

Mother of Invention Socks It To 'Em

Combining a role as a mother of five boys under nine, and a busy graphic designer, Kezi Levin has taken her ingenious and practical product Sock Ons to market - and it is flying off the shelves.

Kezi Levin is not your typical mum. She married straight out of high school and spent her first four years of married life in the company of London's hippest, studying at Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, which, famous for pushing boundaries, numbers Lucien Freud, Alexander McQueen and Mike Leigh amongst its alumni.

Pregnancy and baby care brought unusual challenges: "I used to run out of the library with morning sickness and run home in between lectures to feed or bring the kids in". One valuable skill which she credits to that period is time-management: "I learned how to be time-efficient - if I had a design brief, I knew my time was more limited, given all my other commitments, and there was no time for procrastination," she explains. Getting an assignment done would often mean completing it between midnight feeds.

With a hectic schedule came a new pursuit: "I am constantly thinking of how to make life easier - I have always been a mad inventor and my mind spins around at 100 miles per hour!" It was a case of necessity proving to be the mother of invention that yielded her most recent creation, now selling out in the shops, Sock Ons:



"We had a family wedding mid-winter and my three month old baby had to join the retinue in black trousers and the works. He never, ever managed to keep a sock on his foot for more than a minute and I was getting so desperate I almost made him wear a pair of tights for the occasion but his elder brothers would have none of it so in the end he went cold footed."

"After extensive research I had found nothing to deal with the lost sock / cold feet syndrome and knew I had to come up with a solution. The Sock Ons idea came while I was trying to fall asleep that night: I got up, cut up my own tights, made a prototype and it worked." Levin's product of softly woven elasticated material that 'locks' babies' socks gently and firmly in place was designed out of sheer frustration.

Experienced businesspeople advised her to sell the invention to a producer and then walk away; being stubborn by nature, she explains, Levin decided against that route. "I suppose the one thing that kept me going was hearing that I was crazy to pursue this so far and the more I heard that, the more I felt I was going to do it."

When it comes to offering advice to others, Levin's message is straightforward: if anyone says you can't, say you can. "I was told that I would never finish my degree... or do so many other things, just because of all the other commitments I was juggling. Take it as a challenge and make the most out of every situation. Don't fight the stage of life you are in - see it as a blessing and try to incorporate it and work with it. I am blessed to have such a wonderful, supportive family and a career that allows me to work from home, even though my office looks like a playroom."

Over 20,000 Sock Ons have been sold to date, in some the entire stock of Sock Ons sold out in the first week. Sock Ons are now being sold in Mothercare UK and Mothercare International Franchise stores - UK's leading baby good stores. Sock Ons have generated a huge amount of international interest and are quickly becoming a necessary item that no baby (or sane parent) can do without!

For further information and a full list of stockists please go to www.sockons.co.uk