



## SYMBIOTIC SUPPORT

**SIDE HUSTLE:** Just Between Friends

**OWNER:** Kristen Parent, Program and Events Manager,  
Middleton Chamber of Commerce

**ADVICE:** Get organized.

When Kristen Parent was pregnant with her oldest daughter, a friend told her about a twice-yearly pop-up consignment sale of gently used children's items. A fan of rummage sales, Parent knew the Just Between Friends sale was a way to find what she needed in one place. Now, as the owner of the local franchise, she coordinates 225 consigners, rents a 30,000-square-foot venue, and plans the twice-yearly four-day sale while balancing her role at the Middleton Chamber of Commerce.

"I like organization, I like lists, I like checking things off," Parent explains, describing the tasks required of her side hustle, which averages about 10 to 12 hours per week. The franchise provides marketing support and technology to ensure items are scanned and tracked to the correct consigners, who receive 60% of the sale.

The large event typically draws more than 2,000 shoppers, primarily first-time parents or grandparents. Parent says she has no trouble managing the event outside of her 8 to 5 work schedule and mainly works on the business at night and on weekends. "Nobody knows that when I'm building my email database that I'm on the couch watching Netflix," she laughs.

The relationship between Parent's business and her role at the chamber is symbiotic and owning the business has helped her better understand both. "I can relate to what business owners have on their minds, and 30,000 square feet is no small venue to find for each sale, but my connections help."

Her side hustle also has introduced her to software tools that she's been able to share with the Middleton chamber membership through educational programming.

Just Between Friends has operated in Dane County for 12 years, but Parent has owned it for two. As it grows, she's glad to see the bottom line turning green at the end of the year, but she's opted not to take a salary until her business loan is paid.

"I see myself doing this as long as people keep coming to the sales," Parent says. "Even when family incomes go down, children continue to grow and there will always be a need for these items."