

Starting Out

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On qualifying as an Infant Massage Teacher, you leave the course feeling really enthusiastic and positive. Then you get home and when you are running private classes, you can get ideas about advertising but ultimately it is down to you...

Advertising and marketing yourself is hard work. Along with all the usual children's places and parent and baby places, I also advertised in some shops and even handed out leaflets to parents I passed in the street.

My first class came about however, because I was still friendly with my midwife, who recommended me to one of the mums she knew. The woman wanted to know if I would do a course for a group of five mums and for the class to be held at one of the mum's houses (which is a great cost cutter).

I have set days and times for my courses and have decided to work from home too. It means my groups will be smaller but I find that more relaxed for myself, mum's and baby. It also means I save on hall cost and trying to find somewhere warm and inviting.

I have found that it pays to be as flexible as I can though. I can only work weekends and evenings, as this is when my husband is at home to look after my own children. As this is set in stone I am flexible on the times they would like to have the class. When possible, I ask them what time as a group is best for them and baby.

With the financial climate the way it is at the moment and the fact that there are more and more massage teachers out there, it is a struggle to get things started. I know I am going to have to do a little more advertising but I am not going to get disheartened and I am hoping word of mouth will be a good advertisement for me as well.

The three most important things to remember to try and get started I would say are:

- Get in touch with midwives and health visitors and even give them the opportunity to sit in on a class and use a doll (they may feel happier recommending you if they have seen you at work)
- Taking the current climate into account, price reductions always bring in people or even an introductory promotion
- Be as flexible as possible

It is hard work getting started and regular classes don't come quickly. Depending on the time of year as well (holidays and Christmas etc), you can get peaks and troughs but it is all worth it to see happy relaxed parents and babies and when they go away happy, your own confidence grows.