

Enterprising Business Enterprising Mums

There are no illusions of a glamorous lifestyle of 'work at home mums' for the owners of Lola & Ben®.

While previous governments have implemented policies which encouraged mums back into the paid work force. There is another sector of families (primarily mums) in New Zealand which run home based businesses around the needs of family life, choosing to pave their own way in business and employment whilst using their creative skills after starting families. While these businesses range from small and emerging to large businesses, the skill sets and the development of capital of these business owners are a valuable contribution to the economy with The OECD concluding that a "vigorous" SME (small and medium sized enterprise) sector makes a positive contribution to economic growth¹. Small business, with five or fewer fulltime employees represents 89% of New Zealand business².

Lola & Ben® is an online retail store which showcases only the best New Zealand made baby and child products. Each of the 12 brands that Lola & Ben® stock are from original businesses that have been inspired by and for children and run around children on a daily basis. For these businesses, it's a juggle to meet the demands of family and business on a daily basis, many have found that by working together makes the demands on advertising and marketing easier and more efficient in a cost effective manner. Lola & Ben® promotes brands collectively in an online retail store.

While many 'work at home mum' businesses are portrayed as being glamorous and easy. Sigi Schmitt & Trina Parker owners of Lola & Ben® are well aware of the daily struggle to meet deadlines, whilst enjoying the challenge, and constantly learning. After developing the Lola & Ben® brand of merino baby sleeping bags, they realized that there where many small and emerging similar businesses in the child market.

To boost the collaborative nature of their business Sigi & Trina since extended their range of products on their online store to that of 12 brands which all complement each other. Collectively these 12 brands create a large online presence and help each other in a collaborative manner. Lola & Ben® are proud to showcase their 'brands' at every opportunity and are going to debut at the 2009 Auckland Parent & Child Show with some of their most popular products.

Visitors to the show will be surprised at the beautiful products that are made here in NZ, along with the selection and the quality, attributes that are sought after by new parents and parents to be. Lola & Ben® offers a complete and convenient online shopping service, while taking opportunities like the Parent and Child show to meet their customers in person. This year customers can view the functional and quality Lola & Ben® Baby Sleeping Bags, Pipichild Merino and Cotton Clothing, Unido Designer Baby Slings and Nudey!Rudey! Modern Cloth Nappies to name a few.

For more information please contact Trina Parker on 0274872524 info@lolaben.co.nz or www.lolaben.co.nz

¹ Small Business in NZ Research Paper <http://www.parliament.nz/en-NZ/ParlSupport/ResearchPapers/d/8/1/d813612035774864a779a2f00feebb66.htm>

² Small Business in NZ Research Paper <http://www.parliament.nz/en-NZ/ParlSupport/ResearchPapers/d/8/1/d813612035774864a779a2f00feebb66.htm>