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'I Love Spending 14-Hour Days With Mum'

Clare O'Connell, 22, and her mum Judith, 55, run Pop Bakery, a London cake company

I've always loved baking – my grandad was a baker, so I grew up eating amazing cakes. I got the idea for the cakepop – a tiny chocolate cake on a stick – from an American bakery blog in March this year. They looked cute, so I just had to try making them.

The cakepops I saw online were plain pink, but still looked very cool. Plus, cupcakes were everywhere, and I was looking for something new. I quickly realised there were so many ways to decorate them, so I decided to try selling them. My sister and my boyfriend made me a website (www.popbakery.co.uk), and

I contacted a magazine with images of my designs. I was so excited when they featured them!

Suddenly, orders flooded in, then Harvey Nichols asked for a meeting. I took a box of cakepops to their offices and amazingly, they decided to start stocking them!

At that point, it was just me in my parents' kitchen, baking and decorating all day long. It reached crisis point and one night in May, Mum sat me down and told me that she wanted to give up her childminding job to work with me. I'd never seen her so happy – she was excited that at 55 she could have a whole new career.

It's strange being Mum's employer, but working together

also feels very natural. She's in the kitchen baking, and I'm in the dining room doing the decorating. However, I still live at home

Mum was so excited to have a whole new career

and working and living together can cause tension. Little things that have always annoyed me are more prominent, like her habit of throwing things away

before I've finished with them!

My two older sisters also live at home, and while they're excited for us, I do monopolise Mum. All we talk about are cakepops.

This business has definitely brought Mum and I closer – when we get a big order, we can share our excitement. While I was at university, I was homesick – now I spend 14 hours a day with Mum, so I've definitely made up for it!"

Judith says: "Having my daughter as my boss doesn't feel weird. It's just exciting to be involved."

I think you do need a special relationship to work with your daughter. I know I can support Clare, and enjoy her happiness. It makes work more fun."