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## [MyBestHelper: The eHarmony of home help](#)

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PHOTO: Kim Stallknecht/PNG

Alexandra Greenhill and her three daughters in their back yard. She has launched her startup called [mybesthelper.com](#) which matches people looking for top notch child care.

As a physician, mother and entrepreneur, Alexandra Greenhill shares the pain of parents trying to juggle child care and other responsibilities at home with a hectic work schedule.

So she created a cure.

[MyBestHelper](#) is an online resource for parents, families, caregivers and child care providers that goes beyond traditional nanny matching services by offering both helpers and families the tools they need to customize their search – whether it's for emergency babysitting, a full-time caregiver for grandma or someone to feed the cat or walk the dog.

It's the eHarmony of home help.

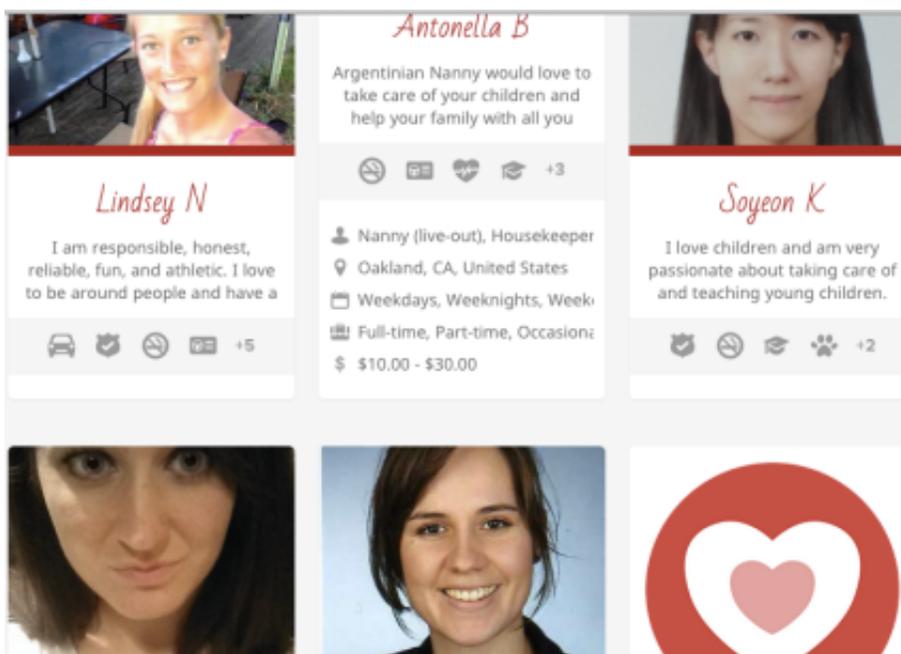
“There are competitors everywhere,” Greenhill said. “Every day somebody starts a nanny agency because the need is still there, but the issue I saw was that every one of those looks at it from one

perspective.

“And what this space really needs is somebody who will say one idea can’t solve this. It’s a complex space.”

And so instead of setting up an agency, recruiting workers and clients and offering up services in a single geographic area, Greenhill, a one-time computer coder, and fellow co-founders Rob Attwell and Francois Deschenes created an online platform to connect families and helpers – whether that’s babysitters, nannies, housekeepers, caregivers or other family help.

Let’s say you’ve used MyBestHelper to find full-time child care at home in Vancouver and you’d like to take the kids along on a business trip to Toronto – you can check profiles for the 387 helpers listed there to see if any would be available to babysit while you work.



The site includes Vancouver, Calgary and Toronto and has about 5,000 users, with two-thirds of those helpers and one-third families seeking help.

Like an online dating service, helpers post profiles and photos, but there the similarity ends. The profiles read more like a LinkedIn listing – an abbreviated resume listing skills, background, availability and other information, including whether or not they can provide a recent criminal record check. Helpers get an automatic email when a job listing is posted that fits their requirements. Their contact numbers and email addresses are available only to families that sign in to use the service. And families can message prospective job candidates through the site without giving their own contact information.

Helpers post profiles and answer job postings for free; families pay a flat rate of \$99 a year, or \$59 for a one-time three-month membership.

Statistically, MyBestHelper says families need a new helper 3.2 times a year.

Unlike most home help agencies, MyBestHelper integrates social media with links to Facebook and other social networking sites.

Greenhill has been more fortunate than most moms in that she can adapt her work to her kids’ schedules:

She has pitched investors with her baby sitting on her lap and attended conference sessions where fellow doctors minded the baby while she stepped out for a few minutes.

But as a physician who keeps up her clinical activity by serving as backup to doctors who can't find replacements and is chief medical officer of Medeo – the Vancouver-based company that offers virtual house calls through secure video feeds – Greenhill's schedule is formidable.

Her family, husband James and three daughters, aged 11, nine and three, are supportive of her start-up.

“The kids have been my greatest champions,” she said of her children, who critique MyBestHelp flyers for blogs and other sites.

The company got significant help when it was chosen by Vancouver's Invoke Labs to join its tech accelerator program, perhaps best known for its first spinoff, HootSuite. Greenhill's company donates one per cent of its equity to Science World in the hope that what now represents a small donation could grow to millions if MyBestHelper achieves its goals.

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