

NEW MUM FELT SUPPORTED TO GUIDE HER BUSINESS THROUGH THE PANDEMIC

DEBBIE MITCHELL

Razzamataz Franchisee - Carlisle and Dumfries

#FRANCHISINGSTRONGERTOGETHER



Running a business and balancing early years motherhood, may seem like an impossible dream, at the best of times. But, what more could you want than the freedom to work around your baby's sleep routine, and the opportunity to enjoy time with your new-born, when they are alert and giggly?

For Debbie Mitchell, who runs a theatre school in Scotland, the anticipation of meeting her new son was in danger of being overshadowed by challenges her business, face. "As the owner of Razzamataz Carlisle and Dumfries, I had reached a stage of my career where I was working a 4-day week. I loved the freedom to choose when I worked and would balance everything to ensure the classes ran well and students enjoyed the high-level theatre training my teachers gave them. Don't get me wrong, it was always a juggle to run my business; keeping work and my homelife separated, especially whilst pregnant. When the Pandemic started, and restrictions were brought in, my business took a bit of a hit. Not to mention I was also heavily pregnant, and about to give birth."

Didn't feel alone

Debbie, and her team, were not alone in dealing with the impact of the UK-wide restrictions. Most of those who run a business in the children's sector were hard hit by the lockdown. But, Debbie belongs to a supportive network, as Razzamataz is a hugely successful franchise. "When we went into the first lockdown, the Head Office very quickly supported us to pivot our classes online. Being part of a wider franchise, I knew I wasn't alone in trying to work out what to do – especially with the legislations around our sector being so fluid. We were all trying to adapt together, learning how to use Zoom for classes, and doing our bit to help families survive the lockdown."

As the first lockdown started to lift and the arrival of her son was imminent, like most new mums, Debbie couldn't wait to meet him. As many of us can identify with, the pandemic led her to reflect on her future. "After Alfie, was born, in June, I realised I needed to re-think how I could work more efficiently. Taking the business online, meant I had time to look deeply at what was working, and where we can improve our face-to-face teaching."

By combining this personal realisation for change, with the strength of being part of a resilient franchise network, and the support of Head Office, I believe Razzamataz has come through stronger."

Time for growth!

So much so, Debbie is expanding her business! "I've employed an assistant principal, who is supporting me with the day-to-day management of the business. This is especially important to me as a new mum, and as a business woman who is about to purchase a second Razzamataz territory! I feel I've gained appreciation of other business owners in Scotland, so have been building connections in my community, even with the local Council. I truly value the support of my partner, as he encourages me to take my business forward."

Debbie, knows she is one of the lucky ones. "I believe, with everything we've been through over the last year, if I'd not been part of Razzamataz, my business wouldn't have survived. Having a baby and with all the changes and uncertainty, I think I would have been forced to look for another career. It would have been too overwhelming to have coped with it all, on my own. Having Razzamataz franchisees, and the Head Office, living and breathing the same thing as me, has been invaluable."

Franchising Stronger Together

At EWiF, we are proud of the way our members have been able to adapt to the challenges of 2020, and provide support to those both within their networks, and beyond. We truly believe we are stronger together! So, why allow yourself to be held back when you can discover the joy of full support as a franchise owner. Let us help you find your tribe.

If you want to know more about how the right franchise can help you thrive as a business owner, why not find out more here or book a free 30 minute mentoring session to discuss the benefit of franchising.