

September - November, 2013

"S" Family



This position was dipping my toe into in-home childcare! I found the position through Workaway.info, a website that connects hosts to volunteers. I accepted an offer from a lovely family in Cremona, Italy, and about a month later, was on a plane! I was there for three short months - all that my visa would allow - and worked with a five year old girl and seven year old boy. My primary role here was talking! Both children had had some basic English instruction in their schools, but the parents enjoyed having English-speaking Workawayers live with them for periods of time to increase the fluency. I had the mornings to enjoy all Cremona had to offer - and as a musician, that was a lot! - and in the afternoons, picked the children up from school, supervised them on the playground or walked them to sports activities, and then we all returned home for homework and dinner.

November, 2013 - June, 2014

"K" Family

In my first full-time au pair role, I had charge of a seven year old boy. Again, a great portion of this job was talking. He'd had some English instruction in school, but barely enough to hold a significant conversation. I took some time to get to know his interests, and by the end of my seven months with this family, the seven year old and I could talk about anything under the sun - usually, under the pixelated Minecraft sun. I helped him with his reading fluency in both Turkish and English - my attempts at Turkish pronunciation were a source of great entertainment for him - and started creating activities right up an active seven year old's alley, but had the hidden goal of expanding his vocabulary and getting him used to talking about all sorts of different topics in English.



June 2014 - December 2014

“D” Family

Working with a stay at home mum whose partner was working overseas, it was all hands on deck in this house with active 2 and 3 year old boys! In this role, I really got my footing on creating activities that incorporated goals from multiple areas of development. They both loved sensory play. One time, I froze some of their little dinosaur figures into “eggs” and set them off to chip away and melt the ice. The elder of the two was starting to show interest in learning letters and reading, and I loved creating letter identification and fine motor skill prewriting activities to make sure that when he was ready to start reading and writing, he would be more successful from the start. The mum and I spent our days working in tandem taking the boys on outings around the area, supervising and playing with them at playgrounds, indoor play centers, pools, beaches, and hikes. We were always looking for new ways to keep the little gentlemen engaged, and they loved to be out and about! With this family I also travelled internationally for a 6 week trip, and a couple hours’ car ride away for a week. Unfortunately, a stipulation to my visa in Australia was a requirement to change employers after 6 months, so I had to say goodbye far too soon.



Trays Point, Australia

January 2015 - June 2015

“H” Family

With this family, I worked with 3 boys: 4 years, around 18 months, and newborn just after I started. The mum stayed at home while the dad was gone for typical office hours. She and I worked closely in a tag-team style, handing off to each other as the situation called for it. These three little ones loved visiting playgrounds, going to the library, hiking, swimming, and getting creative and messy! In this role, I also liaised with preschool staff and jumped in the pool to participate in a “mums and bubs” style swim lessons with the 18-month old. That’s one of my favourite things I’ve done in my childcare career! I developed activities for each of the older boys to suit their interests and developmental needs, and though I did not often have sole charge of the youngest, I got my first tastes of newborn care through observing and working with the mum. In addition to day-to-day childcare tasks and activities, I also took on some occasional basic household tasks like laundry and organization. With this family, I travelled domestically for one week, and was heartbroken to leave when my visa expired.



June 2015 - December 2015

“B” Family



In New Zealand, I worked for a single, stay at home mother and her children: a three year old boy, and boy/girl twins that were born shortly after I arrived. After my first exposure to newborn care in my previous role, I loved getting more hands-on with these adorable twins. We went on walks, had tummy time, explored different textures and sang and danced to more songs than I can count! I got to know the staff at the preschool the elder brother attended very well, and ended up working “relief” for them on occasional days when they were short-staffed and this mum could spare me for a few hours. On the days the three-year-old wasn’t in the preschool, we explored the local playground and beaches and went to one of the most wonderfully organized library storytime circles I’ve ever attended! There was always something with which to keep my hands busy, even if all the children were napping - a rare moment, indeed! In addition to basic childcare tasks and activity development for each of the children, I dove into keeping the house tidied, meal planning and grocery shopping, cooking a few dinners each week, keeping laundry moving through the washer and clotheslines, and organizing any space I could reach - cabinets, shelves, drawers, even the coat closet. Leaving this family was hard, but after a whirlwind of just over 27 months abroad, I was ready to return to the USA.

January 2016 - Present

"L" Family



Returning to the US, I wanted to find a job where I could finally stay with a family for a longer period of time, without visa restrictions getting in the way. I started in January of 2016 with two boys who are now ten and fifteen years old. It's a pretty big change from working with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, but I adapted quickly and continue to meet the new challenges that come with adolescence. Rather than changing diapers, making bottles, or giving baths, I am shuttling them between school and various activities, making sure they're moving efficiently through their morning routines, and helping them fold clothes and keep their bedrooms organized. We love visiting museums and art galleries, for which I prepare complementary activities to help them engage with the exhibit, going on hikes, hitting the pool, cooking and baking, and doing science experiments. Helping with homework is a huge part of my role here. I use Khan Academy and other resources to wrap my mind around what they're learning in school, whether it's refreshing my memory on Chinese history or figuring out exactly how we're supposed to multiply and divide these days. As I work on the concepts myself, I develop

supplemental activities for topics they're struggling to comprehend. In addition to working directly with the boys, I am responsible for an assortment of household tasks, including meal planning and grocery shopping for work days, light cleaning duties, and laundry, and I occasionally spot a cupboard or drawer that needs a new system of organization and tackle that while the boys are in school.

July 2016 - Present

"D" Family

Working only four days a week at my full-time job left me a day to look for a family who only needed a few hours of support a week. They are currently around age 3 and 18 months. I supported the stay at home mum, working primarily with the elder brother. We took walks, went for hikes, and visited the playground, and I brought along an activity or two for while we were at the home - art supplies, a fine motor exercise, or a basic science experiment like a magnetic tray - for him to explore something new. Our day was usually rounded out by lots and lots of marching and dancing to "Colonel Hathi's March" from The Jungle Book! Occasionally, during nap time I was happy to clear up some dishes in the kitchen or reorganize the toys. While after a few months the family no longer need me for full days, I continue to babysit for them on occasion.

