CourseMints

GUIDE

Mompreneur

Build a Business Around Family Life

SELF-PACED PDF COURSE

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CourseMints

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Build a Business Around Family Life

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How to Use This Guide

Most business advice is written for someone who can work whenever the work needs doing: early mornings, late nights, a whole weekend on a launch. Mothers do not have that kind of time. You have school hours, nap times that may or may not happen, sick days that arrive without warning, and the long summer holiday. This guide starts from that reality. It shows you how to choose, test, run and grow a business that fits around your children, rather than one that competes with them.

It is for mothers at any stage: thinking about an idea, just starting, or already running a business that is slowly taking over family life. It focuses on the business itself. If your main challenge is the mental load at home or burnout while employed, the CourseMints guide Super Mom Without Burnout covers that ground.

An honest word about income

There are no promises of income here. Many small businesses take months to earn their first steady money and years to replace a salary, and some never do. The aim is a business that is realistic for your hours, earns fairly for the time you put in, and can grow without costing you your health or your family life. You decide what “enough” looks like.

What you will learn

- How to measure your real capacity, by season of childhood.
- How to choose a business model that fits around children, and which models clash with family life.
- How to test an idea in a few weeks of short work sessions, before investing much.
- How to plan work around school, naps and holidays, using focus blocks and pockets of time.

- How to arrange childcare, partner support and boundaries with clients and children.
- How to price so that the business actually pays, including the cost of childcare.
- How to find customers in limited time and grow without burning out.

How each chapter works

Each chapter explains why the topic matters, gives you numbered steps, shows a short example and ends with an exercise and key takeaways. Chapter 11 brings everything together in a 12-week plan.

How to get the most from it

1. **Read Chapters 1 and 2 before choosing anything.** Your capacity and your model decide most of what follows.
2. **Write in the exercises.** They build your real plan: your capacity, your model, your price and your week.
3. **Plan in your actual hours.** Every plan in this guide assumes the hours you really have, not the hours you wish you had.
4. **Check local rules.** Registering a business, tax and licenses differ by country and sometimes by city. This guide teaches principles, not legal or tax advice.

TIP

About the examples

The mothers in the example boxes are fictional composites, written to show the methods in action. Their numbers are illustrations, not typical or promised results.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- This guide plans your business around the time a mother really has.
- There are no income promises: the aim is a realistic, fairly paid, sustainable business.
- Start with your capacity and your model; everything else builds on them.

CHAPTER 1

01 Business on Family Time: Know Your Real Capacity

The most common mistake mothers make when starting a business is planning it for the hours of a person without children. The plan says 20 hours a week. Reality delivers 7, in pieces, often with someone asking for a snack. Then the plan falls behind and you feel like you are failing, when the real problem was the plan.

Why it matters

Time with children differs from office time in three ways:

1. **It is fragmented.** It comes in short pieces between drop-offs, meals and bedtimes.
2. **It is interruptible.** Any minute can be cut short by a child who needs you.
3. **It changes with the seasons.** A newborn, a toddler, a school child and a teenager give you very different amounts and kinds of time.

Fragmented time is not useless, but it suits some tasks and not others. Switching between tasks and recovering from interruptions has a real cost: research on attention consistently finds that people work more slowly and make more errors when they switch tasks or are interrupted, and that getting back into complex work takes time. Writing a proposal in five-minute fragments is far slower than writing it in one hour. So the question is not just “How many hours do I have?” but “What kind of hours?”

The three kinds of time

Kind	What it looks like	Best used for
Focus blocks	60 minutes or more, childcare covered, few interruptions	Creating, building, client work, writing, planning

Kind	What it looks like	Best used for
Pockets	10 to 30 minutes, interruptible	Emails, invoicing, ordering supplies, scheduling posts, quick calls
Background time	Your hands are busy, your mind is free (walking, cooking, waiting)	Thinking through problems, voice notes, listening to industry content

Capacity by season

These are typical patterns, not rules. Your family will differ.

Season	Usual pattern	What often fits
Baby (0 to 1)	Unpredictable, mostly pockets, very tired	Planning, light admin, very small offers; little or no client deadlines
Toddler and preschool	Pockets plus any childcare hours	Work you can schedule into childcare hours; flexible deadlines
School age	School hours give reliable focus blocks; holidays do not	Most models, with a holiday plan
Teenagers	More time, but driving, evenings and emotional needs	Most models, often more hours

How to measure your capacity

1. **Track two ordinary weeks.** Each day, note every block of time when you could have worked, how long it was and whether it was a focus block or a pocket.
2. **Count only reliable time.** Keep the blocks that would happen four weeks out of five. Bonus time (an unexpectedly long nap) is welcome, but do not plan on it.
3. **Protect sleep first.** Late-night work borrowed from sleep is usually repaid with worse days. If you plan to use evenings, set a firm stop time.
4. **Write your reliable week.** For example: “Three focus blocks of two hours in school hours, plus about five pockets.”
5. **Define your minimum viable week.** The least you need to do to keep the business healthy in a bad week, such as replying to clients and delivering what you promised. You will use it in Chapter 4.

6. **Mark the holidays.** Note school holidays and other low-capacity periods for the next 12 months now.

EXAMPLE

Aisha's real numbers

Aisha, 34, planned 20 hours a week for her new bookkeeping business. Her two-week tracking showed something different: her toddler's preschool mornings gave her two reliable three-hour blocks, and naps gave pockets that varied from zero to 90 minutes. Her reliable week was six focus hours and about four pocket hours. She set her client capacity to fit those ten hours, not twenty, and stopped feeling behind all the time.

EXERCISE

Your Capacity Audit

1. My reliable focus blocks each week (when, how long):

2. My reliable pockets each week (roughly how many, how long):

3. My current season, and how I expect it to change in the next 12 months:

4. My minimum viable week (what must happen even in a bad week):