



Serena Kirby, author of *Better Late Than Never Baby*, with her son Riley who was the inspiration behind the research for the book. Picture: Nic Duncan

Finally a book for the mature-aged mother

■ Lisa Cook

The number of mature-aged mothers in Australia has reached a record high, yet until now there has been no Australian literature available for the growing demographic.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the number of women aged 35-39 having a baby has tripled in the past 30 years and births to women aged 40-44 has almost doubled in the past decade.

Denmark freelance writer Serena Kirby dove head first into the unknown when she became a first-time mum at the age of 43, without her mother or any relevant resources to guide her.

Seven years after the birth of her son Riley, Kirby has released Australia's first book for older first-time mothers, *Better Late Than Never Baby*. *Becoming a Mother Later in Life*.

The book answers questions about adjusting to older motherhood, dispels myths of medical risks, the heightened importance of health, fatigue, raising an only child and the benefits in having a partner who is a mature-aged dad. Kirby said her

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Writer Serena Kirby

book was about sharing knowledge, first-hand experience and the things she wished she had known to create conversation on the topic.

When becoming an older mother, Kirby could not find any information about her situation and resorted to the internet, which she said actually made things a lot worse.

“Googling, I found, instead of comfort actually gave me a lot of fear because of all the warnings about the complications and the risks — it was really depressing,” she said.

Kirby started writing her own stories and researching for her own personal record, but then

saw the landscape which she became a mother in and said after talking to other women the momentum grew.

“It was always the case that if I helped one woman with one thing I had accomplished what I set out to do when I decided to make it into a book,” she said.

Better Late Than Never Baby also offers strategies at the end of each chapter with solutions on how to deal with each issue based on Kirby's research, interviews and experience.

Kirby said she had learnt so much through the rewarding journey and writing the book made her realise she was not alone.

“I don't feel as much of a motherhood misfit anymore because so many of the mothers that I spoke to have had either some or all of the same issues,” she said.

Her one piece of advice is: “If you are struggling with motherhood, regardless of your age, the important thing to remember is you're not alone, and then when you have a child, you rarely are.”

The book is available exclusively as an e-book at Kirby's website: www.ThingsIWishIHadKnown.com.