

## Mom's the word

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Mothers in business: not just about baby food

**WORKING MOTHERS:** The challenge of combining work with motherhood has led a number of women to start their own businesses. Some even call themselves “mompreneurs”. But don’t expect these female entrepreneurs to be satisfied with selling toys and organic baby food.

Frances Wright, publisher of *MOMpreneur* magazine in Calgary, Alberta, understandably likes the term her publication is named after. “[It] very quickly crystallizes the idea that this is a person who has a business and a family,” Wright says. “But the majority are not in baby products.”

Jennifer Greenberg, for example, provides oil and gas exploration workers in northern British Columbia with a mobile first-aid service. Greenberg, a mother of four and a biochemist with paramedic training, has run the business for five years. She says it is important that women continue “ploughing into male-dominated territory and saying, ‘We can do it too. Here we are!’”

Mompreneur Robyn Green-Ruskin of Thornhill, Ontario, wasn’t even a parent when she started her business, Movies for Mommies, which offers afternoon film showings for mothers and babies. Now the ten-year-old franchise operation has 15 locations across Canada — and Green-Ruskin has two children. “I approached my business differently after having kids,” she says. “You know what? Women have babies. But we do many other things, too. I think it’s more important to just make peace with who you are.”

Still, not everyone agrees that the term “mompreneur” is positive. “Fine if it helps in business-to-business networking,” says Barbara Orser of the Telfer School of Management at the University of Ottawa. “But if it contributes to that antiquated stereotype, then it’s had its day.”