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Mommy-Moves! fits moms fine

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KEYPORT BUREAU

Some are stay-at-home moms. Others have part-time jobs or own small businesses. Whatever, these mothers have something in common: They don't have to put their children in day care while they work out.

They bring them with them to **Mommy-Moves!**

"It's a great program, because it's not only a stroller-based fitness program for mothers to lose weight," said Lori Sawyer of Middletown, who runs **Mommy-Moves!** "It's a group for moms that have the same interests. It becomes a social thing."

Sawyer, who does fitness counseling and personal training through LS-Fitness, which she owns, said she decided to create a workout program for mothers after her son, Jake, was born in August 2005. She needed a way to spend time with her son while also staying in shape, she said.

"I feel like I get to lose the baby weight while getting some fresh air," said mother Chara Bellincampi, 30, of Atlantic Highlands, who said she has lost 35 pounds since starting the program earlier this year. Her son, Adison, is 7 months old.

Mommy-Moves! classes — held Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at Meadow Ridge Park in Rumson and Tuesdays and Thursdays at Normandy Park in Middletown — combine cardiovascular and strength training for mothers. And it's all done with their little ones in tow.

Sawyer is capitalizing on a growing sector of the fitness industry, according to industry experts.

Rosemary Lavery, spokeswoman for the International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association, which represents nearly 30,000 clubs nationwide, said mothers and fathers are searching for fitness programs that are more parent-friendly.

The industry is responding, she said, by not only offering child care services, but also by promoting family-based fitness activities, she said.

"Some of the top reasons why people don't join clubs are lack of time, cost and intimidation," she said. "So definitely that kind of programming can eliminate that barrier."

But as any rookie to a fitness program will tell you, motivation can be the toughest part of sticking to a workout regimen. And that's where **Mommy-Moves!** comes in. Tara Harmon, 31, of Rumson, who moved to the area in May from Manhattan, said the program has become a social tool. Not only has she been able to meet new friends and stay in shape, she's also been able to trade parenting tips.

"Maybe I feel like working out, but maybe I also want to know why my daughter isn't eating," Harmon said. "When you come here, you can share advice."

For mothers such as Colleen Contreras, 27, of Monmouth Beach, the exchange

includes sharing tips with other mothers who are small-business owners.

"It's nice to be around business owners who do the same thing," said Contreras, owner of a consulting business she runs out of her home.

There are also instructors who run Kids-Moves! fitness classes for children and Mommy-Runs!, a running program headed by a mother who has competed in more than 30 half-marathons and triathlons nationwide.

"Running a race is something I never thought I would have done," said mother Jennifer Canavan, 33, of Tinton Falls. "So there's really a lot of inspiration in all of this."

A mental lift

Suffering from what she called "mommy brain," Bellincampi said the **Mommy-Moves!** program has done more than just help her lose the extra pounds she gained after giving birth to her son.

"You really do start losing your mind," being house-bound taking care of children all day, she said. "You do need to get out, and this (program) forces you to do that."

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MORE INFO

Mommy-Moves! classes are \$18 for one, \$150 for 10. For more information on **Mommy-Moves!**, visit www.mommy-moves.com, or call (732) 539-7711.