

A winning idea

Do you have a shed full of wondersuits, high chairs, bouncers and prams? Are you waiting for your best friend/brother/sister/cousin to have a baby so that you can pass it all on? If you'd rather have some money in your pocket, then it might be worth logging on to www.adelaidebabybargains.com.au.

It's like eBay for baby and kids gear, but it's local and it's free. It's simple to list products for sale, it's simple to buy and you can even chat to other mums and dads about parenting topics such as feeding and sleeping.

It's been a whirlwind journey for Adelaide Baby Bargains creator Belinda Jennings. What started as a Facebook page to sell her son's baby clothes has exploded into a website that's taken Adelaide parents by storm.

"Originally it started as a way to just buy and sell because I wanted to sell my son's stuff. So I started a Facebook page in March. I had a bassinet, some clothes, some toys and other things that he was growing out of at nine months," Belinda said. "I used to buy on eBay and I was getting frustrated with buying things from interstate and paying the cost of postage. I thought 'there has to be another way'.

"So I made an album on Facebook with pictures of all the things I wanted to sell and sent it out to my friends. But not many of them had kids, so I looked at ways of getting it out there. I realised you could start a page for a business and then I promoted it to my friends and told them to tell their friends.

"For the first couple of weeks I was logging into my husband's profile posting stuff to sell to give people an idea of what to do. Numbers grew and numbers grew, but people were sitting and watching. Suddenly a few gutsy mums jumped on and started buying things and chatting. And then it just skyrocketed."

The Adelaide Baby Bargains page gathered 2,000 fans in a month. "I knew I was onto something," Belinda said. "A defining moment for me was when I put an Exersaucer play centre on the page for sale. In a couple of minutes it was sold – it was being picked up tomorrow, with cash paid on pick up. And I thought, 'if this is what it can do, this is huge'."

The Facebook page still exists, and now has more than 9,000 fans, but it's been enhanced by a website boasting more than 1,000 active listings a week. "The site was getting too big for the functionality that Facebook could offer," Belinda said. "I couldn't control it the way I wanted to so I



*Belinda Jennings
with her son James.*

decided to set up a website that could offer an automated marketplace."

The website was launched late August and it's become the place to buy and sell baby products in Adelaide. There are three easy steps to list items for sale and sellers receive an email when a buyer is interested in their product. "The feedback to the website has been amazing," Belinda said.

"Just like the Facebook page, it's free for Adelaide parents to buy and sell. Sellers are making hundreds of dollars and first time parents are saving tonnes of money. It costs you thousands to buy everything new and so many of the baby items are in as new condition."

As well as trade, the Facebook page and the website provide chat facilities for parents. There are rules governing chat and sales, which insist on clean and working products, and positive and polite behaviour.

Adelaide Baby Bargains is quickly becoming a full time job for Belinda, who currently runs the Facebook page and website in her 'spare time' away from her office job and time spent with her 17 month old James. It's a challenging balancing act, but Belinda is excited about the future.

Visit www.adelaidebabybargains.com.au.