

# MOMPREENEURS



Kim Burgau &  
Renée Hemel  
Lil Squirts



Amanda Aguillard  
Aguillard Accounting

## MEMORY MAKERS

Following the birth of her first child, Kim Burgau wanted a baby book to record his various milestones. All she could find were generic books. It would be fun, she told her friend Renée Hemel, to have something to record all those uniquely NOLA moments like “baby’s first Mardi Gras” and “baby’s first Jazz Fest.” That discussion was the impetus for their future business, Lil Squirts, “baby books the locals love.”

Since creating their first New Orleans-focused books seven years ago, Kim had a second son, now six, and Renée had a son, now six, and twin daughters, who are two-and-a-half. They also expanded to other markets; they now have *Bebé Acadian* and baby books for Louisiana, the Gulf Coast, Mobile Bay, and Atlanta. The books are available in retail establishments in four states as well as online.

As busy as they are with Lil Squirts, both Kim and Renée have separate fulltime jobs. Kim has been a physical therapist for the last 16 years and also works as West Jefferson Hospital’s acute care coordinator of therapy services. Renée has been in early childhood education for the last 18 years—both in the classroom and now as the Assistant Director at Louise S. McGehee School’s Little Gate. She’s also co-authored two children’s books, *Fleurdelicious* and *Fleurdelee*.

The biggest challenge for these two moms is finding time to raise their young families, work fulltime jobs, and run Lil Squirts. But it’s a balancing act they’re happy to do.

“At the end of the day, it’s all worth it,” says Renée. “I feel I am the kind of mother that leads by example, and I want my children to see they can succeed at anything they put their mind to.”

Also providing motivation? When people tell them how much they love the books, says Kim.

### NBF: WHAT’S YOUR FAVORITE LIL SQUIRTS MEMORY BOOK?

**RENÉE:** I don’t know if I can pick just one!

**KIM:** Being from New Orleans, I would have to say the New Orleans baby book. It has so many of the fun things that we as New Orleanians love to celebrate.

Lil Squirts, [lilsquirts.net](http://lilsquirts.net).

## CREATIVE ACCOUNTING

Amanda Aguillard has worked for international accounting firms as well as large corporations. But it was the Deepwater Horizon oil spill that opened her eyes to the needs of small businesses and eventually led her to launch her own accounting firm.

While working with a local law firm to calculate the loss claims for the spill, she had an epiphany. “I realized that most business owners didn’t understand their finances because they hated talking to their accountants,” she says. “I saw that there was a market for approachable and understandable business consulting.”

Amanda’s accounting firm keeps her busy. “There are nights that I don’t tuck the kids in because I’m trying to squeeze every minute out of the day,” she says. “After a busy tax season this year, I asked my kids what they wanted us to do most to celebrate, and my son said, ‘I’d just like for you to cook dinner.’”

Despite the heavy workload, she is able to attend daytime events that are important to her children, Avery, 11, and Jack, 10. And because she set up her company to be cloud-based, allowing her clients to access to important business financial information any time or place they had an internet connection, she has the flexibility to get out of her office and travel with her children.

“I’ve taken business calls from the deep woods of Wisconsin, the California coast, and even Spain,” Amanda says. “I couldn’t do that in a traditional accounting job.”

### NBF: WHAT’S ONE PIECE OF FINANCIAL ADVICE YOU THINK PARENTS SHOULD SHARE WITH THEIR KIDS?

**AMANDA:** Every time you buy something, you are choosing this over another thing you may want later. No matter how much you have, you can’t buy it all!

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