Arlene Francis was a mortgage broker who managed dozens of people. The busy executive had no reason to be concerned with child care—until she found out she was pregnant. The timing was awful, forcing her to face what would become her biggest challenge yet: working single motherhood.

“It’s harder than I ever would have imagined it would have been,” she says. She was used to managing mortgage deals from across Canada, but jetting around from meeting to meeting was just not possible with her baby on her hip. She got herself on a list for subsidized daycare, but she struggled in the interim.

“If you’ve got a baby and no child care, you can’t do your job. I never thought I’d be in a position where I would ever have to give up my job,” she says.

Necessity, of course, is the mother of invention. Francis went online to try to find someone who could help her out a couple times per week. What she found instead was a gap in the market.

The candidates she was coming across fell short in credentials. She had the idea that potential caregivers should be screened in advance. She also realized that sifting for the right candidate is a time consuming task that most new mothers simply do not have time for.

Her struggles gave her a bright new idea and an excuse to finally start her own business—something she’d always dreamed of. Her plan was to develop a comprehensive system that would connect new moms with pre-screened, qualified caregivers on a platform that was seamless, easy, and fun-to-use.

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ARLENE FRANCIS, FOUNDER

After reaching out to George Brown College to help develop her idea, Francis is now preparing to launch Mothereaze.com early this summer. She worked with GBC to devise a business plan and actualize her vision, and is currently working with the gaming and graphic design departments on website development. They are in the process of streamlining user paths and polishing the interface. In the meantime, she is amassing a pool of qualified applicants that moms can choose from to help out with their little ones.

Francis’ intensive involvement in candidate screening is what sets Mothereaze apart from rival services. “I fully interview, screen them, get all documentation and background checks, CPR verification, immunizations—and then I check at least three references. So they’re fully screened by myself. It’s a long process.”

Her qualified caregivers include ECE workers, nurses, and professional caregivers. She then provides bios and profiles to help moms discern which is the best fit for their families. She is excited to provide new moms with support at a critical juncture in their child’s life.

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