

## **From Busy Mother to Businesswoman: Bev Hoefs and Heart to Heart™**

by Pat Millar, National Fundraising Coordinator

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Mothers of young children are very busy people. In spite of this, or perhaps because of it, many mothers are also extremely creative. A few years back, Bev Hoefs was a young mother faced with the challenge of a fussy baby. Far from being overwhelmed by her situation, she used the opportunity to create a business "from the heart". She recently told me this story of how it all happened:

"My business certainly would not exist if it wasn't for La Leche League. When I was pregnant with my first baby, my midwife required that I attend a series of La Leche League meetings. Armed with all that good info and support, breastfeeding was entirely successful. However, I was blessed with a very high need baby, who was easily overstimulated. I spent many League meetings and family events rocking or jostling or nursing my wailing infant in a back room or porch, before I learned he was overstimulated by the noise and extra people. My Leader loaned me a book by Dr. Sears, *The Fussy Baby*. At last I understood!! Then I borrowed *The Continuum Concept* by Jean Liedloff, and tried everywhere to find a baby sling. I ended up making my own with some fabric and 2 napkin rings-not very aesthetically pleasing-and probably not very safe, but it worked."

"When moms saw my content baby snuggled up to me in the sling, they asked if I'd make them one. I've had 4 children, and improved the sling materials and design with each one. At a friend's daughter's 4th birthday party, I gave a miniature version of my sling as a gift. When I saw her delighted expression and her gushing, heartfelt "Thank You!" I knew I needed to make doll slings as well."

I asked Bev if she planned her business so that she could work from home: "I didn't start my business thinking that it would allow me to stay home with my children-it just gradually grew that way. At one point, when I had 4 children under 8 years old, I hired a woman to help out with the children. She ended up answering phones and shipping, while I played outside with my kids! My children are all "unschooled", and having a home business enabled me to stay with them, and has also been very educational for them. They've all helped in the business at one time or other. They are now 19, 16, 14 and 12 years old-my eldest is at university. "

I also asked her what she likes best about her job: "My business is not without its challenges, but it is very rewarding to be able to help other parents to nurture their babies. A baby sling is such a valuable tool for parents. I often demonstrate breastfeeding positions to new moms and have opportunities to share my positive breastfeeding experiences. Plus, I get to hold all those beautiful babies!!!"

The Heart to Heart™ baby sling is sold through home distributors, baby retail stores, hospital breastfeeding clinics. To find out more, visit Bev's website at [www.heart2heart.ca](http://www.heart2heart.ca).