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Agency condemns the rise in 'nanny cam' use

WHEN it comes to leaving your infant with a professional nanny, some mothers could be forgiven for being a little nervous.

But a recent rise in online sales of hidden cameras in toys and clocks, known as 'nanny cams', suggests more and more parents are intent on keeping a close eye on the hired help at home - much to the disappointment of one east Kent agency.

Professional nanny and au pair agency County Nannies Ltd, based in Lynsted near Faversham, supplies trained nannies across the county, and managing director Benedicte Speed is not a fan of nanny cams in the home.

She said: "I have two daughters aged nine and ten and I use nannies, but I would never, ever think of using a camera.

"I think the use of nanny cams is flawed - it implies that 100 per cent trust is not there in the first place."

Several high profile cases in the US of nannies caught mistreating children on hidden cameras saw demand for the technology rocket across the country, and the growing number of UK nurseries offering a webcam service to allow working parents virtual contact with their children has made the idea of nanny cams in the home even more appealing.

No demand

But Ms Speed said there was little to no demand for nanny cams from her agency's clients - only one client in its 10 year history had openly used one - and she was concerned that technology was starting to play too big a role in some parents' decision-making when it came to childcare.

She added: "A lot of people can get their child care online, without meeting the people first. But I can't understand what someone is doing recruiting someone online and unseen."