

# Women taking care of business at trade show

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It used to be that when women decided to stay home to raise her children, their careers were essentially over.

That is no longer the case. Many women are taking advantage of whatever little spare time they can find between feedings, diaper changes, school dropoffs/pickups and homework help to start their own businesses.

In 2011, about 17 per cent of small businesses in Canada were owned by women, according to Industry Canada.

In Whitchurch-Stouffville, 21 per cent of chamber members are female entrepreneurs, according to Edward Nelles, executive director of the local chamber.

"Stouffville is a remarkably open community towards initiative and will reward initiative as much as it can, regardless of gender," Mr. Nelles said.

Compared to last year, there are more women attending the Start Your Business workshop, which is a regional program offered by the York Small Business Enterprise Centre, according to Maria Schembri, spokesperson for the town.

The Whitchurch-Stouffville Chamber of Commerce offers a number of workshops but nothing specific for women.

"There's no reason why we shouldn't. It's a workable idea, so we should look into it," Mr. Nelles said.

What is taking place locally is the Women in Business Trade Show, Sept. 7 at the Lebovic Centre for Arts and Entertainment - Nineteen on the Park.

The show is run by a pair of mompreneurs — Steph Switzer and Linda Kontosic — who both left behind six-figure salaries to raise their children and run their own businesses.

Ms Kontosic operates Scentsy and Ms Switzer manages We Have Little Legs. She is also a travel agent.

The pair also host a number of mommy brunches/play dates for stay-at-home moms.

The women realized a trade show was needed to improve contacts, build better customer bases and show women what entrepreneurial opportunities there are out there

for them.

Starting a business is always risky, but now is an especially challenging time, according to Mr. Nelles.

"(The economy is) not contracting, but it's not expanding at anything close to a healthy rate," he said.

Along with a business plan and start-up capital, you need to have patience. Mr. Nelles said it takes about two years to get established.

The Women in Business show runs from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Admission is free. There are door prize draws and the first 200 visitors get a free goody bag.

All of the vendors are businesses owned by women, including: the Stouffville Natural Health Clinic, Salsa Babies, Born Again Shabby Chic, Fizzique Personal Fitness, Jaclyn S. Photography, PartyLite, Artastic Kiddy Creationz and Creativity by Rowena. There are approximately 50 vendors in total.

For more information, go to [www.facebook.com/events/282438031919216](http://www.facebook.com/events/282438031919216)

## service update



### Whitchurch-Stouffville

EFFECTIVE  
SEPTEMBER 1,  
2013

Effective September 1, YRT / Viva is adjusting select bus services operating in the Township of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

#### REVISED ROUTES / SCHEDULES

> 9 - 9<sup>th</sup> Line

#### HIGH SCHOOL SPECIALS

High School Specials (400 series) and most routes with diversions to schools will resume with the start of the new school year.

#### STATUTORY HOLIDAYS

Canada Day - Monday, July 1  
Civic Holiday - Monday, August 5

For complete details, visit [yrt.ca](http://yrt.ca) or call 1-866-MOVE-YRT (668-3978).  
Thanks for riding YRT / Viva!



STAFF PHOTO/STEVE SOMERVILLE

Stephanie Switzer, with daughter Ellen, and Linda Kontosic, with daughter Zoë, are organizing the Women in Business Trade Show Sept. at Nineteen on the Park.

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