

Set your own balance



Courtney Sargent/The Gazette

Tammy Bayer does paperwork in her office while her daughter, Ella, 5, plays on her computer Thursday at BabyMatters in Cedar Rapids. Bayer started her business in 2006 and has set the hours around Ella's preschool schedule.

By Carly Weber

The Gazette

CEDAR RAPIDS — From the time Tammy and Kevin Bayer decided to start their family until seven months into their pregnancy, there was one plan. Tammy would take the summer off and go back to teaching special education in the fall.

"I intended on going back until February or March — then I really started thinking about it. That's when it became real to me that there was going to be this little person around," said Bayer, 33, of Cedar Rapids. "Once I actually was pregnant and anticipating sending my kid to child care, it just became very real to me. I decided that I didn't want to go back to work."

This conflict between motherhood and career is not a new one. It is, though,

'Mompreneurs' find way to blend careers, families

a dilemma with an increasingly popular solution.

Instead of returning to the corporate world and its less-than-kid-friendly 9-to-5 schedule, more women are opening their own businesses. These "mompreneurs," or mom entrepreneurs, trade business lunches for the ability to have a picnic in the park with their kids and don't miss the last-minute scramble to find day care when the sitter is sick.

"It doesn't have to be 'I'm either a mom or a businesswoman.' So many women are dissatisfied with those two options. That's why so many moms are choosing to open their own business,"

said Lisa Druxman, a mompreneur and columnist on the subject for Entrepreneur.com.



Lisa Druxman
Mompreneur
columnist

owning her own business has worked out well for Bayer. As a doula, birth assistant and owner of BabyMatters (soon to be called

Birth, Baby and Beyond) in Cedar Rapids, she arranges her businesses around her 5-year-old daughter Ella's schedule.

"I'm able to do what I want to do. It may not always be the best decision for business. But right now that's not my priority," Bayer said.

She's open three days a week. On two of those, Ella comes to work with Mom.

"I still consider myself to be a stay-at-home mom, or she's a come-to-work kid," said Bayer. "I'm still the main caregiver. Nobody else has her more than I do."

Maggie Jackson also made a career change when she realized she no longer wanted put in long night and weekend hours away from home and her son Will, then 6, as dean of

► MOMS, PAGE 7B

Moms/Business skills overlap parenting skills

► FROM PAGE 8B

admissions for Mount Mercy College.

"But I knew I didn't want to just stay at home," said Jackson, 40, of Cedar Rapids.

So she started thinking about things she enjoyed doing and The Organized Life, an organizing and coaching service, was born.

"I love it. Not every day is

easy. This is not utopia," she said. "But it is a great solution for women who want to be their own boss. And have a better handle on balancing their family with their career."

A lot of moms, like Jackson, end up owning a business doing something they're passionate about, said Druxman, who started Stroller Strides, a stroller-based fitness com-

pany, seven years ago.

Mompreneurs also can bring skills learned as mothers to the table.

"Managing a business is not that different from managing a family," she said. "Mompreneurs are everything from a cook to a housekeeper to a friend, a lover, a CEO, a fix-it person."

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