

Baby Sensory Case Study - Jayne Bull & Victoria Cooper

Jayne Bull and her daughter Vicky Cooper started running their own Baby Sensory business in Stoke in September 2009 and their Baby Development classes have proved to be an instant success.

Prior to starting their Baby Sensory business Jayne was a registered Childminder and Vicky was a Nursery Nurse and both had really enjoyed working with young children. It was the birth of Baby Ethan which prompted Vicky to look for activities she could enjoy with her new son that first brought Baby Sensory to Vicky's attention. There were no Baby Sensory Classes in the immediate areas so Jayne, Vicky and Ethan decided to attend a class in Chester. All three were hooked and Jayne and Vicky had discovered a new business opportunity that they could pursue together.

Baby Sensory Director, Ian Sharland commented, "From their first visit to a Class, Jayne and Vicky showed the decisiveness and sense of purpose that is essential when setting up a business at any time. Jayne and Vicky took their first steps by approaching us in May 2009, at the height of the Credit Crunch, they had completed our entire recruitment procedure within three weeks and set about promoting their classes prior to our training programme in July. They followed every step in our Business Development Plan and it was no surprise to me when they opened their classes, just 6 weeks after training, with over 100 customers signed up."

Why did Jayne and Vicky decide upon a Franchise business?

We had always wanted to work together and we wanted something that was working with babies or small children. There are many activities for toddlers but very little that is designed for newly born babies. We knew that it would be a tremendous amount of work to design a programme of our own and we wanted the support and backup of an established company to guide us through the process of growing our own business.

Why did you choose the Baby Sensory Franchise?

The simple answer is that we visited a class and thought the programme was excellent. In particular:

- the classes were designed specifically for babies;
- the session plans include a wide range of activities for babies;
- every week is different which helps to maintain the interest for parents;
- each session includes an opportunity for parents to meet and socialise.

We also completed an investigation to make sure we were making the right decision. We asked if we could speak to one or two of the existing franchisees and rather than be directed to a specific franchisee, we were encouraged to contact any we wished to. This was reassuring as it proved that Baby Sensory were confident in the service they were providing to all franchisees. The resulting calls were not disappointing.

We also spoke to two of the Baby Sensory Directors, which is a normal part of the Baby Sensory recruitment process. We are happy to say that they are just accessible after the contract was signed.

Have things worked out for you?

As soon as we signed the contract we were given access to a wide catalogue of adverts, marketing material and posters which we could adapt with our own details. Baby Sensory also set up our web page and made sure that it featured highly in relevant Google searches.

For our first week we had over 100 babies signed up for our classes and things have continued to progress far better than we had initially expected. After just 2 months and we had over 130 attending our classes every week and we are confident that this success will continue.

Now you have your classes successfully established, what will be your next step?

When we started discussions with Baby Sensory we reserved two territories, one of each of us. The territories are large, each having a population of between 150,000 and 180,000. We have decided that we wish to expand beyond this and have reserved 2 further territories to allow for our growth over the next 12 months. Baby Sensory is also about to launch its new programme for 1 to 3 year olds which we plan to launch this programme in the Stoke area during 2010.

It is great to know that we are in control of our own destinies and we intend to really take full advantage of this fact and to grow a really successful business in North Staffs and South Cheshire.