



# FCC Taskforce Webinar: ABC's of Empathy Hope and Clear Communication for NICU Parents: Resource Sheet.

<p><b>ABC's of Empathy</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Acknowledge/Ask</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [Ask for permission to enter a relationship with families in the care of their children. This is the beginning of restoring control in an environment in which parents perceive very little control].</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>2. Breathe</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [Embrace Silence in Conversations with Families—how many minutes do you pause when sharing information and meeting with families?]</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>3. Curiosity:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [Ask questions that show relevant and compassionate curiosity rather than judgement]</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p>*Remember this is the beginning of a relationship, it begins with establishing rapport. Emotion must be attended to before sharing information that requires processing and decision-making. Attend to emotion first. Hold space for emotion first.</p> <p>Ortego Creative, November 9th 2021  <a href="https://classdismissedpodcast.com/podcasts/abcs-empathy-make-stronger-educator/">https://classdismissedpodcast.com/podcasts/abcs-empathy-make-stronger-educator/</a>          Brenee Brown Empathy  <a href="https://youtu.be/1Ewgu369Jw?si=HeArQbWjsLftF90F">https://youtu.be/1Ewgu369Jw?si=HeArQbWjsLftF90F</a></p>
<p><b>Establish Rapport with Families in the NICU</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Introduction:</b> Ask parents how they want to be addressed. Data shows that many families prefer not to be called Mom/Dad but rather by their names.</li> <li><b>2. Language:</b> Be mindful of language and the power of words including suffering, non-viable, or implication that someone is lucky to have a bigger preterm infants Parents of later preterm infants have PTSD like that of parents of smaller or more preterm infants. PTSD symptoms in NICU parents are not correlated with size of infant or length of NICU stay but rather the admission itself as an unexpected, untoward, unanticipated event with daily uncertainty for which families have no control.</li> <li><b>3. Position:</b> If possible, consider sitting rather than standing when rounding with families. Research shows that patients perceive that health care professionals have spent more time in patient encounters when they are sitting and feel more attended to, seen, heard, validated.</li> </ol>
<p>References</p>	<p><a href="https://nypost.com/2015/05/10/dear-strangers-dont-call-me-mom/">https://nypost.com/2015/05/10/dear-strangers-dont-call-me-mom/</a></p>

"The ABC's of Empathy, Hope, and Clear Communication for NICU Parents"



**TERRI L. MAJOR-KINCAID, MD, MPH, FAAP (SHE/HER)**  
 Associate Professor of Pediatrics,  
 Medical Director Pediatric Palliative Care  
 UT Health Houston, McGovern Medical School  
 Children's Memorial Hermann Hospital

Join our Free Membership to the NICU Parent Support Program




Generously Supported by:





	<p><a href="https://www.researchgate.net/publication/24248603_Don't_Call_Me_'Mom'_How_Parent_s_Want_to_Be_Greeted_by_Their_Pediatrician">https://www.researchgate.net/publication/24248603_Don't_Call_Me_'Mom'_How_Parent_s_Want_to_Be_Greeted_by_Their_Pediatrician</a></p> <p>Effect of chair placement on physicians' behavior and patients' satisfaction: randomized deception trial. BMJ 2023; 383 doi: <a href="https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj-2023-076309">https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj-2023-076309</a>        (Published 15 December 2023) BMJ 2023;383:e076309  <a href="https://www.bmj.com/content/383/bmj-2023-076309">https://www.bmj.com/content/383/bmj-2023-076309</a></p> <p>Wall-mounted folding chairs to promote resident physician sitting at the hospital bedside        Blair P. Golden MD, MS, Sean Tackett MD, MPH, Kimiyoshi Kobayashi MD, MBA, Terry S. Nelson MSN, RN, NEA-BC, Alison M. Agrawal MHA, Jerry Zhang MHA, Nicole A. Jackson MS, Geron Mills BA, Ting-Jia Lorigiano MD, MBA, Meron Hirpa MD, Jessica S. Lin MD, MBA, Trent Johnson MD, Aparna Sajja MD, Sarah Disney MS, FACHE, Shanshan Huang MBA, Juhi Nayak MHA, Matthew Lautzenheiser MHA, Stephen A. Berry MD, PhD  <a href="https://shmpublications.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1002/jhm.13271">https://shmpublications.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1002/jhm.13271</a></p>
<p><b>Hearing vs. Active Listening</b></p>	<p><b>Hearing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One-sided family meetings</li> <li>• Predominantly yes-no questions</li> <li>• Negative labeling/stereotyping           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Assertive vs. Aggressive</li> <li>○ Appropriate questions/advocacy vs. perception of mistrust</li> <li>○ Perception of denial rather than holding space for Hope of the impact of fear/worry</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Active Listening Vs. Hearing</b></p>	<p><b>Listening</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Be Curious, Not Judgmental</b></li> <li>• <b>Open Ended Questions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Tell Me More</li> <li>○ Help Me Understand</li> <li>○ What are you most worried about?</li> <li>○ What are you most hoping for?</li> <li>○ Do you have any concerns that we have not discussed today?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

"The ABC's of Empathy, Hope, and Clear Communication for NICU Parents"



**TERRI L. MAJOR-KINCAID, MD, MPH, FAAP (SHE/HER)**  
 Associate Professor of Pediatrics,  
 Medical Director of Pediatric Palliative Care  
 UT Health Houston, McGovern Medical School  
 Children's Memorial Hermann Hospital

Join our Free Member Online Network  
 Text Linkage Program Available



Generously Supported by:  

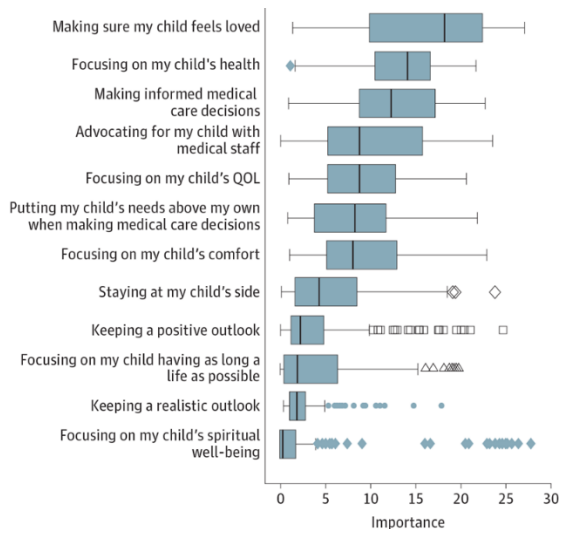

- **Amplify Non-verbal Communication Skills**
  - Read the Room
  - Facial expression, Eye Contact
  - Open Posture

**Validation and Affirmation Statements**

- Understanding of **Good Parent Beliefs** and the importance of affirming to parents that we value, welcome and are learning from their advocacy. Values that are important to families ensure that they feel like they are being a good parent to their child.
- Affirmation Statements
  - Thank you for sharing what is most important to you
  - I can only imagine how hard this is for you and your family
  - Would it be helpful to have another opinion
  - You are an amazing parent. Thank you for being so intentional and thoughtful with every decision for your child. We can feel your love for your child.

Weaver MS, Neumann ML, Lord B, Wiener L, Lee J, Hinds PS. Honoring the Good Parent Intentions of Courageous Parents: A Thematic Summary from a US-Based National Survey. *Children*. 2020; 7(12):265. <https://doi.org/10.3390/children7120265>

Feudtner C, Walter JK, Faerber JA, et al. Good-Parent Beliefs of Parents of Seriously Ill Children. *JAMA Pediatr*. 2015;169(1):39–47. doi:10.1001/jamapediatrics.2014.2341



"The ABC's of Empathy, Hope, and Clear Communication for NICU Parents"



**TERRI L. MAJOR-KINCAID, MD, MPH, FAAP (SHE/HER)**  
 Associate Professor of Pediatrics,  
 Medical Director of Pediatric Palliative Care  
 UT Health Houston, McGovern Medical School  
 Children's Memorial Hermann Hospital

Join our Free Member Online Network



TEC Learning Program Overview



Generously Supported by:





**Attending to Emotion**



NURSE ACRONYM:

*Representative language*

Naming	"It sounds like..."
Understanding	"I'm hearing you say..."
Respecting	"I am impressed that..."
Supporting	"I'll be available for you..."
Exploring	"Tell me more about..."

Source: Pollak et al.<sup>17</sup>