

# **BASLERS** *you should KNOW!*

## **Babsy, Babysitting Service in Basel**

### **Tell us a little bit about yourselves**

Babsy is a Non-Profit Organization offering childcare and is run by passionate volunteers. Our board members are Andrea, Sarah, Stephanie, Oliver, Alvin and Ferdinand. The task of personally interviewing the parents and sitters is done by Andrea, Stefi and Sarah because at Babsy we care deeply about the safety of both parents and sitters and always ensure that this is a priority.

Andrea had the original idea for Babsy during a workshop in Tallinn, Estonia that was part of her Master's studies in Innovation Management. When she returned and told her boss about the idea, he encouraged her to take part in an innovation competition that was being launched by the company she was working in. She won the competition and went through several stages of pitches.

In September 2018 however, the project lost support and consequently, Andrea and her colleague Sophia lost their jobs. By this time, Babsy had more than 60 registered parents and 20 bookings. Not wanting their idea to die, Andrea and Sophia decided to establish a club on a zero-cost basis. All of their energy then went into figuring one thing out: "how can we save this?".

Sarah and Stephanie were recruited to help on a volunteer basis. Since January this year, they have helped with the recruitment and sign-ups, personal interviews with parents and sitters, and other administrative and marketing jobs. Sophia is also now involved in creative parts like videos etc. All our volunteers do not work more than 20% of their time at Babsy.

About Sarah and Stefi: Sarah, a mother herself, first signed up as a sitter. She found



herself in a double-role when she needed a sitter and pitched in to help when Babsy was looking for more volunteers. Stephanie reduced her job in the building sector to 80% to help Babsy on Fridays because she believes in the idea of a social, sustainable network and wanted to volunteer with a social network.

We are really happy to have such lovely people on board and we are always looking for sitters, parents and volunteers to join our amazing community.

### **Tell us how you came to be in Basel**

Andrea is an expat herself and came from Austria, where she attended a tourism-school. She worked in the hospitality industry and then switched to the insurance sector. Sarah and Stephanie are “real Baslers” and are very committed to the beautiful city which is now enriched with a lovely Babysitter-on-demand-service that provides personally checked sitters.

### **Tell us a bit about your business**

We provide babysitting and nanny service that can be awarded regionally around the clock, including in the event of illness. We want to use local resources and generate jobs for a sustainable economy. The goal is a happy community with contented children and loving parents.

Babsy is as simple as a helping hand or a neighbourhood community but on an online basis. It is a sustainable and holistic idea of childcare, for any eventuality. It also

considers today's lifestyle and career choices.. Babsy is still developing its app: it has since September 2018 received more than 450 bookings without it. The volunteer-based start-up also seeks to help parents with administrative aspects such as taxes, duties and insurance. Furthermore, it employs a strategy that focuses on working together with existing clubs and aims to help the childcare sector with digitalisation. But, the fact is, it is not all about the app, the app will just ease the administrative process.

Babsy offers safe childcare, adopting a process where both parents and sitters are checked by members of the Babsy crew since we aim to make it the safest childcare platform in Switzerland. We carry out background checks that include elements such as the special criminal record extract. We also perform checks on the parents as we do not want to send our sitters to just any family.

On the other hand, we help parents out by doing administrative work including all things relating to the nation-wide, state-run insurance scheme in Switzerland (AHV), and more. Babsy will remain available by phone even when the app is launched. We are creating the app together with the University of Applied Sciences Northern Switzerland and a team of psychologists, to have holistic and healthy offers for parents and sitters.

We care a lot about our registered parents and sitters and they feel that we have put in a lot of work to build up a sense of mutual trust. For Babsy, it is not about making money, it is about changing our society.

## How does your service work?

Parents and sitters sign up after registering themselves (which can take between 20 and 60 minutes, depending on how much they have to say). Immediately after this, parents gain access to Babsy's sitter database to see if they have any preferences. Parents can send us requests at any time and tell us whether they would like to book their favourite sitter or if they would like to make an open request to meet with the next available sitter. After this, the parents are free to choose who to book. Sitters, on the other hand, give us their general availability and are also open for other requests as sometimes, they may postpone in order to spend time with their own families. Communication is so important: by contacting us, sitters and parents save themselves a lot of time and frustration by receiving quick responses. A mum, by the way, could also be signed up as a sitter. What we do not want is to become an "uber" for Babysitters. What we do want is to take the administrative processes that stress parents out, such as AHV, insurances, etc and combine them with the simplicity and functionality of an app that will help them do things correctly and with ease.

We operate on two different levels. We offer families the possibility to have a baby-sitter at any given moment and different businesses (SMEs to large corporations) the prospect to cooperate with us. With Babsy, employees will be able to feel more at ease knowing that they're prepared for any emergency related to babysitting. Whether you or your child is ill, or for whatever kind of help you need,

Babsy is there to help wherever we can.

A holistic system with for reasonable prices, because today, we're already thinking about how our society will change tomorrow.

## Do you have any restrictions?

Yes, if we find something strange in the documents supplied or during the personal interview and we feel that people don't trust us then we don't trust them - why should we? We do not want to send sitters to families if we do not feel comfortable with the sitters. We also don't want to send our sitters just anywhere. Imagine if it was your teenage child which is babysitting, you would want him or her to be safe which they will likely be on a platform like Babsy. With Babsy you know that someone has performed checks on the families beforehand. Trust is very important to us. Also, besides conducting interviews, checking CVs and , criminal records etc. we work continuously to make the process more efficient but at the same time even more secure. This is why we work as an NGO. This gives us the chance to work on a very important topic together with the best existing providers, universities and psychologists. We do not want to make decisions based on our "gut feeling", we want to have a stable and safe process.

When we started developing our app, we signed up on other platforms to find sitters as fake parents as an experiment. No one ever asked us who we were. We decided that wasn't something that we wanted, so we made a point of first checking if people were who they said they were. We will also try to find more modern ways to incorporate

security elements within the app. Though there are other ways to book for childcare services (because we would like to maintain several methods of contact), we think the app offers additional convenience and security. We have turned down parents and sitters who were not able to provide all the necessary documents. In some cases, they had a strange manner about them during the talk that we did not want to integrate. Going forward, we aim to make this sorting process easier by using a questionnaire. This will make the process more defined and less instinctive. We would then combine the questionnaire and a personal interview to create a safer, personalised solution.

### **How will I know what to expect from a babysitter?**

The profiles say it all. On a profile, you will have an overview of the kind of person to expect. Some sitters will have additional

offers, such as helping with homework or music lessons, others will provide only childcare. Extra jobs can be requested from a sitter, for a small additional amount, but this is negotiated directly with the sitters. We keep an eye on the profiles to ensure they're up to date and if things change, we ask for new information to make any necessary adjustments. We have a lot of wonderful sitters and parents, and Babsy helps to match them.. The sitters could be hobby-sitters, childcarers with diplomas or hobby-grannies, they all have their advantages. If you are a parent who is not sure if a sitter is right for you, do make an appointment with Babsy for a free first-time consultation. This way, you can get to know as many sitters as you want to, and you can make sure you're comfortable with your choice.

Photo by Lina Kivaka from Pexels



## **What is your recruitment process for babysitters?**

All our sitters are interviewed and have had to bring us the following documents: first aid, first aid for babies and children, other certificates in relation to childcare or education as well as their CVs. We also request their criminal record extract and their special criminal record extract. Sitters can choose to bring their references from previous jobs and we can integrate them with their online profile. Babsy also carries out random tests and verifies the references via phone calls to see if they are real. Incidentally, we are the only babysitting service that asks for the special criminal record extract because we want to set the bar high.

## **How quickly can I arrange for a babysitter?**

So far, our quickest request was for 2 hours and we solved it in 2 minutes after the text arrived (via Whatsapp). Once our app is up and running, parents will be able to choose sitters from a map on the app, who is available or online, similar to taxi apps. The response time would be around 20 minutes. Our app will also have a calendar function to allow parents to select the dates they would need a sitter for, and see who is available. Open requests may also be made, where sitters can apply to the families' requests and the parents can choose the one they like the most. If the sitter is nearby and responds immediately, the parents may find a sitter in 5 minutes.

## **What makes Babsy a unique babysitting experience?**

We offer a babysitting experience that is better than usual because the sitter or family has been personally vetted by our team. You can always rely on us to provide a fast and reliable solution to your requests because that's our goal. Additionally, we offer the service of the AHV which is unique and for prices which are second to none.

We ensure that there are always sitters available on the platform for parents. We, therefore, guarantee you a solution for any time and any budget. Most importantly, you can sign up for a free trial to get to know some sitters. Even before that, you can have a portfolio of sitters that eliminates the risk of not finding anyone. Should all your preferred sitters be booked, we can recommend other sitters that worked with other families

There is always the possibility to contact the parents to ask questions or chat with the sitters. There are no restrictions for contacting within the app as soon as you are signed up. We trust that the sitters and the parents will use us even when faced with alternative arrangements - I think this makes it the best experience ever.

We strive for a future hand in hand, one where family, work and a healthy sense of self-realization is possible without justifying why you need a sitter. This makes us and our vision unique.

## What are your plans for Babsy in the future?

Babsy is the result of more than 400 talks with parents and sitters about their needs. We interviewed them regarding their desires and in fact, the idea was designed by them. Babsy wants and needs to grow, as it is not earning money with the basic services. Our aim is to generate income by offering additional services such as the AHV-solution, accident insurance solutions, and so on.

Our current priority is to grow the basic services in the 4 cantons Basel-Stadt, Baselland, Solothurn and Aargau and to finish the first prototype of the app in order to start a test run. We are also thinking about creating a Babsy-Playground as a drop-off possibility for parents should they need it. Besides that, we are working with several childcare institutions and services to be able to grow steadily and healthily. We are thinking further because the future and demographic

Changes are already knocking at our door. We are presently looking for companies that might be interested in having solutions for their childcare issues. If your company is interested, let us know. Of course, we also welcome any volunteers who would be interested to help and work in a happy environment. We continue to work for you and for the future of childcare services.

***Parents and sitters can look forward to the release of the Babsy app in 2020.***

Donations are welcome at any time, please find our details below.

Support us:  
Babsy Office  
Liebrütistrasse 10  
4303 Kaiseraugst

Raiffeisenbank Basel  
St. Jakobs-Strasse 7  
4052 Basel

IBAN CH33 8148 6000 0093 4172 7

