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**Momprenurial Pursuits: Mom CEOs: Mom-Owned Home Businesses Are Empowering**

By: Vicki Salemi

When it comes to being a mom, let's face it - you're the CEO of the household. Sure, you've made sacrifices along the way, but it's time to act upon your own creativity, harness your own dreams, and allow your inner entrepreneur to emerge.

ParentSociety.com caught up with successful mommy inventors who, after "birthing" a business idea, made it their "other" baby.

**Creating a balance**

After Siobhan Winograd gave birth to her son in 2004, she knew returning to her former job as director of engineering and new product development at Tiffany & Co. was not an option. "I definitely wanted to go back but having a baby changed everything," she says. "Their leave policy was terrible and I knew that I could not balance my old career and a little baby."

After her daughter was born two years later, Siobhan reflected upon her professional past and noticed few opportunities for working women who wanted to continue being the primary caregiver at home. "That led me to start Womily -- a combination of women, work, and family." The signature jewelry line started with an idea she named "touch." "It is the translation of a fingerprint onto a charm or cufflink. The name was meant to signify that the fingerprint represents someone who has 'touched' your life."

Siobhan's jewelry business, primarily sold through Womily's website and Neiman Marcus, gives her the satisfaction of growing a successful business while maximizing time with her children. "Jobs from home can be done at all hours while little people sleep or are in school."

**Calling the shots**

Leslie Gatti agrees. As the owner of Start a Food Fight, an online trendy children's clothing boutique, she has the ability and flexibility to nurture both her kids and her budding business. The former schoolteacher says, "The focus is nurturing and growing this business to become all that it can and should be. I love being at home with my children and would love to continue working from home at least until they are in school full time."

Plus, being the CEO has its advantages. "I love being able to make all of the big decisions. Everything from hiring our PR agency and choosing the t-shirts to designing the website and creating the gift wrap...I love all of it!" By calling the shots, Leslie enjoys giving back to the community by donating funds from each sale to an organization that helps students and teachers in need.

According to Barbara Shapiro, CFP, CDFP and vice-president of HMS Financial, a financial group based in Dedham, Mass., bringing money into the household is empowering. "Owning your own business is creatively very satisfying. The sense of accomplishment in creating something, struggling to get it on its feet, and watching it flourish can only enhance one's self esteem." She adds, "Although being a mom is intrinsically rewarding, the idea of making money and all that it culturally implies is also very empowering."

**Lessons learned**

Plus, what better message could you send to your kids than setting the example of running the show? For Elise Nappi, co-owner of Planet Mom T-shirts, an online t-shirt business with savvy sayings like "Nanny deprived" and "Botox free," her kids have front row seats to the time and effort involved in running the show. "My older son will often suggest lines for our shirts...I think the biggest thing they've learned is that anything is possible if you put your mind to it. They've watched Planet Mom grow from an idea into a successful business and they've seen all the hard work that we've put into it."

Shapiro adds, "Children learn by example that nothing can be successful without hard work and discipline."

Now that's a concept to cash in on.

If you could start your own business, what would it be?

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