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JOBS

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Be part of
a community

When hospital worker Nicola White realised childcare costs were beyond her pay packet, she decided it was time to work for herself. Since then, Nicola, 44, from Peterborough, Cambs, has mastered the art of direct selling as a way to work from home, earn more, raise her three sons, and have fun in the process.

What products do you sell?
I sell beautiful Usborne books, jigsaws and games, suitable from birth through to young adult and beyond.

How much do you make?
For the most part, between £1,000 to £1,500 per month.

What made you do this?
When I started my Usborne business I was on maternity leave from my full-time role in the hospitality industry. I was miserable in that role and felt stuck where I was, having worked there for 13 years. Having two children aged two and under, it wasn't

nursery fees while working in my previous role. I didn't want to pay someone else to raise my boys while not even breaking even with my salary. I needed a job that was flexible around my family.

After six months of building my business I was able to hand my notice in, and now do it full time. Escaping my 9-5 will always be one of my greatest achievements.

Was it easy to start up?
Through a combination of the training supplied by the head office, and the support of my mentor and wider team, I found it really straightforward and fun to start my business. It didn't really feel like a job, as I enjoy it so much and genuinely look forward to my Usborne time.

How do you go about it?
I love the fun and excitement of selling at events throughout the year. Nothing beats getting the books in front of people so they can see, feel and smell

MORE FLEXIBILITY
Nicola sells books, games and jigsaws



Busy mum's new chapter

(that's definitely a thing) the quality. I hold a regular pop-up bookshop at my local gym which is really well received. I also work with schools and nurseries across the country running reading challenges to get books into classrooms and libraries.

What do you spend the earnings on?

In the beginning my Usborne earnings went on general life expenses, clearing debt and saving for our house deposit. Now I'm able to spend some on fun things like family holidays.

How does it fit around life?
Everyone always asks me how I juggle running my business while raising three boys. In the early days when I was in the thick of nappies and night feeds, Usborne slotted into the nooks and crannies of family life. It's amazing what you can accomplish during nap times.

I would often bring the boys along if I was running a

pop-up at a baby group or a soft play centre.

What do you love about it?
Getting books into children's hands and seeing the delight when they find a book they are going to treasure. The practicalities are perfect for mums and dads who need the flexibility it provides.

Being able to support my community is another real highlight. Over the years I have helped get thousands of books into the community through fundraising and charitable donations.

I support several hospitals in the East Midlands to get books to children and adults on wards. I have also helped get mental health packs into schools, and have a free community library (sunflower shed) in my garden which people in my village love.

Do your children and husband get involved?
My boys Elijah, 12, Jude, 10, and Jonah, seven, and my husband Adam have been known to help at events.

My sons love the thrill of selling a book and chatting about what they've enjoyed.



DELIGHT
Books to treasure

TOP TIPS TO GET STARTED

- Choose the right products to sell. Many brands sell their products direct-to-consumer, including Avon, Oriflame as well as Usborne Books.
- Set realistic expectations.

Money is earned through commission on the product sales.

- Know your rights – and the rights of your customers too – and learn about upholding good

practice as a direct seller.

- Beware of rogue traders. You should always look out for the Direct Selling Association (DSA) logo. Check if a company is legitimate at [dsa.org.uk](https://www.dsa.org.uk)