

Fall 2004

The first and probably most important step in making a choice about anything is realizing there is a choice to be made. This is especially true in making the decisions surrounding the births of our babies. It is so easy to take the path most traveled by our friends or family, and not ask questions or question the 'normal' routine. But being a parent means figuring out what works best for you, and this starts in pregnancy and certainly in birth. Births are like snowflakes – no two are the same, so it is essential to make thoughtful choices for each unique birth experience. This is not always a simple process, as it may be difficult to find information or people in your life who have explored alternatives. But it is worth the effort – first determine what you need and want from your pregnancy care and birth, and then figure out what choices you need to make to get what you deserve.

This issue of The Birth Vine explores a few of the choices we make in birth – choosing midwifery care or medical care, choosing homebirth or hospital birth, and the possibility of waterbirth. (You may notice there aren't actually any articles on choosing medical care or hospital birth because #1, this is a common practice which needs little further explanation, and #2, no one submitted an article on choosing medical care or a hospital birth...) We are not opposed to choosing a hospital birth (I work in a hospital!) or to choosing medical care in pregnancy if this is right for you. MACFE supports the belief of freedom of choice through knowledge of alternatives. So our hope is that you will become knowledgeable about all the options, then consciously choose the one that is right or necessary for you and your family. As always, we welcome your feedback on any issues we cover in The Birth Vine.

The next issue of The Birth Vine will be a follow-up to our Winter 2003 issue, and will feature

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including family nutrition, behavior and discipline, as well as the reality of parenting. We are pleased to accept your submissions on these (or any other) topics at birthvine@shaw.ca

The deadline for the winter issue will be January 10, 2005.

Finally, we are pleased to welcome new members to the Birth Vine team – Karen Bilous, Shannon Thiessen and Katherine Wiebe have joined Sonya, Tracy and myself in creating this amazing journal. We thank you for supporting MACFE and The Birth Vine with your submissions, and by subscribing to, and reading this important publication.

Have a wonderful autumn,

Lori - for The Birth Vine Team