



Birth Circle of Kirksville

supporting informed choices, gentle births, and confident moms

What is Birth Circle? In 2004 Breanna Farris and Jennifer Eldridge Houser began attending a local breastfeeding support group after struggling to overcome difficulties with breastfeeding. During these meetings, birth became the focus of most discussions. Women wanted to share their birth stories and many of them were saddened by their experiences. Many women described births that included interventions that scared them and led to difficulties with breastfeeding. As each woman came to terms with their own birth, they came to understand that they would have benefited from more information and encouragement during their own pregnancy and birth. In 2006 Breanna and Jen started the Birth Circle group which continues to meet monthly to educate and empower mothers before, during and after their pregnancies in hopes for encouraging gentle births with moms who feel in control and informed. In 2007 we became an unofficial non-profit organization (Birth Circle of Kirksville) and began creating a birth network which includes physicians, midwives, doulas, and health care services in NEMO.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Birth Circle of Kirksville
c/o Laurie Griego
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Phone: 660.665.2264

Monthly Meeting Information: Jen 660.665.6761

E-mail: info@birthcirclekirksville.com

www.birthcirclekirksville.com

Join our chat group:
<http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/birthcircle4u/>

Birth Circle Meetings

We gather the third Saturday of each month from 10:15 a.m. to noon at the parish center of Mary Immaculate Church (no affiliation) for presentations, demonstrations, story sharing, and community building. It's a child-friendly atmosphere.

Past Discussions/Demonstrations

Birth Plans, Standard Intervention, Nutrition and Exercise, Baby Wearing, Birth Video Watching and Sharing Birth Stories, Palpating, Vaginal Birth After Cesarean (VBAC) Support, Postpartum Care, Mother Blessings

Upcoming Topics

February 16 – Birth Expectations

March 15 – Birth Places

April 19 – Birth Partners

Our vision is to have an empowered and educated birth community that supports each woman's pregnancy and birth.

Meet the BCK Board Members...

President and Transparency Project Coordinator: Laurie Griego is a mom of three children, ages 5, 3 and 1, and has been interested in pregnancy and birth issues since the birth of her first daughter. She became a birth doula in 2007 and teaches private childbirth education classes.

Vice-President: Breanna Farris is a founding member of Birth Circle. Working with others to compile resources, listening to positive birth stories and meeting others that want to make informed choices about their body and health care has been a great asset to her and her family. She is the mother of Eric 5, Greta 3, and Lenna 1 (her water baby!).

Secretary and Treasurer: Jackie DeSanty-Combes has two children, ages 4 and 2. She advocates for the right to birth where and how a woman chooses, for the importance of postpartum support, and for attachment parenting.

Public Relations: Jo Wheeler is the mother of 4, soon to be 5 children. Jo has been a Professional Labor Support Doula since 2000, is an Evidence Based Childbirth Educator, and is currently a member of and previous chapter leader of International Cesarean Awareness Network (ICAN). Jo also offers Private Breastfeeding Support to her clients.

Community Liaison: Lynn Carter is the mother of a seven year old son and a three year old daughter. She volunteers as a breastfeeding counselor and is training to be certified as a childbirth educator. Lynn currently serves as the regional representative and vice president of Friends of Missouri Midwives.



Jo, Laurie, Breanna, Jackie, Lynn

Birth Circle Receives Grant from Lamaze International

In the fall of 2007, Birth Circle of Kirksville (BCK) decided to take a huge step forward and become not only a support group, but an advocacy group as well. To help us meet this new goal, we applied for a grant from Lamaze International. The purpose of the grant is to work toward improving public reporting of intervention rates in maternity care. In late December 2007, BCK was very excited to learn that we had received \$1,000 from Lamaze to work toward our goals in the Northeast Missouri area.

We will use the money to help fund four major projects: a birth survey which will help us evaluate the birth experiences and satisfaction of families in the Northeast Missouri area; a Normal Birthing Workshop to be held in early November that will bring together doctors, midwives, and families to learn about and discuss issues in local maternity care; a program to encourage local doctors to openly share their intervention rates and post their compliance with the Coalition for Improving Maternity Services (CIMS) Mother-Friendly Childbirth Initiative (MFCI) guidelines (listed on next page); and a quarterly newsletter that will keep local doctors, organizations, and private supporters aware of our progress toward achieving our goals.

Why It's Important...

BCK believes that birth is a natural, life-changing event that a woman will remember and cherish forever. Women deserve to receive maternity care that is up-to-date, research-based, and respectful of the woman, her family, and her beliefs.

Research has shown that a woman's risk of intervention during labor is *most directly related to her care provider and birth place*, not from medical issues that arise during labor. It is important that a woman learns as much as she can about her particular care provider and birth place in order to make the best decisions about her and her baby's care. Encouraging care providers to document and openly share their intervention rates helps ensure that a woman can confidently find care that best fits with her beliefs about pregnancy, birth, and newborn care.

To learn more about the project, volunteer to help, or to take the survey, please visit our website at www.birthcirclekirksville.com.

Birth Circle Endorses Coalition of Improved Maternity Services (CIMS)

CIMS is a coalition of individuals and organizations with concern for the care and well-being of mothers, babies, and families. Their mission is to promote a wellness model of maternity care that will improve birth outcomes and substantially reduce costs. They developed the Mother-Friendly Childbirth Initiative, a consensus document that outlines the principles and practices of mother-friendly care. The MFCI has been endorsed by numerous prominent individuals and more than 50 organizations representing over 90,000 members.

Ten steps of the Mother-Friendly Childbirth Initiative:

Step 1: Offers All Birthing Mothers Unrestricted Access to Birth Companions, Labor Support, Professional Midwifery Care

Step 2: Provides Accurate, Descriptive, Statistical Information About Birth Care Practices

Step 3: Provides Culturally Competent Care

Step 4: Provides the Birthing Woman With Freedom of Movement to Walk, Move, Assume Positions of Her Choice

Step 5: Has Clearly Defined Policies, Procedures for Collaboration, Consultation, Links to Community Resources

Step 6: Does Not Routinely Employ Practices, Procedures Unsupported by Scientific Evidence

Step 7: Educates Staff in Non Drug Methods of Pain Relief and Does Not Promote Use of Analgesic, Anesthetic Drugs

Step 8: Encourages All Mothers, Families to Touch, Hold, Breastfeed, Care for Their Babies

Step 9: Discourages Nonreligious Circumcision of the Newborn

Step 10: Strives to Achieve the WHO/UNICEF Ten Steps of the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative to Promote Successful Breastfeeding

For more information on CIMS visit www.motherfriendly.org

Easy Ways to Support BCK

- 1. Become a Member (it's free!) . Share your experiences and support expectant moms by attending monthly meetings or joining our chat group.**
- 2. Make a freezable meal for a new mom.**
- 3. Be a voice in our community.**
- 4. Add your organization to our list of Supporters (see next page).**
- 5. Take our Birth Survey and pass it along to other moms (see page 9).**
- 6. Shop at Amazon.com through our special link (see next page).**
- 7. Make a financial contribution.**
- 8. Volunteer your time.**

Become A BCK Supporter

Our supporters consist of individuals and businesses who do at least one of the following:

- Distribute surveys to moms in their area.
- Promote BCK monthly meetings through brochure distribution, word of mouth, or promotional material.
- Make a financial contribution.
- If the individual or business offers childbirth classes, doula services, or maternity/newborn care, they must be working toward or complying with the appropriate CIMS guidelines.

Current Supporters:

Mary Ann Coatney, CNM, FNP -- Moberly, MO
Columbia Community Birth Center -- Columbia, MO
La Leche League Kirksville -- Kirksville, MO
Parents as Teachers (PAT) - - Kirksville, MO

Experienced a Miscarriage or Birth Loss? Interested in Sharing Your Story ?

With support from Columbia Community Birthing Center, I recently had an empowering natural miscarriage at home. Writing about the pregnancy and miscarriage assisted the healing process, and I received a great deal of support and love from the Birth Circle community. The experience expanded my mothering metamorphosis, and as a result, I am compiling miscarriage/loss stories for a booklet. If you would like to contribute to the booklet, please contact me (Jackie) at 660.689.3012 or combes@cvalley.net Thank you!

What Women are Saying about Birth Circle...

"Birth Circle empowered me to take control of my birthing experience! It was so moving to have the spiritual and emotional support of a strong network of women believing in me and helping me to prepare for and have the birth that I wanted." -Jill

BCK Fundraiser:

Shop at Amazon.com and we earn 4% of your total purchase!!!

Step 1: Visit our website

www.birthcirclekirksville.com and click on the Amazon link at the bottom of the page.

Step 2: Shop for everything you need at Amazon.com Place the items in your basket within 24 hours of using our link.

Step 3: Check out as usual! BCK earns 4% of your total purchase.

It's that simple!!!

Please Participate in our Birth Satisfaction Survey

Who can take the survey?

Anyone who resided in Adair, Knox, Linn, Macon, Putnam, Schuyler, Scotland, Shelby, Sullivan, or Randolph county, AND had a hospital, birth center, or home birth in 2003 to 2008.

How do I obtain a survey?

- Surveys can be completed online or downloaded off our website (after March 1)
- Attend our monthly meetings
- Pick up a survey from our Kirksville Farmer's Market booth
- Contact us at info@birthcirclekirksville.com or 660.665.2264 to have a survey mailed to you

Will I remain anonymous?

Absolutely.

How long will it take to complete the survey?

Approximately 20 minutes.

What kinds of questions are on the survey?

We are interested in assessing local intervention rates (such as c-sections, inductions, and pitocin augmentation) as well as how satisfied you were with your primary care giver during before, during and after birth (was your birth plan respected?, did you feel in control of your birth?, how did you feel about your experience?)

How long do I have to complete the survey?

Surveys must be submitted no later than September 1st 2008.

Why should I take the survey?

Taking the survey is one big way to let your voice be heard and to anonymously share your feelings and experiences with others. Your answers will also help BCK identify the areas of maternity that need the most improvement in the NEMO area.

How will the survey results be reported?

Survey results will be presented at the Normal Birth Workshop in Kirksville in early November 2008, and all area hospitals, birth centers, and physicians will be provided with a report of the survey results by January 2009. Results will also be available on our website or to individuals upon request.

In the News...

Cesarean rate record high in US ~ 17 MO hospitals ban VBAC ~ Number of women dying in childbirth increases for first time in decades (quoted excerpts from Lily Beck, Friends of Missouri Midwives)

- Cesarean rise coincides with CDC report that the maternal death rate rising for the first time in decades. World Health Organization data shows that mothers die at a higher rate in the U.S. than 40 other countries. Consumer Reports includes cesarean on "10 overused tests and treatments."
- St. Louis, MO, December 5, 2007 - The National Center for Health Statistics has reported that the cesarean rate has hit an all-time high of 31.1 percent. In Missouri, the rate is 30.2 percent, putting Missouri twenty-fourth in the nation.
- "Cesarean section is major surgery and doctors are overusing it on women and their babies," said Ruthie Dicken, Chapter Leader of ICAN of St. Louis. "People tend to think because cesareans are common that they are risk-free, but unfortunately, many women and babies are paying the high price of complications from this surgery."
- More than 300 hospitals across the U.S. ban women from having a VBAC, essentially coercing them into unnecessary surgery and feeding the growing rate of cesarean. In MO, 17 hospitals have joined this trend.

Birth Circle Comment: The Adair County c-section rate for 2006 was higher than both the state and national average at 34.9%.

Women Can Improve Childbirth Outcomes by Seeking Care Providers with Low Cesarean Rates

<http://www.lamaze.org/Default.aspx?tabid=627>

Columbia Community Birthing Center Staff on Good Morning America

"Hips Don't Lie in Belly-Dancing Births. Belly Dancing Is the Latest Trend in Labor"

<http://abcnews.go.com/GMA/TurningPoints/story?id=4071888&page=1>

Cesareans May Harm Lung Growth -

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/7137945.stm>

Purposely Breaking Water Does Not Speed Delivery --

http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/30/health/research/30chil.html?_r=1&ref=science&oref=slogin

Potentially carcinogenic chemical bisphenol A found in infant formula <http://www.thestar.com/article/283101>

Use of Codeine By Some Breastfeeding Mothers May Lead To Life-Threatening Side Effects In Nursing Babies

<http://www.fda.gov/CDER/Drug/advisory/codeine.htm>

BCK Birth Highlights

Ame – '06 homebirth (Addie)

Breanna – '03 and '04 c-sections (Eric, Greta), '06 birth center VBAC (Lenna)

Cheryl – '05 c-section (Connor), '07 hospital, VBAC (Quinton)

Jackie – '03 birth center waterbirth (Finn), '06 homebirth (Elzi)

Katy - '01 hospital birth (Zoe), '05 and '07 homebirths (Isaiah, Eleisa)

Jen - '04 c-section (Cameron), '06 VBAC homebirth (Greysen)

Jill – '06 natural hospital birth (Sydney)

Jo - '97 Cesarean--failed induction (Dain), '98 c-section (Destin) , '01 Stillborn VBAC at 26 weeks--Placenta detached from Cesarean Scar (Sienna), '02 Birth center transfer to Hospital VBAC (Semie), '04 Birth center Waterbirth VBAC (Senoah), '08 (TBA)

Laurie – '02 hospital birth (Joslyn), '04 and '06 natural hospital births (Kensleigh, Merritt)

Lynn – '00 and '04 homebirths (Nolan, Rosie)

Shana – '02 natural hospital birth (Alaysia), '04 birth center birth (Syr Ava)

Local and National Events Calendar (February – April)

February 13th, Join Midwifery Supporters for 4th Annual Family Visit to the MO State Capitol for Cookie Day. More info at www.friendsofmomidwives.org

CIMS FORUM: Mother-Friendly Care By All, For All, March 6-8 FL.
<http://www.motherfriendly.org/events/>

THE TRUST BIRTH CONFERENCE- March 7-9 CA.
"Birth is Safe; Interference is Risky" www.trustbirthconference.com

Infant Massage Class. Kirksville Area Technical Center Community Education. Two Sessions: March 18th , 23rd \$15.00
http://www.kirksville.k12.mo.us/tech%5Fcenter/Community_Education/courses.htm

MIDWIFERY TODAY CONFERENCE March 25-30 Philadelphia, PA
"The Healing Touch of Midwifery and Birth" www.midwiferytoday.com/conferences

April 7th, BCK Board Meeting. 6:15- 8:30pm at Wooden Nickel Restaurant, 114 S. Elson Street, Kirksville

DAR A LUZ NETWORK BIRTH CONFERENCE April 11-13 Dayton, OH
"Birth Empowered. Birth Aware." www.daraluznetwork.com

April is C-Section Awareness Month.

Morning Sickness Tips

- * Keep your blood sugar levels up--eat small, frequent protein rich snacks throughout the day and before bedtime.
- * Walking a mile a day can help prevent the chemical by-products that cause morning sickness. Getting fresh air can also help with morning sickness.
- * Increase available Iron and Vitamin B complex through diet or supplements.
- *Your mother was right--eat crackers before getting out of bed. Get up from bed slowly.
- *Avoid greasy, spicy foods.
- *Drink tea, Raspberry leaf, Peppermint or Spearmint. The mints are an anti-nauseant.
- *Ginger Tea can be taken a tablespoon at time whenever nausea occurs.
- *Using Sea Band Acupuncture Bands may be one of the easiest and cheapest ways to help control morning sickness. Check with your pharmacy, doula or check out www.morningsicknesshelp.com/seabands.html

Source: *Wise Woman Herbal: Childbearing Year*
by Susun Weed

Area Resources

Whole Birth Prenatal Yoga

The Integrative Wellness Institute, Shana Stremel 660.627.0066

Doulas

Active Childbirth Options, Jo Wheeler 660.457.3184

Gentle Heart Doula Services, Laurie Griego 660.665.2264

Sacred Matters, Shana Stremel 660.627.0066

Columbia Community Birth Center (CCBC)

Ivy White 573.447.2700 www.birthcolumbia.org

Prenatal and Infant Classes

Childbirth Education Classes Saturdays from 1-3 PM, beginning March 17th

Belly Dancing Classes DeeDee at 573.443.8574

Meditation Megan 573.657.1425

Mother Craft Nicole K-Weber 573.876.0676

La Leche League

Lynn Carter 660.665.5866

Parents as Teachers

Ricky Trosen 660.626.1455

Attachment Parenting Playgroup

Jackie DeSanty-Combes 660.689.3012

For families interested in networking with others who practice extended breastfeeding, co-sleeping, babywearing, or positive/gentle discipline.

Chat Group: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/APKirksvilleMO/>

Book Recommendation:

Birth Babies: A Collection of Birth Stories from the Heartland. (LLL of Kirksville 2007). Including 24 birth stories in hospital, birth center, and home settings, this book is a great addition to any collection of pregnancy books. \$7. Purchase through our website store, or from Lynn at 660.665.5866; Lynn@KJSL.com

We have a secret in our culture and its not that birth is painful. It's that women are strong. -- Laura Stavoe Harm