Doing It For The Kids Presents: Child-Friendly Coworking Spaces
“It is more than a nursery. It is more than a workspace. It is a safe and happy space where we are both thriving.”

Rosina Sharrock, Social Media Coach
Based at Farm Work Play in Faversham, Kent (page 11)
Thank you.

This guide would not have been possible without the amazing support of Huckletree. Thank you.

Huckletree West also kindly hosts our DIFTK meetups! Watch this space for details of the next one.

Hello.

Working from home definitely has its perks — I mean, who doesn’t love nailing a client brief while rocking Weetabix-encrusted loungewear? But it also comes with its challenges. Mainly a lack of contact with the outside world, spiralling self-doubt... and when it comes to working from home as a parent there’s the issue of, well, the kids.

Getting out and about can bring new energy, drive and motivation to an otherwise knackered parent doing their own thing. And while cafes and softplay centres may provide access to WiFi and biscuits, you can’t quite beat the networking, support and professionalism that comes with joining a coworking space.

Thankfully there are now a whole bunch of people out there on a mission to change how and where freelance parents work — setting up incredible spaces and places that provide all the perks of coworking with flexible, on-site childcare to boot.

This, my friends, is potentially life-changing stuff.

In the next 24 pages, I aim to highlight all of the child-friendly coworking spaces and pop ups available for you to use right now — July 2018.

As you can imagine, with childcare in the mix there are some pretty big stumbling blocks to get over when setting up something like this, and as a result, the options out there are still quite limited, with most spaces in London.

But things are moving quickly. This kind of setup is gaining popularity all the time; proving that parenting and work are not mutually exclusive, and that childcare can be fully flexible when you put enough thought and energy into it.

Given the fast-moving nature of the industry, I’ll be sure to update this document soon but in the meantime, I really hope you find it useful. Happy coworking!

Frankie, Doing It For The Kids
What is Doing It For The Kids?

Doing It For The Kids is for freelance parents trying to make flexible working work. For all the brave (and maybe a little bit bonkers) people out there tackling the unpredictability of freelance life and parenthood combined.

On the face of it, Doing It For The Kids is a collaborative blog. Simple. A platform for lots of different voices to share their stories, experiences and advice as both freelancers and as parents.

But since it launched in November 2016, DIFTK has become so. much. more. This is about building a community of freelance mums and dads, both online and off. Whether it’s virtual high fives for securing a new client, commiserations for yet another bout of chickenpox, or collaborating with one another — through the blog, Instagram, Facebook group, meetups and resources (of which this guide is the first!), DIFTK is proving that all sorts of good shit happens when freelance parents are given the opportunity to connect.

Talk to me. Email frankie@doingitforthekids.net

twitter.com/DIFTK
instagram.com/doingitforthekids_
facebook.com/groups/DIFTK

Founded by... me

DIFTK is founded and run by me, Francesca Tortora (but you can call me Frankie). Marmite lover. Bobble-hat-wearer. Mum of two. And graphic designer by day, and night, and nap times.
1. Bloomsbury Beginnings
   King’s Cross . London

2. Creche & Co
   Walthamstow . London

3. Cuckooz Nest
   Clerkenwell . London

4. Desks & Daycare
   Truro . Cornwall

5. Entreprenursery
   Old Street . London

6. Farm Work Play
   Faversham . Kent

7. Huckletree West
   White City . London

8. Impact Hub Birmingham
   Birmingham

9. Isel Co-Work Creche
   Solihull & South Birmingham

10. More2Childcare
    Greenwich . London

11. Mother House
    Various . London

12. Playpen
    Mile End . London

13. Third Door
    SW18 . London

14. V22 Early Years
    Dalston . London
Bloomsbury Beginnings offers a coworking space and startup courses with an on-site crèche to give parents a few hours of guilt free time to themselves.

Since starting in 2013, the Bloomsbury Beginnings ‘Parent-Cubator’ has launched more than 30 businesses and helped 100+ mums take their next professional step with more confidence. More than 250 babies have enjoyed their creative play sessions while their mums (and a few dads too) have sewn, written books, run companies, drank tea, looked for new jobs and made lifelong friends in the coworking cafe right next door. The setting is in a beautiful community garden, the Calthorpe Project, just down the road from King’s Cross, London.

Creche & Co is a pop up crèche and coworking space based in a house in Walthamstow for parents working freelance and/or those just wanting to get things done.

Whether you’re starting your freelance business, want to meet like-minded parents or just want to get some everyday tasks completed, Creche & Co gives you some headspace to work, knowing that your child is close by and being safely cared for by an Ofsted registered/DBS checked childminder.

The lovely home environment has WiFi/desk space on the first floor of the house for four to five people. You can make private phone calls from different rooms and you’ll have access to the kitchen if you want to bring food for yourself or your children. Creche & Co caters for children 1-4 yrs old, and their childcare facilities are on the ground floor with access to a small garden with lots of toys and crafts to keep your children busy.
Cuckooz Nest is a hybrid workspace; allowing working parents to be close enough to breastfeed their children or read them a story.

- Cuckooz Nest allows parents to transition seamlessly between work and life, empowering you to pursue big careers without compromising on parenthood.

In terms of childcare, Cuckooz Nest offer more flexible hours and host fewer children than traditional nurseries. They provide a community of like-minded co-workers and a place free from home distractions, while helping to assuage the guilt a new parent can feel when putting their child into day-care.

A first for London, Cuckooz Nest lets working parents book office and crèche space on a pay-as-you-go basis with zero commitment from as little as one hour a day.

With a shared mission to offer innovative solutions to childcare, Cuckooz Nest have partnered with London-based agency Manny & Me to ensure the highest quality of staff and educational programming are delivered. Together they are building a space where both adults and children are able to innovate, create and embrace new and traditional ways of learning, playing and collaborating.

Story

The Cuckooz Nest concept is the brainchild of entrepreneur and mother-of-one Charlie, and her best friend, Fabienne. After Charlie struggled to find affordable and flexible childcare when returning to work — and realising that in a city where 1 in 7 freelancers are working mums, she was not alone — the duo decided to use their business experience to find a solution themselves.
“It’s been amazing to have the opportunity to get back to work and to know that Freddie is being well looked after just next door. As a breastfeeding mum, the proximity is especially important. I love the flexibility of being able to arrange childcare around the hours that I need to work, but most importantly it’s great that the team are so friendly and supportive (for both the parents and the babies!)”

Alex Jones

Membership

Cuckooz Nest is a totally flexible solution, allowing you to scale up/down depending on your childcare/work commitments. Parents can use the space from as little as two hours a day on a totally ad hoc basis.

All memberships include:

- **Crèche facilities** for 0-2yrs, with no minimum age limit.
- No need to give up breastfeeding, as workspace and crèche are next door.
- Homely crèche and professional workspace.
- Ofsted registered and following Early Years curriculum.
- Book sessions anytime between 8am - 6pm, Monday – Friday.
- Adjust your hours to your work / life needs.
- Access to entrepreneur / business and parent focused events.
- Just 1 working days notice to book (subject to availability).

For more details about Cuckooz Nest, visit: www.cuckooznest.co.uk

You can reach them at: hello@cuckooznest.co.uk or 0203 950 2539

Or get social at:

- twitter.com/CuckoozNestLDN
- instagram.com/CuckoozNestLDN
- facebook.com/CuckoozNestLDN
“I couldn’t have asked for a better first experience of childcare... I’ve got a whole new support network now.”

Cheryl Jones
Based at Impact Hub Birmingham (page 19)
Alice Wright — a freelance writer and mum of three — is currently in the process of setting up Desks and Daycare. This will be a pop up service, initially running one morning a week. It will provide an open plan coworking space, with a separate on-site crèche. The aim is to offer a shared workspace with childcare that is flexible and affordable. Parents will be able to book sessions as and when they need them, allowing them to get a few hours work done while their children are cared for nearby. If the initial sessions are well received she’ll be looking at extending them to other days and venues in the area.

More details coming soon.

Coming soon! Desks & Daycare will be a pop up coworking service in the Truro/Falmouth area of Cornwall.

Entreprenursery is a flexible childcare solution for parents offering a fun, stimulating and nurturing environment for the children and a bright coworking space next door.

The nursery offers on-site childcare from 3 months to 5 years and is small so that the staff and children form a close bond. There is a schedule of activities that are age appropriate and educational. They offer lots of messy play, visits to the local park and go at the pace of your child. There are two-hour free trials available.

Located in Old Street, London, Entreprenursery is in the heart of the silicon roundabout and is buzzing with energy from the start-up scene. Come and meet like-minded people, access networking opportunities and professional development webinars, and join this vibrant community of working parents.

facebook.com/desksanddaycare

entreprenursery.co.uk
Jo and Vanessa met while heavily pregnant. Their shared mission to support working families and their pursuit of a better work-life balance led to the creation of Farm Work Play — the UK’s first rural coworking space with on-site childcare. Farm Work Play helps parents to flourish in the pursuit of ‘work that works’ and nurtures happy kids who spend interesting days both indoors and out.

A bright and airy converted granary is home to the workspace — Farm Work. The building sits on a beautiful, rural site amongst a growing creative community. As well as being home to the coworking space it’s also a venue for networking, training and events.

The space is just a one minute walk away from the sea and every window has views of the Kentish countryside. Inside there’s WiFi, a printer, projector, digital radio, kitchen, shower and break-out areas. Parking is free and plentiful.

Farm Work Play

Room to breathe, space to focus, time to be productive. Farm Work Play is a nursery for the cool kids and a vibrant coworking space between Whitstable and Faversham, Kent.

Farm Play

Big skies and lungfuls of fresh air come as standard at Monkshill Farm so it’s a pretty good place to be if you’re a Free Range Kid. Babies from 3 months to 5 years are lovingly cared for at Farm Play — an Ofsted registered nursery where there’s digging, climbing, splashing and mud-kitchening a’ plenty. After lots of exploring there’s snacks and stories in the shade of the willow or oak trees. Tasty and nutritious (and often vegan) lunches are created by the nursery chef especially with little tummies in mind.
“Before the farm I was a stressed, demotivated, sleep-deprived mum grappling at whatever minutes I could get to spend on my business.

Now, I’m still sleep-deprived but I am fired up to work harder because I am surrounded by inspiring likeminded business owners (including the Farm Work Play founders) and I have time to dedicate to the areas of my life that I need to, safe in the knowledge that my son is having the time of his life.”

Rosina Sharrock, Social Media Coach
Isel Co-Work Creche

ISEL Co-Work Creche is a pop up facility where parents can work or access training whilst their children are cared for by qualified staff.

Isel Co-Work Creche know how difficult it can be for the growing number of freelance and self-employed parents to access networking, training and affordable childcare before their kids are entitled to government funding.

So they offer a supportive community where parents can excel in their careers, work on their business, or work on themselves whilst also being around for their children. Parents can use hot desks, access networking, workshops, mentoring, business services and much more while their little ones are cared for by qualified childcare staff who work to create a stimulating environment where the children learn through play.

More2Childcare

More2Childcare provides flexible and quality childcare, alongside a workhub, training and career advice.

There are up to eight desks available at More2Childcare in an open-plan office with free WiFi, tea, coffee and printing facilities. Desk space can be hired for two hours, half day (four hours) or full day as well as an unlimited half day or full day monthly pass. All users become members of More2childcare’s unique membership community with discounts at local businesses as well as reduced price tickets on relevant courses in the workhub. Courses to date have included career coaching workshops, paediatric first aid and startup marketing techniques.

More2Childcare accommodates children from 0 to 5 years on a part-time, full-time or crèche basis, 50 weeks of the year. The Ofsted-registered ‘Outstanding’ setting has four large and spacious classrooms in the former Victorian school and two outdoor spaces. They have an emphasis on well-being through yoga, time outdoors and nature.
Huckletree West is a child-friendly workspace and curated collective of digital lifestyle startups, creatives and entrepreneurs, located in the heart of White City’s creative campus.

This is the first Huckletree location with a membership specifically designed for entrepreneurs growing their businesses whilst raising children. The space is designed to maximise productivity and inspire innovation. 40% of Huckletree West is dedicated breakout space for collaboration and chilling out, with a no-tech Meditation Yurt, sunken seating zone and podcasting booth for content creators.

When you join Huckletree’s West London community, you’re invited to their regular in-house workshops, events and socials including weekly Growth Tuesday breakfasts, members drinks, well-being sessions and panels with inspirational entrepreneurs and founders of leading tech, fashion, design and lifestyle brands. Because you need more than parent-related stuff — it’s all about balance.
If you need an on-site sitter, Huckletree has partnered with bubble, the app to find and book the babysitters your friends and community already know, use and trust. Huckletree West members get free use of bubble — paying no booking fees per sit.

Huckletree West has partnered with three parent-focused communities who regularly hold their meetups, workshops and other events in the space. Coding school Mums in Tech, community of local mums Mush, and freelancing network Doing It For The Kids (oh hi!) are there for support, advice or a relaxed chat.

Whether you’re an entrepreneur, a scaling startup or an agency, you can tap into the community and leverage the expertise and experience of Huckletree’s team, your fellow members and their wider network of industry game changers. It’s this unique mix of resident businesses, and emphasis on conversation and collaboration amongst its members, that sets Huckletree apart from other workspaces.

“If employers and businesses want to understand what the future of work looks like they need to look to spaces like Huckletree. In order to retain staff and create a culture of inclusion — pizza and beers on a Friday isn’t enough. The workspace needs to reflect the needs of the workforce and Huckletree have recognised this by creating the family room where parents can comfortably work and be with their children. It is a space that allows you to bring all the sides of you to work.”

Selina Bakkar, Amalih Co-Founder
“When we first started Huckletree we were still in the occasional ‘lets go to Fabric tonight because we can’ mode... couple of years on and things have changed somewhat.

Our daily needs today, now that we both have children, look very different to what they did less than three years ago. Today, alongside many of the other founders and entrepreneurs at Huckletree West, we’re constantly facing childcare battles. Power Parents membership gives parents the choice of morning or afternoon access with a dedicated space to work alongside their children — something we’d never had at Huckletree before. It’s great that we can offer them — and ourselves! — a child-friendly workspace so that what to do with our kids today doesn’t make it into this week’s 99 problems.”

Gabriela Hershman, Huckletree’s Founder and CEO

There are 5 different membership types available at Huckletree West: from more flexible options starting at ten day access to their workspace (Light and Power Parents), across Unlimited with full month access, to Resident or Studio membership with a dedicated workspace.

**All memberships include:**

- **Global access** to any of Huckletree’s locations for up to five days per month.
- **Access to Huckletree’s curated network of ambassadors, VCs and mentors** from across the tech and creative industries.
- **Tickets for exclusive events** including workshops, panels and Q&As with industry leaders including Uber, Stripe and Courier Magazine.
- **Well-being programme** which includes hip-hop yoga, mass meditation and everything in-between.
- **Meet-up, catch-up and wind down** at **weekly members drinks** with the community.
- **The essentials:** bottomless tea and coffee, private phone booths, meeting rooms and stunning event space.

For more details about Huckletree West, visit: [www.huckletree.com/locations/west](http://www.huckletree.com/locations/west)

You can reach them at: west@huckletree.com or 020 3948 9270

Or get social at:

- twitter.com/Huckletree
- instagram.com/Huckletree
- facebook.com/Huckletree
“I feel so fortunate to be able to play a part in my son’s childcare whilst also setting up my own business.”

Mark Little
Based at Cuckooz Nest in Clerkenwell, London (page 7)
Mother House

Mother House is the world’s first artist studio model with integrated childcare where children are welcome into the working space.

Mother House was conceived and established by the Procreate Project CIC. The Mother House model aims to help artists who are mothers, creatives, freelancers and entrepreneurs; providing them with an inspiring space to continue working whilst also nurturing engaged parenting.

There is a studio space for professional arts practice in the form of an open art studio; in-house activities organised specifically for children, guided and supervised by a dedicated team; as well as bespoke professional support to nurture each artist, including mentoring and networking.

Playpen

Playpen combines Ofsted registered crèche facilities with a friendly social enterprise cafe to create the perfect ‘pop up’ parent-friendly workspace.

Based at St.Paul’s Way Community Centre in Mile End, London, PlayPen gives working parents the opportunity to enjoy some calm and productive laptop time in the Bow Brew Café while the children are busy having fun in the crèche next door. The café serves coffee, cakes and hot food and has a lovely garden and playground outside.

The Ofsted-registered crèche is staffed by experienced and friendly childcare professionals, and has a well-equipped, clean and modern playspace, which runs both indoor and outside. Children are welcome from 6 months to 5 years old.

PlayPen ‘pops up’ every Monday and Thursday morning during term times, from 9.30am - 12pm.

www.motherhousestudios.com

Playpencowork.com
The Children’s Membership at Impact Hub Birmingham forms an important part of their #RadicalChildcare programme — an initiative to explore, imagine and invest in bold new possibilities and outcomes for children and families.

Impact Hub Birmingham are on a mission to help build a fairer, more equal and just city through people, places and open movements. They have collectively crafted a 6000 sq. ft collaborative space designed to make it easier to do the work that matters; acting as a physical and social habitat for projects, practices, organisations, events and ideas.

The Crèche

The Crèche offers a high quality, safe, stimulating, all-encompassing provision to babies (6 months+), toddlers and pre-schoolers offering free-flow creative play and additional structured activities, all led by experienced artists and early years practitioners.

The Children’s Membership not only gives your child access to their high-quality weekly childcare provision alongside your own membership, but it also positions you and your child to inspire, influence, and shape the conversations, interventions, and initiatives that aim to create a better future for the children of Birmingham.
“I couldn’t have asked for a better first experience of childcare. Being just downstairs during those first weeks made it so much easier to relax, with the added bonus of being amongst fellow working parents going through the same thing — I’ve got a whole new support network now.

The crèche has enabled me to increase my work hours in a way that’s affordable. It’s probably the most efficient three hours I work all week.”

Cheryl Jones, Director Grand Union

The current crèche provision is held weekly on a Thursday from 10am - 1pm and is accompanied by access to their collaborative workspace, meeting rooms and events programme and includes membership to the global Impact Hub network, making it possible for you to work anywhere in the world.

Practitioners and playworkers are in the crèche to oversee the children’s welfare, provide additional support and nurture each child’s overall development.

All infants are encouraged to play and socialise inclusively, no matter what their age, developmental stage, or learning ability. Impact Hub Birmingham have seen a real benefit to having a mix of ages where children have the opportunity to learn from each other and older children find pleasure in communicating with babies and toddlers and making them laugh.

For more details about Impact Hub Birmingham, visit: www.birmingham.impacthub.net/join

You can reach them at: birmingham@impacthub.net

Or get social at:
- twitter.com/ImpactHubBrum
- instagram.com/ImpactHubBrum
- facebook.com/ImpactHubBirmingham

2018
Launched back in 2010, Third Door was built on the idea that parenting and working do not have to be mutually exclusive. Since then, Third Door has become a leading example of how flexibility in work and childcare is needed and is possible for the working families of today. They passionately believe that this solution will be the norm for future generations of parents.

Third Door is a hybrid coworking space with an on-site, fully flexible Ofsted nursery that caters to your needs. Your work diary isn’t fixed week to week, so the flexible hours you book for coworking and nursery reflect that. Flexible nursery options include full days (from as little as one day a week), to flexible packages (minimum 30 hours a month) and ad hoc days.

V22 Early Years is a place for parents to work, whilst their children learn, grow and play.

V22 provides a space for artists, freelancers and entrepreneurs, who are also parents, to work alongside a space for their children. In partnership with parents and carers, V22 is creating an ethos of co-caring for our children in an environment built on a child-centred approach to daily routines that celebrates the importance of play. The space has dedicated access to the lovely Dalston Eastern Curve Garden, which the children visit every day.

Sessions run Monday to Friday across term times and school holidays. There are fixed contract or pay-as-you-go options available.
“I love watching my son through the window, waddling off with the others on an adventure or picnic.”

Emma, Copywriter & Singer/Songwriter
Based at Farm Work Play in Faversham, Kent (page 11)
There’s an abundance of information and resources out there for parents and similarly, for freelancers — but what about those of us juggling both freelance life and parenting combined?

Well, this guide you are looking at right about now is the very first in a new series of downloadable resources specifically designed to help and support us freelance and self-employed parents.

From child-friendly coworking spaces to must-have apps, finance fun and activity ideas for the kids... I’ve got you covered.

Watch. this. space.

And if you’re interested in working with me or sponsoring a future resource just like this one then please get in touch.

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