



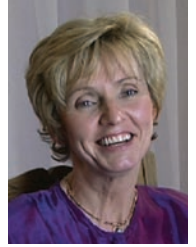
*Birth Rite Floor Studio*

The Setting of Choice for Childbirth

## Considered Position

Women instinctively know what works best for them in childbirth. All too often, obstetric caregivers overlook women's innate strengths and instead supplant them with medical interventions of one sort or another. The holistic model of midwifery recognizes women's natural resources and advocates a dignified birthing environment sensitive to their needs.

The BirthRite Floor Studio brings the practice of holistic midwifery within easy reach. Its designer, Monika Boenigk, is a midwifery practitioner and educator with over 20 years experience in Europe and Australia. She regards routine use of the obstetric bed as the greatest single obstacle to widespread adoption of holistic methods.



*Monika Boenigk*  
RN, CM, CNS, GDCT



**Monika:** *“A holistic approach to childbirth requires not only a different way of working with labouring women but also the creation of a whole new birthing environment. The focus needs to be shifted away from the obstetric bed and towards an inviting and versatile birthing platform.”* With the empowering environment created by the Floor Studio, midwives can confidently integrate upright positions, interactive engagement and relaxation into their practice without compromising obstetric safety. The appealing simplicity of the Floor Studio strikes a deep chord in couples preparing for childbirth, and they are highly motivated by the prospects of active participation in the birthing process.

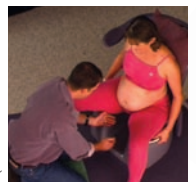
*“Women need to be able to labour and give birth in whatever position works best for them at the time. However, it is the sitting position which allows a woman to feel totally supported, enabling her to invoke relaxation as a powerful ally in labour and let her baby emerge out of her as gently as possible.”* With the woman supported on the seat and leaning into the backrest, most of her large muscle groups are relaxed. Contractions have optimal effect on dilatation of the cervix and descent of a well-aligned baby. Relaxation aids the release of oxytocin and endorphins, and oxygenation of the baby is enhanced. A combination of these effects can shorten labour considerably. The woman is enveloped in an empowering atmosphere - upright, unhurried and in control.



*“The midwife can give the woman her undivided attention, encourage her to remain relaxed and engage her through affirming, empathic and simple language.”* Sitting on the purpose-designed midwife seat, equipment table within easy reach, she can attend to most aspects of the woman's care without getting up. This creates a calm and quiet atmosphere in which the woman can feel safe and focus on her task. At birth, the midwife seat is designed to enable the midwife to slide down in one fluid motion into a semi-sitting, semi-kneeling position that minimizes postural strain.

*“If a woman remains relaxed, there is minimal resistance to the baby's head sliding through her perineum.*

*She breathes her baby out, reducing her likelihood of perineal oedema or injury, and enhancing her baby's oxygenation 'til the last minute. Many times, women express to me how exhilarating it feels, that control over their babies emerging out of them, reaching down and lifting them straight up to the chest.”* The tri-positional mirror can be rotated to different angles, allowing the woman to see her baby's progress for herself, while the carefully designed slope of the seat ensures a gentle birth over the perineum. With the Floor Studio providing complete support for the birthing woman, her partner can be in front and help her to birth the baby - an exciting opportunity to work together as couple and bond with the baby even while it is being born!





The BirthRite Floor Studio is also an invaluable platform for more complicated obstetric scenarios such as large babies, shoulder difficulties and after epidurals, as it provides complete support, opens the pelvis wide, and enables the woman to provide maximum assistance with pushing if needed. McRoberts manoeuvre and all-fours position are achieved in seconds, with the woman taking advantage of the soft floor mat. Obstetricians often use the birthing seat for assisted vaginal births and breech births with gratifying results which have been described in the literature.

# Holistic Midwifery

## The Principles

- 👂 Interactive engagement of a single midwife with all of the woman's internal forces - physical, psychological and emotional.
- 👂 The invoking of relaxation as a powerful ally in labour.
- 👂 Observance of upright positioning during childbirth whenever possible.

## The Practice

A dignified birthing atmosphere is amazingly simple to achieve and can enrich midwifery and obstetric practice, even in conventional hospital settings.

By returning control of the birthing process to women, doctors and midwives themselves derive greater personal satisfaction from their work.

The practice of holistic midwifery reflects on the hospital also, as its birthing unit becomes not just a place to be saved but rather a place where extraordinary experiences are created and savoured.





[www.birthrite.com.au](http://www.birthrite.com.au)

**BirthRite USA**

Margaret Heldwein, CNM  
Orchard Park, New York, USA  
Cell-Phone: +1 716 796 5388  
Email: MHeldwein@aol.com

**BirthRite (Principal Office)**

65 Campbell Road  
Stony Chute NSW 2480 Australia  
Phone: +61 2 6689 7490  
Fax: +61 2 6689 7492  
Email: m.b@jdl.net.au

**BirthRite Europe**

Andrea Muentner  
Baal, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany  
Handy: +49 17 5295 0409  
Fax: +49 2435 3964  
Email: andrea\_muenter@web.de