/he is related to the child.

Client Family. A family which is the employer of a nanny.

Live-In Nanny. A nanny who resides with the client family in the family's home.

Live-Out Nanny. A nanny who does not reside with the client family in the home, yet who comes to the home to provide child care.

Nanny, NNEB. A person who has graduated from a two-year training college and passed an examination given by England's Nursery Nurse Examination Board.

Nanny, (U.S.A.). A person who, with training in the appropriate child-care skills (or lack of such) and knowledge of developmental stages (or lack of such), is employed to provide individualized care of a child or children in the home.<sup>7</sup>

Nanny Agency. A business which hires and/or places persons defined as nannies.

Nanny Training Programs. Available through private schools, vocational schools, and community colleges, programs which offer a variety of courses related to children and child care.

#### Limitations of the Study

The data obtained from this investigation and the interpretation of the data are limited by the reliability of the questionnaire and interview methods in general. More specifically, the participants' fibbing about their answers

to the questionnaire, and the investigator's lack of control over items inherent in the study, such as voice inflection, item pacing, and clarity of address during the interviewing process, may or may not result in a larger margin of error than data obtained via other methods.

Further, the study concentrates on one region of the country and does not purport to include a cross-section of training programs, nannies, or client families.

### Organization of the Study

The study consists of five chapters. Chapter I presents an introduction to the investigation consisting of the statement of the problem, the purpose of the investigation, the significance of the study, the definitions of terms present within this work, and the limitations of the study.

Chapter II reviews the correlating literature and provides the theoretical base for the study.

Chapter III examines the design of the research project, including the instruments used for the study and the field test of the questionnaire, the interview format, and the methodology used for collection and analysis of data.

Chapter IV presents and analyzes the data obtained in the research, and answers five research questions presented in the "Purpose of the Study" section in Chapter I.

Chapter V concludes the study with an overall summary of the information gained and indicates implications for future research.

#### End Notes

1. Robin D. Rice, The American Nanny, (Revised Edition) (New York: Harper and Row, 1987), p. 1, 2.
2. Ibid., p. 4.
3. National Nursery Examination Board, Regulations Guide on the content of courses leading to the award of the NNEB Certificate.
4. The International Nanny Association is, at the time of this research, the largest nanny organization in this country, with a membership of more than 700 nannies, agency owners, educators, parents, and others committed to professional in-home child care. This organization also describes itself as the national clearinghouse for information on in-home child care in the U.S. It has adopted a voluntary code of conduct for nannies and placement agencies (Appendix A), with a similar code for training programs, which is expected to be adopted by 1991.
5. International Nanny Association, 1990 INA Directory, (Austin, TX: Laurel House Press, 1990), p. 8.
6. Kenneth B. Noble (special to the New York Times), U.S. Nannies Seek Regulation of Their Profession, New York Times, June 30, 1988, p. C1.
7. Flemming, Jean, The American Nanny: Opportunities, Training and Placement (1987, June 12). Paper presented at the International Nanny Conference, Claremont, CA. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 286 622)

## C H A P T E R   I I

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of the review of the literature is to establish an understanding of the American nanny from existing sources and to document a theoretical base for the study.

While there is a profusion of both expert commentary and well-defined research on out-of-home child care, there are few existing sources related to in-home, non-parental child care and almost none of these references consists of any systematic inquiries.

"The nanny, or nursery nurse, emerged as a distinct profession in the early decades of the nineteenth century as Great Britain cemented into place its industrial designed class structure."<sup>1</sup> In the ensuing years, the British nanny has reached a level of public acceptance in England where nannying has become an entity in and of itself. To this day, nannies are identified with an upper-class employer of a "certain" social order and the nannies themselves almost always reflect the mores and values of the class they serve.<sup>2</sup>

A review of the writings of the British industry is beyond the scope of this paper. The following themes relate to nannying today, particularly in-home child care specialists in the United States of America, with references

to the English nanny (NNEB) used only when necessary to define the current American industry.

As the appearance of the nanny in the United States is a recent occurrence (according to the responses to a 1990 International Nanny Association survey, in which well over 90% of the nanny training programs listed had been established after 1979),<sup>3</sup> a comprehensive review of related literature from 1970 to December 1990 was completed. This material is divided into the following sections:

The Need for Quality Child Care: in which the concerns of parents and experts in the field are explored, and which includes the available research on the effects of group care for children.

Child Care in the Home: in which the advantages and disadvantages of in-home child care are explored, including the value of individual attention that the child receives and the security of staying at home, the value of the flexible schedules the nanny can provide compared to the schedules of day care homes and centers, the value of an in-home child care provider who is trained in caring for sick children, and the disadvantages of in-home care, such as loss of privacy and lack of supervision over the nanny's actual work are explored.

The Demand for Nannies: in which the market place is examined, including the inability of training programs to keep up with demand, and a review of the general range of wages in the industry.

Nanny Education and Training: in which formal education and training are explored, including the debate over what such programs should contain, the types of programs and schools available, the certifications or degrees awarded by these programs, what efforts the nanny industry is making to standardize nanny preparatory programs, and an examination of "nannies as professionals."

Section I: The Need for Quality Childcare

Anderson-Kulman and Paludi (1986),<sup>4</sup> Mahlert (1989),<sup>5</sup> and Demeis, Hock, and McBride (1986)<sup>6</sup> suggested in recently completed studies that (a) the major area of conflict experienced by working mothers and single parents has been child related, and (b) the availability of consistent and dependable child care is one of their most important concerns.<sup>7</sup> Helen Blank (1989), of the Children's Defense Fund, sees child care resources, particularly for newborns, as limited and costly:

Over 50% of mothers with children younger than one year old are working, largely because their paychecks are crucial to supporting their families and maintaining their standards of living. Infant care, however, is not only in short supply but often prohibitively expensive. Child care costs in general are often very high in relation to women's typical wages, but newborns need especially intensive (and expensive) attention.<sup>8</sup>

Another concern of the parent is that the limited spaces available for newborn child care are, in fact, nurturing to the child. This fear may be coupled to a traditional belief system, held in many Western societies,



that, in order to be good mothers, women must stay at home with their children.<sup>9</sup> The cultural belief that at-home mother-care is the optimal method of promoting a child's emotional and intellectual development, the impact of the multidimensional and complex phenomenon of maternal separation anxiety on the mother,<sup>10</sup> and a number of articles lately in national mass print media questioning whether the socio-emotional values gained in group day-care settings offset the lack of one-on-one interactions seen as necessary to build the child's self-esteem,<sup>11,12,13</sup> may have all contributed to many parents' hesitancy to send their children to day care centers and helped fuel the growing demand for nannies, documented in section III.

Headlines of "An Epidemic of Child Abuse" (Newsweek, August 20, 1984),<sup>14</sup> "Brutalized: Sex Charges at a Nursery" (Time, April 2, 1984)<sup>15</sup> and "A Nightmare That Won't Go Away By Itself" (Working Woman, August, 1984),<sup>16</sup> along with countless daily television news stories, may have helped provoke the hysteria which resulted in 1984 when approximately 30 day care employees were charged with the sexual abuse of preschool children. However, subsequent research has shown that children who attend day-care facilities are actually at less risk of sexual assault than children who are cared for at home. The author of one report, David Finkelhor (1988), while minimizing the risks of a sexual abuse incident in a day-care setting, also cautions parents to "be suspicious of a place that doesn't

allow free access to the child at any time," and "parents must teach their kids to report such incidents (abuse, if they occur) as soon as possible."<sup>17</sup> The impact of this negative publicity of day-care centers on the mother already dealing with the apprehension or concern that is uniquely associated with mother-child separation must be taken into account as the woman comes to terms with the issue of balancing her needs and her infant's needs.

Much of the actual research on maternal employment and child care has been motivated by a concern that some damage is inherent to the mother-child relationship by the daily separation of the mother from the child. Studies of the relationship between the employment of the mother and the quality of infants' attachments have lead to inconsistent findings. In studies of 12-month-olds, using the Strange Situation Behavior Instrument developed by Ainsworth (1978),<sup>18</sup> Hock and Clinger (1980) found only minor differences in relationships.<sup>19</sup> Easterbrook and Goldberg (1985), using similar research with 20-month-olds, also found no difference in the proportion of securely attached infants in nonemployed versus employed mother groups.<sup>20</sup> In contrast, studies done by Belsky and Rovine (1988)<sup>21</sup> and Clarke-Stewart (1989)<sup>22</sup> show that extensive nonparental care in the first year of life is associated with patterns of attachment that are commonly regarded as evidence of insecurity. In fact, Jay Belsky, in "The 'Effects' of Infant Day Care Reconsidered" (1988), stresses that

extensive nonmaternal care (day care) in the first year could entail serious risk to the emotional development of the infant:

A focus upon reunion behavior as a "window" on the security of the attachment relationship, coupled with the investigation of children from different socio-economic strata and a myriad of child care experiences, leads me to conclude that there are too many findings linking more than 20 hours per week of nonmaternal care experience in the first year with increased avoidance of mother following separation, heightened insecurity, and subsequent aggression and noncompliance not to draw attention to the findings and raise concerns about their meaning.<sup>23</sup>

While the evidence that early childhood group day-care, especially out-of-home infant care, may have some negative developmental effects on the child, it should be noted that most of the early research which concluded that nonmaternal care had no measurable impact on the child or the mother-child relationship took place in university-affiliated, "teaching" day-care facilities, and that most of the later studies showing pervasive and negative effects on the children were usually done in "inner-city" day-care centers and often in states with minimal child-care standards.<sup>24</sup> A recent study of the variables in child care environments undertaken by Vandell and Corasaniti (1990) suggests that:

...we will probably never be able to draw global conclusions like "child care is bad for children" or the converse, "Child care is good for children." Instead, any conclusions about child care must be carefully qualified in terms of (1) the characteristics of the child care environment, (2) the characteristics of the families selecting the care, and (3) the characteristics of the children using the particular child care arrangement.<sup>25</sup>

Some research has also been done on the effects nonparental child care has on the parent, and, again, these studies have focused on out-of-home child care. The bulk of these are systematic inquiries and have used single parents, particularly mothers, as their target population, as the focus on the alleviation of poverty of single parents has justifiably been considered a major issue for both research and media in this country within the last 10 years. However, the majority of this group, 60.9% for single mothers and 82% of single custodial fathers, have been in the labor force and employed full time.<sup>26</sup> The fact that work increases the single parent's sense of independence, self-esteem and social participation has been documented by a number of studies.<sup>27,28,29</sup> and, according to the National Longitudinal Survey, which focused on women with children whose marriages were disrupted, it is the employment of the woman herself that is the major means of avoiding poverty.<sup>30</sup> Further research based on Hall's article (1982),<sup>31</sup> Beutell and Greenhaus (1983) examine how "successful" single parents cope effectively with the responsibility for both the provider and nurturer roles, concluding that the use of more instrumental than expressive behaviors, encompassing a cognitive focus on getting the problem solved or the job done, leads to more flexible and creative solutions.<sup>32</sup>

In order to fulfill their need for quality child care, one creative solution available to single parents is the live-in nanny. Despite a small increase in cost, compared

to current quality day-care centers, based on the enrollment of one infant (if a day-care center can be found that will accept any child under the age of two), and approximately the same cost, based on the enrollment of two children, securing a live-in nanny gives the single parent more of the control needed in order to meet their own child-care expectations. A study done by Fortune magazine (1987) of working mothers concludes that "the parents who have most control over child care are those who can hire their own help." Quoting costs of \$165.00 to \$350.00 per week for nannies that come for the day, and \$150.00 to \$200.00 per week for live-in nannies (since it includes room and board), live-in nannies become a viable child-care option.<sup>33</sup>

## Section II: Child Care in the Home

"Home and family," possibly one of the most basic concepts and traditional beliefs of American culture, has been under attack for the last two decades by economic patterns that have required two incomes in a family to maintain financial stability, and an increased divorce rate which has impacted on the family itself. New social patterns have further eroded an earlier ideal of family stability as a valued and protected state. Increased family mobility is one such pattern, and, as families have become more mobile, children have less and less contact with relatives outside the immediate family. According to one

estimate, just five percent of American children see a grandparent regularly.<sup>34</sup>

Along with these economic and social shifts, there can be no doubt that the women's movement has also dramatically altered women's attitudes towards family roles. Although there is no available research to document how these changing values have challenged mothers' attitudes on infant and child care, there is some evidence that, even among the large proportion of women who have rejected "feminism," there is a growing majority of women who are unwilling to subordinate personal needs and interests to the demands of husbands and children.<sup>35</sup> As a result, fewer women aspired to motherhood and homemaking as a full-time career and instead joined the labor force as much for independence and self-fulfillment as from economic motives.<sup>36</sup>

Thus, as women increasingly seek employment outside the home, the family itself shifts to adjust to the changing conditions of its members while striving to provide the stability and continuity it has traditionally afforded.

Finally, concerned parents of all socio-economic strata are aware that today's permissive culture encourages a "new precocity" that thrusts children into the adult world before they are mature enough to deal with it.<sup>37</sup> Alarmed by sharp increases in delinquency, alcohol and drug abuse, pregnancy and suicides among children and adolescents, parents have become uneasy about the proper way to raise children.

Lin Yeiser, in her book, Nannies, Au Pairs, Mother's Helpers - Caregivers, considers the various types of child care available and gives the following advice to the parent about to return to the workplace:

When you use any kind of child care, you're delegating some control over the care of your child to someone else. When you're away, you can't supervise the care your child receives. The more you are away from your child, the less you control his care. However, with somebody that cares for your child in your own home as opposed to at a day-care center, you have more control than you do in most other child care situations.

The in-home caregiver is your employee rather than a service provider for whom you are one of many clients. By hiring carefully, you can be more confident that your caregiver has the same basic child-rearing values you do. You can set standards for care and specify things to be done with your child. By finding someone who likes such work and is trustworthy, you provide your child with quality individual attention.<sup>38</sup>

It is the consistent, individual attention that Belsky and Rovine (1988),<sup>39</sup> and Stanley Spiegel, in an article in Fortune magazine (1987),<sup>40</sup> feel is the key to developing a child's self-esteem. In fact, the International Nanny Association, in their 1990 flyer, A Nanny for Your Family, promotes nannies as "the one-on-one care givers" and states that:

The nanny is an important part of the family support system and serves as a loving, nurturing and trustworthy companion to the children. A nanny tends to have special skills in taking care of children, as well as a deep love of children. A nanny offers the family convenient, high quality care to meet the needs of a child's physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development.<sup>41</sup>

Another advantage of in-home child care is the stability and security the home itself provides. Along with the peace of

mind parents gain knowing that the child is receiving the best possible care in the most appealing environment, Robin Rice, in her book, The American Nanny, suggests:

While turnover is high in any kind of child care, public or private, the home environment gives the child stability. Because they nap in their own beds, play with their own toys, and continue their regular diet, children often feel less disrupted when the nanny fills in for their parents than when they are dropped off at a school for twelve hours each day.<sup>42</sup>

In-home child care also provides:

- The probability of fewer childhood illnesses contracted by the child with lessened exposure to other children and their illnesses, and, in the event the child does get sick, a nanny who is available and often trained to care for a sick child.
- The accessibility to quality infant care which is unavailable in most communities and highly inaccessible and expensive in communities where they do exist.
- Some help with housekeeping, particularly those jobs related to feeding and picking up after the child. The nanny will clean children's play areas, bedrooms, bathrooms, and usually do the children's laundry. Some nannies will also consent to do some light, general housekeeping if this has been agreed upon in the pre-employment contract.
- The flexibility a group day-care center or home is unable to provide. Parents who must comply to the schedules set by day-care centers are often dependent on others to provide transportation for their children to and/or from school, and to supply baby sitting if they need to work overtime or an emergency arises.

Live-in child care providers can offer even more benefits to the busy parent attempting to juggle career, parental and social roles, as their flexibility is further increased by their live-in status. The live-in nanny is



also usually dependable as commuting to the job is not a factor.<sup>43</sup> Another advantage of the live-in nanny is that she will be in the home while the parents are there, affording the parents a good opportunity to get to know their child care provider, and also to see her interact with the children. When, and if, it becomes apparent that the nanny and children are developing a positive and nurturing relationship, the resulting peace of mind gained by parents can far outweigh some of the disadvantages inherent in hiring in-home child care, particularly live-in domestic help.<sup>44</sup>

The practical considerations and some disadvantages of in-home child care include the relatively high costs compared to group day-care homes and centers, the lack of back-up help in case the in-home provider becomes sick or leaves without notice, and the lack of supervision once the employer leaves the house. There is the additional issue of privacy associated with live-in child care providers, which is defined by a number of sources as a potentially major problem. Robin Rice describes the lack of privacy as:

...often the hardest adjustment for both the nanny and the family. Most families are not accustomed to having a stranger in the home. Like-wise, the first-time live-in nanny is not used to living in someone else's home. To overcome this problem, many families choose to create very separate accommodations or invite the nanny to become a member of the family.<sup>45</sup>

What we may be seeing here is the nanny as an invader of the "social envelope" which distinguishes the family from

all other kinds of social organizations. Eliot D. Chapple, in a book called Culture and Biological Man, describes the rhythms and flows of family interactions in terms of "interaction quotas" for each individual and hypothesizes that a person not receiving their quota could suffer deleterious effects. Chapple observes:

Each individual needs to interact for so much time, with so many people, as well to experience intervals when he is by himself and not interacting....Even if each person gets the quota of interaction which his daily rhythm requires, he also is seeking interactions with his compliments. Any old interaction will not do; he needs to utilize his endogenous rhythms of action and inaction, at a tempo within the natural limits of his repertoire, and thus experience a maximum degree of synchronization by the other person.<sup>46</sup>

In any case, it is reasonable to assume that any kind of satisfactory interaction between people in a family would involve a balance of giving and getting, and of being touched and being left alone. Practically every "how-to" live-in child care book this research has examined has suggested that a successful live-in nanny/family relationship needs specific guidelines, strong ground rules, and adequate living space to accomplish these interactions. Lin Yeiser goes so far as to suggest:

To maximize privacy, employ someone who lives in your area or even someone who has family nearby. Then she can go to her own family on weekends, leaving you and your family alone in the house.<sup>47</sup>

In conclusion, most of the related literature generally assumes that if a family is willing to pay the extra costs, and share their time and space with a non-family member,

they will also be willing to make other necessary concessions in order to provide their children with the individual attention and home atmosphere inherent to live-in child care.

### Section III: The Demand for Nannies

In order to more clearly define the demand for nannies and the market place in which that demand exists, an examination of the few existing sources related to the employing family was undertaken. A 1987 survey reported by Fortune magazine revealed that a higher percentage of families looking for live-in child care more likely sought help for infants than for toddlers, possibly because of the unavailability of spaces for infants in out-of-home child care centers.<sup>48</sup> A report by Money magazine (1985), based on figures from a nanny agency in Atlanta, profiles the employing family as an upper-middle income, two-career couple in their thirties.<sup>49</sup> According to another agency in Boston, Beacon Hill Nannies, Inc., their clients are almost exclusively professionals, and the nannies they place are "all upscale-young, college-educated women... 'role-models' to children of the professional class."<sup>50</sup>

One recent study by Susan Bowers surveyed 24 agencies that placed live-in nannies, and collected data by means of telephone interviews which profiled employer families in a number of areas. This research project determined that agency officials in the eastern United States reported a

majority of client families with incomes over \$100,000, whereas agency officials in the western United States reported the majority of employer families earning between \$75,000 and \$100,000. No nanny agencies (0%) reported dealing with families with incomes less than \$75,000.<sup>51</sup> This study also profiled the employing family to have two children (93%), be comprised of two parents in the home (92%), and with both parents working outside the home (80%) in all geographical regions.<sup>52</sup>

The quality, non-parental child care positions, particularly infant care settings, that are available to this market have been diminished in a number of ways. As has been previously discussed in Section I, according to many child developmentalists, there are few if any group settings for infant care that are sufficiently nurturing (Clarke-Stewart [1989]),<sup>53</sup> (Belsky, [1988]),<sup>54</sup> and those few that have quality standards and adequate staffing also have long waiting lists.<sup>55</sup>

Another alternative to mother/parent child care has been both the British nanny, N.N.E.B., and the European au pair, who have in the past provided individual and quality live-in child care for American parents. However, since the State Department eliminated au pair visas in 1973, the road to obtaining a foreign nanny has been a bumpy one.<sup>56</sup> Except for a brief period of time, between 1986 and 1988, when the U.S. Information Agency was able to slip in 2000 au pairs and nannies on a cultural exchange,<sup>57</sup> the only possible way

to hire overseas help legally has been through a "sixth-preference approval" with a waiting period of at least 18 months.<sup>58</sup>

The final option to quality, live-in child care to be discussed in this review of the literature is the trained American nanny, as opposed to the untrained live-in help often passed off by agencies as nannies.<sup>59</sup> According to nanny training programs that either have their own placement service or are affiliated with other placement agencies, the demand for trained nannies is so great that most parents looking for nanny care will be unable to find a nanny. Exactly how much the demand exceeds the supply can vary drastically depending on such variables as geographic location of the program reporting, year of the report, and public recognition of the training program involved, but all published material shows at least a ten-to-one demand to supply ratio, and, in some cases, that ration jumps as high as one hundred to one.<sup>60</sup> One typical high-end estimate was reported by Betty Neff in a 1988 article for The Vocational Educational Journal about her experiences in running a Montana nanny training program:

Since the first class of nannies graduated in August of 1987, the job offers have been coming in from cities all over the country, as well as from Great Falls, Billings, and Missoula, Montana. We received three or four phone calls a day for our nannies for two months following the graduation of the first class. Now we receive two or three calls a week from placement agencies and private individuals. Currently, there are approximately 100 jobs for every nanny, and one placement agent in New Jersey tells us she has 500 families needing nannies right now.<sup>61</sup>

Not all placement agencies, however, have found that extreme a disparity between supply and demand. A 1986 article in Changing Times called "Desperately Seeking Nanny" examines the marketplace across the country and cites the following account:

All nanny agencies share a common problem: finding enough qualified job seekers. "For every 50 clients there's one quality applicant," says Bonnie Gillespie of Mothers-In-Deed in Arlington, Va. She usually needs four to six weeks to fill a request, a typical lead time.<sup>62</sup>

This demand has also been found to be substantial by school systems surveying potential employers before budgeting new vocational training programs for nannies. A 1987 survey by Moraine Park Technical Institute in Wisconsin of a sample 42 agencies indicated that they could place 3790 graduates by the end of 1987, and by 1990 there would be employers for 4445 graduates.<sup>63</sup>

In a 1984 summary of the conditions in the nanny industry, an article in Newsweek called "Schools for Modern Nannies" seems to have seen the writing on the wall:

Nannies may prove to be England's most popular gift to the American nursery since "Winnie-the-Pooh" or the upscale pram. The mothers of 8 million U.S. children under six now work outside their homes. There are only 1 million licensed day-care openings to serve them - and precious few are for babies. Moreover, many parents feel guilty about relinquishing their offspring to mass care - particularly after recent allegations of sexual abuse at one California facility. The supply of individual caretakers has diminished, meanwhile, due to tighter immigration controls. Enter entrepreneurs in a handful of communities, who have started nanny schools. Their graduates command about \$600 to \$800 a month - plus room, board, and benefits. That's about half what a

genuine graduate of a two-year training institute in Great Britain would cost, could she even secure a green card - and well within what two-career professionals seem willing to pay for a skillful surrogate with verifiable references.<sup>64</sup>

In order to examine the most recent range of wages nannies receive, a study of materials published between 1987 and 1990 was completed. This review also studied sources that cited the general wages of all in-home child care employees and the range of fees charged by placement agencies.

A 1989 flyer published by the International Nanny Association states that inexperienced or first-time nannies will usually earn from \$125 to \$200 per week for live-in child care, depending on geographic region. A more experienced or trained nanny can command \$200 to \$500 a week, also based on the overall wages in the area in which she is working. These figures are usually founded on a work week of 50 to 60 hours with two days off, and benefits that usually include free room and board, two weeks paid vacation per year, and paid major holidays. These benefits may also include health insurance and the use of a car. The I.N.A. advises potential nanny employers that:

Since a nanny is a household employee, a nanny's employer is also required by federal law to pay the employer's portion of Social Security tax on her salary and most states also require payment of state unemployment taxes....Given the high demand for nannies and their short supply, be prepared for a professional nanny to look carefully at the entire compensation package - both salary and benefits - before accepting a job offer.<sup>65</sup>

With the exception of a few references, notably from cities like New York (citing salaries of up to \$40,000 a year),<sup>66</sup> and Boston (quoting inexperienced, college-educated nannies from a select agency earning an average of \$20,000 yearly),<sup>67</sup> the salaries quoted by the I.N.A. hold up well when compared to other sources. These salary ranges have also remained somewhat consistent within the target dates of this review; with one 1987 source stating U.S. nannies receiving \$135 to \$375 a week plus benefits,<sup>68</sup> and a 1988 article quoting national salaries in the area of \$200 to \$400 weekly.<sup>69</sup> A 1990 article in Campus Life, about a training program in Los Alamos, New Mexico, cites starting wages for trained nannies at \$200 to \$250 a week, and also suggests that, in addition to traditional benefits, some nannies are receiving travel and vacation with the family, recreational clubs, and college classes as additional wage supplements.<sup>70</sup>

The alternative, live-in child care workers have, in the past, traditionally come from overseas, as au pairs. As has been previously discussed, this child care option has all but disappeared because of State Department restrictions. A 1988 article in U.S. News & World Report, called "Should the USIA be Importing Nannies?", examined the nanny shortage in this country and documented the attempt by the U.S. Information Agency to alleviate this shortage by stretching its definition of cultural exchange:



Using its power to authorize cultural-exchange visas and working with two sponsoring agencies in New England, the USIA subsequently helped to import more than 2,000 au pair nannies for American families sufficiently well-informed to learn of the program and sufficiently well-heeled to lay out about \$3,000 in up front fees. In turn, the neophyte nannies received room and board, \$100 a week in pocket money and the opportunity to immerse themselves in American culture - in whatever free time they<sup>71</sup> had left after changing diapers and wiping noses.

A final consideration in an examination of nanny wages is the fees generated by placement agencies, and paid by the employer. Whether or not an employe needs to use an agency probably depends on the availability of nannies in his/her advertising area, and if s/he is willing to employ someone without a thorough background check done by a bonded placement service. In addition the fees charged, most agencies will only place nannies with employers who agree to pay their recommended hourly wages; usually higher than nannies found individually.<sup>72</sup> There are a few agencies that deal only with professionally trained nannies, but most services of this kind place caregivers with all types of training and backgrounds. Most agencies, however, also give employers a one-month trial period during which time the nanny can be replaced if the match doesn't work.<sup>73</sup> In any case, almost all the "nanny how-to" books agree that, no matter how a nanny is found, it's the employer's responsibility to ask to see any certification the nanny claims she has and to call the school she attended to request her references.<sup>74</sup> No matter how reliable an agency may or may not be, in some locations, a placement agency may

be the only source of finding a nanny and, under those circumstances, the fees charged can be substantial.<sup>75</sup>

Agency fees are generally based on a percentage of the monthly wages paid to the nanny, and, in addition to that, many agencies also charge their potential clients (nanny employers) an application fee to be paid before the agency will even begin a search.<sup>76</sup> One recent study encompassing nanny placement agencies by Susan Bowers (1989) ascertained both application and placement fees throughout the United States and found that 33% of those agencies surveyed required an application fee from the client family, and that placement fees were dispersed in the following manner:

One agency, 4%, reported the placement fee charged to a client family for a full-time nanny placement to be \$600 or less. Four agencies, 17%, reported that placement fee to be \$601-\$899. Six agencies, 25%, reported the placement fee to be \$900-\$1000. Six agencies, 25%, reported the placement fee to be \$1001-\$1500. One agency, 4%, reported the placement fee to be \$1501-\$1900. Two agencies, 8%, reported the placement fee to be in excess of \$1900. Response to the item was 87%, with three agencies, 13%, not reporting.

Agencies in the eastern United States most frequently reported the placement fee for a full-time nanny to be \$900-\$950. Agencies in the Midwestern United States reported placement fees of less than \$600, \$601-\$899, and \$900-\$950 with equal frequency. Agencies in the western United States most frequently reported the full-time placement fee to be \$601-\$899.<sup>77</sup>

The International Nanny Association has determined that placement fees of its member agencies range from \$500 to \$5,000 and, according to their 1989 flyer, A Nanny for your Family, this:

...should include a provision to replace the nanny or refund all or a portion of the fee if the employment situation doesn't work out.<sup>78</sup>

This national clearinghouse for the nanny industry has also documented that a large percentage of its member placement agencies require deposits, some non-refundable. In a survey done for the INA 1990 Directory, 182 of the United States based member agencies reported a placement fee schedule, and, of those agencies reporting, 123 agencies, 67%, required deposits. Of those agencies reporting, 47 agencies, 26%, stated that their deposits were non-refundable or that they were termed application fees.<sup>79</sup>

The over-all impressions gained in this review of the marketplace conditions of the nanny industry from available material are:

- a) The demand for nannies is substantial with yearly requests for 70,000 to 90,000 full-time, in-home child care workers with only a small number of college and trade school trained nannies to fill those positions.<sup>80</sup>
- b) That, while the general range of nanny wages is more costly than out-of-home child care, these expenses become more competitive with two or more children to be cared for.
- c) The over-all cost for live-in nannies ranges from \$9,600 to \$24,000 a year, and that most families that employ trained nannies have incomes of at least \$75,000 a year.<sup>81</sup>

#### Section IV: Nanny Education and Training

The concept of a defined or structured training program for nannies seems to have originated in England in the late 1200s with the establishment of Norland Nursery Training College.<sup>82</sup> The criteria of what the nanny stood for, what

her role was, and even what she looked like was determined by the strict standards of her culture and times. An examination of the curriculum of Norland during their early years of operation is akin to looking through the original "how-to-get-a-stiff-upper-lip" book. Even the Norland uniform, long, starched, serge dresses with stiff cotton aprons, and brown nurses' caps, emphasized a no-nonsense professionalism.<sup>83</sup> When this training school was opened in 1892 in Berkshire, England, its founder and director, Mrs. Walter Ward, stated that Norland training is specific, scientific, and professional, and therefore its graduates should be called nurses, not nannies.<sup>84</sup>

This attempt to separate "specifically, scientifically and professionally" trained in-home, child care workers from their untrained counterparts by the use of a title is what we may be seeing today, as the nanny industry in the United States attempts to define its role in the American culture. To this date, most private, longer-term training programs and some two-year college, associate degree programs in this country have been patterned after the English model.<sup>85</sup> In a 1987 presentation for the International Nanny Conference, Jean Fleming compared current English training programs with their American counterparts:

Norland's program is a two year plus nine months of practical experience in an in-home setting. The program prepares students for group care, in-home care and care of the child in the hospital. England's National Nursery Examination Board Certification assumes one of a high level of training and education for quality care. The NNEB was founded 40 years ago by an act of Parliament

to promote training and certification of nursery nurses. It determines curriculum, indirectly affects faculty hiring, and writes and administers an annual national examination given to every NNEB candidate who completes the training in a public or private polytechnical school.

Training programs in the United States vary from short term, for profit, to short term university programs; from community colleges with one year diploma or certificate programs and two year associate degree programs to universities with a nanny training component in their Early Childhood degree programs. The goal of all programs is to train the student with skills associated with the responsibilities of a nanny; infant and child care, to stimulate creativity, and understand one's role in the family structure. The longer programs are able to train for additional depth including additional hours in an in-home practical experience.

In order to obtain a clearer understanding of nanny training in the United States, particularly the discrepancies in the length of, and the material covered by, various training programs all leading to the title of "trained nanny," catalogues were reviewed from a number of these programs listed in the 1990 INA Directory.

The International Nanny Association, in their 1990 Directory, lists 55 training programs as member schools. In a survey completed for this directory, 38 schools reported a total number of training hours required for the completion of their programs. Of these 38 schools, 100% reported that a certificate, diploma, or degree was given upon completion. The total hours required ranged from 10 hours (1 program), to 1710 hours (1 program). Seven programs, 18%, reported between 10 and 100 hours. Fifteen programs, 39%, reported between 101 and 500 hours. Ten programs, 26%, reported

between 501 and 1000 hours. Five programs, 13%, reported between 1001 and 1500 hours. One program, 2%, reported between 1501 and 1710 hours.<sup>86</sup>

Requests for catalogues were sent to specific training programs, based on category representation of training hours, and the geographic location of their program.

No programs responded that listed training hours between 10 and 100 hours.

From the catalogue of one of the programs listed in the INA Directory that reported between 101 and 500 hours of training required for completion, the following information was gathered:

- a) The training program is located in the eastern part of the United States, and is a private, vocational school.
- b) 350 hours of training are required for completion, including an unspecified number of field work hours.
- c) Tuition is \$5000 and a certificate is awarded upon completion.
- d) The curriculum consists of:

Stages of development  
Physical development and keeping children healthy  
Cognitive development and learning through play  
Emotional development  
Social relationships  
The nanny in employment  
Practicum - internship

- e) This school did not specify the number of hours spent on each course. In order to qualify for certification, each student must maintain a minimum C average, successfully pass a complete medical exam, psychiatric exam, and a complete background check. The school offers job placement.<sup>87</sup>

From another training program which required between 101 and 500 training hours for completion, the following information was gathered:

- a) The training program is located in the eastern part of the United States, and is a private, vocational school.
- b) 397 hours of training are required for completion, including 100 field work hours.
- c) Tuition is \$2,455 plus a \$100 application fee, and a certificate is awarded upon completion.
- d) The curriculum consists of:
  - First aid
  - Child safety
  - CPR
  - Educational play
  - Child growth and development
  - Special needs forum (specialized in-home medical care)
  - Child psychology and family dynamics
  - In-home internship
  - The modern nanny
  - One week affiliation (day care center)
- e) This school did not specify the number of hours spent on each subject. In order to qualify for certification, each student must maintain a minimum C average. The school offers job placement.<sup>88</sup>

One of the training programs that reported between 501 and 1000 hours of training required to complete their course responded with the following information:

- a) The training program is located in the mid-section of the United States, and is a public, vocational and technical school.
- b) The nanny certification program requires two semesters, about 550 hours for completion, including 90 field-work hours.
- c) The tuition varies depending on where the student lives. The costs range from \$1758 (in-district) to \$3207 (out-of-state), and a certificate is awarded upon completion.

d) The curriculum consists of:

- Child development I and II
- Physical care of infants and children
- Creative activities with children
- Building effective relationships
- Practicum as a nanny
- Study of family dynamics
- Nutrition
- Professional development for nannies
- One choice of recommended electives

e) This school specifies about equal hours spent on each subject with twice the time spent in field work hours. After the completion of the certification program, students may continue with courses leading to an associate's degree.<sup>89</sup>

The catalogue of a training program that reported between 1001 and 1500 training hours required for completion of their program offers the following:

a) The training program is located in the mid-section of the United States and is a public, vocational and technical school.

b) 1,026 hours of training are required for completion, including 432 field work hours.

c) Tuition is \$1,311 and a certificate is awarded upon completion.

d) The curriculum consists of:

- Child development
- Human growth and development
- Guiding children's behavior
- CPR and first aid
- Nutrition and menu planning
- Infant/toddler care
- Creative activities
- Contract negotiations
- Personal and professional development
- Practicum, in child care center
- Practicum, in home

e) This school did not specify the number of hours spent in each course. One of the courses spends some time on defensive driving. A two-year associate's degree course which features 736 field work hours is also offered by this program.<sup>90</sup>



While the number of schools responding with literature represents a small sample of the total, it seems that these schools are indicative of the broad range of training hours students need to complete in order to be awarded a certificate of nanny training, it also seems that the courses they offer are very similar in content. Each of the schools offers courses that identify and study children's physical, emotional, and safety needs. These programs also attempt to prepare future nannies for the roles they will play in the families they join as employees by offering courses in family dynamics and social interaction.

All of the original sources this review found, such as catalogues and related literature, described only certificate programs with all programs completing the needed course work within a two-semester period. What, then, can a four-semester, two-year, associate's degree school offer the nanny that is unavailable in a certificate program? Jean Fleming (1987) examined the process of developing the curriculum for both the certificate and associate's degree nanny programs for Moraine Park Technical College and suggests that most of the nanny courses, including 12 hours a week of practical experience, were stacked in the first year because:

It was assumed that this student would remain in the Midwest for his/her employment. It was further assumed that the associate degree student would leave the Midwest and would need additional skills in cultural awareness of foods, etiquette, and varying lifestyles; housekeeping skills; tutoring elementary age children including meeting and interacting with elementary teachers; basic

lifesaving and water safety; security precautions; and additional in-home practicum experiences in a variety of homes. Their future employment might require a greater degree of judgment in child care over an extended period of time without parental guidance. Electives in the program were identified as: Computer Applications, Exceptional Children, and a three-month summer internship course.<sup>91</sup>

Despite the similarities found in the basic nanny training programs examined so far in this review, there is a debate within the industry that the discrepancies in nanny training programs are so great, and the lack of standardization so pronounced that the concept of the nanny as a trained and reliable child care worker is being compromised.<sup>92</sup> To help alleviate this situation, the American Council of Nanny Schools (ACNS) was formed in 1984 and met in the following year with 11 schools in attendance.<sup>93</sup> Since that time, ACNS has developed the following statement of goals:

The American Council of Nanny Schools, incorporated, a non-profit coalition of accredited nanny schools, seeks to promote the professional status of nannies. The Council establishes educational standards, accredits new schools, and provides professional support for nannies.<sup>94</sup>

The criteria that this organization would like to see adopted by all nanny training programs are the criteria they use to determine which schools are qualified for membership:

1. Must be licensed or provisionally approved for legal operation within that state.
2. Must have a minimum of 200 contact hours and 100 field work hours. Contact hours are defined as: instructional lectures, fieldtrips and discussions under direct supervision of school faculty. Field experience is defined as supervised, non-paid work experience with children. It is understood that these are minimum

requirements. The goal of ACNS is to encourage schools to continually upgrade their programs.

3. Must submit curriculum in ACNS format to the Curriculum Review Committee.
4. The following curriculum was approved in order of priority and identified as a core curriculum in any nanny training program. Each school is unique and should include the core curriculum in a manner most appropriate to the focus of its program:
  - \* Child Growth and Development (must be a minimum of one third or 70 hours of the total contact hours).
  - \* Family Dynamics/Interpersonal Skills
  - \* Health and Safety
  - \* Nutrition
  - \* The Nanny as a Professional
  - \* Practicum<sup>95</sup>

This brings us to the observation that a nanny, trained in the "accredited" training program, will probably have what Virginia Satir (1972) calls the "blueprint" (a working knowledge of child development), to accomplish:

...the hardest, most complicated, anxiety-ridden, sweat and blood producing job in the world. It requires the ultimate in patience, common sense, commitment, humor, tact, love, wisdom, awareness, and knowledge.<sup>96</sup>

Armed with this "blueprint," and the ability to be nurturing, the nanny needs what has been described as: "the single most important factor as a prerequisite to providing quality child care; a commitment on the part of the Caregiver to function as a professional."<sup>97</sup> In fact, this need to function professionally is of paramount importance to a nanny who needs to work independently with children,

sometimes for extended periods of time. With a methodology of child care which is nurturing to children, even in difficult conditions, and with an awareness of the implications of her actions on children, gained through her study of child behavior, the trained nanny will most likely think of herself as both responsible and professional.<sup>98</sup>

As to whether or not the certificate trained nanny can, in fact, be classified as a professional child care worker is an industry issue that needs further scrutiny. In an examination of the nanny as a professional, Christine Readdick (1987) used the following criteria to define a profession: provision of a service beneficial to society; theoretical knowledge as a basis for practical judgment; ethical performance of work; and focused, limited scope and purpose.<sup>99</sup> She found that the following conditions in the industry influenced the study:

- \* Nannies provide quality developmental care for young children in their homes.
- \* This service is available to a very small, well-to-do segment of society.
- \* This service can be available to a larger portion of society if more programs sharing in the services of nannies are created.
- \* Training programs have a core curriculum that enables certified nannies to perform competently and independently.
- \* Certified nannies are unlikely to gain the depth and complexity of knowledge and theory necessary for classification as a professional due to the brief duration of most training programs.
- \* There are no enforced standards of quality in the industry.

- \* There are no standard examinations in the industry.
- \* There are no standards for nomenclature in the industry.
- \* There are an increasing number of programs that are voluntarily adopting standards by joining organizations like ACNS.<sup>100</sup>

The following conclusions were arrived at by the author of this study:

Reflections on the question "Is the nanny a child care professional?" lead to the conclusion that the schools surveyed are making strides in developing capable in-home child care specialists. Nonetheless, designation of the nanny as a professional at this time is premature. Indeed, as the nanny movement progresses, a continuing consideration of sociological criteria for a profession vis-a-vis the nanny practice is encouraged.<sup>101</sup>

#### Summary

The nanny, a position which had evolved from wet nursing and emerged as a pronounced entity in nineteenth century Great Britain, has recently appeared in the United States as a movement which offers alternative child care to the American family (Caughron, 1986). The American nanny began to make some impact on child care choices in the United States within the last two decades; a period of time in which dramatic economic social changes occurred in this country (Campbell, et al., 1976).

This shifting social and economic patterns that seemed to have affected the quality of child care in this country include: (a) an increased divorce rate; (b) the impact of the women's movement on women's attitudes about the domestic

roles they had previously accepted; and (c) economic conditions that have required two incomes in a family to sustain financial stability (Weiss, 1984; Espenshade, 1979). While the resulting increased feminization of the labor force offered women the opportunity to gain independence, self-fulfillment, and more occasions for varied and interesting social contacts (Brandwein, 1977; McLanahan, 19??), this same social phenomena was highly instrumental in producing what has been described as a child care crisis in the United States (Belsky, 1988; Blank, 1989; Brazelton, 1985).

In order to alleviate a situation of child neglect, that researchers and child care experts agree effects a half million pre-school and seven million "latchkey" children between the ages of 6 and 12 years old (Chapman, 1987), a network of child care centers and homes emerged in the last 20 years. The effect of this type of non-parental child care on children has recently been the focus of numerous research projects with generally inconclusive results (Belsky, 1988; Clarke-Stewart, 1989; Easterbrook & Goldberg, 1985; Hock & Clinger, 1980). Other research has targeted the overall quality of out-of-home child care settings with equally varied and inconclusive outcomes (Belsky & Rovine, 1988; Blank, 1989; Vandell & Corasaniti, 1990).

The media in recent years has also covered the issue of quality in out-of-home child care settings, particularly in day care centers, after a number of charges of sexual and

physical abuse occurring in day care centers surfaced in 1984. While the majority of these charges are not yet resolved, the resulting public perception concerning non-parental child care is now one of wariness (Chapman, 1987).

Despite parental concern for the nurturing their children may or may not be receiving, most studies report that the demand for out-of-home child care spots far exceeds availability, particularly openings available to toddlers (Blank, 1987; Chapman, 1987). The literature reviewed relating to the nanny in the United States suggests that the preceding conditions might be responsible for the unprecedented demand for quality in-home child care providers, a role that the American nanny is beginning to fill (Rice, 1987; Yeiser, 1987).

The value of quality in-home child care is examined by the study of a number of factors, including (a) the control parents have when hiring their own employees (Chapman, 1987; Yeiser, 1987); (b) an assurance of individual attention being paid to the child (Belsky & Rovine, 1988; Spiegel, 19??; Rice, 1987); (c) the stability and security that the home provides (Rice, 1987); (d) the consistency and dependability of live-in help (Elliot & Savage, 1990); (e) the possibility of fewer childhood illnesses spread by contact with other children (Binswanger & Ryan, 1986); (f) the accessibility to infant care which is generally unavailable in most communities (Yeiser, 1987); and (g) the

flexibility that day care centers are unable to provide (Chapman, 1987; Rice, 1987).

The disadvantages of in-home and/or live-in child care include the costs entailed, the lack of back-up help available, the lack of supervision once the parent leaves the home, and the issue of privacy inherent to live-in help (Binswanger & Ryan, 1986; Chapman, 1987; Elliot & Savage, 1990; Noble, 1988; Rice, 1987; Yeiser, 1987).

A review of material related to the nanny reveals two distinct, yet often connected segments of the industry, mainly: (a) the private nanny placement agency which may or may not have its own training program, and (b) the private or public nanny school or training program which may or may not have its own placement agency (Bowers, 1989; Flemming, 1987; Readdick, 1987). The majority of trained nannies are placed by nanny agencies and it is those agency officials that determine the market price for both trained and untrained nannies whom they often also place (Yeiser, 1987). Because of the lack of standardization and/or regulation of nanny placement agencies, and given the demand for nannies, conditions might arise which could lead to the possibility of an unwary consumer hiring a costly, yet untrained and unqualified in-home child care worker represented as a nanny.

While the practices of unscrupulous nanny agency officials have affected, and continue to affect, the overall integrity of the nanny industry, most reports conclude that



(a) incidents of fraudulent nanny agency behavior are uncommon, and (b) most agencies engaged in those kinds of practices don't last long (Chapman, 1987; Noble, 1988; New York Times, 1988). In fact, the author has found in his review of the available material that, while there is an opportunity for widespread abuse caused primarily by tremendous demand for trained nannies and very few qualified applicants to meet the demand, most agencies have little or no trouble placing untrained nannies even when they are candid about their lack of credentials (Bowers, 1989).

There are a number of studies that have suggested that some changes are needed in the nanny industry if the image of the nanny as a highly skilled in-home child care provider is not to be compromised, and most studies have agreed that those changes need to come from the nanny training program in the form of standardization (Bowers, 1989; Readdick, 1987). What type of standardization is needed has not yet been agreed upon by the nanny industry, but some progress was made by the International Nanny Association (INA) and the American Council of Nanny Schools (ACNS) at a joint council in November, 1990, when they tentatively agreed on standardized nationwide competency tests. Because of the conceptual differences between these two organizations, other issues such as minimum curriculum and training hours may be unresolved for the time being.

It is this conceptual difference that seems to be at the root of the discord within the training programs and is

based on the following factors: (a) a far greater demand for nannies than can be met by nanny training programs and schools, (b) a critical difficulty in recruiting students for training programs and schools - particularly if the school requires extended training hours, and (c) most private training programs and schools deriving a portion of their income from the placement agencies they may also run.

A survey done in 1985 by the ACNS (an organization which might be defined as a group of nanny schools with the single objective of promoting quality standardization within the nanny industry) of their 12 member schools revealed those schools to have adequate training hours and comprehensive core curriculum (Readdick, 1987). This effort targeted only the schools that were already members of an organization which required both minimum contact and field work hours, and a specific core curriculum. However, the ACNS study did not represent the amount and type of training available to nannies in the United States by the 55 schools and training programs identified by the INA, a national clearinghouse requiring no minimum training criteria for membership (Directory, 1990).

The absence of (a) a rigid set of attributes to define nanny training in the United States, and (b) systematic inquiries of nannies in this country concerning the amount and type of training they received, and whether they perceived that training to be adequate for the tasks they performed, has drawn this researcher's attention to the

potential risks involved to the industry and the consumers  
the nanny industry serves.

Table 1

## An American Nanny School Profile\*

School Name	Sponsorship	Location	Beginning Date	Program Length
1. American Nanny Plan, Inc.	Private Business	Montclair, CA	May 1983	8 weeks-6 months
2. California Nanny College	Private Business	Sacramento, CA	Nov. 1983	15 weeks
3. Child Care Specialists Center, Inc.	Private Business	Beverly Hills, CA	Mar. 1985	4, 6 weeks
4. Delta College	College	Bay City, MI	Oct. 1983	10 weeks
5. English Nannies School, Inc.	Private Business	Cleveland, OH	Feb. 1985	8 weeks
6. Nanny Child Caring Plan, Inc.	Private** Business	Minneapolis, MN	May 1985	8 weeks
7. Nanny Training Institute (The C.A.P.E. Center, Inc.)	Private Business	Dallas, TX	Feb. 1985	4, 6 months

Continued on the next page.

Table 1, continued:

School Name	Sponsorship	Location	Beginning Date	Program Length
8. North American Nannies, Inc.	Private Business	Columbus, OH	May 1984	8, 12 weeks
9. Northwest Nannies Institute	Private business	Portland, OR	Jan. 1985	13 weeks
10. Seattle Central Community College	College	Seattle, WA	Sept. 1984	12 weeks
11. Sheffield School	Private Business	Hopewell, NJ	Aug. 1984	8 weeks

\*Portion of chart listing responding schools from a list of 12 meeting minimum accreditation standards of the American Council of Nanny Schools as of July 1, 1985.<sup>102</sup>

\*\*Hospital-affiliated.

Table 2

Nanny School Entrance Requirements

Requirements	Schools*											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
High school diploma or equivalent	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
At least 18 years old	*	*			*	*		*	*			*
Child care experience	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*			*
Transcripts	*									*		*
Interview	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Letters of recommendation	*	*			*	*			*	*		*
Personality inventory	*					*		*	*			*
Police Checks	*		*		*		*			*		
Credit Checks	*		*		*							
Medical exam	*	*		*	*	*				*		
Driver's license	*		*	*			*			*		
Other**	a		b	c					d	e		

\*Schools: See Table 1 for list of schools.

\*\*Other:

a. Aptitude Test

b. English language, fluency

c. Personal history, vignette performance

d. TB test

e. Basic math, reading tests<sup>103</sup>

Table 3

Nanny School Curricula

Requirements	Schools*											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Child growth and development	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Infant/toddler care	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Health, safety, first aid	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Nutrition	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Interpersonal growth	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Creative play curriculum	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Effective parenting	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Assertiveness training	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
The family	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Role of the nanny, employer-employee negotiations, contract, negotiations	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Field placement	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Atypical child	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Travel/community resources	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Personal growth, etiquette/dress homemaking skills	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

\*Schools: See Table 1 for list of schools.<sup>104</sup>

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## C H A P T E R   I I I

### DESIGN OF THE STUDY

This chapter examines the design of the study. It includes an explanation of the pertinence of the research methodology utilized and a detailed description of the processes used to collect, select, present, and analyze the data.

#### Background of the Study

The study develops out of a survey done in 1985 by the American Council of Nanny Schools of their 12 member schools in response to the increasing demand of working parents for high quality, consistent in-home child care, and the lack of national standardization or regulation of nanny schools. This effort targeted only the schools that were already members of an organization which required both minimum contact and field work hours, and a specific core curriculum. However, this study did not represent the amount and type of training available to nannies in the United States by the 55 schools and training programs identified by the International Nanny Association, a national clearinghouse requiring no minimum training criteria for membership. The listing of these schools and training programs can be found in the 1990 INA Directory,<sup>1</sup> and 11 of those schools listed were located in the New England, New York, and New Jersey areas. In addition, the

ACNews (summer 1990)<sup>2</sup> lists one school in the same geographic area. These 12 programs represent the school population of the study.

Another contributing factor was the lack of any available systematic inquiries of nannies in the United States concerning the amount and type of training they received, and whether they perceived that training to be adequate for the tasks they performed. A list of nannies obtained from a survey of western Massachusetts training programs in addition to the nannies identified by the 1990 INA Directory to work in the western Massachusetts area comprise the target nanny population of this study.

Employers of nannies comprises the final group identified to be surveyed in order to help determine whether the training received by nannies is sufficient for the jobs they do and the responsibilities they are given. This sample population was identified by (a) the nannies surveyed, and (b) a list of clients of training programs in western Massachusetts. A further clarification of the make-up of the sample populations is given later in this chapter under the title Population.

#### Thrust of the Study

In addition to the five questions proposed in the Purpose of the Study section of Chapter I, a systematic inquiry was completed in order to gain knowledge about and insight into the perceptions of the nanny training schools,

the nannies, and their employers regarding nannies as professionals. This category is examined from the data of specific items in the questionnaires, cross-tabulation of various questions in the questionnaires, and perceptions of a random sample of nanny employers derived from structured interviews.

### Study Design

An ex post facto research methodology, based upon mailed questionnaire data, is used in the study. These data are supplemented by selected interviews with nanny employers. Both instruments involved the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods of inquiry.

### Presentation and Analysis of Data

Analysis of the data was divided into three phases. The first phase focused on the presentation and analysis of the Nanny School questionnaires. The second phase focused on the presentation and analysis of the responding nannies. The third phase focused on the presentation and analysis of personal interviews conducted with Nanny employers.

In addition, within the scope of each phase, examinations included: (a) the reporting of quantitative profile data describing the characteristics of each survey participant; (b) the reporting of the quantitative response data detailing perceptions and practices of the respondents, and (c) the reporting of qualitative response data detailing perceptions and practices of the respondents.



## Quantitative

Quantitative data analysis centered on the characteristics, perceptions, and practices of the subjects. These were taken from responses to closed questions in the surveys. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze responses on the questionnaire. Analysis of certain specific phrases contained within questions posed to the employers was the basis of another quantitative data analysis.

## Qualitative

Analysis of the qualitative data centered on specific procedures which examined written comments from the respondents -- in the cases of the Nanny Schools and the nannies. In the instance of examination of nanny employers, reliance is on their oral responses.

In reviewing Nanny School questionnaires, cross-references were examined with specific attention directed to the perceptions of each respondent, particularly with regard to the issue of "professionalism." It was important to determine whether the title, "professional," equated with a specific number of hours of education, affiliation with certain specific organizations and awarding of credits in a meaningful manner. A review of all data focused on established commonalities among all respondents.

In attempting to analyze data from nanny respondents, focus shifted to personal perceptions of those employed as nannies. Qualitative data were gleaned from responses to a

series of statements which began: "I feel that..."

Further, cross referencing was utilized in an attempt to determine correlations between original expectations of Nanny Schools and actual experiences of employed nannies.

Analysis of the perceptions of nanny employers was gleaned from personal interviews, all of which were taped. In attempting to analyze the responses, primary focus was on whether conclusions could be determined which would tie together the expectations of both Nanny Schools and the actual experiences of employed nannies. For only in the case of the employer could it be determined if the nanny had received education appropriate for the nanny to be called "professional," or if, in fact, employers even expected nannies to be "professionals."

The use of these analysis methods enabled the researcher to capture key data, thereby enhancing research findings while personalizing the subjects.

### Summary

In this chapter, the researcher discussed the design of the study. The discussion focused on the use of quantitative and qualitative methods of inquiry and the utilization of questionnaires and oral interviews as the survey tools. Three specific respondent groups were described as the study's focus: Nanny Schools, nannies, and nanny employers. The resultant information was intended to

provide potentially significant research on the issue of nannies as "professionals" in today's society.

End Notes

1. International Nanny Association. (1990). Directory.
2. ACNews. (1990, summer).

## C H A P T E R I V

### PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF SURVEY DATA

Through the presentation and analysis of data gleaned from the questionnaires, this chapter answers the following five research questions:

1. What percentage of the schools' officials questioned are affiliated with a community college, state vocational college, private vocational school, or independent agency?
2. Is the length of the school program sufficient to assure students' acquisition of a reasonable level of skills specified in the course curriculum?
3. Are currently employed nannies perceived as "professionals" by their employers?
4. What is the nature of the credential awarded on the completion of the course?
5. Is the program accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency? On what basis was the accreditation granted?

In this study, questionnaire data is the primary source of answers to four of the five questions. The only exception is Question No. 3, the answer for which came from personal interviews conducted with nanny employers.

Analysis of information is based on receipt of completed questionnaires from 50% of nanny schools, 31% of employed nannies, all of whom work in the Western Massachusetts area, and 31% of nanny employers contacted.

It must be noted that repeated attempts were made to gather additional responses from all three areas of study. In addition to the original contacts, the researcher tried

to make personal contact with Nanny Schools and employed nannies. It is the researcher's conclusion that the analysis would not have changed had the number of responses been greater.

#### Question One

"What percentage of the schools' officials questioned are affiliated with a community college, state vocational college, private vocational school, or independent agency?"

Of those Nanny Schools responding, the length of time each school has offered education and training services in this specific field has been reported to be from one to 85 years. In terms of type of school, 33% report being "private," 50% report being "public," and 17% report being "vocational."

When questioned about their affiliations, Nanny School officials responded overwhelmingly -- 67% -- being affiliated with community colleges. Of the remaining respondents, there was a tie between state vocational college affiliation and independent agency, with each receiving 17%.

#### Question Two

"Is the length of the school program sufficient to assure students' acquisition of a reasonable level of the skills specified in the course curriculum?"

In reviewing the responses from the Nanny School officials, on the surface it appears the length of the

school program would be sufficient to assure students' acquisition of a reasonable level of skills specified in the respective course curriculum.

Number of hours of classroom study required for program completion ranged from 75 to 550 hours, with the average being 316.83 hours. It would appear that this amount of classroom experience allows adequate time for curriculum.

In addition to the classroom requirements, most Nanny Schools mandate a certain level of hands-on experience with children -- either in child-care centers or in actual "Host Family" settings.

Number of hours of required hands-on experience ranged from 0 hours, in the case of one school, to a high of 1,608 hours. The "average" hands-on experience with children is 405.5 hours. It must be noted that, when 33% of the respondents are taken as one group -- those with the highest number of hands-on experience with children -- they make up 84% of the total hands-on hours reported by all respondents.

When this seemingly exorbitant high group of hands-on child care hours is eliminated, the resulting group average drops to 96.25 hours in comparison to the previously stated average of 405.5 hours.

The range of hours for both classroom studies and hands-on child care experience is from a low of 96 hours to a high of 1,608 hours, with an average of 722.33 hours. Again, adjusting for the majority of Nanny Schools, the

average for both classroom and hands-on child care experience requirements is 356.50 hours.

Despite the number of hours said to be "required" for program completion, all Nanny Schools have hours which are not accounted for when a thorough comparison is done of curricula detail and hours required for course completion.

When the researcher investigated the classroom hour requirements versus detailed classroom subject hours reported, there was an average of 35% of the "required" classroom hours missing from respondents' questionnaires. Of all Nanny Schools responding, only one was able to substantiate number of classroom hours said to be "required," and, in that case, the respondent ended up with five more hours than originally stated. In terms of percentages, "missing" classroom hours range from 17% to 69%.

When hands-on experience listed as a requirement for program completion was reviewed, the researcher found there was an average of 80% of the "required" hands-on experience unreported. Again, in terms of percentages, "unreported" hands-on experience range from 0% to 100%.

Faced with the previously described unreported "required" classroom and hands-on child care experience, the researcher reviewed Nanny School responses pertaining to numbers of students which graduated and of those graduates who found employment as nannies.

Officials of Nanny Schools reported numbers of graduates - in percentages - ranging from 15% to 100%. The average percentage of students listed as having graduated is 74%.

In response to the researcher's question: "What percentage of those graduates are presently employed as nannies?" Nanny School officials reported a range of from 0% and 100%. The average percentage of graduates listed as "presently employed as nannies" is 65%.

Taking this quest for discovery further, the researcher compared answers given by Nanny School officials to two specific questions. In posing the questions, respondents were given four choices for answers: "Yes," "Sometimes," "No," or "Not Sure."

The two questions were: (1) "The tasks nannies are asked to do require special skills"; (2) "Nannies have the qualifications to complete those tasks?"

Regarding Question (1), 83% of the Nanny School officials responded "Yes" -- "the tasks nannies are asked to do require special skills." The remaining 17% of the Nanny School officials gave as their response, "Sometimes."

In reviewing the answers to Question (2), 50% of the Nanny School officials responded, "Yes -- nannies have the qualifications to complete those tasks" and the remaining 50% of Nanny School officials responded, "Sometimes -- nannies have the qualifications to complete those tasks."



It is important to note that, of those responding to both questions, the only Nanny School official who answered "Sometimes" to BOTH questions was that respondent who listed the highest number of classroom and hands-on hours necessary for program completion. It was also the Nanny School for which the "missing" classroom hours totaled 17% with an additional 60% of hands-on hours absent.

Having reviewed responses provided by the Nanny Schools pertaining to whether the "length of the school program was sufficient to assure students' acquisition of a reasonable level of the skills specified in the course curriculum," the next step was to query employed nannies.

As with Nanny School officials, two questions were asked of persons employed as nannies. Each person was asked to complete each of two statements using the answers, "Yes," "Sometimes," "No," and "Not Sure."

The two statements in need of completion were: (1) "I feel that the tasks I am asked to do require special skills," and (2) "I feel that I have the qualifications to complete those tasks."

In completing the first statement, only 17% of the employed nannies "feel that the tasks I am asked to require special skills" in comparison with 73% of those who responded "Sometimes."

In completing the second statement, 64% of the employed nannies "feel that I have the qualifications to complete

those tasks." This compares with 18% responding "No," and 18% responding "Sometimes."

An examination of how the Nanny Schools' officials responded to the "special skills needed" question and how that same question was answered by employed nannies reveals a noteworthy divergence. While the Nanny Schools seek to portray the nanny occupation as one in which "special skills" are required -- 83% saying "Yes" -- only 27% of those persons actually employed as nannies believe the tasks they are assigned to do require "special skills."

A review of how these two groups respond to the second issue -- whether the employed nannies actually have the qualifications to complete the tasks -- reveals they are closer to agreement. While 50% of the Nanny Schools' officials believe their graduates to be "qualified," a slightly larger percentage -- 64% -- of those actually employed as nannies feel they are qualified.

Although none of the Nanny Schools' officials report their graduates as not qualified, 18% of the employed nannies reported that they were not qualified.

Based on the preceding responses, it is apparent there is sufficient time within the various school programs for students to acquire "a reasonable level of skills" specified in the course curriculum to become a nanny. But, it is the conclusion of the researcher that the discrepancies between what is described as a graduation "requirement" and what

time is actually spent in the program differs so widely as to cast doubt on the legitimacy of the curriculum specified.

Further, the disparity between the responses of Nanny School officials and employed nannies -- specifically the "need" for special skills in the performance of the actual job -- points to a lack of follow-up on the part of the Nanny School officials once students have gone from graduation to employment as nannies.

### Question Three

"Are currently employed nannies perceived as professionals by their employers?"

#### School Officials and Nanny Program Graduate Responses

Before approaching the nanny employers to seek their "perceptions" relative to the professionalism of nannies in their employ, the investigator sought to clarify the "perceptions" of Nanny School officials as well as employed nannies concerning the preceding question.

Nanny School officials were asked: "Nannies are treated as professionals by their employers?" In response, 33% answered "Yes," 33% answered "Sometimes," 17% said "No," and 17% said they were "Not Sure." Of the respondent nannies, 45% said "Yes," they felt they were treated "as a professional by my employer." In other responses, 36% said they felt they were treated "as a professional" sometimes by their employers; 9% responded "No," and 9% were "Not Sure."

Both groups were asked about the "perceptions" of the general public relative to the question of a nanny being a "professional."

Nanny School officials were asked: "Nannies are perceived as professionals by the general public?" In response, only 17% of the responding Nanny School officials said, "Yes." The same percentage, 17%, said, "Sometimes," and the same percentage (17%) reported that they were "Not Sure." Those Nanny School officials responding "No" totalled a commanding 50%. In qualifying their response, the 17% of responding Nanny School officials who said "Yes," they believed the general public perceived nannies as "professionals," also added this notation: "The well-educated sector."

Those persons employed as nannies who participated in the survey were asked to complete the following statement: "I feel that I am perceived as a professional by the general public..." The answer choices were: "Yes," "Sometimes," "No," and "Not Sure." Of those nannies who responded, only 9% said "Yes," they thought the general public perceived them as a "professional." The largest percentage, 45%, said they felt they were perceived as a "professional" by the general public only "Sometimes." In addition, 36% said they were not perceived by the general public as being "professional," while 9% were "Not Sure" of the general public's perception of their "professional" status.

The largest disparity between the Nanny School officials' and the employed nannies' responses pertained to the perceptions of the general public. In the Nanny School officials group, 50% said the general public did not perceive nannies as professionals, compared with 36% of the employed nannies who responded in the negative. Among the employed nannies, 55% combined to say that they either were perceived as professional, or at least were "Sometimes" perceived as professional. This compared with Nanny School officials tallying 33% for a combination of "Yes" and "Sometimes."

Again, the researcher can only conclude that the two groups have little, if any, formal contact once the student graduates and goes on to become an employed nanny.

#### Nanny Employer Responses

The researcher developed a series of questions for employers pertaining to the primary question -- "Are currently employed nannies perceived as professionals by their employers?" It was believed that responses to the questions would enable the researcher to draw inferences concerning the "professionalism" of persons employed as nannies.

Described as the "Employer Interview," a series of 26 specific questions were developed. These questions were:

1. Why do you feel you have a need for child care?
2. Is this your first nanny experience?
3. What other kinds of child care have you used?

4. If you have used other kinds of child-care, do you find nanny-care preferable? If so, why?
5. How long has your present nanny worked for you?
6. Do you feel you will be using a nanny in the future?
7. Do you feel you will be using other types of child-care?
8. Could you explain the procedure you used in finding a nanny?
9. Is your nanny working under a contract?
10. Could you describe the makeup of your family, the ages of all members, the education of all adults, and the jobs held by all adults?
11. Could you detail the costs involved with the employment of a nanny? Please include: Salary before deducts? Matching employer contributions? Other actual monetary outlay for food, etc.?
12. Could you explain what types of qualities you were looking for in a nanny during the pre-employment interview?
13. Were the qualities you were looking for in a nanny, those things which, in fact, ended up being important?
14. Were you looking for a child-care professional?
15. Do you feel your nanny is a professional?
16. Are you satisfied with the live-in arrangements between you and your nanny? Please elaborate.
17. How has a live-in nanny impacted on your life/lives? Please explain.
18. How many hours each week does your nanny work?
19. Do you feel your nanny has the qualifications and training necessary to do the job?
20. Do you feel you can openly discuss child-care issues with your nanny?
21. Who usually initiates discussions related to child-care? Do you, or is it your nanny?
22. Does your nanny complete a daily log?

23. Do you feel your nanny complies with your discipline and child-rearing preferences?
24. Do you feel your nanny provides reasonable flexibility in times of emergency or unexpected schedule changes?
25. How would you describe your child's/children's relationship with the nanny?
26. Would you describe your nanny as a worker in your home or as a member of your extended family? Please elaborate.

Once this "Employer Interview" was developed and finalized, the researcher forwarded an introductory letter to persons in the New England area who were identified as "nanny employers." Names were supplied by the representatives of Nanny Schools and/or presently employed nannies.

The letter was used both to describe the study and to explain the data acquisition process to the nanny employer. Four of the 13 "Nanny Employers" contacted agreed to participate in the study. Although the positive response level represented only 31% of those Nanny Employers contacted, the researcher believes information gleaned from these nanny employers is representative of the entire nanny employer population.

As the next step in the process, arrangements were made to conduct personal interviews with each responding Nanny Employer. All interviews were conducted in the respondents' homes.

Following is a description of the responding Nanny Employers who were interviewed:

Employer A is a husband and wife. The husband is 38 years old and the wife is 37 years old. Both consider themselves to be professionals. The husband is a college professor and the wife is a secondary school teacher. They have two children, a boy, two, and a girl, four. Normally, they are away from home from about 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Employer B is a single female parent. She is 41 years old and has been divorced for one year. She has two children, boys, ages two and 13. She owns an agency which provides employment opportunities for persons wanting to work as nannies. She describes herself as a "professional."

Employer C is a single female parent. She is 41 years old and has been divorced for two years. She has a Master's Degree in Education, is enrolled in a Doctoral Program, and is a college professor. She has three children, a boy, four, and two girls, seven and eight.

Employer D is a husband and wife. The husband is 44 years old and the wife is 33 years old. They have two daughters, ages two and three. The husband is a corporate executive and the wife is enrolled in a four-year nursing program.

In the case of 100% of the respondents, the compelling need for employing a full-time nanny is the hours spent away from home by all parents and their commitment to providing as "stable" an environment as possible for their children.

As Employer B described her situation:

I was working incredibly long hours in a job in Washington, D.C., and needed to have somebody who



could be "the Mom." I was a single parent then, and it wouldn't have worked even if there had been a two-parent family, as I was gone so much.

At the time of all interviews, each of the Nanny Employers had previously employed nannies. This was not their first nanny experience. In addition, 100% of the respondents stated they had previously experimented with other forms of child-care, such as day sitters in their own homes, day-care centers, and other short-term babysitters. Despite some problems, which will be elaborated upon later in this study, 100% of the nanny employers stated the employment of nannies as their "absolute preference."

Data obtained from the employers are organized within six specific themes. The title of each theme and relevant data follow.

Types of Qualities Sought. As the prospective nanny employers each began the search for a person qualified to provide child care, they concentrated on questions which would be asked in the pre-employment interview.

In this regard, the researcher was interested in "what types of qualities" the parents were looking for in selecting a nanny to care for their child/children.

Employer A, in responding to this question, said:

Our preference, and, in actuality, the nannies we've hired have not been highly trained -- by our own choice. We made it clear we didn't want someone in the traditional nanny stereotype. We did not want someone who'd been trained, had years of experience, had taken care of all kinds of kids, and who was going to come here and be a little bit cold and have a little bit more refined professional relationship because of the way we view child-rearing.

We think about child-rearing as a very critical thing. Warmth and availability are the most important aspects. We think the skills part is less important -- with a few exceptions.

Clearly, it was our preference to have someone be more on the warm and fuzzy side and approachable with the kids -- than a professional child-care person.

On the whole, Employer A stated a definite commitment to hiring as a nanny a person who would be accepted as a "member of the family" and not merely "an employee."

In her nanny search, Employer B said she wanted "the type of nanny who would be creative with TV, someone dependable and who knew the value of being on time." It was important that the person be able to handle a problem if one happened to arise.

I was looking for a nanny who was able to be versatile with a two-year-old. And, the nanny would also have to be able to treat a 13-year-old with respect, and not be intimidated by him.

Employer C said,

The most important attribute I wanted the person to have was being responsible to my children and for my children -- that my children would come first.

Secondly, that she had some empathy with the children, and be able to help them enhance their self-esteem. By not being overly critical of them.

Employer D was in agreement with the view expressed by Employer A: They wanted a nanny who "did not come to the child-care position pre-packaged. We feel strongly the person caring excellent communication skills, be caring, considerate, but firm."

After these employers hired their respective nannies and with the passage of some time, the researcher was interested in determining if the qualities originally sought ended up being as important as thought.

One hundred percent (100%) of the responding nanny employers said the answer was "Yes."

Nannies on the Job. The costs associated with the hiring and retention of nannies was determined by asking the nanny employers to "detail the costs involved with the employment of a nanny." These costs were supposed to include all expenses associated with the employment of their nannies. Responding nanny employers reported salaries between \$100 and \$175 per week.

Nanny Employer C provided the most extensive description of related expenses.

My nanny gets paid \$100 a week. It isn't much at all. I also pay for a course she takes in school, and I pay whenever we go out anywhere. So, really, that \$100 is money she can just save.

I pay for all of her food - both at home and when we go out. I fill the car with gas for her to drive around on her day off. When I send her out with the kids, for example, I pay for her to go to the movies. If we all go out and stop for ice cream or for lunch, I'm paying for an extra person - an extra adult.

And I pay for the hot water she uses when she showers or takes a bath. There's an expense associated with every human need. So, you're supporting the nanny, and, on top of the basic support, you're adding salary dollars.

Beyond the response to the financial arrangements given by Employer C, the remaining Nanny Employers always managed

to change the subject of the discussion rather than answer questions pertaining to the amount of money each nanny was paid.

Based on this apparent diversion, there is no doubt in the researcher's mind that it is the discussion centered on financial arrangements that has resulted in only 4 of 13 respondents in this Nanny Employer survey.

One question which led to vigorous discussion was:  
"16. Are you satisfied with the live-in arrangements between you and your nanny? Please elaborate."

Employer A responded:

Sharing your home, sharing the space in your home can be a difficult thing and I think, initially, the first time we had a nanny here, it was kind of a shock to our system.

There are lots of issues that come into play. There's the privacy issue. It changes your behavior, the way you react in your own home -- because you have a stranger there. You have to see how that impacts upon you, as an individual, and how it impacts upon you, as a family member. It certainly impacts on how you relate to each other. It's a lot harder to have a good fight with your spouse when there's a stranger there. And, even when you get to know them, they're still a stranger.

So, it certainly changes the way family members relate to each other. That can be positive or negative. Certainly, that is an important issue. How does a nanny share your living space with your and does she disappear when that's appropriate?

In addition to how the family reacts to "sharing space," Employer A provided the following insight relative to how a nanny might react to this same "sharing of space":

I'm sure nannies must, also, find it a strain. Where does their privacy begin and end?

We've certainly had nannies who weren't good at setting limits on that and the kids really took advantage of the nanny's space. They would either be in the nanny's space lots of the time or would borrow stuff from them without asking....I'm sure some nannies are better than others at setting aside their space and setting certain limits.

There are a lot of other things -- meals, the sharing of meals, for instance, with the nanny. That's a pretty important part of our home life and our home structure.

It depends on the nanny's view of food - is it healthy or unhealthy? We've had good situations and we've had horrible situations. We've had junk food junkies who wouldn't eat with us because they only wanted junk food. It wasn't a good example for our kids. And, it caused a real strain around meal time. But, it isn't something you'd think to ask about during the interview process.

Another space-sharing issue can be a nanny's hygiene habits. Does she take a shower at a specific time each day, and is that time the same time you want to take a shower? Does she flush the toilet whenever you're taking a shower? Having a stranger in the house has the potential for creating a hazard as far as your lifestyle is concerned.

Naturally, the best situation is if you have a huge home with separate wings for the kids, and the nanny can have a private existence when her duties are through for the day.

In response to the same question, Employer C said:

We had a little trouble around meal time. The nanny ate with us. She felt slighted when she didn't, and the arrangement was always that she would eat with us. I found sometimes that it was difficult for me.

Employer D added:

Sometimes our nanny eats with us. But, she doesn't insist on it. There are times when she'd rather eat alone -- when she needs a break from the children.

Another "space-sharing time" includes nightly television. What's watched on television, many times, is hard to work out just between husband and wife -- of course, after the children have gone to bed. When you add a third ingredient, that of another "adult," it ends up being easier just to buy the nanny her own television set. Of course, then she gets upset because she ends up having to watch TV alone. What can you do?

What About the Child/Children-Nanny Relationship?.

Said Employer C:

My kids loved their nannies, and they worship the woman who now comes in every day. The kids treated the nanny as sort of halfway in between a "big sister" and a "mother."

Sometimes my kids just wanted to eat privately with me because I had just come home from work and they needed me. I think if I had it to do all over again, I would not have the nanny eat with us. But, that's how it was pre-arranged. It would have been impossible to change it.

The nannies weren't quite a member of the family, but they were very close to it. They were more than just a worker. They certainly were falling in between the two roles previously mentioned. I'd say they were more like a member of the extended family who happened to have a job with us.

Employer B said:

The nanny was the "mother" for about a year. Then, my child was two years old and the nanny stayed with us for four years. As a single parent, I think sometimes it was hard because the nanny and my child had bonded and, at the same time, I had a different kind of bond with my child.

When I was home, the nanny was so used to being in charge and doing everything that I would have to tell her, "That's okay. Let me do this."

When you have a person who is a live-in nanny, I think you should look more at a nanny as a roommate or pseudo family member. When it's a live-out child-care person, then it's more like an employee-employer relationship.

I really believe it's hard for the nanny to strike the perfect balance in the employer's home. Some families expect the nanny to take full responsibility for modeling their children and getting them ready for their role in society. I know it's tough emotionally, but it makes the nanny's job so much easier when parents don't interfere. In that case, the nanny knows what's best, and it's great.

But, in many cases - at least in this area - the nannies are very young (18-23) and taking full responsibility for the rearing of children is difficult, if not impossible.

In response to the same question, Employer A said:

We've had nannies from two other countries as well as from the United States. It think it has been wonderful - in terms of our all-around expectations, all-around families, and all-around cultural differences. Through exposure to different cultures, there's been a broadening of the children's knowledge. The relationships with these nannies have continued and it's been an enlightening experience -- except for one nanny who stayed with us for only six weeks.

We feel the more adults who are here will impact and influence the kids because they'll come away with more balance.

In general, we like an exciting life with a cast of creative people coming through for everybody to interact with. In a nanny, we don't want just a kind of cold person who's going to come in, do the job, and, for instance, make sure the snacks are nutritional. We want the nanny to be a person who will share their life's experience with all of us.

From my perspective, all kids need a lot of love and someone who is setting limits which fall within our own desires. We didn't want a nanny who was going to replace us as parents. We wanted a balance. I'm sure there were times when the kids liked the nannies better than they liked us!

Said Employer D:

It was easy for our children to warm up to our nanny. She was a considerate, caring person. She devoted a lot of time to providing individual

attention to each child, and made each one feel special.

There's no doubt our nanny feels like a member of our extended family, and not merely a child-care worker.

Are Daily Logs Required?. Only one of the responding nanny employers required the nannies to complete daily logs.

Said Employer D, who did not require a daily log:

I remember when I've had jobs that required the completion of detailed time cards. They're seldom accurate as far as what really went on over the course of each and every day. Many times, a person will look back at yesterday's activities in order to fill in today's blanks.

We'd rather have the nanny concentrating her efforts on attending to today's child-care than trying to remember what goes in the daily log.

Discussion of Child-Care Issues. All four of the nanny employer respondents said they were able to openly discuss child-care issues with their nannies. "I never had any problem openly discussion child-care issues with a nanny," said Employer C. "Naturally, it's critical. You have to be able to do it."

Usually, I was the one who initiated the discussion. I found that with the younger girls, they were trying so hard to please. They were constantly afraid they weren't going to look good as far as their jobs went. But, once the issues were raised, they were willing to talk about it.

I always let the nannies know - up front - I wouldn't be afraid to be critical of their actions, or inactions. They would know from the start when I was displeased. And, I wanted them to be as open with me.

As soon as they realized they weren't going to be put down for not being perfect, they were more willing to talk about whether we were having difficulties, what it was they needed to learn, and not being afraid to ask for some input.



In regard to Question 23: "Do you feel your nanny can comply with your discipline and child-rearing preferences?", by their answers it is fair to say 100% of those responding Nanny Employers agreed with the assessment offered by Employer C:

I don't think it's fair to ask a nanny to just discipline the kids in the way we -- the parents -- would discipline the kids, because I don't think the kids would take it from a nanny in the same way they would take it from their parents.

I did ask the nanny to be very consistent. The rules were house rules, not nanny rules. The kids always knew this. The nanny was fulfilling obligated rules that were house rules.

The nannies did comply to my child-rearing preferences. But, I think it's an important issue that these weren't rules the nannies were making up. The kids already had house rules, and it was the nanny's job to have the kids comply with these same house rules.

Added Employer A:

I'm very comfortable with the way our kids were treated in terms of discipline and child-rearing. We have had no problems with physical abuse. The kids are pretty self-disciplined. As a result, the discipline thing has not been a big issue in our situation.

Qualifications and Training. All four nanny employers were "satisfied" with the level of training possessed by those nannies who ultimately were hired. Said Employer C:

The nannies I hired had training--you know, they had received first-aid training and they knew what to do with the kids. I'm not sure about their specific qualifications as they were both just starting out in this career."

"Just Starting Out". It's this sense of "just starting out" that permeated each interview of nanny employers. It was apparent from all of the interviews that the employers were satisfied to hire as nannies people who were just beginning their respective careers. According to Employer A:

We prefer that the nannies we hire not be highly trained, by our choice. Typically, the people we've gotten are young women who have taken a year off from school to think about whether they want to go on to college or do something else. After this year off, usually they decide on college.

We would've been pleased to have a longer relationship with those who worked out well. In all four instances in which we hired nannies, the young women were all, essentially, new high school graduates. Two were slightly older, about 20, and eventually they planned to go on to college.

They all had child-care experience of one degree or another -- significant for some, not as significant for the others. Basically, we just explained what our expectations were and trained them around that.

In the case of Employer B, both nannies were short-term propositions. One was already contracted for with another family. The second worked only one semester while attending a four-year college in western Massachusetts.

Pertaining to Employer C, one of the two nannies she has employed was hired through a Nanny School. But, that person was terminated soon after her hire for "unsatisfactory job performance." The second person who was hired as a nanny remained on the job for about nine months while still attending college.

According to Employer D:

Our nanny began working for us when she was in her senior year in college. She had no idea what she would do when she graduated. This could've been just an interim job for her and for us. Fortunately, she stayed on as a nanny, and is now thinking about continuing her education in connection with the child-care industry.

But, Is Your Nanny a "Professional"?. Although many of the questions in the "Employer Interview" referred to aspects of the nanny job and the answers to those could be used to define aspects of a nanny's "professionalism," of the 2 questions, the two which focused on this issue are:

"14. Were you looking for a child-care professional?"

"15. Do you feel your nanny is a professional?"

Based on the responses given by each nanny employer, it is the conclusion of the researcher:

(1) Due to a variety of circumstances, 100% of the prospective Nanny Employers were not "looking for a child-care professional" when they were interviewing candidates for the nanny job.

(2) Of the responding Nanny Employers, 75% do not "feel (their) nanny is a professional."

Referring to the position stated by Nanny Employer A, their stated preference has been to hire, as nannies, persons "who have not been highly trained..." They did not want someone in the "traditional" nanny mold. A nanny's skills were not as important as the person being "warm," "fuzzy," and "approachable with the kids."

"It was clearly our preference to have someone be more on the warm and fuzzy side, and be approachable with the kids, than a professional child-care person," said Employer A.

As a result, Employer A "typically" hired "young women who have taken a year off to think about whether they want to go on to college or do something else....We basically explained what our expectations were and trained them around that."

Employer B, whose job entails the actual placement of persons in nanny positions, said:

Most families don't really want a "nanny."  
They want a housekeeper; they want a "Heloise."

Unfortunately, our generation was raised watching "The Brady Bunch," where that woman did everything. She did the ironing, the washing, the cooking, and serving the meals. Nannies don't do all these things. America is uneducated and very, very ignorant about nannies.

If they have to start recognizing nannies as "professionals," they have to pay them as "professional." Not one family member I've interviewed has ever agreed to even having a nanny receive a good week's pay or that nannies need to receive benefits. Neither would they agree to vacations or sick days. It's as if this person is subhuman.

If you have a professional person living with you then you have to treat them with respect. After travelling to England and meeting the nannies there -- if one of the English nannies was treated once the way American families treat their nannies, all the English nannies would quit!

Responding to the same two questions, Employer C said:

I could not afford someone who already had a lot of experience in the child-care field. I wanted someone who was looking to do this seriously and professionally, but who was starting

out so that she was still on the low end of the pay scale.

In spite of these expectations, Employer C said: "The women that I got from the Nanny School was a professional. Yes, she was a professional..."

Said Employer D:

When we hired our nanny, she was in college and didn't even know what her career path would be. We were looking for someone who would relate well to the children and would be able to follow directions as far as our child-care preferences.

We were not necessarily seeking a child-care professional.

At this point in time, our nanny is not a "professional." She has decided to continue her education in the child-care field, and one day may be considered to be a "professional." Today, she is not one.

But, despite the fact that we do not consider her to be "a professional," this does not mean our nanny cares for our children in any lesser fashion or manner than someone who could be called a "professional." Maybe we're just playing at semantics...

In an attempt to clarify the issue concerning "professionalism," Nanny Employer B -- the person employed in the placement of persons as nannies -- expressed criticism of both state regulatory agencies and one major nanny association: "In England, prospective nannies are schooled at colleges and their curricula is [sic] monitored. Each teacher is reviewed and must remain current - regarding changes within the nanny job focus," said Employer B.

In the United States, teachers in nanny schools should be certified and regulated through some agency other than a trade school. In Massachusetts, for example, we are mixed in with truck driving schools. Are you going to tell me

the truck driver school is the same as a nanny school?

Commenting on the International Nanny Association (INA), Employer B said,

The INA is supposed to help represent and clear the way for nannies. But, they're doing a horrible job. They don't look at qualifications or credentials.

I could send the name of my dog and that dog could become a member of the INA -- just as long as the dog could write a check!

#### Question Four

"What is the nature of the credential awarded on the completion of the course?"

Although 83.34 percent of the responding Nanny Schools were reported to be affiliated either with a college or vocational school, there are no formal degrees awarded in connection with the completion of a program which culminates in a person becoming a nanny.

In fact, all students graduating from Nanny School -- regardless of its affiliation -- only receive "certificates of completion."

A breakdown of these certificates of completion shows: 50% issued as "private" awards; 33.34% issued "through a college"; and 16.67% awarded in connection with a vocational school.

In addition, none of those Nanny Schools which responded to the investigator's questionnaire listed the

receipt of college credits for students enrolled in the Nanny Programs.

#### Question Five

"Is the program accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency? On what basis was the accreditation granted?"

There are two primary agencies which accredit and oversee the operation and administration of Nanny Schools on the national level. These are: the American Council of Nanny Schools (ACNS) and the International Nanny Association (INA). In addition, there are a number of state agencies, many of which come under the direction of the state Departments of Education. But, none of these state agencies can provide national accreditation.

Of those Nanny Schools responding to the investigator's questionnaire, the overwhelming majority -- 83.33% -- stated that they were members of the International Nanny Association, and had received their accreditation from that nationally recognized agency.

Of the 83.33% who reported membership in the INA, 50% also reported an affiliation with the American Council of Nanny Schools.

Incredibly, 16.67% of the Nanny Schools reported no affiliations with a nationally recognized accrediting agency. These respondents operate the Nanny Schools in

accordance with state laws and regulations, but without national accreditation.

Accreditation was granted to these Nanny Schools through their making application for accreditation, a thorough review of their proposed curricula and payment of the appropriate fees.

#### Summary of Response Data in Questionnaires

The American Heritage Dictionary, Second College Edition, includes as one definition of a professional, "Having great skill or experience in a particular field or activity."

Throughout this chapter, the investigator has attempted to analyze responses given by Nanny School officials, employed nannies, and nanny employers to a series of closed questions in order to reach a conclusion as to whether nannies in the United States are, at least, perceived as professionals.

Rhetorically, one might ask: "How does one gain 'great' skill?" "Do the Nanny Schools offer thee proper ingredients enabling students to attain these skills?"

- \* Analyses provided in this chapter described the number of hours Nanny Schools reported were necessary for graduation, only to fail in their ability to provide detail to support their stated requirements.
- \* In some instances, there was no hands-on experience available for Nanny School students.
- \* Although the overwhelming majority -- 83.34% -- of Nanny Schools reported they were affiliated with a college or vocational school, none awarded graduates with college degrees or college credits



for program completion. Only certificates of completion were awarded.

- \* While an average of 73.5% of those students who enroll in Nanny Schools actually graduate, of that number, only 65% find employment as nannies.
- \* All 100% of the Nanny School officials say "special skills" are required all or part of the time in order to perform the job responsibilities of being a nanny.
- \* As to whether their graduates possess these "special skills," 50% of the Nanny School officials say "Yes" and 50% say "Sometimes."
- \* Of the employed nannies who responded to the questionnaires, only 33% said their jobs do require "special skills." But, when a "special skill" is required, 64% of the respondents say they do have that skill.

Based on the above, it would seem that, although the operation of the Nanny Schools is somewhat lax, the skill level imparted to students enables them to perform their jobs as nannies in a "skilled, professional" manner.

But, are these employed nannies treated as "professionals" by their employers?

- \* Employed nannies reported that they are treated as professionals by their employers in 81.81% of the employment situations.
- \* When asked the same question, Nanny School officials estimated employers would treat employed nannies as professionals in only 66.67% of the employment situations.

So, based on these responses, it would seem safe to state that nannies in the United States believe, at least, they are treated as professionals.

But, what is the general public's perception of nannies in the United States?

- \* Of the responding nannies, only 9.09% said they felt the general public perceived them to be "professionals." In addition, 45.45% said the general public "sometimes" perceived them as professionals, and 9.09% said they were "not sure" of the public's perception. A substantial number of nannies -- 36.36% -- said that the general public did not perceive them as professionals.
- \* When the same question was posed to Nanny School officials, 16.67% said the general public did perceive nannies as "professionals," 16.67% said the public "sometimes" perceived nannies as professionals, and 16.67% said they were "not sure" of the public's perception. As with the employed nanny responses, 50% of the Nanny School officials said the general public did not perceive nannies as professionals.

In attempting to decide upon the "professionalism" of nannies in the United States, the primary source of information which would lead to the researcher's conclusion was the nanny employer.

The conclusions reached by nanny employers is based on their day-to-day experiences with persons employed as nannies to care for their child or children. Their conclusions have as their basis real experiences, not merely perceptions.

In extensively discussing the nanny's "professionalism" with the nanny employer, the following information was gleaned:

- \* Of those nanny employers who responded to our survey, 100% stated that they were not seeking "professionals" when they were seeking to fill their nanny positions.
- \* Further, 75% of the responding nanny employers reported that they "do not believe" the nannies they employ can be described as "professionals" -- although the omission of the term "professional" has no impact on the quality of child-care these employers state that their child/children receive.

In Chapter II of this study, reference was made to Christine Readdick's 1987 "examination of the nanny as a professional" and her use of the following criteria to define "a profession":

1. Provision of a service beneficial to society;
2. Theoretical knowledge as a basis for practical judgment;
3. Ethical performance of work;
4. Focused, limited scope and purpose (Readdick, 1987).

According to Readdick, the following conditions within the industry influenced her study:

1. "Nannies provide quality developmental care for young children in their homes" (Readdick, 1987). In this study, 100% of the nanny employer respondents said they were satisfied -- if not more than satisfied -- with the quality of care provided for their child/children by the employed nannies.
2. "This service is available to a very small, well-to-do segment of society" (Readdick, 1987). Although some of the responding nanny employers were "well-to-do," it is apparent that the need for live-in nannies has spread beyond what one might categorize as "a very small, well-to-do segment of society." Further, if the segment of society which seeks the employment of nannies was limited to the "well-to-do," then a greater degree of professionalism might exist rather than

people -- out of necessity -- seeking to employ nannies, yet limiting their choice to "someone starting out who demands compensation on a lesser scale."

3. "This service can be available to a larger portion of society if more programs sharing the services of nannies are created" (Readdick, 1987). Based on all circulated questionnaires and personally conducted interviews, the services of more nannies are needed at present. This conclusion is formed based on the fact that this study takes into consideration nanny employers -- especially single parents -- who might have otherwise been thought to be "outside" of the traditional nanny employer definition.
4. "Training programs have a core curriculum that enable certified nannies to perform competently and independently" (Readdick, 1987). Although there may be structured training programs available to provide a specified core curriculum which would enable nannies to perform competently and independently, the results of this study show a "crying need" for many more of these programs.

Within all three responding segments -- Nanny Schools, nanny employers, and employed nannies -- survey results confirm there is a definite lack of curriculum conformity, state-to-state and nanny school-to-nanny school. And, among responding nanny employers, it is clear that, although they are

satisfied with the degree of service provided to their children, there was no initial intent to hire a "professional." Their intent was to hire a "trainee" and personally train that person to be "a professional."

5. "Certified nannies are unlikely to gain the depth and complexity of knowledge and theory necessary for classification as a professional due to the brief duration of most training programs" (Readdick, 1987). Through the research conducted in this study, the researcher has determined that most nannies in the United States need not be "professional." Very few U.S.-educated nannies are "certified." And, this has little to do with the length of the training programs. It has more to do with the uniformity of education/ training received.

Further, the respondent nanny employers have made their feelings clear -- they were not seeking to employ professional nannies.

6. "There are no enforced standards of quality within the industry" (Readdick, 1987). All of the arguments put forth in the preceding statement hold true here. Further, based on comments made by Nanny Employer B, who also is engaged in providing nannies to households who would like to fill this type of position: "I could send the name of my dog and that dog could become a

member of the International Nanny Association -- just as long as the dog could write a check!"

7. "There are no standards for nomenclature in the industry" (Readdick, 1987). Although this issue was not pursued within the scope of this study, it is the researcher's opinion that this conclusion remains true today.
8. "There are an increasing number of programs that are voluntarily adopting standards by joining organizations like [the] American Council of Nanny Schools" (Readdick, 1987). Of those Nanny Schools surveyed, all belong to or are in the process of joining formal associations. With membership in these organizations comes the requirement to adhere to certain training standards.

Readdick (1987) concluded: "...designation of the nanny as a professional at this time is premature..."

In 1992, this researcher concludes that designation of the nanny as a professional at this time is still premature.

## C H A P T E R V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND POSSIBLE FUTURE RESEARCH

#### Introduction

In this chapter, the focus is on summarizing the information gathered during the extensive study, developing conclusions based on this research, and indicating implications for possible future study.

#### Summary

##### Development of the Study

The study develops out of a survey done in 1985 by the American Council of Nanny Schools of their 12 member schools in response to the increasing demand by working parents for high quality, consistent in-home child care, and the lack of national standardization or regulation of nanny schools. This particular effort targeted only the schools that were already members of an organization which required both minimum contact and field work hours, and a specific core curriculum. But, this study did not represent the amount and type of training available to nannies in the United States by the 55 schools and training programs identified by the International Nanny Association, a national clearing-house requiring no minimum training criteria for membership. It is a compilation of 11 of these schools which were identified as being in the New England, New York, and New

Jersey areas, plus one additional school listed in the ACNews (summer 1990) which forms the school population for this study.

Another contributing factor was the lack of available systematic inquiries of nannies in the United States concerning the amount and type of training they received, and whether they perceived that training to be adequate for the tasks they performed. A list of nannies obtained from a survey of western Massachusetts training programs plus nannies identified by the International Nanny Association as working in the western Massachusetts area comprise the target nanny population of this study.

The final group identified to be surveyed was nanny employers. The intent of the investigation was to attempt to determine whether the training received by nannies is sufficient for the jobs they do and the responsibilities they are given. This sample population was identified by nannies surveyed as well as from a list of clients of nanny training programs in western Massachusetts.

#### Five Key Questions

In order to examine the standards and practices of the newly established American nanny industry, specifically those operating in New England, New York, and New Jersey, and to determine the perceptions of Nanny School officials, employed nannies and nanny employers relative to: (a) the individual duties nannies perform; (b) the training required of nannies to complete those tasks; and (c) if the need for



standardization within the industry exists, five key questions were posed by the researcher:

1. What percentage of the schools questioned are affiliated with a community college, state vocational college, private vocational school, or independent agency?
2. Is the length of the school program sufficient to assure students' acquisition of a reasonable level of the skills specified in the course curriculum?
3. Are currently employed nannies perceived as professionals by their employers?
4. What is the nature of the credential awarded on the completion of the course?
5. Is the program accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency? On what basis was the accreditation granted?

### Research Method

An ex post facto research methodology, based upon mailed questionnaire data, was used in this study. These data were supplemented by selected interviews with nanny employers. Both instruments involved the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods of inquiry.

### Describing the Problem

In stark contrast to the nanny role in England, what has been blossoming in the nanny industry within the United States is neither well-defined nor well-understood. Therefore, a need definitely exists to clarify the role and

practices which are emerging and then to appraise the contributions of the nanny concept to child care in the United States.

The nanny's emergence in the United States is very recent. Based on a 1990 International Nanny Association survey, well over 90% of the listed nanny training programs were established after 1979. In order to track this emergence, the researcher conducted a comprehensive review of related literature from 1970 to 1990. This material was divided into four sections: (1) The Need for Quality Child Care; (2) Child Care in the Home; (3) The Demand for Nannies; and (4) Nanny Education and Training.

While touching on every conceivable aspect of the child care experience, no one more succinctly describes the key concerns than Lin Yeiser in her book, Nannies, Au Pairs, Mother's Helpers - Caregivers (Yeiser, 1987):

When you use any kind of child care, you're delegating some control over the care of your child to someone else. When you're away, you can't supervise the care your child receives. The more you are away from your child, the less you control his care. However, with somebody that cares for your child in your own home as opposed to at a day care center, you have more control than you do in most other child care situations.

The in-home caregiver is your employee rather than a service provider for whom you are one of many clients. By hiring carefully, you can be more confident that your caregiver has the same basic child rearing values you do. You can set standards for care and specify things to be done with your child. By finding someone who likes such work and is trustworthy, you provide your child with quality individual attention (Yeiser, 1987).

As for the formal view of the International Nanny Association, in their 1990 flyer, A Nanny for Your Family, they state:

The nanny is an important part of the family support system and serves as a loving nurturing and trustworthy companion to the children. A nanny tends to have special skills in taking care of children, as well as a deep love of children. A nanny offers the family convenient, high quality care to meet the needs of a child's physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development (INA, 1990).

In most of the literature reviewed by the researcher, one of the most crucial aspects described as necessary for nanny employers to overcome relates to one's ability to adjust to having a "third party" in one's home.

In her book, The American Nanny, Robin Rice describes the lack of privacy as:

...often the hardest adjustment for both the nanny and the family. Most families are not accustomed to having a stranger in the home. Like-wise, the first-time live-in nanny is not used to living in someone else's home. To overcome this problem, many families choose to create very separate accommodations or invite the nanny to become a member of the family (Rice, 1987).

While described as a major concern, the privacy issue does not appear to be negatively impacting the demand for nannies in the United States -- at least, not according to the reviewed literature.

According to nanny training programs that either have their own placement service or are affiliated with other placement agencies, the demand for trained nannies is so great that most parents looking for nanny care will be

unable to find a nanny. Exactly how much the demand exceeds the supply can vary drastically, depending on such variables as geographic location of the program reporting, year of the report, and public recognition of the training program involved. But, all published material shows at least a ten-to-one demand to supply ratio, and, in some cases, that ratio jumps as high as 100-to-one.

Since the amount of training received by nannies can play a significant role in a nanny's ability to find employment, the researcher was interested in reviewing data describing the United States training experience. In a 1987 presentation for the International Nanny Conference, Jean Fleming said:

Training programs in the United States vary from short term, for profit, to short term university programs; from community colleges with one year diploma or certificate programs and two year associate degree programs to universities with a nanny training component in their Early Childhood degree programs. The goal of all programs is to train the student with skills associated with the responsibilities of a nanny; infant and child care, to stimulate creativity, and understand one's role in the family structure. The longer programs are able to train for additional hours in an in-home practical experience (Fleming, 1987).

In order to obtain a clearer understanding of nanny training in the United States, particularly the discrepancies in the length of, and the material covered by, various training programs all leading to the title of "trained nanny," the researcher conducted a review of programs listed in the International Nanny Association's

1990 Directory. In this directory, 55 training programs were listed as member schools. In a survey completed for this directory, 38 schools reported on a total number of training hours required for completion of their programs. Of these 38 schools, 100% reported that a certificate, diploma, or degree was given upon completion. The total hours required ranged from 10 hours (1 program) to 1,710 hours (1 program). Seven programs, 18%, reported between 10 and 100 hours; 15 programs, 39%, reported between 101 and 500 hours; 10 programs, 26%, reported between 501 and 1,000 hours; and one program, 2%, reported between 1,501 and 1,701 hours (INA Directory, 1990).

In part, based on discrepancies such as those reported in hours of training/education required for program completion, there is a debate within the industry that the discrepancies in nanny training programs are so great, and the lack of standardization so pronounced that the concept of the nanny as a trained and reliable child care worker is being compromised.

Further, as to whether or not the certificate-trained nanny can, in fact, be classified as a professional child care worker is an industry issue that needs more scrutiny. In an examination of the nanny as a professional, in her article, "Schools for the American Nanny: Training In-Home Child Care Specialists," Christine Readdick used the following criteria to define a profession: provision of a service beneficial to society; theoretical knowledge as a

basis for practical judgment; ethical performance of work; and focused, limited scope and purpose (Readdick, 1987).

Readdick found that the following conditions in the nanny industry influenced the study:

- \* Nannies provide quality developmental care for young children in their homes.
- \* This service is available to a very small, well-to-do segment of society.
- \* This service can be available to a larger portion of society if more programs sharing the services of nannies are created.
- \* Training programs have a core curriculum that enables certified nannies to perform competently and independently.
- \* Certified nannies are unlikely to gain the depth and complexity of knowledge and theory necessary for classification as a professional due to the brief duration of most training programs.
- \* There are no enforced standards of quality in the industry.
- \* There are no standard examinations in the industry.
- \* There are no standards for nomenclature in the industry.
- \* There are an increasing number of programs that are voluntarily adopting standards by joining organizations like ACNS.

Concluding, Readdick states:

Reflections on the question "is the nanny a child care professional?" lead to the conclusion that the schools surveyed are making strides in developing capable in-home child care specialists. Nonetheless, designation of the nanny as a professional at this time (1987) is premature.

Indeed, as the nanny movement progresses, a continuing consideration of sociological criteria for a profession vis-a-vis the nanny practice is encouraged (Readdick, 1987).

## Conclusions

### Analysis of Data

**Question One:** "What percentage of the schools' officials questioned are affiliated with a community college, state vocational college, private vocational school, or independent agency?"

Respondent Nanny School officials overwhelmingly - 67% - reported an affiliation with community colleges. Of the remaining Nanny School officials, there was a tie, 16% each, between affiliations with a state vocational college and an independent agency.

**Question Two:** "Is the length of the school program sufficient to assure students' acquisition of a reasonable level of the skills specified in the course curriculum?"

The number of hours of classroom study required for program completion ranged from 75 to 550 hours, with the average being 316 hours. It would appear this amount of classroom experience allows adequate time for curriculum (INA Directory, 1990).

But, based on a closer review by the researcher, despite the number of hours said to be "required" for program completion, all Nanny Schools have hours which are not accounted for when a thorough comparison is done of curricula detail and hours required for course completion.

When the researcher investigated the classroom hour requirements versus detailed classroom subject hours reported, there was an average of 35% of the "required" classroom hours missing from respondents' questionnaires. Of all Nanny Schools responding, only one was able to substantiate number of classroom hours said to be "required," and, in that case, respondent ended up with 5 more hours than originally stated.

In terms of percentages, "missing" classroom hours range from 17% to 69%.

As for assertions within the previously reviewed studies of literature between 1970 and 1990, namely that the demand to supply ratio is 10 to 1 or, in some cases, 100 to 1, responding to the researcher's question: "What percentage of those (Nanny School) graduates are presently employed as nannies?", Nanny School officials reported a range of 0% to 100%. The average percentage of graduates listed as "presently employed as nannies" was 65%.

In an attempt to determine whether employed nannies possess special skills required to perform the functions of a nanny, two sets of questions were posed - one to Nanny School officials, and the other to employed nannies.



The two questions asked of Nanny School officials were: (1) "The tasks nannies are asked to do require special skills?", and (2) "Nannies have the qualifications to complete those tasks?".

Answering Question (1), 83% of the Nanny School respondents said, "Yes, the tasks nannies are asked to do require special skills." In answering Question (2), there was a 50/50 split between those respondents whose answer was "Yes, the nannies have the qualifications to complete those tasks" and those who said they "Sometimes" have the needed qualifications.

Still trying to ascertain whether "the length of the school program was sufficient to assure students' acquisition of a reasonable level of the skills specified in the course curriculum," the next step was to query employed nannies.

As with Nanny School officials, two questions were asked of employed nannies. The answers could be "Yes," "No," "Sometimes," or "Not Sure." The two statements in need of completion were: (1) "I feel that the tasks I am asked to do require special skills" and (2) "I feel that I have the qualifications to complete those tasks."

Answering the first question, only 33% of the employed nannies said "Yes," the tasks (they) are asked to do require special skills, while 67% said special skills were "sometimes" required.

In response to the second question, 64% of the employed nannies "feel that (they) have the qualifications to complete those tasks." Additional responses were 18% "No," and 18% "Sometimes."

**Question Three:** "Are currently employed nannies perceived as professionals by their employers?"

Among the 26 questions posed to nanny employers, only two specifically referred to the issue of nannies as "professionals." Those questions were: "14. Were you looking for a child-care professional?" and "15. Do you feel your nanny is a professional?"

Based on answers provided by the respondents, it is the conclusion of the researcher:

- (1) Due to a variety of circumstances, 100% of the nanny employers were not "looking for a child-care professional" when they were interviewing candidates for the nanny job.
- (2) Of the responding nanny employers, 75% do not "feel (their) nanny is a professional."

The foregoing positions were best summarized by one responding nanny employer as follows:

What I was looking for....was someone who was working to become a child-care professional, and who was just starting out. I could not afford someone who already had a lot of experience in the child-care field. I wanted someone who was looking to do this seriously and professionally, but who was starting out so that she was still on the low end of the pay scale.

Following up on the preceding nanny employer's response, one other nanny employer's statement was:

When we hired our nanny, she was in college and didn't even know what her career path would be. We were looking for someone who would relate well to the children and would be able to follow direction as far as our child-care preferences. We were not, necessarily, seeking a child-care professional.

**Question Four:** "What is the nature of the credential awarded on the completion of the course?"

Although 83% of the responding Nanny Schools reported an affiliation with either a college or vocational school, there are no formal degrees awarded in connection with the completion of the program which culminates in a person becoming a nanny. In fact, all students graduating from Nanny Schools -- regardless of their affiliation -- only receive "certificates of completion." Further, none of those responding Nanny Schools listed the receipt of college credits for students graduating from nanny programs.

**Question Five:** "Is the program accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency? On what basis was the accreditation granted?"

Based on the responses received from Nanny School officials, the overwhelming majority, 83%, reported they were members of the International Nanny Association from which they received their accreditation. Of this 83%, about one half reported an affiliation with the American Council of Nanny Schools.

Incredibly, 17% of the respondent Nanny Schools reported "no" affiliation with a nationally recognized accrediting agency. These respondents stated that they operate their Nanny Schools in accordance with state laws and regulations, but without national accreditation.

Those nanny schools reporting an accreditation said it was gained through their making an application for accreditation, undergoing a thorough review of their proposed curriculum, and payment of the appropriate fees.

Based upon the information gathered in this study, the researcher forms the following conclusions:

- \* Although Nanny School officials provided data describing the number of hours required for students to complete their training, most failed in their ability to supported their stated requirements.
- \* In some instances, there was no hands-on experience available for Nanny School students.
- \* Although the overwhelming majority, 83%, of the Nanny School officials reported that they were affiliated with a college or vocational school, none awarded graduates with degrees or college credits for program completion. Only certificates of completion were awarded.
- \* While an average of 73% of those students who enroll in Nanny Schools actually graduate, of that number only 65% become employed as nannies.

- \* All 100% of the Nanny School officials say "special skills" are required all or part of the time in order to perform the job responsibilities of being a nanny.
- \* As to whether their graduates possess these "special skills," 50% of the Nanny School officials say "Yes" and 50% say "Sometimes."
- \* Of the employed nannies who responded to the questionnaires, only 33% said their jobs do require "special skills." But, when a "special skill" is required, 64% of the respondents say they do have that skill.
- \* Although 82% of the employed nannies reported that they are treated as professionals by their employers, only 67% of the Nanny School officials estimated nannies would be treated as professionals.
- \* Of the respondent nanny employers, 100% stated that they were not seeking professionals when attempting to fill their nanny positions.
- \* Further, 75% of the responding nanny employers reported they do not believe their nannies can be described as "professionals" -- although the omission of the term "professional" has no impact on the quality of child care these nanny employers feel their children receive.

## Possible Future Research

After having completed a thorough review, the researcher makes the following recommendations for future study:

1. Because the survey results tend to differ from those reported in previously published works, especially in the area of training required for graduation from Nanny Schools, this study should be expanded to include other regions of the United States, if not the entire United States.
2. The "privacy" issue, specifically as it impacts on the lives of both nanny employers and employed nannies residing within the same home, should be explored in more depth. In fact, the results of that research could be used to develop specific courses for nanny training schools.
3. Due to the inconsistencies discovered in the area of "required" classroom hours said to be necessary for graduation versus those hours which could actually be accounted for by Nanny School officials, additional investigation should focus on only the classroom activities in hopes of being able to develop more uniformity in course selections in Nanny Schools.
4. In order to attract more interest in nanny schools by students, a researcher should investigate what barriers stand in the way of providing college credits for successful completion of Nanny School training.

APPENDIX  
NANNY CODE OF CONDUCT

## Nanny Code of Conduct

The International Nanny Association's voluntary code of conduct as it appears on page 4, INA 1990 Directory:

### RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE CHILD

A nanny shall:

- \* Respect each child as a human being and never knowingly participate in any practice which is disrespectful, dangerous, exploitative, intimidating, or psychologically or physically harmful.
- \* Maintain a safe and healthy atmosphere which encourages optimum social, emotional, intellectual, and physical development of children.
- \* Provide various learning opportunities through which a child can explore and utilize their continued personal growth and development.
- \* Recognize the unique potential of each child, encourage questions and present answers that children can understand.
- \* Keep abreast of current activity in the areas of childhood development through continued education, either formally or informally.
- \* Work toward promoting knowledge and understanding of young children and their needs and act as an advocate for children's rights.



- \* Be familiar with the signs of child abuse and neglect and be knowledgeable of procedures for dealing with them.

#### RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE PARENT

A nanny shall:

- \* Treat parents and other family members with respect by maintaining confidentiality and respecting the family's right to privacy.
- \* Work together with parents to create an environment conducive to the healthy development of the child.
- \* Respect the family's child-rearing values and parents' rights to make decisions for their children.
- \* Work to develop positive relationships based on mutual trust with parents and children.
- \* Support the family value system, cultural expression, and individual characteristics and refrain from imposing personal values or biases upon the child.
- \* Be an advocate for children and work to protect their rights.
- \* Not hold the child accountable for negative interactions between parents and nanny.

- \* Inform parents of physical injury, illness, and emotional crises should they occur in the child's life.

#### RESPONSIBILITIES TO SELF

A nanny shall:

- \* Present her/himself as an acceptable adult role model, take pride in personal appearance and professional behavior and refrain from activity which might injure credibility or produce a negative representation of her/himself or an employer.
- \* Continue to improve personal knowledge of child development by seeking contemporary information through formal or informal means, such as membership in child care organizations.

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