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Parents rejoice as Kidswap grows

No, you can't trade your kids, but you can get them really cool stuff, cheap

You'll have to move fast if you want to get your hands on the hand-crafted Swarovski crystal pacifier that's up for grabs on Shelly Wutke's Kidswap website.

The designer soother is going for just \$20 — its pampered young owner no doubt having moved on to blazers from Benetton.

Only people who have little kids will understand why Kidswap, started by Shelly just two years ago, is going through such a rapid growth spurt.

The Aldergrove mom, who has three tots of her own, came up with the idea after growing tired of looking for bargains at kids' clothing swap-meets.

"I just didn't want to go to them any more," says Shelly. "I was getting elbowed all the time when I was pregnant."

Today Kidswap is used by more than 26,000 visitors per month and Shelly now finds herself fielding takeover offers.

Sellers pay 30 cents to advertise each item, which stays on the site until it's sold.

"The biggest category is the toddler clothes," says Shelly. "Those things just fly out the door. Sometimes there's a catfight for them."



Shelly Wutke operates the Kidswap website from her kitchen in Langley with the 'help' of her three children (left to right) Camryn, 4, Nate, 27 months, and Jackson, three months. RIC ERNST — THE PROVINCE

Users come from all over North America but about half live in the Lower Mainland. Shelly says Kidswap is not only a cheaper way to trade than eBay but also gives parents the opportunity to arrange same-day pickup — and perhaps even make new friends. You can check out hundreds of bargains — and put in an offer on that crystal-encrusted Swarovski soother — at www.kidswap.ca.