

Clearwater Business Interview Questions For Councilmember Kathleen Beckman's Website

What's the name of your business? A Mother's Arms Inc.

Can you describe what you do/provide? A Mother's Arms is a non-profit organization, run completely by volunteers, who offer free "time out" babysitting to relieve a mother under stress. When a mom, particularly a mom with limited financial needs, needs a break, or time for her self-care, she can call on one of our volunteers to provide a safe environment for her child(ren) while she takes care of what she needs to do. We also promote various programs that educate and empower parents and the family as a whole.

Where are you located? We are located in Dunedin FL, but we serve all of Pinellas County

How long have you been in Clearwater? I am a Clearwater native directly from the North Greenwood Community.

Why did you decide to create A Mother's Arms? I was driven by the tragedies in our County of young mothers killing their children and God said to me, you need to help the mothers and save the babies.

How many employees do you have? Currently I serve as Director of A Mothers' Arms and I am blessed with a team of volunteers

How do you advertise? We advertise primarily through Facebook and LinkedIn. We also distribute flyers, set up information tables through vendor opportunities, and we collaborate with other organizations. Word of mouth is also important.

What makes A Mother's Arms unique? There is no other program in the area that looks to relieve some of the stress of parenting while teaching parenting skills and healthy family practices. I tailor my classes to build on each parent's strengths. Parents in my program redevelop themselves and their mindsets on their own by understanding exactly who they are and the power they possess as a parent.

What are you most proud of? I am proud that I am able to help the parents understand themselves and create better bonding with their children. Seeing parents' smiles when they graduate at the end of the curriculum and seeing how proud they feel about their experience, their efforts and the knowledge they have gained from participating in our program and learning from leaders and other members of the group, is simply amazing. I am always so proud of their efforts and hopeful of the ripple effect throughout their family. Children learn about good parenting from good parenting.

Have you taken any actions to be "green" or environmentally friendly? Well, we are happy to accept gently used children's clothes and toys and furniture. We believe in reducing, reusing and recycling. Children rarely "wear out" clothing or toys, high-chairs or strollers, so we are happy to accept those types of donations to help parents who may be struggling financially.

What can the City of Clearwater do to help you as a business owner? My dream is to have a house in Clearwater that would serve as the permanent location of A Mother's Arms. This house/home is where

parents could drop off children for “respite child-care.” Here is where we could offer: parent/child activities like story time, crafting, and mother/child instructional opportunities. In this home we could provide a number of parenting resources like videos, books, and information about local providers of services tailored specifically for young parents. I envision this house feeling like a home; like a warm comforting hug when a stressed parent walks in. People who grow up in healthy, stable families often feel like there is a “safety net” at home. But many people don’t grow up that way – and when they become parents they may not have the necessary skills or support needed to give their children what they need to thrive. My aim is to provide both the skills and support - to be that safety net. I would love to have a home in Clearwater that serves as that safety net. And, I would love to have a diverse group of volunteers – the “it takes a village” group of volunteers to help me with my mission.

Anything else you’d like Clearwater residents to know? My program is dedicated to baby Jordan Belliveau who was killed by his young mother in Largo, Fl. You can read more about the tragedy of Jordan Belliveau here: <https://www.tampabay.com/news/crime/2020/10/13/jordan-belliveaus-mother-sentenced-to-50-years-in-2-year-olds-murder/>

And you can learn more about A Mother’s Arms here: <https://amothersarms.org/>
Thank you for caring enough to read about my program, please consider a donation of money or your time and expertise.