

Description

Supporting Autistic People Through Pregnancy and Childbirth

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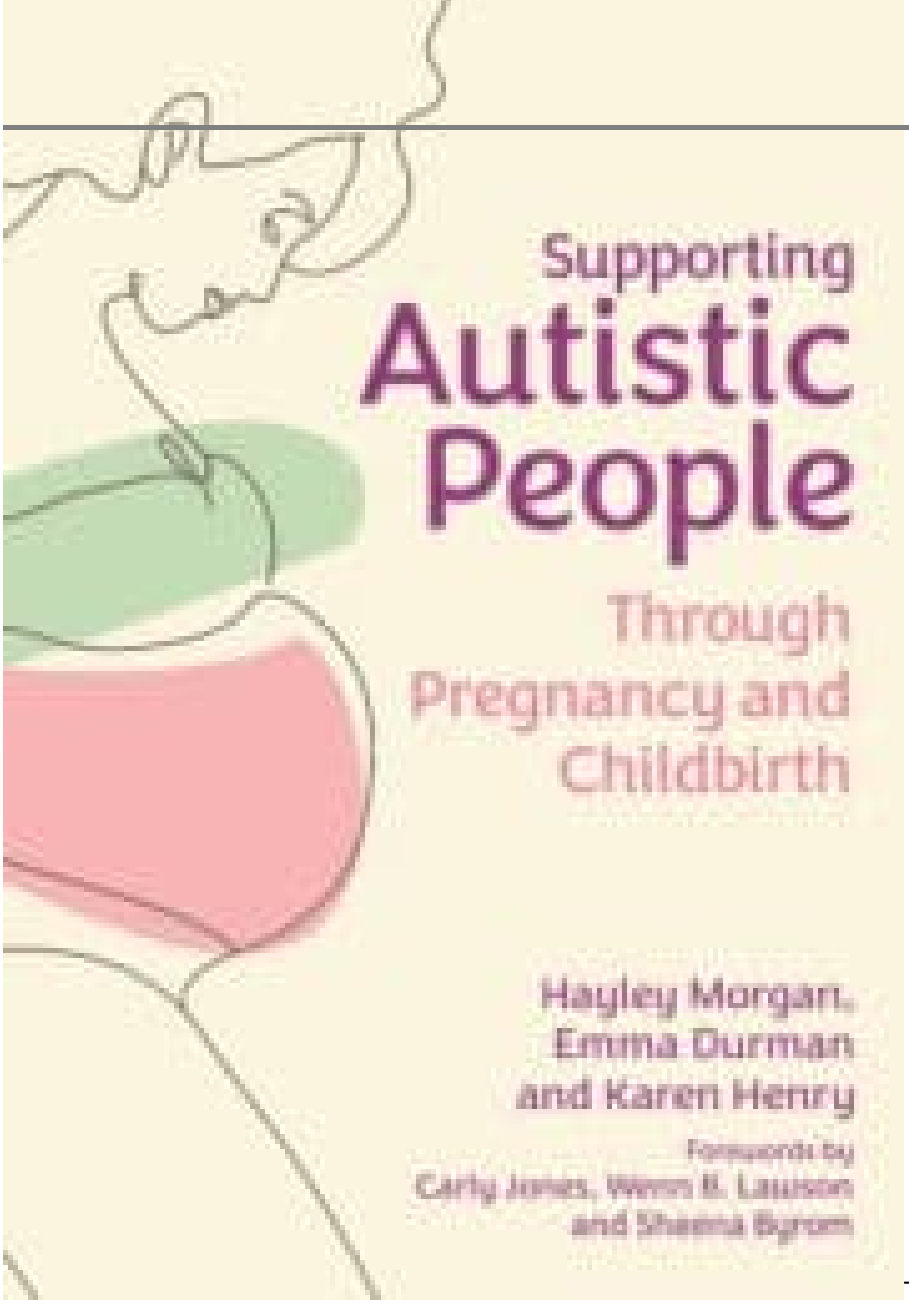

This book should be read by every healthcare professional as a guide to empathetic and compassionate care for autistic and neurodiverse people navigating the childbirth continuum.

Bringing together both research and perspectives from autistic people's experiences of care, it highlights how the system fails to serve the autistic population but also provides a roadmap to providing exceptional and thoughtful care. Written from the autistic individual's perspective, with all the authors having a diagnosis of autism. It provides insight into the lived experiences, challenges and barriers that might be encountered. This makes this book invaluable, really allowing the reader to see the challenges from a lived perspective and to consider how their own maternity services are providing care.

Starting with the background and history of autism and highlighting the gaps in knowledge and challenges of female presentation of autism, as well as the coexisting challenges and conditions people with autism may also experience, it is woven through with stories of experiences to highlight the impact of compassionate and thoughtful care. Bringing solution focused considerations to healthcare professionals to enhance care pathways and create an environment

where those with neurodiversity are enabled to engage with services.

Working through the challenges that autistic people may encounter, there are strategies for communication and service improvements. This includes a comprehensive training map for professionals and serves to highlight the lack of training that midwives and birth workers might receive around autism and debunks some of the outdated knowledge and thinking about peoples with autisms capacity to parent.

As the mother of an autistic transgender teenager, my wish is for every midwife and birthworker to have read this book and implement some of the suggested strategies to ensure that autism doesn't become the label around the person. This book was such a positive read. Some of the stories really highlighted just what a difference respectful care does or doesn't make to neurodiverse individuals navigating the maternity system and how we as midwives have the power to make their journey into parenthood feel valued, supported and understood.

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1. All4Maternity Blog
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1. autism
2. birth
3. pregnancy

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