International and the International Childbirth Education Association. Hotelling makes a case for childbirth educators to learn from and support national coalitions devoted to improving maternity care and to use local resources to develop their own collaborative efforts on behalf of childbearing families.

In the column “Ask an Expert,” Nayna Philipsen explains how protecting the confidentiality of the personal information that childbirth educators receive from their clients is crucial. Without this respect for privacy, educators will not be able to get the information essential to meeting their objectives. Childbirth educators who work in schools or are employed in a health-care facility may come under federal law that protects individuals’ personal or health information. All childbirth educators must be thoughtful advocates of the rights to privacy and self-determination of expectant parents.

Author Amy Romano reprises recent selections from Lamaze International’s research blog, *Science & Sensibility*, in her column “Creating a Culture of Consumer Engagement in Maternity Care.” Each selection discusses opportunities to establish a culture of consumer engagement in maternity care. Romano demonstrates how improving health literacy, ensuring multi-stakeholder participation in the development of clinical guidelines, and supporting comparative effectiveness research of woman- and family-centered care practices may improve maternity care.

In this issue of the journal, instead of our usual “Media Reviews” column coordinated by Teri Shilling and Stacie Bingham, we are excited to share a review by Tamara Kaufman, “Use of Big-Screen Films

in Multiple Childbirth Education Classroom Settings.” Kaufman gives examples of how two recent films, *Orgasmic Birth* and *Pregnant in America*, can serve as valuable teaching resources in multiple childbirth education settings, even though the films were intended for the big screen.

REFERENCES

- Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. (2010, March). *Vaginal birth after cesarean: New insights*. Rockville, MD: Author. Retrieved April 12, 2010, from <http://www.ahrq.gov/clinic/tp/vbacuptp.htm>
- Guise, J. M., Berlin, M., McDonagh, M., Osterweil, P., Chan, B., & Helfand, M. (2004). Safety of vaginal birth after cesarean: A systematic review. *Obstetrics and Gynecology*, 103(3), 420–429.
- Menacker, F., & Hamilton, B. E. (2010, March). *Recent trends in cesarean delivery in the United States. NCHS data brief, No. 35*. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. Retrieved April 12, 2010, from <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db35.pdf>
- National Institutes of Health [NIH]. (1980). *Cesarean childbirth. NIH consensus development conference statement – September 22–24, 1980*. Retrieved April 12, 2010, from <http://consensus.nih.gov/1980/1980Cesarean027html.htm>
- World Health Organization. (1985). Appropriate technology for birth. *Lancet*, 2(8452), 436–437.

Visit the Lamaze research blog, *Science & Sensibility* (www.scienceandsensibility.org), to stay up to date and comment on the latest evidence that supports natural, safe, and healthy birth practices.

WENDY C. BUDIN is the editor-in-chief of *The Journal of Perinatal Education*. She is also the director of nursing research at NYU Langone Medical Center and a clinical professor at New York University, College of Nursing. She is a fellow in the American College of Childbirth Educators and is currently chair of the Lamaze International Certification Council.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Prenatal Yoga and Childbirth Education: A Response to Tracy Posner’s Birth Story

Ann L. Israel, MA, E-RYT, LCCE, FACCE

ABSTRACT

In this letter to the editor, the author responds to a birth story published in a previous issue of *The Journal of Perinatal Education* and discusses the relationship between practicing prenatal yoga and childbirth education.

The Journal of Perinatal Education, 19(2), 3, 15, doi: 10.1624/105812410X495488

Keywords: prenatal yoga, childbirth education, birth stories

(Continued on page 15)

Soliman, S. R., & Burrows, R. F. (1993). Cesarean section: Analysis of the experience before and after the National Consensus Conference on Aspects of Cesarean Birth. *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, 148(8), 1315–1320.

The United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF]. (2007). *Child poverty in perspective: An overview of child well-being in rich countries*. Innocenti Report Card, 7. Florence, Italy: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre.

World Health Organization. (2007). *Maternal mortality in 2005: Estimates developed by WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, and The World Bank*. Geneva, Switzerland: Author.

DESIRRE ANDREWS is President of the International Cesarean Awareness Network (ICAN). As the owner of Preparing For Birth, LLC (<http://prepforbirth.com>), she works as a childbirth educator, a labor doula, and a lactation educator in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and is an avid blogger on birth-related topics. GRETCHEN HUMPHRIES is Advocacy Director of ICAN as well as a veterinarian working in emergency and critical care in southeastern Michigan. She has written extensively on birth topics, and many of her essays can be found online at www.birthtruth.org.

(Letter to the Editor – Continued from page 3)

Reading Tracy Posner's birth story again gives me shivers ("The Most Amazing 24 Hours," *The Journal of Perinatal Education*, 19(1), 4–7). As her prenatal yoga teacher, I am so proud of her and her efforts. She had the benefit of a wonderfully supportive husband and an amazing doula. Tracy came to prenatal yoga class nearly every week throughout her pregnancy and also attended a "Comfort Measures for Birth" workshop that I offer for couples. In class, she had the opportunity to practice everything that we, as childbirth educators, preach. We preach relaxing, we talk about breathing, and we focus on positive language and empowerment and, of course, educating. Over the years, I have found that I can offer my yoga students the opportunity to try things out—to practice the techniques we use in childbirth while holding a challenging yoga pose. The similarities are strong and the learning opportunities are immeasurable. The marriage of the two disciplines, yoga and childbirth education, provides so much opportunity for women to practice and gain confidence in their abilities and their body. I feel that every childbirth educator would benefit from tossing a few yoga postures into their curriculum, and every prenatal yoga instructor would benefit from understanding more about the birth process and pregnancy.

Lamaze International's Prenatal Yoga Workshop was created to provide an opportunity for practitioners of both disciplines to blend their experiences together in order to provide more learning opportunities for the women we serve. It was created as an innovative and current way to implement the six Lamaze Healthy Birth Practices into the lives of the women of today. Participating in this workshop won't turn a childbirth educator into a prenatal yoga teacher, or a prenatal yoga teacher into a childbirth educator, but it will allow for some new ways to provide moms with practical applications that they can use in labor and beyond. For more information on Lamaze's Prenatal Yoga Workshop, visit the "Specialty Workshops" link under "Events" at the Lamaze Web site (www.lamaze.org).

Tracy's birth experience is a wonderful example of how she integrated her yoga practice into her labor. She felt empowered to request being upright when she wanted to be, and perhaps most importantly, she learned to listen to her body. For anyone who has practiced yoga, you know that you must listen to your body, and when you do that, you can also learn to soften around your discomfort and even settle into it, often accepting the discomfort and learning from it. Isn't that what we teach our pregnant women? Don't we want them to become aware of their body and all its capabilities?

Being a small part of Tracy's birth experience touched my life in a positive way, as it does with all of the women I work with, and as I am certain it does with all of us in this profession.

ANN L. ISRAEL is the owner and founder of Yoga For Moms, has been a Lamaze Certified Childbirth Educator since 1993, and is a fellow in the American College of Childbirth Educators. She is an Experienced Registered Yoga Teacher with Yoga Alliance and the workshop leader for the Lamaze Prenatal Yoga Workshop. Israel has worked with over 1,400 pregnant women in the Baltimore, Maryland, area.