



PARK PERKS: Outdoor fun is a plus for part-time babysitter Melissa Hocking, who looks after Rowan, 3, Nathan, 1, and Aidan, 5. The 24-year-old university student earns up to \$220 a shift through a babysitting agency. Picture: Darren England

Making the big money is child's play, really

KRISTIN SHORTEN

PSYCHOLOGY student Melissa Hocking can't keep up with the babysitting work coming her way.

The Toowong 24-year-old is earning up to \$220 a shift through agency Dial-An-Angel.

"I've got regular clients Monday, Wednesday and Friday as well as whatever else comes up," she said.

"If you've been to a client before, they can request you again, so I've got a few of those. If I wanted to work seven days a week, I could because there's so much work."

After years of working with children, Ms Hocking discovered professional babysitting 18 months ago.

"I've had friends who have done the private babysitting thing where they'd advertised but I thought this would be more professional," she said.

Ms Hocking said the screening process had been stringent.

"It was like going for an ordinary job interview, so they were pretty thorough," she said. "You needed to have references and to have had previous experience. It was

about an hour-long sit-down interview and you had to have your Blue Card and full first-aid certificate."

Ms Hocking says she loves the perks of her part-time job.

"We go to the park, I take them to play group, we play outside, paint, do craft and puzzles," she said. "When you're with regulars, you become close with the families."

Ms Hocking said a mix of regular and casual clients kept it interesting.

"I've had one family who asked me to write down every single thing we did and when, like what the kids ate and when they went to the toilet and things like that, but honestly that's fine," she said.



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Babysitter Melissa Hocking

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