

Letter of Recommendation

My name is Lia and I am 18 years old. Dawnie has been one of the most important people in my life for over 17 of those years. She was my nanny from three months old to seven years old, and has continued to be my support, role model, parent, and friend every minute since. From puddle stomping to water fountains, art projects to nature walks, Dawnie is undoubtedly gifted with the ability to help children grow and explore the world around them. What's remarkable is her natural ability and desire to connect with each child or person she encounters. Any child that comes into Dawnie's life is a being with unique needs, challenges, strengths, and talents. As a young child I struggled. I projected challenges and confusion I experienced at home onto my school life and onto Dawnie. She always explained to me how other ways of communicating would more affectively get my needs met, but she did not label who I was based on my challenges. She never told me I was bad or unworthy. She held me tight in her arms, singing "you are my sunshine" until I calmed down. Dawnie reminded me constantly, and I hear her do so with her day care kids now as well, that she loves me and that she will keep me safe. Her home was my safe space. Growing up with Dawnie's own children helped me learn how to be a team player, connect, and that I would always get my needs met even when I was not the only child she was taking care of. Spending time with her and her day care kids now, I am blown away by the cohesiveness of the group, and how all her kids get the same love and attention as they would with her one on one. I would not be who I am today without Dawnie, and her presence in my life from such a young age was and continues to be an irreplaceable gift.