

Pass It On®...

Are You Smarter Than a Seventh-Grade Business Owner?

How Kidpreneur Alejandro Buxton is making money for college and helping others.

Ask just about any 12-year-old what their favorite time of the day is and you'll get a resounding answer: lunch! But for Alejandro Buxton, it's a bit different. He can't wait to get home to dive into his candle-making business. Alejandro has a goal of being a bright light in the world. He also has a little sister for an assistant and a mother who is good at taking directions and giving a little advice.

It all started when Alejandro discovered that commercial candles gave his mom headaches. He figured there must be a way to make an all-natural candle that was safe. So he dug into the world of wax and found a soy-based wax that is chemical-free. He also found natural oils to add scent, and Smell of Love Candles was born.

Alejandro sells his candles at local fairs and to his neighbors. Then his online orders began picking up. In the fall of 2022, he started seventh grade — and opened his first retail store, becoming the youngest leaseholder at Tysons Corner Center, a regional mall outside Washington, D.C. As his candles become a much bigger operation, he is always experimenting with new scents like Donut Kill My Vibe, the perfect after-school scent that gets you in the mood for a snack.

He started his business to build his college fund. But running a business is about more than making money for Alejandro. He sets aside a portion of the profit to give back to the community. Some of the money supports the local homeless shelter, and some goes into a scholarship fund for kids who need a little help with college.

"My future goal is to just help people around the world," Alejandro says. His mother, Patricia, is impressed with her son and loves to spend time with him as his business grows. She says it has strengthened their bond to be together and see how his mind works, adding, "It's been really inspiring."

Alejandro has big goals. And an even bigger heart. With all the problems that seem to rob many of us

of the motivation to move forward, Alejandro has chosen to focus on a solution that works, not only for him, but as an inspiration to others, no matter their age.

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