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UBER FOR THE SCHOOL RUN

🇺🇸 MOBILITY & TRANSPORT

LA-based moms start a safe taxi service that parents can order for their kids.

More and more households include two working parents. And busy parents know that it can be a difficult balancing act making sure their children get home from school, are back in time for ballet or swimming and can make it safely over to a friends sleepover. Uber passengers need to be at least 18-years of age to ride alone. Now three LA mums have come up with a solution. Enter HopSkipDrive.

The ridesharing app focuses on safety. All drivers have to have prior experience working with children as, for example, teachers or nannies. Before hiring a driver, the company conducts thorough checks which include fingerprinting, requiring drivers to be members of the TrustLine registry (the most stringent checks for those working with children in LA), ride-alongs, reference checks, driver training and meeting each driver personally. As co-founder and head of policy Carolyn Yashari Becher notes, "We're incredibly proud of the 15 point safety certification process".

Unlike Uber, the app is not on-demand. Users schedule the time they want the ride and are sent a driver profile and secret password in advance, information which they then share with their children. The app also features GPS tracking so parents can follow the journey.

HopSkipDrive is currently available in Los Angeles and San Francisco, and hopes to expand to other regions in the near future. Springwise has covered a number of Uber variations: a Brazilian car service which provides armored vehicles and drivers trained in defensive driving; and female-only ridesharing

services that employs women drivers for female and trans customers. Are there still more niche innovations of this nature to come?

14th September 2016
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