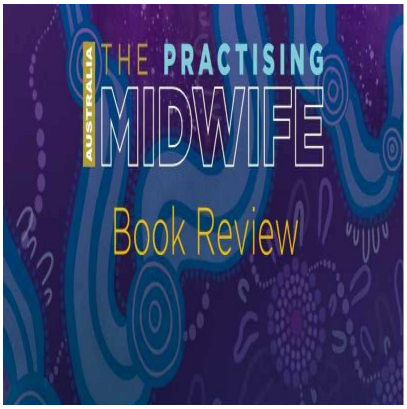


Description

Book Review: The Complete Australian Guide to Pregnancy and Birth by Sophie Walker & Jodi Wilson

Review by: Samantha Gunn – Birth & Postpartum Doula and Hypnobirthing Practitioner

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A common refrain from new parents is ‘I wish I had known’ or ‘I wish someone had told me…’.

The Complete Australian Guide to Pregnancy and Birth's central aim is to inform and prepare Australian women andtheir families so that they are not left asking these questions as they move through their journey from conception to postpartum. Sophie Walker has built upon her podcast Australian Birth Stories and collaborated with Jodi Wilson to create this book as a resource that is comprehensive in scope and detail. The contents are intuitively organised by trimester so that readers can use the book as a source of information and guidance throughout their journey. Each chapter covers specific topics, including prenatal care, common discomforts, nutrition, exercise, childbirth options and postnatal recovery. Something that sets this book apart is its inclusion of personal stories and anecdotes with areference to the associated episode from the companion Australian Birth Stories podcast. This provides the reader withanother layer of interaction and has the effect of making the content more relatable to their own experience.

A key benefit of this work is that it offers a localised approach to the Australian healthcare system, explaining the roles of healthcare professionals involved in pregnancy care and addressing important local considerations, such as Medicare benefits and available resources.

The book is well laid out with a thoughtful design that complements the content and its well-defined sections make it easy on the eye. However, it is almost exclusively text-based and in my opinion one potential area for improvement could be to include more illustrations and images to break up the text, help more visual learners and make information more easily reviewed.

In conclusion, The Complete Australian Guide to Pregnancy and Birth is a valuable and comprehensive resource for expectant parents in Australia and one that I feel midwives can recommend to the families in their care with confidence.
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