

# MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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## Photos depict a sometimes bumpy road

A UTAS sociology research project has culminated in a photography exhibition examining 12 women's experiences of pregnancy titled *Picturing Pregnancy*.

The women were given digital cameras and asked to photograph their lives through pregnancy and ten weeks after giving birth.

The exhibition of 20 photographs is the result of one year of photography and interviews with the women by researcher Dr Meredith Nash from the UTAS School of Social Sciences.

The purpose of the exhibition is to engage the Tasmanian community in thinking about what it's like to be a pregnant woman today.

These images are powerful in their illumination of the challenges, concerns, hopes and fears that Tasmanian women face on their life-changing journeys to becoming mothers.

Dr Nash said that the exhibition invites you to walk in these women's shoes, to see what they see, and to feel what they feel as pregnant women.

"Nearly 2000 digital photos were taken during the project and they cover a broad range of themes from body image and maternity clothing to pregnant celebrities, childbirth, and breastfeeding."

Dr Nash said a lot of images also illustrate the anxieties that some women felt about juggling paid work with motherhood.

"Several images show that women were also experiencing confronting feelings surrounding the changes to their pregnant bodies. Feeling the pressures of celebrity culture, many women worried that they would never 'bounce back' to a pre-pregnancy shape.

"This was an important finding and it applied to both first-time and experienced mothers."

Dr Nash's next research project will focus on family photos of pregnancy. She will be delving into Tasmanian family albums from the post-World War Two

period to the present day looking at how the shape of pregnancy has changed over time.

The exhibition will be displayed until 27 March 2013 in the main foyer of the UTAS Morris Miller Library, Sandy Bay campus, Churchill Avenue.

*(Please note that due to UTAS ethics requirements, the media will not be able to interview project participants.)*

**Information released by:**

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