

Au Pairs Offer Surprisingly Affordable Childcare And Cultural Enrichment

Posted by [Zach Hill](#) On 02/03/2021

Jamie Jarmon says a lot of people have the wrong idea about having an au pair care for their children.

"A lot of people who hear the term think it's strictly for the rich. That's not the case. Au pairs are less expensive than daycare or a full-time babysitter. And definitely less expensive than a nanny."

An au pair is a young college-aged person, normally from a foreign country, who lives with your family and helps care for your children up to 45 hours a week. Another benefit is flexibility. The host family sets the schedule and an au pair can work up to 10 hours in a day as long as they don't go over 45 hours total in the week. By government rules, au pairs are strictly limited to taking care of children and can't be used for other household duties such as cleaning.

Called To Give Back

Jarmon, the local consultant for the international Cultural Care Au Pair Agency, says she has always been in love with children. She was a babysitter as a child and an au pair twice herself. Jamie took a year off from college in 2010 to au pair in Germany and spent another year after graduating as an Au Pair in Switzerland.

Since then, she's worked mostly in the public sector but recently felt called back to childcare. "I've always felt that my calling is to give back to individuals." Now she's helping connect local families with just the right au pair.

While she enjoyed her experience as an au pair, she says that in Europe the au pairs are pretty much on their own. "Maybe I didn't do the best job in finding the proper family for me. The positives far outweighed the negatives."

Part Of The Family

Cultural Care has a matching process that helps the right au pair and family find each other. "The agency and I have a hand in making sure the family gets someone that meets their needs. The host family gets to interview the au pair as long as they need until they feel they have the right person."

The agency also offers counselors and support services for young au pairs. Au pairs are between 18 and 26 and mostly female, though Jamie says there are some male au pairs out there.

What are the advantages to an au pair over other types of childcare? Aside from the cost, Jamie says the cultural exchange is enriching to both sides. "You can learn a new language and you help her improve her English."

The host family gets to introduce their au pair to American culture and food and au pairs enjoy sharing their cuisine and traditions with their new families. "An au pair can help teach your child a new language if you like."

While some people are hesitant about inviting a stranger to live with them, Jarmon says it's an overwhelmingly positive situation. She says she's still in contact with her first host family and that she employs her own au pair who is part of the family.

"My kids love her. What is nice is your childcare is right there and you get to form a relationship with your provider. My kids are so happy."

For more information about how the au pair process works, you can email Jamie at jamie.jarmon@lcc.culturalcare.com or call 240-230-7155.

You can also visit her website: <https://culturalcare.com/lcc/jjarmon/>

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