

Life's a



PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOHANNES REINHART

BY KATE DURACK

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Every now and again we stumble across a great product and might wonder to ourselves, “What a fabulous idea!” or better still, “Why didn’t I come up with that??” Meet one Perth woman who has indeed come up with a unique idea and developed it into a must-have resource for WA families – creator and owner of Kidzabuzz, Rebecca Hall.

IT all began as a light bulb moment. Four years ago in the kitchen of her Bassendean home, new mother, Rebecca Hall, was at a loss with what to do with her seven month old baby, Ethan. We’ve all been there. We’re excited, new mothers eager to take our new babies out to introduce them to the world. Where’s somewhere fun and exciting, yet suitable, for a young child?

Well, the obvious place for Bec was to look through the Yellow Pages under “Children” or “Babies” to find such activities but alas, or rather fortunately as was the case for Bec, no such section existed. She wondered why there wasn’t an activities book for families and, drawing upon her extensive experience in media sales, decided “Let’s do it!”

This was the beginning of her journey as a business woman, and the dawning of a new landscape for WA families looking for ideas in children’s entertainment. *Kidzabuzz* was born.

Four editions later, *Kidzabuzz* has become a highly-valued resource for WA families, providing a range of activities and options for children’s

activities, services and products.

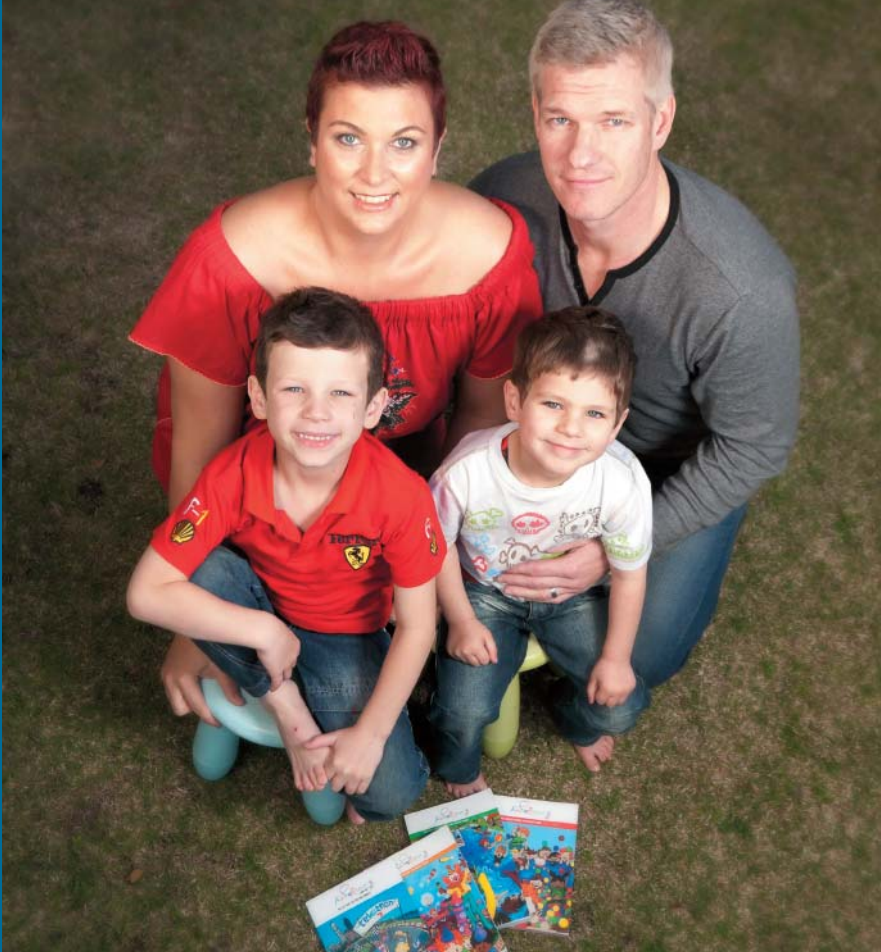
Kidzabuzz is a discount voucher book with a difference. It is a publication designed to provide WA families with options for activities that are both wholesome and subscribe to healthy living. Bec takes responsibility for ensuring the book pertains to healthy living, even if in doing so has meant turning down potentially lucrative advertising opportunities from fast food outlets. Parents can use the book knowing the hard work’s been done for them – they don’t have to sift through the vouchers to find “appropriate” dining options, for example.

“*Kidzabuzz* is about families spending quality time together, and being active and healthy,” Bec says.

The 2010 edition is perhaps their most comprehensive, comprising more than 260 pages and 380 discount vouchers over 12 sections, ranging from birthday party ideas, to animal farms and photography.

Bec attributes her success with the business to being very well organised and receiving fantastic support from family and friends;

“I’m not the sort of person who could be a stay at home mum, I need to work”



not to mention great support from her clients, 80 per cent of whom have advertised in the book since its inception.

While Bec is the “face” of the business, her husband, Glenn, is equally committed, involved in business development, marketing and accounts.

The couple has taken on a marketing manager to take the business to new heights, and employs several staff members part time to assist with design and production. And their company is indeed reaching greater echelons with the recent development of several corporate alliances including new relationships with prestigious entities Telethon and Australia Post.

This is the first year it has been affiliated with Telethon, with part proceeds of the books going to the iconic WA charity, a development of which Bec is proud.

In addition to the books being available at the usual stockists and through fundraising, the Halls have

recently received the go-ahead to distribute their books through Australia Post shops, which further consolidates their place within the WA market.

Regardless of their business’s growth, the owners want to maintain the accessibility of the book to all families so, despite suggestions to increase the price, the book will continue to be sold for \$20.

10,000 copies of the latest

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edition will be available from mid September.

Bec says she never set out to create a multi-million business, but wanted to create a book for other parents that she would like for herself: a resource “full of healthy, fun and affordable ideas for the family.” It’s a book she herself loves to use with Glenn and her two boys, Ethan, five, and Jacob, three.

“We went to Outback Jacks the other night with the kids and saved \$35, while I saved \$67 the other day at Toyworld,” she said.

Despite the success of her venture, Bec, like many women who have high work demands and a young family, sharing herself between her work, her children and her husband is a juggling act she is still trying to master.

“It’s hard work, I don’t have a lot of spare time for myself and sometimes, like many mothers, I feel guilty that I have to spend time away from my family to get the work done,” she says.

“But it’s all worth it because my children are happy and healthy, I have a great marriage and I love what I do. I’m not the sort of person who could be a stay at home mum, I need to work.”

Bec works from home which is great for her in that she can be with her children, but she admits it can be isolating at times. Still she wouldn’t have it any other way. As the mother of two points out, she can work while “preparing dinner or putting on a load of washing”, and she first started selling advertising space in her book while breastfeeding her baby.

Her advice to other women with an idea who’d like to take it further? “Don’t think about it too much, just do it.”