

mum's the business!

When their offspring start full-time education many mothers find themselves at a loose end. These so-called 'returners' often find part-time work, invariably low paid, undemanding and consequently unfulfilling. So what's stopping them setting up their own business where they can work the hours that suit them?

In many cases it's a lack of confidence and knowledge of where to find the information they need, but support groups are out there. There are a number of online networking forums and in West Kent there's Women In Business (WiB), a non-profit-making networking group for businesswomen – whether employed or running their own businesses, or with aspirations to do so – WiB offers friendly support and encouragement.

The group holds evening meetings on the third Thursday of every month, at Pembury and Sevenoaks alternately. Invited specialists speak on a range of subjects of interest and relevance to businesswomen, from finance and selling, to marketing and new technology.

The group, which includes many women already running a diverse



range of successful businesses, provides a friendly forum for people to meet and discuss business issues. As Nikki Cole, chair of West Kent WiB explains, 'It's helpful for women to have a safe environment, where they can network using their natural style.'

Aside from the events, WiB members can promote their businesses via a link to the 'WiBsite' www.wib-westkent.org.uk, can exchange ideas through the online forum, and receive regular newsletters and bulletins on a range of business matters.

contact:

For further information visit www.wib-westkent.org.uk or telephone: 0845 838 6347.

Relate Family Counselling

The relationship people – Relate Kent

Relate in Tunbridge Wells is now offering the Relate Family Counselling service in response to requests from couple counsellors.

Relate Family Counselling helps family members to be interested in one another. It encourages the family to consider alternative viewpoints and so understand one another's behaviour. A straw poll was conducted recently and six out of ten couples coming to Relate spontaneously mentioned problems with their children as a factor in their relationship.

Relate recognises that unaddressed conflict in the family can be damaging and can lead to problems such as teenage pregnancy, antisocial behaviour and unintentional homelessness.

This relatively new service is largely preventative and deals with life issues before they become serious problems.

Suzanne March, Manager of West and Mid Kent Relate, says: 'Family problems are often kept "behind closed doors" with people giving up

hope on being heard by their children, parents or siblings. But there's simply no need for people to settle for unhappy family relationships just because that's the way it's always been.

'Just like couples who want help with their relationships, families can now talk about how they feel and, hopefully, move on to a more loving and positive footing with their family members.'

contact:

To find out more about Relate Family Counselling, or to set up an initial consultation, phone 01892 529927.