



## The proud parent fuels the 'parent pound'

Franchised companies are cashing in with compelling offerings

**Today, we're more eager than ever to provide opportunities for growth, development and fun for our children. From the day they're born, we're looking for activities to keep our babies stimulated and give them an edge that will help them thrive and the drive only grows stronger as our children grow. In response, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of companies offering enriching activities for children, from swimming to signing to yoga and more**

Text: Tony Urwin

All successful companies operating in the child 'edu-tainment' sector capitalise on the growing 'parent pound' phenomenon with a compelling proposition that is safe, fun and most importantly, enriching for children. Not surprisingly many of these companies have chosen franchising to meet an impressive latent demand for their services nationwide.

Every parent puts their child's welfare and improvement first. Regardless of the economic climate the parent pound is historically the safest income stream. At a time of growing uncertainty, investment in a franchise that provides a popular activity for children is a relatively safe bet. While price is a major consideration for consumers of most services, parents are generally more concerned with the quality and residual benefits of the services their children receive. If parents perceive a children's experience franchise as the best in the market, they will be prepared to pay a premium—in good times and bad.

# EXPAND YOUR BUSINESS THROUGH FRANCHISING

Of course, some activities have always been popular and many of the most established and well attended sessions are arts-based. Mark Featherstone-Witty, Founding Principal/CEO of The Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts (a new entrant in the franchise market), has his own ideas of what a Saturday theatre school should offer students and the people lucky enough to run them.

"We've been running our Saturday academy, LIPA 4:19, here since 2003," he says. "Our intention was always to create new opportunities for children and young people to develop their skills in performing arts and raise expectations of the quality of teaching that students receive from a theatre school. It's fortunate that we've been able to draw on our resources at LIPA as a leading educational establishment when setting up our franchise model.

# LIPA 4:19

As a result we've created a business system that has the potential to be highly profitable as well as great fun for franchisees, their students and staff. We're launching the LIPA 4:19 franchise later this year and are looking forward to replicating our enthusiastic, supportive academy in new locations outside of Liverpool.

"LIPA, which was co-founded by Sir Paul McCartney, is now an internationally acclaimed brand with a reputation for teaching excellence. The curriculum we have developed for our Saturday academy

ties in closely with the National Curriculum as taught in schools. This reassures parents who appreciate that while their child is having a great time with their friends and learning new skills, they are also boosting their education. As well as building our students' talents as performers, we also institute life skills such as self-confidence, team rapport and social skills. Don't tell the kids that's what we're doing though...as far as they're concerned LIPA 4:19 is just a place to have fun while singing, dancing and acting!"

A provider of quality enrichment programmes, LIPA 4:19 stands every chance of reaping handsome rewards for tapping into the parent pound. So do many potential LIPA 4:19 franchise owners. What's more, they stand to reap the personal reward that comes from putting a smile on children's faces, and a satisfied smile on the faces of their parents too.

There is no doubt that working with children requires special aptitudes, but for the right candidate, the rewards are great. For those providing services that entertain and stimulate children, this is as good a time as any to bring your services to children across the nation. Franchising is the ideal way to ensure that your service retains its 'local' feel. For enterprising individuals looking for a ripe opportunity in uncertain times, parent pound franchises are a particularly interesting proposition.

For more information about franchising a parent pound business, or selecting the right parent pound franchise for you, contact Tony Urwin at FDS Northern today. •



If you're based in the North England or Scotland and looking to franchise your business, contact FDS Northern to find out how we can help you achieve success.



For companies looking at franchising as a means of expanding their business effectively and profitably, FDS provides an intelligent evaluation of your potential for franchising and works with you to implement a carefully structured franchise plan.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL:

0161 926 9882

email: [tony@fdsnorthern.com](mailto:tony@fdsnorthern.com)

web: [www.fdsnorthern.com](http://www.fdsnorthern.com)

[www.fdsfranchise.com](http://www.fdsfranchise.com)



## FOR MORE INFORMATION:



Tony Urwin is the Regional Director of FDS Northern and is a British Franchise Association Affiliated Franchise Consultant with eight years' experience helping Northern franchisors to develop fair, mutually beneficial franchise systems.

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