

Homebirths and the Choice of Women,

My name is Abby and we have three beautiful children, all born at home with the assistance of a homebirthing midwife. I want to comment on the impact of the impending changes that are being legislated that affect the rights of women and families to birth at home.

I can appreciate that the issues and detail of this are many and varied, so I want to comment on what I feel is a key element of pregnancy, birth and nurturing babies.

We homebirthed our three children with the assistance of beautiful, confident midwives. They guided and assisted us through the physical and emotional relationships with our new baby and ourselves. The core of this relationship is TRUST in myself to birth in a strong, empowering way, in my partner to support me in this process and in our midwife.

No matter where woman choose to birth eg hospital, home, etc, the options need to be presented giving the woman a real sense of being supported and empowered. This actually gives women the tools to go on and raise their children confidently, not always looking to others for the answers that we all have inside of us. The system needs to guide and educate women, not take their options away. A natural birth should be the first choice for any woman. Birthing is a strong process, with elements of fear, pain, love and ecstasy involved. We need to show women that this is a life experience that helps each of us grow and mature in our roles as mothers and later grandmothers. This is very important for our society to maintain its integrity into the future.

This whole journey, really starts with our teenage daughters by encouraging and educating them to be strong in their femininity and the importance of honouring themselves as women to make good choices about these issues in the future.

More funding is needed for midwifery and doula services, as many women do not have the extended family to rely on. Also programs for our girls is an essential part of 'change' in birthing practices and ideas. More women supporting women.

Birthing at home for the majority of women is a very conscious choice and we do our 'homework' on our own situations as to the suitability of this choice.

It is a journey and all the plans and resources are put in place to ensure a beautiful, healthy birth for the baby and mother. Treat women with the respect we deserve in making the decision about where to birth our children.

Keep the legislation that supports homebirthing midwives, supports women and supports families. trust and think long and hard of the ramifications of the decisions that are being made by this government.

Regards

Abby Bliss