

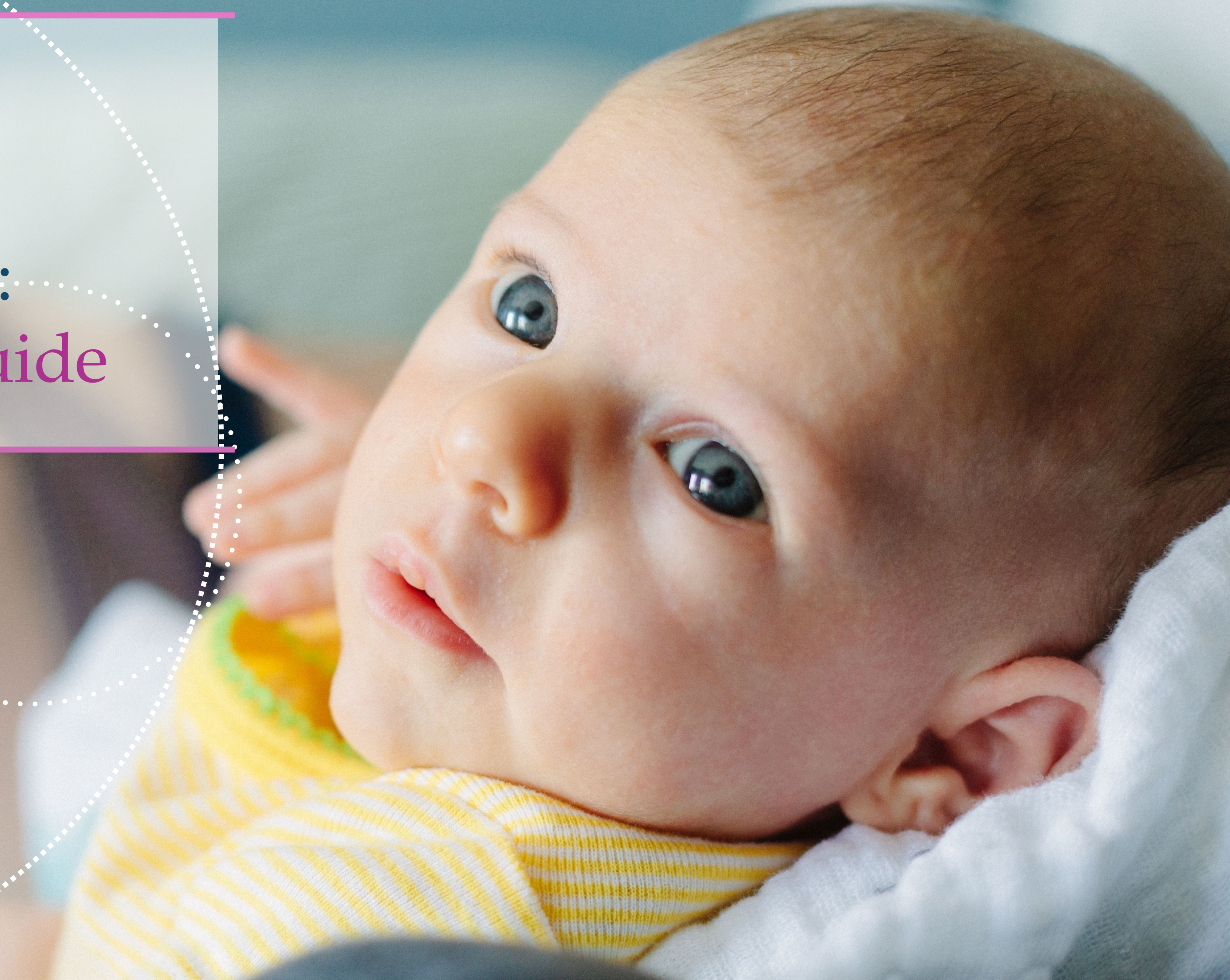
Deciding if a VBAC is Right for You: A Parent's Guide


Nicette Jukelevics, MA, ICCE
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A Volunteer Educational Project Endorsed by the
International Childbirth Education Association &
the International Cesarean Awareness Network

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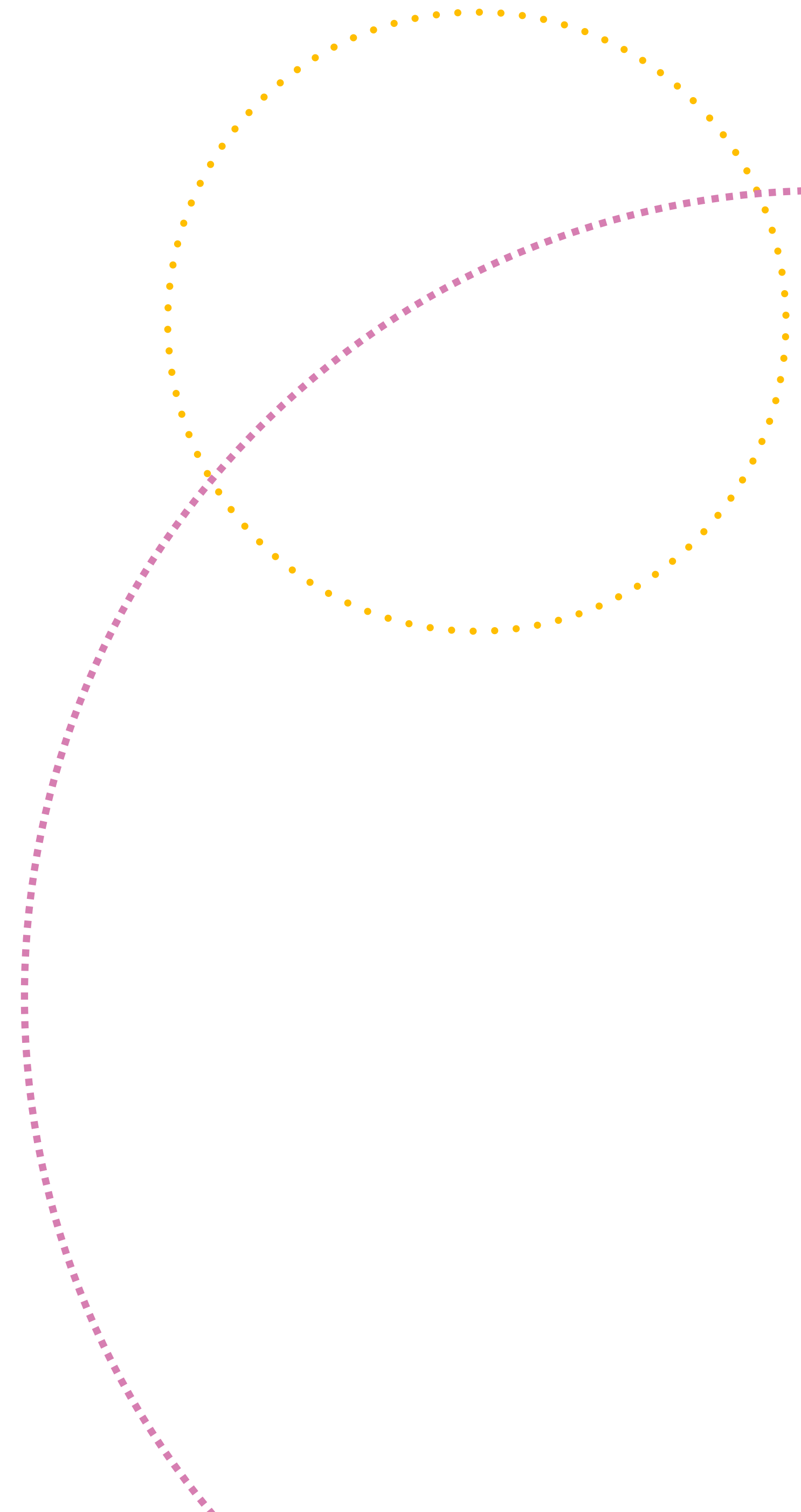
The VBAC Education Project is dedicated to childbearing women and their families and the maternity care professionals who educate and care for them.



Welcome to the VBAC Education Project

Women, in every corner of the world, deserve to know the facts about childbirth. Having the facts and being able to make informed decisions have been shown to increase satisfaction with the birth experience and positively impact a woman's role as mother and parent.

For over five decades, the International Childbirth Education Association (ICEA) has been the profession's leader for freedom to make decisions based on knowledge of alternatives in family-centered maternity and newborn care.





Welcome to the VBAC Education Project

ICEA takes great pride in joining with The VBAC Education Project author Nicette Jukelevics in making evidence-based information about vaginal birth after a cesarean more accessible to both birth professionals and expectant parents.

This is just one way we can push toward optimal maternity care - one birth at a time.

Please share with your friends and colleagues.

Connie L. Livingston, RN, BS, FACCE, LCCE, ICCE
President, International Childbirth Education Association

2015-2016



This
VBAC Education Project
consists of four parts

- 1** Deciding if A VBAC Is Right for You:
A Parent's Guide
- 2** VBAC for Educators:
A Teaching Guide
- 3** Resources for VBAC
and Physiologic Birth
- 4** Educational Handouts
for Parents



For Parents

About the Parent's Guide

- If you are a parent whose baby was born by cesarean section, this evidence-based visual guide provides comprehensive information on vaginal birth after a cesarean (VBAC), a safe option to a routine repeat cesarean.
- It will also help you to understand why you may have had a cesarean and how you can do things differently this time.
- **The Resources** will help expand your knowledge about VBAC and physiologic (normal) birth.
- **The Educational Handouts for Parents** will give you the tools you need to make informed decisions and help you to have a safe and satisfying birth.

For Maternity Care Professionals

About the Parent's Guide

- Denial of access to medical care in the United States for mothers who want to labor for a VBAC has put healthy mothers and babies at risk for several health complications associated with repeat cesarean sections.
- If you are a labor and delivery nurse, office nurse, doula, community-based maternal-child health worker or birth activist, this visual guide provides the medical facts you need to understand the VBAC option, the psychological issues related to laboring for a VBAC after an unexpected prior cesarean, and the many ways you can support and empower mothers to make their own best decisions about how they want to give birth this time.
- The **Resources and Educational Handouts for Parents** will be useful for you and the mothers and families you work with.

For Maternity Care Professionals

About the Parent's Guide

The **Parent's Guide** was also developed to be used as a curriculum for VBAC classes. If you teach childbirth classes or lead a support group for women with a prior cesarean the supporting e-book, **VBAC for Educators: A Teaching Guide** will help you to present the material to your students.



For Maternity Care Professionals

About the Parent's Guide

- Choose the modules that meet your needs and combine them to best serve the expectant parents you work with.
- The Resources and Educational Handouts can reinforce the issues you have already discussed.



For Physicians and Midwives

About the Parent's Guide

- If you are a physician or a midwife, this visual guide can help provide expectant parents with evidence-based information about vaginal birth after a cesarean. It can also help them to clarify some of the issues they are most concerned about.
- Clinicians rarely have the time to provide parents with all the information they may need to make informed decisions for birth after a cesarean. This guide can help begin the prenatal conversations you will have with mothers to help them make an informed choice about how they want to give birth this time.

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Acknowledgments

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With many thanks to the
**International Childbirth
Education Association (ICEA)**

I am honored and grateful for ICEA's support and commitment to The VBAC Education Project

ICEA's Mission

The International Childbirth Education Association (ICEA) is a non-profit professional organization that supports educators and other health care providers who believe in freedom to make decisions based on knowledge of alternatives in family-centered maternity and newborn care.



ICEA's Philosophy of Family-Centered Care

The birth of a baby represents the birth of a family. The woman giving birth and the persons significant and close to her are forming a new relationship, with new responsibilities to each other, to the baby, and to society as a whole.

Family-centered reproductive care may be defined as care which recognizes the importance of these new relationships and responsibilities, and which has as its goal the best possible health outcome for all members of the family, both as individuals and as a group.



ICEA's Goals

ICEA's goals are to provide:

- Training and continuing education programs;
- Quality educational resources;
- Professional certification programs.



With many thanks to the **International Cesarean Awareness Network (ICAN)**

I am pleased to have ICAN's endorsement and confidence to offer The VBAC Education Project to their members and chapter leaders.

ICAN's Mission

The International Cesarean Awareness Network, Inc. (ICAN) is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to improve maternal-child health by preventing unnecessary cesareans through education, providing support for cesarean recovery, and promoting Vaginal Birth After Cesarean (VBAC).

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ICAN's Commitment

“At its core, ICAN is a grass-roots organization made up of local chapters all over the United States and Canada that provide mother-to-mother support and education about cesarean prevention and VBAC. All chapter leaders, Board members and officers are volunteers. International interest in ICAN's mission is growing and new chapters are being started all over the world.”



ICAN's Dedication to Childbearing Families

ICAN meets families' needs through:

- ⦿ Education
- ⦿ Support, and
- ⦿ Advocacy

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ICAN's Disclaimer

Throughout this educational project, the terms 'cesarean', 'cesarean birth', and 'cesarean section' are used when referring to a cesarean. ICAN adopted the use of the term 'cesarean' as a catch-all term to prevent any inadvertent offense to mothers who do not feel that their cesarean was a birth as well as to those who do not feel that it was only a surgical procedure. The use of the terms 'cesarean birth' and 'cesarean section' in this collaborative project are not the expressed views of ICAN, and the terminology is not meant to cause offense.

LaQuitha Glass,
ICAN President 2015-2016, www.ican-online.com



Reviewers

I am highly indebted to the maternity care professionals who reviewed this guide. Any errors or omissions are mine.

- ◎ **Tami Michele, DO, FACOOG, OB/GYN**
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ICEA Past President, 2013-2014
- ◎ **Myra Pillon, RNC-OB, BSN, ICCE, ICD**

Editors

I am most grateful to the editors for their patience, commitment, and guidance. Any errors or omissions are mine.

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ICEA Education Chair, 2015-2016
- ◎ **Connie L. Livingston**, RN, BS, FACCE, LCCE, ICCE
ICEA President, 2015-2016

My sincere appreciation goes to everyone who contributed their **time and expertise to this project**

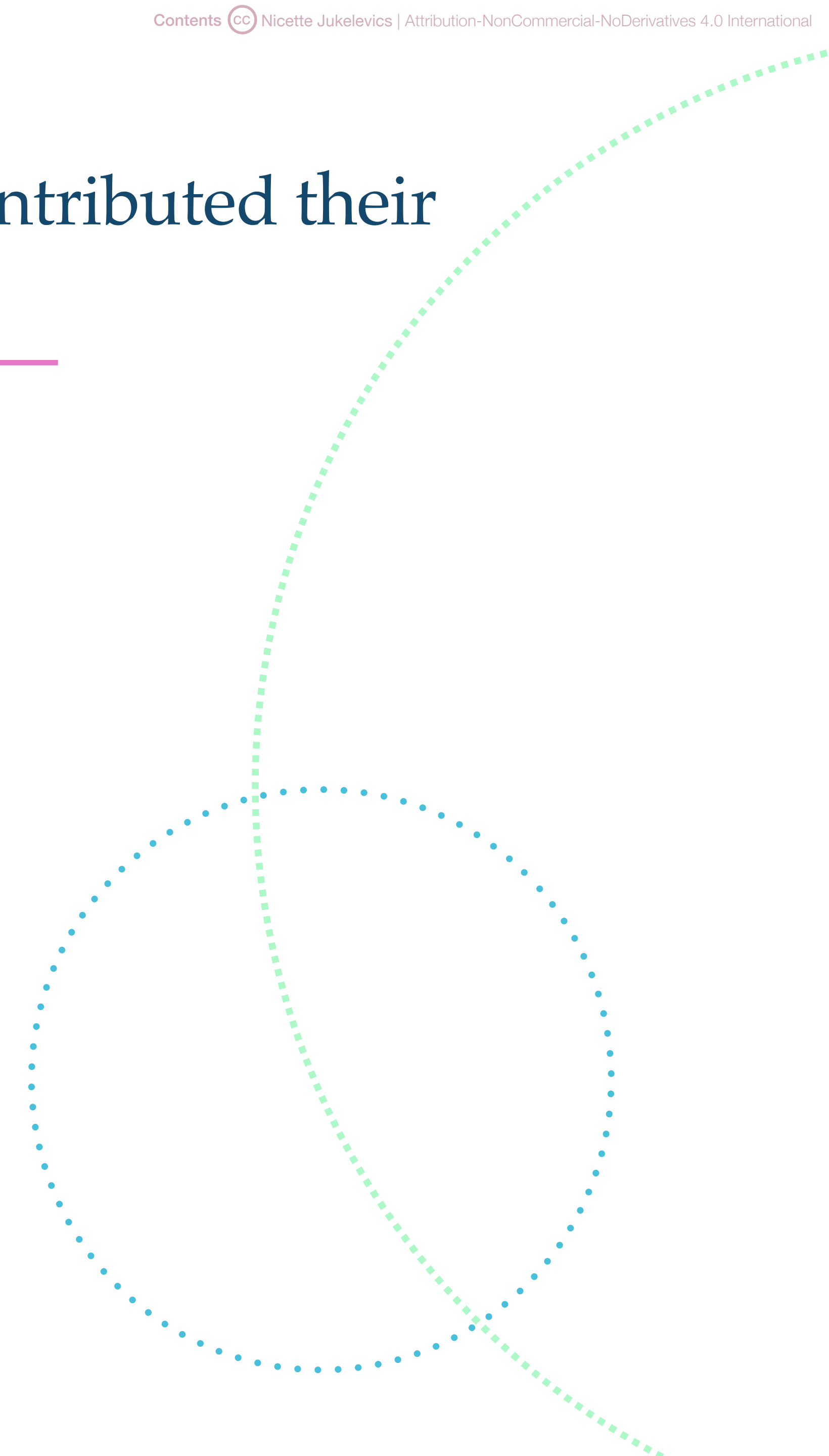
- **American Association of Birth Centers**
- **Commission for the Accreditation of Birth Centers**
- **International Cesarean Awareness Network**
Board of Directors, 2015
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Contributors to the VBAC Education Project may have differing views on the issues or content presented in this project.

My sincere appreciation goes to everyone who contributed their **time and expertise to this project**

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www.jesslarsendoula.com
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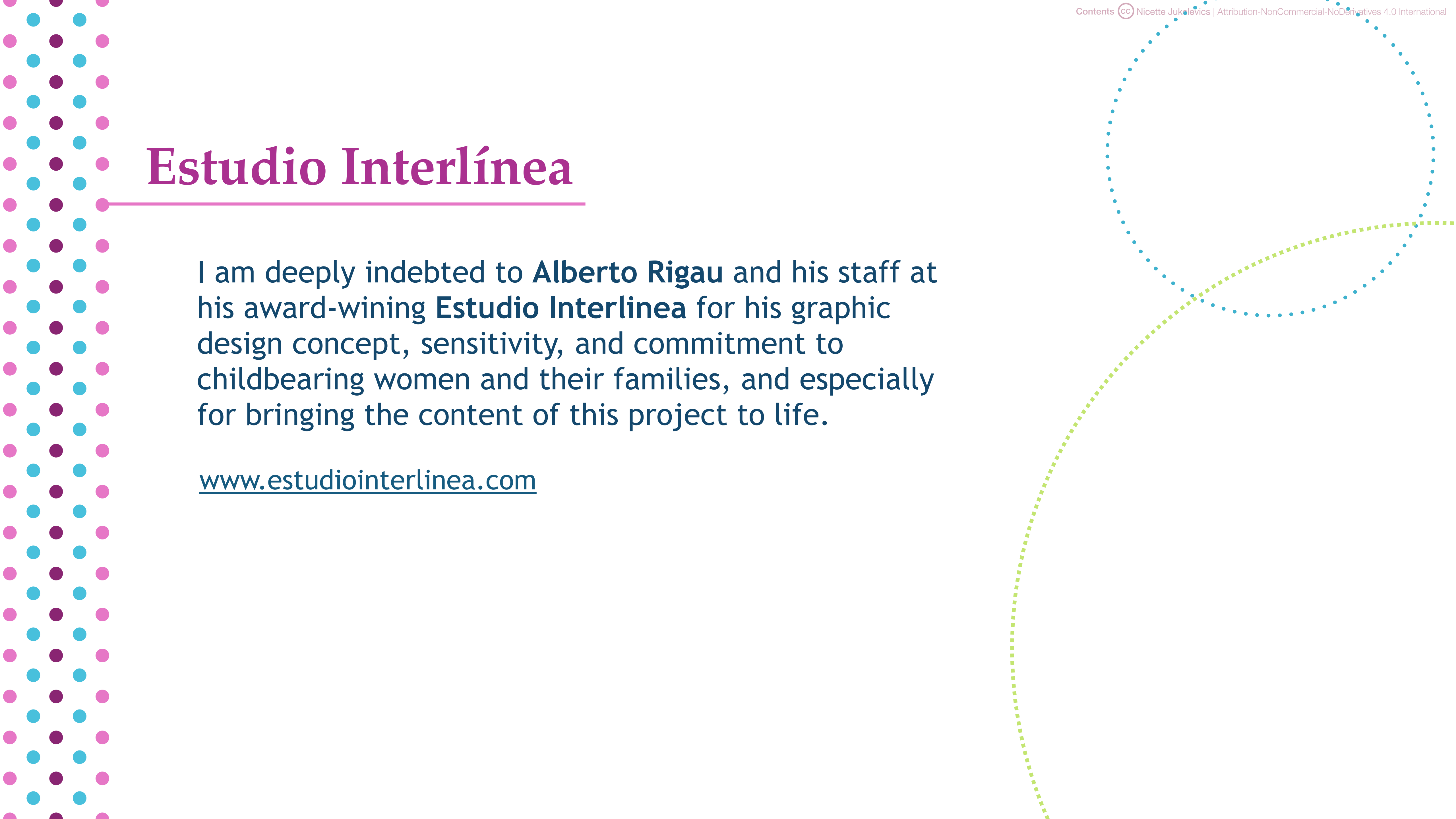
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Estudio Interlínea

I am deeply indebted to **Alberto Rigau** and his staff at his award-winning **Estudio Interlinea** for his graphic design concept, sensitivity, and commitment to childbearing women and their families, and especially for bringing the content of this project to life.

www.estudiointerlinea.com



Many thanks to my former co-author
Ruth Ancheta

I appreciate the generosity of **Ruth Ancheta**, BA, ICCE, CD (DONA) my co-author of **The VBAC Source Book and Teaching Kit** (ICEA, 2000) for allowing me to use our book as a foundation for this VBAC project.

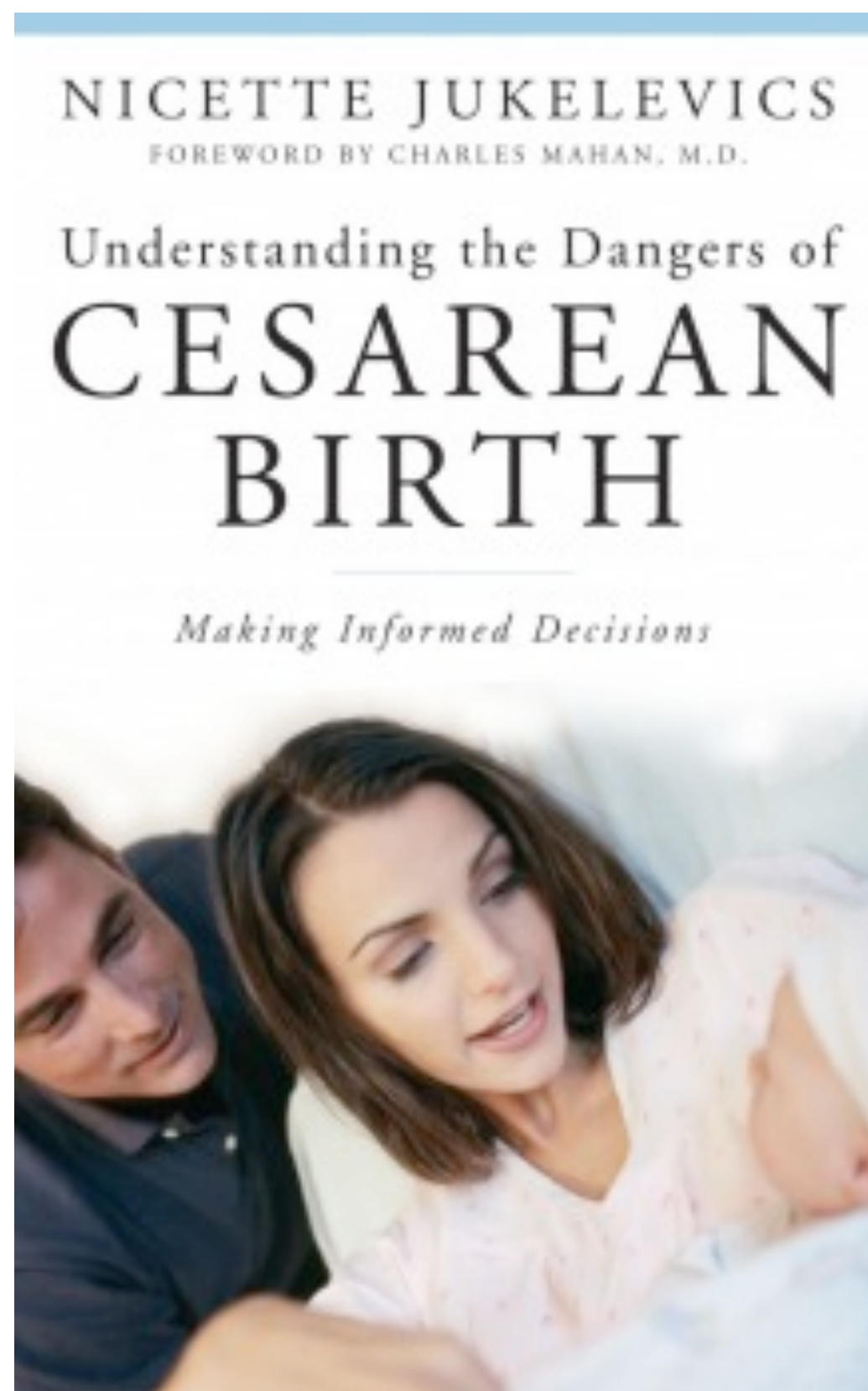
About the Author

Nicette Jukelevics, MA, ICCE is a childbirth educator, speaker and author of **Understanding the Dangers of Cesarean Birth: Making Informed Decisions** (Praeger Books, 2008). For over 30 years Nicette had the privilege of helping thousands of expectant families to prepare for childbirth, VBAC and early parenting.

She developed and taught hospital- and community-based VBAC classes and has presented on cesarean and VBAC issues at national conferences and provided trainings for educators, nurses and doulas across the U.S. Nicette founded and writes for **VBAC.com**, the first evidence-based website devoted to VBAC issues.

Nicette served on the Board of Directors of the International Childbirth Education Association, DONA International and is Past Chair of the Coalition for Improving Maternity Services.

Nicette Jukelevics, MA, ICCE



VBAAC.com
A woman-centered, evidence-based, resource

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[Find Nicette on Facebook](#)



Find the VBAC Education Project on Facebook

Educators, share your thoughts about how you are using the VBAC Education Project to increase awareness about VBAC and to increase safe access to medical care for mothers who want to labor after a prior cesarean.

If you are a parent, use the Facebook page to answer questions you may still have about safe access to a VBAC.





Deciding if a VBAC is Right for You: A Parent's Guide Introduction

Photo- © Niederlander/Dollar Photo Club

VBAC is a Reasonable Option

- Most mothers with a prior cesarean have a routine repeat cesarean section. But, there is another way to give birth safely.
- This visual guide is designed to provide information on vaginal birth after a cesarean (VBAC) for women who have a healthy pregnancy.
- Hopefully, it will help you to make an informed decision about how you want to give birth this time.
- This guide does not provide medical advice nor is it a substitute for medical care. It is important that you receive prenatal care from a physician or a midwife during your pregnancy and for your birth.



Congratulations on Your Pregnancy!

If you had a baby by cesarean section and you have a healthy pregnancy, **you have a choice** about how you want to give birth this time. It's your decision.



About the Modules

- The Parent's Guide is divided into 14 modules. It allows you to read all the modules or just read the ones you are most interested in.
- Each module contains a list of resources which correspond to the Resources for VBAC and Physiologic Birth. It is available for you as a pdf that you can download separately. You will find the web links for the listed resources in the pdf.
- In addition to the **Resources** you can also download the **Educational Handouts for Parents** to help you think about what you want for your birth and to discuss the issues that are important to you with your caregiver.

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Be informed and get the support that you need

- Try to get as much evidence-based information as you can.
- Learn about the options available to you.
- Discuss the issues that are important to you with your caregiver and your partner.
- Connect with other mothers who have had a cesarean and planned a VBAC. Then make the best decision for yourself and your family.

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