



NEWS RELEASE

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ACNM APPLAUDS RELEASE OF *THE BUSINESS OF BEING BORN*

“Choose midwifery” is a primary message of the film

SILVER SPRING, MD – The American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) congratulates Executive Producer Ricki Lake and Director Abby Epstein on the release of their documentary [*The Business of Being Born*](#), a critique of the medicalization of childbirth in the U.S. and a celebration of normal birth and midwifery care.

The film interlaces intimate birth stories with shocking statistics about the U.S. maternity care system. The film encourages childbearing women to embrace birth as a powerful—and empowering—life event rather than view it as an illness in need of medical treatment.

Certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) are featured prominently in the film, attending hospital, birth center, and home births. CNMs and certified midwives (CMs) attend 11% of the vaginal births in the U.S., 97% of which are in hospitals. While midwife-attended births in the U.S. have more than doubled since 1990, midwives attend 70% or more of the births in Western Europe, Britain and Japan, with better outcomes and lower cost of care.

“Lake and Epstein spotlight the high quality care offered by CNMs,” says Lorrie Kline Kaplan, ACNM executive director. “The U.S. cesarean section rate is rising dramatically. Our infant mortality rates are climbing, and there are indications that maternal mortality is rising as well. It’s time to sit up and take notice—and work to turn these trends around.”

“The vast majority of women in the U.S. and other developed countries are at low-risk for complications in childbirth, and under the midwifery model of supportive care, are capable of delivering a baby vaginally and participating fully in this experience,” says ACNM President Eunice K.M. Ernst, CNM, MPH, DSc (Hon), FACNM.

ACNM urges midwifery proponents to support efforts to improve access to midwifery care. Congress is considering the “Midwifery Care Access and Reimbursement Equity Act of 2007,” (S.507/H.R.864) which would lead to improved reimbursement for midwives. In many states, CNMs and CMs can’t attend home births or provide services without a written agreement with a physician. Many hospitals have restrictive rules that make it difficult for midwives to practice.

“We can’t all be filmmakers,” quips Kaplan. “But if we are in the fortunate minority who has delivered a baby with the support of a midwife, we can spread the word by sharing our stories, encouraging other

women to see this uniquely beautiful film, and advocate for increased access to midwifery care.”

More facts about midwifery:

1. **There are many types of midwives**, so pay attention to credentials. The vast majority of midwives are Certified Nurse-Midwives and Certified Midwives and ACNM urges consumers to choose a CNM or CM. [Learn more.](#)
2. **CNMs and CMs are highly educated.** Most have a master’s degree or higher. Schools of midwifery reside in such prestigious universities as Yale, Georgetown, and Columbia. [Learn more.](#)
3. **CNMs and CMs also provide well-woman and primary health care** for women in all stages of life. [Learn more.](#)
4. **Most insurers cover midwifery services**, including Medicare and Medicaid. [Get information on insurance coverage.](#)
5. **CNMs practice in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.** [Find a Midwife.](#)
6. **Help us win our battle for fair reimbursement.** [Learn more.](#)

For more information about the film, visit www.thebusinessofbeingborn. It is currently slated for limited release in theaters in January and February 2008 but supporters can host their own screenings.

About ACNM

The American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) has approximately 7,000 members. The mission of ACNM is to promote the health and well-being of women and infants within their families and communities through the development and support of the profession of midwifery as practiced by certified nurse-midwives, and certified midwives.

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