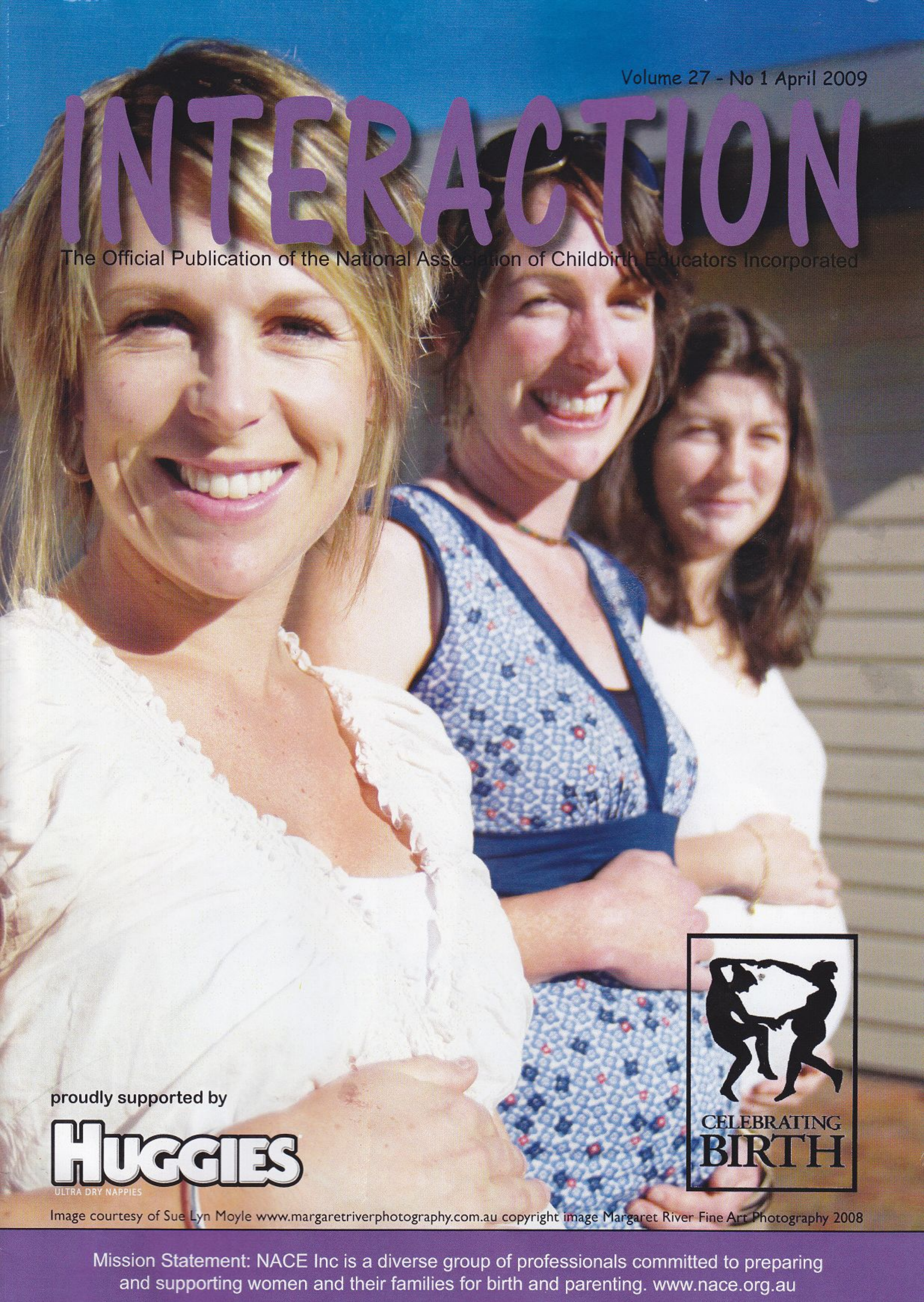


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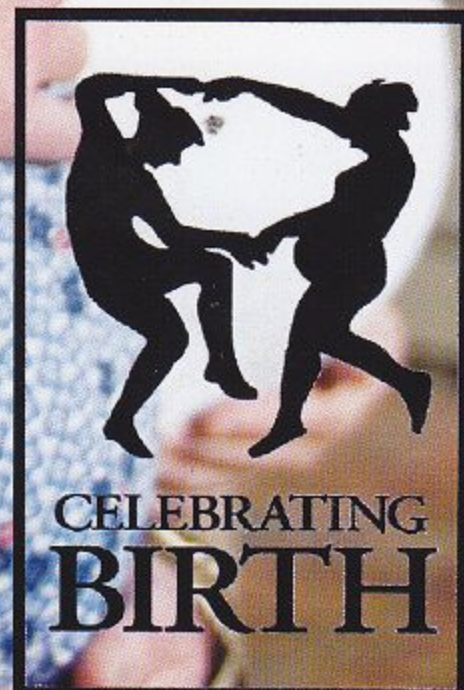
INTERACTION

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HUGGIES
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CELEBRATING
BIRTH

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Mission Statement: NACE Inc is a diverse group of professionals committed to preparing and supporting women and their families for birth and parenting. www.nace.org.au



MotherNurture

Caring for Mums Caring for Babies

A dream for new mothers

Donna Mansell is a Registered Nurse/Midwife in South Australia. For more information please go to www.mothernurture.com.au or contact Donna on 0414 949 709.

A dream for new mothers-

*"That they will be confident in their own abilities,
That they will enjoy the first few months of
parenthood rather than fear them,
That breastfeeding rates longer than three
weeks will be the norm,
And of course I will never have to do night
duty again"*

I have many years of experience working in a continuity of care model in South Australia where we provide six weeks of postnatal support to all of our clients. Over the years of providing this service I started to realise that many of the women I saw would have stopped breastfeeding within a few weeks in if it weren't for my support and uncomplicated advice.

That knowledge and the new understanding of true motherhood spurred me into putting my money where my mouth was - that is when *Mother Nurture* was born.

I wanted to provide women with a home visiting service in the first eight weeks of parenthood. Where I could provide

education regarding what is normal in newborns, breastfeeding advice, settling advice, weights and checks for both mother and infant and baby massage.

In South Australia (I am unaware of the changes in other states) many private hospitals are decreasing and even stopping their postnatal home visiting services. Opting for 'drop in' services, due to the lack of funding from private health companies. It often baffles me that we provide classes and loads of education regarding birthing preparation and pregnancy care but when women have the crying poo machine at home there is very little available to them.

I wanted to tailor my advice to their individual circumstances. I also wanted to give women confidence in their own abilities and their bodies in regards to breastfeeding especially. How many times do we hear 'I must not have enough milk?'

I find that most my care for women in the first three weeks is helping them build confidence in their skills and natural abilities. Breastfeeding being a big focus, I spend quite a lot of time explaining the absolute basics to them, chest to chest and nipple to nose. It is around day ten I often see the light switch on and breastfeeding doesn't seem so hard. It then takes me the next two weeks to build on that confidence, stop them wondering has she

had enough? - Especially if formula and bottles have featured.

I often wonder if the high rate of postnatal depression in Australia is linked to the isolation many women feel. The support in pregnancy is constant then we literally cut the cord a few days after the birth. The ID Generation live in an age of 'face book' and 'texting', relationships are different. Conversations between girlfriends are via email and not in person. Will the isolation continue to get worse with the next generation of mothers?

Seeing women through to eight weeks allows time for women to build confidence in their mothering skills. It allows time for them to realise their baby is just a little person, just like them. Not something amazing that needs particular music on to go to sleep, or the most expensive sleeping aid on the market. I find that after six to eight weeks of regular contact with women they are ready to cut the cord, they have accepted their role as the mother and don't need me anymore.

Hopefully over time I will be able to continue to promote midwifery as a profession, further enforcing that birth and early parenting is normal process with many exciting challenges. I want to promote the fact that we as midwives can support women through this time; it is after all what we are trained to do.