

Sarah Jefford, surrogate and lawyer. Author of *More Than Just a Baby: A Guide to Surrogacy for Intended Parents and Surrogates*, published 2020.

Sarah Jefford is a family and surrogacy lawyer, living in Melbourne with her partner, Troy, and their two sons, Archie and Rafael. Sarah has been a practising lawyer for over 15 years and opened up her own law firm in 2016.

Sarah and Troy conceived their first son, Archie, with the help of IVF treatment. After their second son, Rafael, was born, they considered their family to be complete. Sarah then became an egg donor and donated to several families.

In 2016, Sarah decided to become a surrogate, and she and Troy offered to a same sex male couple in Melbourne. The team underwent counselling and legal advice in accordance with the legal requirements for surrogacy. They were eventually able to conceive a child in a traditional surrogacy arrangement, and Sarah delivered a baby for the two dads in 2018. Sarah, Troy, the parents and all their children are lifelong friends and spend regular time together.

Since opening up her own law firm and becoming an egg donor and a surrogate, Sarah has specialised in surrogacy and donor conception law, or 'family creation' law. She is the only lawyer in Australia to practice exclusively in family creation law, and her clients hail from across Australia.

In 2018, Sarah launched the Australian Surrogacy Podcast, sharing stories from surrogates, intended parents and industry professionals, to support others on the surrogacy journey. Now in its third year and season, the Podcast hosts will celebrate the 100th episode this year.

Sarah speaks regularly on issues of donor conception and altruistic surrogacy. Through her work and advocacy, she promotes best practice altruistic surrogacy arrangements, the best interests of children and the bodily autonomy of women.

Drawing on her experiences as an IVF mum, egg donor, surrogate and lawyer, Sarah wrote ***More Than Just a Baby: A Guide to Surrogacy for Intended Parents and Surrogates***.

Sarah says the idea for the book came shortly after she gave birth as a surrogate. "I felt so many powerful and amazing emotions and wondered whether what I was feeling was normal. I remember thinking 'there really should be a book about this.' So, I wrote that book."

Sarah is passionate about positive and empowered surrogacy arrangements that focus on the best interests of children, and the longevity of the relationship between the surrogate and the intended parents. "Surrogacy relationships are the most complex of relationships that we can enter in our lifetime. I want intended parents and surrogates to understand the complexity and gravity of those relationships so they can have a positive, lifelong relationship, well beyond the birth and the legal process."

Sarah is well respected and recognised for her work in the surrogacy community. In 2019 she was a finalist in the Thought Leader and Sole Practitioner categories for the Women in Law Awards, and in 2020 she was recognised as a finalist Innovator of the Year in the Australian Law Awards.