



# Redefine your future

*When her husband unexpectedly walked out on her while she was pregnant, Jane Maudsley needed to find a way to balance her responsibilities as a single mum, with raising a newborn.*

**T**wenty-nine-year-old Jane Maudsley, could never have envisaged there was a problem, as her baby bump grew with the new life growing inside. As with most expectant parents, each exciting milestone was an anticipation of the baby they couldn't wait to meet. Or so she thought. Until one day her husband announced he was leaving.

"I was married and pregnant when he walked out on us, unexpectedly. I was left to pay the mortgage and make ends meet." Jane explains. "Trying to cope emotionally after a traumatic marriage break-up, with a baby on the way, was incredibly difficult. I had to find a way to readjust, if I was to survive day-to-day, and in the long-run, financially."

## **Don't let life challenges define you!**

Initially trained as an opera singer, Jane was then giving children singing lessons. She quickly gaining an outstanding reputation at the independent schools and music departments across her local area. "If I was being honest," she admits, "I actually felt like a second-class citizen in most staffrooms, completely undervalued as a member of staff. But I knew how important the arts were, and knew they enhanced the confidence of children through the skills they learned."



Jane Maudsley founder of *Little Voices*

This is when the seed of a dream started growing in Jane's imagination. One which allowed her to re-align her focus, and redefine her future, instead of allowing the breakdown of her marriage and single-mum status hold her back. "I was a new, and a single, mum, I needed to pay the bills, but with the flexibility to work around my new daughter. And I wanted something I would enjoy doing – I just couldn't imagine still being sat at a piano with a silver bun in my hair, teaching singing one-to-one, at aged 70! So, I started *Little Voices*."

### You are responsible for making your own dreams come true!

Jane decided the only way forward was to reinterpret the way her life should look. It's important to take back control, when you think your future is heading in a particular direction, to find it suddenly knocked back so suddenly. For Jane, rather than assuming a 'woe-is-me' mentality, she grabbed life in both hands, and made her own dream come true.

"I started my own business, so I could make my work fit my life!" she says. "I started off by running classes one evening a week, at first. It was hard juggling my other work, being a mum to a young baby, and starting a business, but I was privileged to have a fantastic support network around me. And it paid off! After about four years, working incredibly long hours, late into the night and early in the morning, my business was working well!! I wasn't ready to stop though – it was time to think about my growth plan."



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### Demonstrating success for others to follow

After researching viable options for business development, Jane found the solution lay in franchising. “Initially, this was never really about franchising, but about how we could help even more children reach their potential, through the performing arts training we offered. But I could clearly see it would work for our model. It was important to really tie-down the right structure we would need, if we were going to grow *Little Voices* nationally, whilst maintaining the brand, excellent reputation and high standards.” She explains.

Ten years on, and *Little Voices* is now one of the UK’s most successful performing arts training franchises, dedicated to helping children reach their full potential in drama and singing, in almost 50 locations nationally. Offering outstanding tuition, expert guidance, support and traditional methods of teaching drama and singing, *Little Voices* has helped children grow in confidence, and even to pursue a life on the stage.

“From a difficult situation, and a desire to be there for my new daughter, I have never felt more empowered when I look back over the way *Little Voices* started.”

#### Could franchising work for you?

If you would like to know about how franchising could help grow your business, or make your own dreams come true through our range of franchise business opportunities, please visit the EWIF website, or email: [info@ewif.org](mailto:info@ewif.org)

