

Work/life « Supermum to the rescue!



Michelle with Belle and Alexander.
Photo by Jasmina Stirling

If you have sprogs, you'll know the many and varied duties of parenthood require something approaching superpowers.

No one knows this more than Michelle Aston, 35, mum to Belle, who is three and a half and Alexander who is 20 months, from Witney. While on maternity leave, Michelle created Bathtime & Beyond organic range for babies. This became her own online business and she left her project management job for Thames Valley Police.

"As a mum to starting a business, I realised how hard it is and most marketing is expensive," says Michelle. "I came across Supermum Surrey, a website and Facebook page to provide a platform for mums. I loved the idea and Louise (the founder and my now business partner) was looking to expand so it was too good an opportunity to miss."

The directory includes mothers who wear all kinds of hats, from party planners to interior designers, including photographer Jasmina Stirling, who is mum to three-year-old son Kingsley. Jasmina says: "I think there's a big

army of mummies who work very hard while children are in school, while they nap or watch an episode of *In the Night Garden!* That is, at least, how I used to get time for my editing. I love my job and I often feel how nice it is to get that little break where I can do something else. "Oxfordshire Supermum brings us all together. If you're well organised, you can juggle work with motherhood and that is a great reward for all effort you put in."

Many of the 'supermums' use the directory to promote hobbies such as craft and baking. Michelle adds: "Like me, the mums are drawn to the flexibility of having their own business. My Facebook page grew quickly 2,000 'likes' in three months and we already have more than 60 businesses signed up. It's rewarding as I get messages on a daily basis from people wanting to find out more."

● For more details, visit oxfordshire.supermum.org

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