

Mom Incorporated: A Guide to Business + Baby

For women with a baby who want
to start a business



Mom Incorporated is the book that will help you figure out the ideal business to start; walk you through setting it up with a baby in the mix; and outline how to get the right support networks into place so you can run your business from home. This is your “how-to take your dream of running a business and make it a reality” guide.

We have the nitty-gritty details you need, from how to tap into your passion and create the business you WANT to the practical tips you NEED to get you started and keep you going even when you think you can't.

Also included in the book are interactive quizzes to help you assess what you'll need moving forward and handy workbooks and checklists with step-by-step instructions for every step of starting, running and growing your business so you don't forget a thing.

Read on for the real-life anecdotes that will have you nodding in understanding, and let us help you avoid the errors and move right to your life as a mom with a business.

You are Mom Incorporated!



About the Authors



Aliza Sherman and Danielle Smith

Aliza Sherman

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Aliza is a successful serial entrepreneur with over 20 years experience starting and running companies, particularly in the Internet space. In 1995, she founded the first full-service Internet company, Cybergrrl, Inc., and the first global Internet networking organization for women, Webgrrls International. In 2005, she founded

one of the first social media marketing agencies that became Conversify in 2008. In 2010, she started a mobile apps communications, marketing and development company called Mediaegg.

Aliza is the author of seven books including *PowerTools for Women in Business: 10 Ways to Succeed in Life and Work* (Entrepreneur Press); *The Everything Blogging Book* (Adams Media) and the upcoming *StreetWise ECommerce* (Adams Media). Her eighth book, *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Crowdsourcing*, will be out Spring 2011. She is an avid blogger and freelance writer, contributing to WorkitMom.com as "Entrepreneur Mom," WomenEntrepreneur.com on the Women at Work blog, WebWorkerDaily.com, *Entrepreneur* magazine, *Pink* magazine, and many other online and offline publications.

Aliza has been featured numerous times in *USA Today*, *US News & World Report*, CNN, CNBC, and been profiled in *People*, *Time*, among many others. When she started her Internet company Cybergrrl, Inc., *Newsweek* named her one of the "50 People Who Matter Most on the Internet." More recently, Fast Company named her one of the "Most Influential Women in Technology." Aliza was recently included on a number of lists including Forbes.com's "Top 20 Women for Entrepreneurs to Follow," Twitter Grader's "100 Most Powerful Women on Twitter," MyMediaInfo's "Top 10 Twittermoms," and Babble.com's "Top 50 Moms on Twitter."

Danielle Smith

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Danielle Smith is the wife of one of the funniest guys in the world and Mommy to two sweet and sassy small people. Danielle is blogger, vlogger, a video correspondent and public speaker. In her 'free time', she balances work as the founder and primary author of ExtraordinaryMommy.com. It was Danielle's desire to create a place where moms would remember that the work they are doing every day is extraordinary that was the impetus for starting her own business. She quickly developed a 'Give Good, Get Good' motto believing it is one of her primary responsibilities to teach her children, by example, to be good citizens of the world. She also hosts and produces Bliss TV, created Vlogging Tips for people looking to jump on camera and travels around the country to speak on a wide variety of topics ranging from video and vlogging to blogger/brand relationships, the use of social media, and the benefits of cause marketing. Danielle worked as a Correspondent at the 2010 Winter Olympic Games on behalf of Procter & Gamble and has championed the Fight Against Child Hunger – working directly with the Con Agra Foods Foundation. She has been featured in USA Today, Alive Magazine, and St. Louis Kids – as well on a variety of websites. She has been a featured contributor on MomItForward.com, DannyBrown: The Human Side of Media, The Social Side of Marketing., and The Rise to the Top.



Author Social Media Influence

Both Danielle and Aliza enjoy high profiles in social media, reaching predominantly women, moms, and both aspiring and seasoned small business owners, bloggers and vloggers. Combined, they directly reach over 26,500 friends, fans and followers not to mention the exponential reach they have because of the interconnected social graph.

Site	Aliza's following	Danielle's following
Twitter	9239	11, 962
Facebook profile	1420	1986
Facebook Page	591	286
LinkedIn	791	320
TOTAL Individual Fans:	12,041	14,554
TOTAL COMBINED FANS: 26,595		
TOTAL COMBINED REACH: 2,659,500		

If most people are connected with at least 100 other people on Facebook, Twitter and Facebook, Danielle and Aliza's combined reach is over 2.6 million people!

The Market

According to the Center for Women's Business Research, **there are more than 10 million women who own and lead businesses.** During the past 20 years, the number of majority women-owned firms has continued to grow at *TWICE* the rate of all businesses. There are 10.4 million woman-owned firms in the US representing 4 in 10 of privately- held businesses.

According to the US census bureau, **41% of women business owners are under the age of 45 compared to 36 % of male business owners.”** Women are starting businesses and families, and running and growing businesses with children at home, experiencing first- hand about the work/life juggle, dance and balancing act. Women start businesses for both lifestyle and financial reasons. Many run businesses from home to keep overhead low.

Mom Incorporated: A Guide to Business + Baby is for the millions of women who are birthing small business businesses after birthing babies and hoping for the best of both world while not just maintaining sanity but getting to success.

Other Business Books

A book that came out four years ago that addresses the entrepreneurial mom is *The Business Mom Guide Book: More Life, Less Overwhelm for Mom Entrepreneurs* by Terilee Harrison (Wyatt-MacKenzie Publishing (Sept 2006, ISBN 1932279369). This

seems more focused on work/life balance and less on business-specific topics. Some books address "stay-at-work" moms but not necessarily business owners such as *How She Really Does It: Secrets of Success from Stay-at-work Moms* by Wendy Sachs (Perseus Books Group, April 2006) and *This is How We Do It: A Practical Guide for the Working Mother* by Carol Evans (Plume, March 2007).

Other books address ways stay-at-home moms can make money such as *The Stay-at-Home Mom's Guide to Making Money from Home* by Liz Folder (Three Rivers Press, March 2000) or work-at-home mom issues surrounding working from home such as *The Work-At-Home Mom's Guide to Home Business: Stay at Home and Make Money with Wahm.com* by Cheryl Demas (I'm Expecting, July 2000); *Mompreneurs Online: Using the Internet for Work at Home Success* by Patricia Cobe (Pedigree Trade, Sept 2001); *Mompreneurs: A Mother's Practical Step by Step Guide to Work at Home Success* by Patricia Cobe (Pedigree Trade, June 2002) and *I Love My Life: A Mom's Guide to Working from Home* by Kristie Tamsevicius (Wyatt-MacKenzie Publishing, Sept 2003).

The women who need and will read ***Mom Incorporated*** want to work for themselves as sole proprietors and don't want to return to the 9-to-5 grind after they've had a baby. Or they are home with small children and need guidance on starting their own small business.



Marketing Opportunities

Taking a multimedia approach to marketing Mom Incorporated will yield better results than sticking to only traditional marketing avenues.

MomIncorporated.com

There will be a promotional Mom Incorporated website and informational blog to attract readers and encourage women to meet to discuss the book while providing support to one another. Aliza has reserved MomIncorporated.com.

Aliza and Danielle's Promotional Venues

Aliza's own sites and blogs where promoting Mom Incorporated can take place including:

AlizaSherman.com, SheKnowsSocial.com, Babyfruit, WorkitMom.com, WomenEntrepreneur. In addition to ExtraordinaryMommy.com, Danielle is launching DanielleSmithMedia in January 2011.

Mom Incorporated and Social Networking

Mom Incorporated should take full advantage any appropriate social networking site for moms or businesswomen. Aliza Sherman has been at the cutting edge of social networking and online marketing since the mid 1990s and can bring her expertise and skills to develop compelling, effective ways to building community around the book. Danielle has been at the forefront of mommy vloggers and the moms community while building her own on ExtraordinaryMommy.com.

Mom Incorporated Podcasts

With the ease of multimedia publishing and the proliferation of social multimedia channels, podcasts and videocasts are a great way to build buzz, grow a loyal audience and promote a related book.

Aliza is an experienced podcaster including hosting the Digital Marketer (<http://digitalmarketer.quickanddirtytips.com>) and Zen of Being Digital (<http://zenofdigital.com>). She is also an experienced radio and television producer.

Danielle is a top vlogger and former TV news anchor. Together, they can quickly and affordably produce a *Mom Incorporated* podcast to attract attention for the book and reach busy entrepreneurial moms who may not have time to browse content-heavy websites. Women can download the podcasts via iTunes to their mobile devices and bring Mom Incorporated with them wherever they go.

Mom Incorporated Blog Tour

Aliza and Danielle can be guest bloggers or be interviewed on countless blogs written by and for moms, women entrepreneurs and other relevant audiences who would be interested in reading *Mom Incorporated*. A blog tour takes place within a specific timeframe optimal for promoting the book and new posts appear on blogs worldwide during the course of the "tour." This is an extremely cost-effective way to market the book, particularly because the target audience for the

book is more inclined to read blogs or blog themselves rather than read typical websites with longer articles.

Mom Incorporated Bylined Articles

As a regular freelance contributor to national publications, Aliza can compose relevant articles related to the entrepreneurial woman who is a new mom for publications ranging from *Parenting* and *Parents* to *Mothering* and *Brain, Child*. Both she and Danielle are skilled in writing queries and landing writing assignments and could contribute relevant content that can be published in diverse magazines to reach a wide audience and further promote the book.

NPR Commentary and Radio Appearances

Radio is still a powerful promotional tool for books.

As a segment producer and guest host for several public radio affiliate stations and shows including "Marketplace" from PRI, Aliza is familiar with producing commentaries for radio and has contacts to facilitate getting them aired. Her years on the radio as both interviewer and interviewee make her radio appearances a success.

Danielle co-created, produced and co-hosted the Internet Radio Show, *Why Moms Matter* focusing each week on the special role that moms play in their families lives and highlighting both the ordinary and extraordinary stories of

women around the country. Danielle has also been featured on a number of radio networks and shows, including NPR, MomTalkRadio, The MommyMentor, The Kid's Doctor Radio Show, and many others.

Television Appearances

In addition to being a "photogenic author," Aliza is comfortable in front of the camera. She is vibrant, articulate, personable and approachable – all qualities that lend themselves to a successful on air appearance. In the past, she has appeared numerous times on CNN, CNN-FN, CNBC, and MSNBC and has been featured on the CBS Evening News, the CBS Early Show and shows on the Discovery Channel, CNET and PBS.

As an award-winning television news anchor and reporter, Danielle gained both media and on-camera skills. Danielle comes alive on camera and has a gift for interviewing and for understanding what an interviewer needs. She understands what it takes to capture an audience's attention. She is comfortable on air, articulate, and has been featured on *The CBS Early Show*, *CNN Headline News*, *Fox News*, as well as a number of local affiliates.

She was one of the original hosts of MomTV and has tackled individual live shows for Mingle Media, most recently drawing in an engaged audience of more than 7000 people, making her the most watched online show during that time fame. She was also chosen - out of nearly 150 interviewers - to help *Rise To*

The Top Entrepreneur, David Siteman Garland, launch his brand new book by conducting an hour-long, television-style interview.

Danielle was also hired as a correspondent for the 140 Conference at the Kodak Theater in Los Angeles as well as for Procter & Gamble's "Thank You, Mom Campaign" at the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics. She will also represent Capital One at the Capital One Bowl Game on January 1st, 2011.

Speaking Engagements

Aliza speaks often to audiences of professional women, entrepreneurs and moms. She has appeared at major women's conferences across the country including BlogHer, Blogalicious, Blissdom, and Type-A Mom as well as Governor's conferences for women in New York and California, Women in Technology Inc (WITI), National Association of Female Executives (NAFE), American Women's Economic Development (AWED), and numerous international women's business summits. She has spoken at major universities including Harvard, Columbia, NYU, Simmons College Graduate School of Management, Rutgers, and Mills College for women. Aliza is a sought-after and popular motivational speaker covering topics ranging from business and Internet to women's issues.

Danielle is comfortable in front of 10 or 10,000 and has a powerful way of connecting with her audience. She has spoken at major conferences across the

country including Blissdom, Type-A Mom, the Evolution of Women in Social Media, Creative Alliance, Social Fresh, St. Louis Women in Media and Windy City Social She covers topics ranging from Video and Vlogging to Brand/Blogger Relationships and Media Training to the best uses of Cause Marketing.

Both Danielle and Aliza can work creatively with any publisher's public relations team to come up with additional ideas for marketing the book. Both are available for media interviews and appearances to actively and enthusiastically promote

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Mom Incorporated Table of Contents

Preface

Introduction

Chapter 1: Picking the Right Business.

- **What makes you tick?** Have you come up with the Big Business Idea? Or are you just looking for something that is aligned with your interests? Depending on what you feel passionate about, there is probably a related business opportunity for you. What are you good at? If you look for a business venture where you can showcase your talents and skills, you'll hit the ground running.

- **Time After Time.** When can you work? You'll need a business that offers you the flexibility you need and the work schedule that suits both your needs and the needs of your baby.
- **“I Can Do Whatever I Want.”** Why do you want to start a business? To be your own boss? Have flexible hours? Do whatever you want? Here's a reality check to what having a business really means.
- **Show Me The Money.** The business you decide to pursue should take into account at a minimum, the amount of income you need to make but also think about how much you'd like to make once financial needs are met.

Chapter 2: Try a Web-powered business.

- **Freelance as a business.** There are many things you can do as a freelancer or independent contractor. Here are just a few ideas that leverage the Web.
 - Transcription
 - Translation
 - Internet research
 - Blogging
 - Online community management
- **Virtual consulting works.** If you've got a talent for organizing, for getting the word out, for social networking, even design or

development, working from home

- PR and marketing
- Social media marketing
- Virtual assisting
- **Sell something online.** Maybe you make things or maybe you have a knack for picking things that other people like. There are ways to sell things online through more than just eBay.
 - Affiliate stores
 - Arts and crafts
 - Products

Chapter 3: Start Planning

- **Business plan basics.** Every business needs a plan, and here's how to write one quickly and easily using software, online templates or free expert advice. Your business plan is your roadmap to business success.
- **Getting licensed.** We'll help you figure out the legal aspects of starting a home-based business in your area.
- **Structuring your business.** Easy ways to decide on a business structure and ways to do it yourself on a shoestring budget.
- **Build your team.** From a good bookkeeper and banker to a good attorney to a board of advisors, you may be home but you can't do it

alone – or at least you shouldn't.

Chapter 4: Setting Up Your Workspace

- **Define your baby space.** Your whole family needs clear definitions of what is work space and what is baby and family space. You need to draw lines, even if not literal, so you can keep separation – and peace – in your household.
- **Create your office.** Carving out a workspace can be harder in smaller quarters, but regardless of space issues, there are ways to make an office feel like an office.
- **The well-equipped workplace.** Beyond making space, having the right tools and equipment at your disposal is important for productivity.
- **Out-of-home spaces.** There will be times you need to work out of the home – for clients or even for your sanity. Learn about your options.

Chapter 5: Arranging Mommy Help.

- **Know Your Limits** You can't do everything –create the business plan, do the books, make the product, tackle the social media, master the html on the new website.... But you are smart enough to surround yourself with people who are smarter than you in some of these areas. For some of these services, you can trade their services for yours. For others, you'll have to pay. We'll explain who and what is worth it.
- **Help with baby.** You may want to run your business from home to be

with your baby, but you need to have some support like a part-time sitter coming over a few days a week or a few hours a day to give you some breathing room. This is a good thing.

- **Help around the house.** Let's see: mother, wife, homemaker, business owner. Something's got to give. Here are some ideas for getting the help you need so you can get everything else done.
- **Crowd workers and virtual assistants.** There are people out there ready to help take a work load off you if you let them. They take on the busy work to free you up for the bigger stuff. Here's how to find them and work with them.

Chapter 6: Building Your Business.

- **Create your brand.** Tips and tricks that every marketer knows for building your personal and professional brand, especially using social media channels like Facebook and Twitter. How to put your best foot forward in cyberspace to benefit your new business venture.
- **Leverage technology.** If you're working from home, you need to leverage all the Web has to offer to run your business smoothly. From project and task management tools to virtual collaborative workspaces; we'll feature the best of the best tools that take the pain out of staying organized, productive and sane.
- **Getting the right clients.** Depending on the type of business you start, you need to be selective about the type of clients you bring on.

How customer-intensive is your business? The right customers can make all the difference in the world.

- **Maintaining a professional image.** How do you put your best business foot forward when you're mostly working from home in your pajamas? Learn ways to project professionalism whether at home or out in public.
- **Promoting Yourself** How to promote your company and what you offer to bring in clients. How to manage your customer relations and provide top-notch customer service.

Chapter 7: Setting Reasonable Expectations

- **Don't Call Oprah Just yet.** Sure you have big plans. I mean HUGE plans. But take Oprah off your speed dial. Those 'overnight success' stories you keep hearing about are just like leprechauns. Cute and intriguing – but has anyone ever really seen one? Success is a combination of hard work, brilliant planning and a dose of luck. We'll help you with all three.
- **Reasonable Doesn't Mean Small** It would be easy to say your goal is to make \$50 your first year. I bet that's a goal you'd reach. But your plans are bigger than the goals you set are, in fact truly reasonable. Will it take you a year to establish yourself and make a solid profit? Or longer? Think big, but be realistic.
- **So What DO You Do? Answering THAT Question** You'll be asked at

dinner parties, on play dates and naturally when you run into those people from high school. You need an answer. One that means business and makes you proud. Not everyone will understand your new venture, but you will answer in such a way, they can't help but respect it.

Chapter 8: The Balance Between Work and Life

- **Setting work/life boundaries.** Is there such a thing as work/life balance? Or is it a juggle? However you look at it, here are some tips on how to handle it.
- **Getting past the guilt.** Will you feel guilty sometimes because dinner's not on the table, you haven't paid enough attention to your baby or your partner, and you're on deadline for a client? Yes. But knowing this is normal and you are not alone can make all the difference in the world.
- **Dealing with an identity crisis.** Sure you're used to wearing multiple hats and not just as a business owner. But who are you anyway? Here's how to cope with feelings of being overwhelmed by all those roles you're playing.
- **Giving yourself a break.** You've heard the adage that if you don't take care of yourself, no one else will. Well, take that to heart because unless you take some time to yourself, you won't be good to anyone and your relationships – and your business – will suffer. You need to

come first. When you're happy and healthy, anything is possible.



PREFACE:

You're in the midst of another midnight feeding. You are struck by the quiet, the peace, the connection between you and your little one who is looking right at you. And then you suddenly hear a voice...

"There must be something more."

Who said that? Your eyes get bigger. Your baby's eyes mirror yours as if to say "I heard it, too."

You hear it again.

"There is something more."

Well, now you are starting to get a little nervous. You glance to the windows: closed. You listen past the sound machine: nothing. You push yourself from the rocking chair, at the risk of disrupting a peaceful feeding. Your husband? Still snoring.

But the voice sounds again. And this time you realize: It is the sound of your heart. Holding your baby in your arms, you are content, but there is a part of you that is searching for something else.

Something that belongs to just you.

You have no desire to return to the 9-to-5 grind, working for someone else. You do want to be present for as many extraordinary moments in your child's life.

What if you started your own business? What if you worked from home? Could you do it? How would you do it? And could you really find a way to handle it all?

Why, yes. Yes, you can.

This is a conversation you may be having with yourself while holding your baby in your arms. Or, like me, you may already have two children at home and your desire for “something more” may have been prompted by a life-changing event, one of those moments that smacks you in the face and reminds you that life is short and that you do need to live your dreams. Regardless of the reason, if you are having the urge to birth a new business after birthing a child, this is the book for you.

We have the nitty-gritty details you need, from how to tap into your passion and create the business you WANT to the practical tips you NEED to get you started and keep you going even when you think you can't. You know there are moms who have managed to pull this off and some who have made mistakes along the way. Also included in the book are interactive quizzes to help you assess what

you'll need moving forward and handy workbooks and checklists with step-by-step instructions for every step of starting, running and growing your business so you don't forget a thing.

Read on for the real-life anecdotes that will have you nodding in understanding, and let us help you avoid the errors and move right to your life as a mom with a business.

You are Mom Incorporated!



INTRODUCTION

Danielle's Story

A few ago, I was floating through my days. I was happy as a mom, content that I was giving my kids all the attention and love they needed. But I knew my soul needed a little stirring. I ignored the voices encouraging me to pursue one dream or another until one Friday night in March 2007.

That was the night of the car accident. Driving home from my first 'night out' after having my second child, I was hit by a girl who ran a red light. My car spun through the intersection, hit a curb and rolled down an embankment. I was totally conscious the whole time. I called my husband while I was hanging, nearly upside down from my seat belt.

I walked away from that accident and into a 'new' me. This new version of me vowed to listen to her inner voices, to respond to the soul stirrings, to start something of my very own. I decided I didn't want to work for anyone else (unless they were 3 foot 3 in fuzzy pajamas) and I wanted whatever I was doing *to matter*.

This was my passion coming up for air.

Now, chances are, you have the opportunity to listen to your 'soul stirrings without the perks of a released air bag and a totaled car. You simply have to pay attention, rather than hushing her and sending her back to her corner.

Let's see what ***your*** 'Inner Mom Incorporated' has to say...

Aliza's Story

My business “birth story” is a little different from Danielle's but I also started my first business after a life-changing event. I was held up at gunpoint and kidnapped with my boyfriend at the time. We managed to escape and later managed to catch them all and see them all go to jail, but the incident shook me to my core.

So it was staring down the barrel of a 9mm gun that made me realized that I didn't want to miss out on the chance to pursue my own dreams and that working for someone else wasn't going to get me any closer to making something of my own. I started an Internet company, Cybergrrl, Inc., with no money in the bank and nothing more than a great idea, a laptop, the Internet and some hot pink business cards I made at Kinko's.

Fast forward 12 years later. I had started my fifth company – a social media marketing agency - had great clients, loved what I was doing each day, then had a baby. I wasn't prepared for the difficulties I would have post partum, but finally came out on the other side of major struggles to grow my business, bring on two business partners. Now I have a Pre-K and am starting a new, home-based venture.

I try to learn from my past mistakes. So what have I learned after all of these years?

Don't wait for something drastic to happen before you do what you love.

Yes, you can start a business from home, with a baby in your midst.

Don't ever hesitate to ask for help.

No, you can't do it all at once, but you can do it all, one step at a time.

What do you want out of life and work?

As Danielle said, let's see what **your** 'Inner Mom Incorporated' has to say...

SAMPLE CHAPTER 1

What Makes You Tick?

This is your moment of truth. Are you ready to throw caution to the wind and pursue that dream, that BIG IDEA? Do you know how to get kids to eat vegetables? Have you created a homing device for missing socks or mittens? Do you take amazing photographs of children? Make the BEST.FUDGE.EVER? Design websites that can make the savviest Internet user drool?

Can you create a business around that passion?

Why of course you can.

Look at Joanna Parker. Before her daughter was born, she was was an avid knitter. She'd knit her baby-to-be many things, including a ton of baby socks. She wanted her baby to only be in hand-knit socks. After her daughter was born, she quickly discovered – in the dead of winter - that hand-knit socks don't really stay on babies' feet. Realizing the knit socks wouldn't work, she sewed her baby girl a pair of baby shoes... the shoes fit, they stayed on, her feet were covered and most importantly warm in the winter.

Joanna made a pair of shoes for a friend, then for some internet friends, and then set up an Etsy shop online. The next fall, she did a few craft fairs as her Etsy shop - Kaya's Kloset - grew and grew. Today, she attends fairs most weekends from May to December and has a dedicated website for customers to place orders as well as a growing wholesale business.

“It's more than a full-time job being a mom and a business owner,” says Joanna, “But both are so incredibly fulfilling that I wouldn't give either up!”

So we ask you...

What do you want to be when you grow up?

You used to be able to answer that question as a child, right? Consider yourself all grown up now. What do you want to be?

What is your passion?

This is the part where you play smart. What are you good at? Are you uber-organized? So crafty that your friends are always asking you to decorate for the

next party? Did you manage to pick up on HTML like it was the language your parents used to speak to you when you were a child?

What are you good at?

In Chapter 2, we have some suggestions for how you can put those skills to work for you.

Time After Time

Before you start singing the Cyndi Lauper song to yourself, let's assume you have all sorts of time to make your business dream a reality. You need to sit down and map it out. Maybe that little angel of yours sleeps a lot, but when you tally her naps, she sleeps for about an hour and a half in the morning and 2 hours in the afternoon. Does 3 and a half hours give you all the time you need to start and run this brand new business?

Before you get discouraged, here are a few questions you need to answer:

- How many hours a week will it take for you to start this business?
_____ (See Chapter 3 where we walk you through creating a business plan and other first steps for setting up your business.)
- What days of the week you would like to work?

- What time of day are you planning to dedicate to this new endeavor? _____
- How will you be able to get any work done with your kids around?

Amee Quiriconi started her business in 2003 when her son was just a toddler. She actually invented a way to make countertops out of recycled materials. This type of labor-intensive business required not only time to research but a large space to work. She made sure that her workspace was always safe and conducive for her son to be around her - and later her daughter. She also found that including them in her work was her best option.

“I engaged my son in my business,” says Amee. “He has my engineering mind, and it was easier to work with him there when I was able to let him 'help' around the shop, even at 3 and 4 years old.”

Amee taught her son how to put the stickers on her samples, how to shred paper, and other small, easy and safe tasks.

You, too, may opt to work around your family's schedule.

Danielle's schedule: On more than one occasion, my husband has accused me of being nocturnal. I have been known to work until 2 and 3 am - that's often when I do my very best work. I'm the kind of girl who needs to back her way into creativity. It is impossible for me to flip a creative switch that allows me to start producing stellar work. I'm especially prone to distraction if I know someone might need me. And if anyone in the house is awake, that might become more than likely. So my productivity on labor-intensive projects during the day is suspect. And I'm not alone. We moms are a resourceful bunch, and we know we can't subsist on a mere three hours of sleep a night. So, we find a way to make it work.

Aliza's schedule: I can't work in the wee hours. By 4pm, I'm mentally exhausted. I've arranged all kinds of day care, child care, babysitting and pre-school situations to help keep my daughter occupied during core work hours so I can tend to my business. Even so, there never seems to be enough time in the day to get to everything.

My husband has really emphasized how important it is to him that we both put our work aside in the evenings, have dinner together as a family, and then unwind and spend time together. He bristles when I pull my laptop out for a quick peek at the emails I didn't get to earlier. So I do carve out time occasionally on weekends, pre-arranging with my husband and getting a babysitter so he can do things he wants to get done. Sometimes, I'll wake up an hour or two earlier than my husband and daughter just to get in some quiet productive time.

Like Danielle said, we moms are a resourceful bunch!

The important question you need to answer isn't simply, "when is the best time to work?" but, "when is the best time *for you* to work?"



Mom, Inc. Tip:

Take naps during the day and learn to get work done on off hours. You'd be surprised how alert and sharp you can be at 3:00 a.m. if you've had a good nap the day prior. Your clients won't have any idea (or care) when you did the work, as long as you get it done in time!

Natasha, owner of a PR Business



"I Can Do Whatever I Want"

Starting a business means you can do whatever you want, right?

Well...yes and no.

Right now, you might have stars in your eyes and are thinking being your own boss, not having to answer to anyone, and having lots of flexibility. You are practically giddy with the thought of making your own schedule. But let us break it down for you.

You can be your own boss. You don't answer to anyone.

You do have to answer to yourself. Your potential clients. And also to the family that is supporting you on your quest to start your own business. That responsibility is a pretty big one.

Danielle's view: One of the reasons I started my own business was to have full control of my own schedule. I didn't want to answer to someone else. I have the flexibility to work around the important moments in my life. I don't miss soccer games or holiday pageants. But it does mean I've missed out on more than a few precious hours of sleep to make up for it. This may be a choice you have to make.

Aliza's view: I must confess that I, too, love the flexibility of having my own business. Having had both sole proprietorships and larger companies with anywhere from half a dozen to several dozen team members, I've seen both sides and must admit that I get antsy and frustrated in a more structured environment. Being my own boss and setting my own schedule as well as not having to worry about the livelihood of lots of other people works best for me. But one thing that isn't always easy is staying motivated. To start and run your own business from home, you need to be a self-starter and go-getter type because you won't have a boss looking over your shoulder to make sure you're really working.

While you can do whatever you want, if you are looking to operate a business successfully, you will have to include a schedule for yourself. And more importantly, you need to stick to it. We hear the boss can be a bear, even if the boss is you.

Show Me the Money

We are assuming you want to make some money with this entrepreneurial endeavor. Don't we all? This isn't going to be a hobby that might make you a little cash on the side. Entrepreneur Carol Roth calls that a 'jobby,' not a business.

You aren't reading this book because you want a jobby, right? You are reading on because you want to create an honest-to-goodness business – something of your very own that will provide you with a steady income or help you contribute to your household income while affording you the ability to work on something you love.

Repeat after us: "I want a profitable business."

Only you can decide if you are looking for 'fun money' – money to take your family on trips and buy some of the things you have always 'wanted - or contributing 50% to your current household income – or maybe even becoming the household breadwinner to allow your partner to pursue a dream.

Danielle on money: When I first decided to start my own business, my financial planning was vague. "Vague" is the word I use if I'm being kind. This is where you get to learn from my mistake. I actually said to myself, "By the time Cooper (my youngest son) is in school full-time, I would like to be a financial contributor to my family."

In my head, I knew that meant I wanted to take over a large portion of our bills so that my husband could pursue a job he enjoyed. Also tied up in that was my desire to feel like a "contributor." As a woman who didn't get married until she

was 30, I had plenty of experience taking care of myself and paying my own bills. It felt odd to no longer see a paycheck with my name on it.

But when I started my business, I never came up with an actual number in my head, and I never wrote one down. That was a mistake.

Aliza on money: I've always started businesses thinking "if I can just make enough to pay the bills," but over the years, I've learned that isn't good enough. When I brought on my first business partner for my last company, I was grateful for her incredible business savvy because she helped me see that the numbers in my head – if I even could come up with some – were much too small potatoes. In the first quarter after she joined me, she tripled the company revenues.

These days, I'm back on my own, and I find myself struggling again with thinking too small. Yet I know that I want three specific things out of this business:

1. To help get my family out of debt;
2. To be able to save for retirement and actually have a savings account with money in it;
3. To afford to travel with my family without a trip putting us deep in the hole and stressing us out.

So I've put numbers to not just meet but to surpass these goals, and I'm setting up the company to not just sustain itself but to have a big payout. And I keep repeating to myself: "Think Big. Think Big."

How much money do you want to or need to make? And when would you like to start seeing a profit? Write it down now.

I want to make: \$ _____

I need to make: \$ _____

I want to start seeing a profit by: _____

You will need these numbers in Chapter 3 when you start to create your actual business plan.

Well done!

- You have identified your passion.
- You are thinking about how to make your time work for you.
- You have measured your financial needs and know how much money you would like to make.

A few baby steps step down, many more to go. One step at a time.

