

From ER to sister act

BY JENNIFER SHERIDAN

Two nurses turned a love of kids' fashion into a new business.



ABOVE LEFT: Melony Baumurtel with Matilda and Eloise.

ABOVE RIGHT: Toni Waterhouse with Aiden, Jorja, Mayson and Morgan.

Sisters Toni Waterhouse and Melony Baumurtel have spent years answering the question 'Where did you get that?'

Both mothers so enjoyed finding clothing, toys and children's accessories online they decided to make the question easier to answer by opening their own online boutique, wheredidyougetthat.com.au in May this year.

Now when Mrs Waterhouse is asked where she got the red wagon she uses to transport her youngest children – Jorja, two and three-year-old twins Aidan and Morgan – to pick up their older brother Mayson, seven, from school, she can direct people to the website.

And when Mrs Baumurtel receives a compliment on her daughters' clothing – she has Matilda, who's two, and Eloise, six weeks – she no longer has to explain how to contact a supplier half way round the world.

"We sort of wanted more unique clothing, and we started looking overseas, and started buying a lot of our kids' clothes from overseas, and a lot of people would start asking 'Oh, where did you get that from?'" Mrs Waterhouse said.

To make the move into online

retailing as a career, Mrs Waterhouse took a number of courses on how to start and market a website, but was also lucky to have a sister-in-law trained in design and marketing who created the website.

Both sisters previously worked as emergency department nurses, and the ability to work flexible hours rather than shift work is a welcome change.

Weighing up her new work-life balance, Mrs Waterhouse said she spent more time with her children now.

"The only thing that really gets sacrificed is television, and I actually spend more time with my husband too...because he's got his own IT business, so we both work at night," she said.

Evening work presents some challenges, such as dealing with Australian business hours, but it makes it easier to deal with their international suppliers.

Although people warn never to work with family, Mrs Waterhouse feels that the experience has brought them closer.

She is based in Adelaide, while Mrs Baumurtel lives an hour and a half away from her, in Wynarka.

"Having the business together with her living that far away, we're on the phone nearly every day talking and keeping in touch with whatever we do," Mrs Waterhouse said.

Currently Mrs Baumurtel takes a lighter load because of recently giving birth, but she still finds time to research products and write descriptions for the site, while Mrs Waterhouse handles accounting and stock management.

The sisters felt it was an easy choice to go into business together.

"It's just something that we felt we could do together and make it successful, and in the meantime have our kids looking fantastic" Mrs Waterhouse said.

Write and win the wagon

Put pen to paper to win this Radio Flyer wagon.



The Radio Flyer Ranger Wagon (RRP \$199.00) will get your children moving this summer. Whether they'll be ferrying toys or each other, this wagon is guaranteed to get them active outside. Online boutique, Where Did You Get That? is offering one reader the chance to win a wagon by writing a story for *Mothers Matter*.

In the spirit of the zippy wagon, write a 'moving' story about your family. You can decide whether to write an emotionally moving tale, or simply one about the challenges of physically moving home, school or taking the big leap interstate/overseas.

To enter the competition, write no more than 500 words by 10 January 2009. Entries will be judged on their ability to engage and/or entertain the reader.

Send your entry to:
wagoncomp@mothersmatter.com.au
 You can view the wagon online at
www.wheredidyougetthat.com.au