

# FCC TASKFORCE MAY 2024 WEBINAR



FCC TASKFORCE  
*Webinar*  
MAY 9TH 2024 11 AM PT

Family-Team Dynamics in the NICU: How Bias Can Threaten Optimal Communication



**Tamorah Lewis, MD, PhD (she/her)**  
Staff Neonatologist, The Hospital for Sick Children  
Sellers Chair, Pharmacology and Pharmacogenetics  
Division Head, Clinical Pharmacology & Toxicology  
Associate Professor, Department of Pediatrics,  
University of Toronto

NICU Parents Need A Hand to Hold: Early Intervention Mental Health Services Improves Outcomes for Parent and Baby



**Kelli Kelley**  
Founder & CEO, Hand to Hold  
NICU Parent, Jackson (24 weeker) & Lauren (34 weeker)

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# THIS WEBINAR IS DEDICATED TO

LAUREN & JACKSON KELLEY



Lauren, 34-Weeker



Jackson, 24-Weeker



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# Industry Sponsor



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NURTURE IN THE PURSUIT  
OF A HEALTHIER WORLD**



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# Industry Sponsor

**Dräger**

“Care for babies  
like never before”



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# All-In Meeting

- Break down the hierarchy
- Integrate patient-families
- Prioritize funds to support patient-families
- Intentionally elevate the voices of women, diverse groups, and individuals with rare or unique experiences
- Make it relevant and personal
- Provide support to disabled individuals during in-person meetings
- Invest in building relationships
- Support and include breastfeeding mothers/parents
- Demonstrate the impact, progress, and opportunities
- Capitalize on the expertise in the room
- Remain receptive and responsive to constructive criticism



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# FCC Taskforce Core Team

Co-Chairs

Program Manager



**Malathi Balasundaram, MD**

Clinical Associate Professor,  
Stanford School of Medicine  
Attending Neonatologist &  
FCC Committee Chair,  
El Camino Health, CA

**Keira Sorrells**

Founder & Executive  
Director,  
NICU Parent Network

**Colby Day, MD**

Assistant Professor of Pediatrics &  
Medical Director,  
Golisano Children's Hospital NICU  
University of Rochester  
Medical Center

**Morgan Kowalski**

Family Partner



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# Executive Council - Family Partners



**Lelis Bauzá Vernon**



**Jennifer Canvasser**



**Amy Finn**



**Molly Fraust-Wylie**



**Marybeth Fry**



**Yamille Jackson, PhD**



**Kelli Kelley**



**Kristy Love**



**Mia Malcolm**



**Necole McRae**



**Kimberly Novod**



**Betsy Pilon**



**Elizabeth Simonton**



**Meegan Snyder**



**Alex Zavala**

# Executive Council - Healthcare Partners



**Daphna Barbeau, MD**



**Joy Browne, PhD**



**Robert Cicco, MD**



**Mary Coughlin,  
MS, NNP, NCC-E**



**Jessica Fry, MD**



**Vargabi Ghei, MD**



**Christy Gliniak,  
PhD, OTR/L, CNT, CPKP, NTMTC**



**Mitchell Goldstein, MD**



**Luann Jones,  
DNP, APRN, NNP-BC, NE-BC**



**Henry Lee, MD**



**Kerri Machut, MD**



**Nicole Nyberg,  
MSN, APRN, NNP-BS**



**Tim Palmer, MD**



**Jochen Profit, MD**



**Aida Simonian,  
MSN, RNC-NIC, SCM, SRN**



**Dharshi Sivakumar, MD**



**Bob White, MD**



**Emily Whitesel, MD**

# Welcome New Executive Council Members!



**Mary Coughlin, MS, NCC-E**  
**Trauma Informed Professional™**  
**President & Founder,**  
**Caring Essentials Collaborative, LLC**



**Amy Finn**  
**NICU Parent of Piper (33 Weeker)**  
**Programs & Events Coordinator,**  
**Project NICU**



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# FCC Taskforce Committee Chairs

## Marketing & Communications Committee Co-Chairs



**Daphna Barbeau, MD**

*Attending Neonatologist,  
HCA University Hospital  
Director,  
High Risk Infant Follow Up Clinic*



**Alex Zavala, Family Partner**

*Founder,  
The NICU Dad &  
The NICU Dad Podcast  
PFAC Chair,  
Dell Ascension NICU Network  
Family Advisor,  
Vermont Oxford Network*

## Newsletter Committee Co-Chairs



**Vargabi Ghei, MD**

*NICU Medical Director,  
HCA East Florida Northwest  
Medical Center*



**Morgan Kowalski, Family Partner**

*Program Manager,  
Family-Centered Care Taskforce  
Family Partner,  
Golisano Children's Hospital NICU  
University of Rochester Medical  
Center*

## Advocacy Committee Co-Chairs



**Kerri Machut, MD**

*Attending Neonatologist,  
Lurie Children's Hospital  
Associate Professor,  
Feinberg School of Medicine,  
Northwestern University*



**Nicole Nyberg, NNP &  
Family Partner**

*Neonatal Nurse Practitioner,  
Cone Health  
Founder,  
Empowering NICU Parents &  
The Empowering NICU Parents  
Podcast*





# Cheers to 2 Years!

Formed in February 2022!

First Webinar in May 2022!!!



## FAMILY-CENTERED CARE TASKFORCE

### JOIN US

FOR THE FIRST FAMILY-CENTERED CARE TASKFORCE WEBINAR

Thursday, May 12th 11-12:30 PM PST (2-3:30 PM EST)  
[Join Link](#) Password: 983240

#### Featuring:

1. "Early Life Adversity in the NICU – the Critical role of Family Centered Care" by Mary Coughlin
2. Family poster panel

**SPEAKER: MARY COUGHLIN MS, RN, RNC-E**



Mary is a global leader in neonatal nursing and has pioneered the concept of trauma informed, developmental care as a biologically relevant paradigm for babies, children and families.

#### FAMILY PARTNERS:



Molly French-Wylie  
NCU Family Program,  
Manager at BEMC,  
Board Advisor for Project  
Sweet Peas,  
Chair of NICU Family  
Advisory Leadership Committee  
NICU Child: Max



Nicole McKee,  
Vice President of  
Grief/loss/trauma,  
Executive Director of  
Post2ward Education  
Recovery Institute

NICU Child: Ahmaad



Katherine Haber  
Family Advisory Board at  
El Camino Health

NICU Children: Finn &  
Isaac



Keira Sacella  
Executive Director  
NICU Parent Network  
NICU Children: Zoe,  
Avery & Lily



Leif Vetter, S.Q.L.L.  
Healthcare Consultant

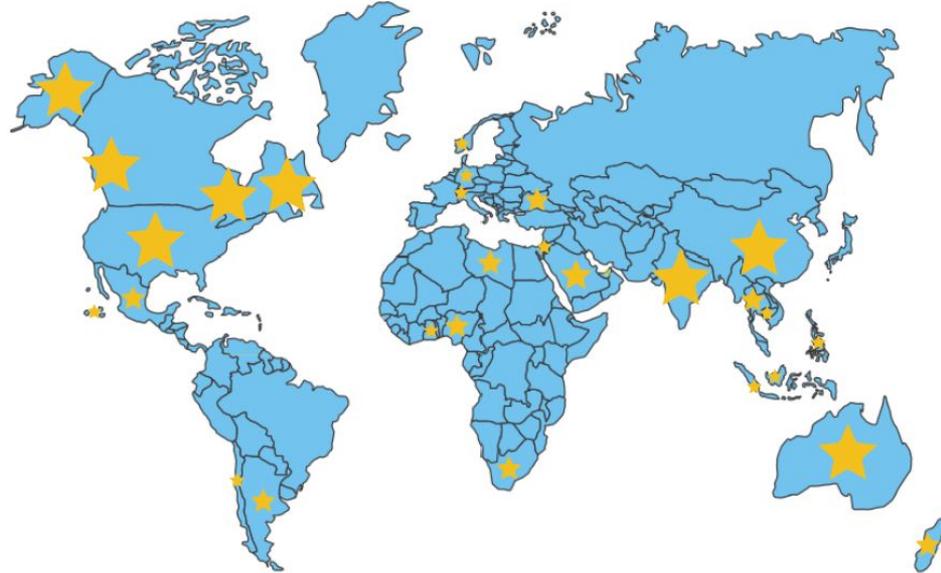
NICU Children:  
Charlie & Bobby



Marybeth Fry, M.Ed  
NICU Family Care  
Coordinator  
Alcorn Children's Hospital,  
Lead Family Faculty  
NICU/INCC,  
Vermont Oxford Network

NICU Child: Sophia

# Family-Centered Care Across the Globe!



Over 900 members!  
43/50 U.S. States  
30+ Countries



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# Database of Webinar Recordings & Topics

FCC Taskforce Webinar Database ☆ 📁 ☁

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📅 Date

A	B	C
7/14/2022	"Why it is Essential to Provide FCC in the NICU: Expert Insights from Family Partners", Meegan Snyder, Nicholas Hall, Mike Hyman, MD, Kimberly Novod, Michelle Wrench, RN, CCRN, & Jennifer Canvasser, MSW; "How to Provide FCC in the NICU?", Unit Examples, Malathi Balasundaram, MD & Dharshi Sivakumar, MD from El Camino Health and Jessica Fry, MD & Kerri Machut, MD from Lurie Children's Hospital	<a href="https://youtu.be/vI3OVBO-8L8">https://youtu.be/vI3OVBO-8L8</a>
9/15/2022	"How to Build and Strengthen Your Family Advisory/Partnership Council in the NICU", Marybeth Fry, M.Ed, Molly Faust-Wylie, & Jennifer Johnson	<a href="https://youtu.be/RHS7s2Eds9Y">https://youtu.be/RHS7s2Eds9Y</a>
10/13/2022	"Providing Support to Non-Birthing NICU Parnters", Chavis Patterson, PhD; "Late Preterm, Term Baby Family Partner Panel", Amanda Yeaton-Massey, MD, Sha Sha Chu, Theresa Urbina, D.O, Michelle Wrench, RN, CCRN, Vishal Kapadia, D.O, & Betsy Pilon	<a href="https://youtu.be/0F5CkBSv5-M">https://youtu.be/0F5CkBSv5-M</a>
11/10/2022	"The Need for More Mental Health Professionals in the NICU", Mike Hyman, MD, Necole McRae; "Local Parental Support", Dharshi Sivakumar, MD, Michelle Wrench; "National Parental Support", Meegan Snyder, Keira Sorrells	<a href="https://youtu.be/AMNPQJKsewQ">https://youtu.be/AMNPQJKsewQ</a>
1/12/2023	"Infant and Family-Centered Developmental Care: Evidence for Practice", Joy Browne, PhD, PCNS, IMH-E (IV); "Using Evidence to Guide Parents in Optimizing the Early NICU Environment", Bobbi Pineda, PhD OTR/L, CNT; "Variation in Family-Centered Care Metrics Across CA", Jochen Profit, MD, MPH	<a href="https://youtu.be/HwuqZbi9UTM">https://youtu.be/HwuqZbi9UTM</a>
3/16/2023	"How to Provide Better Home Transition for NICU Parents", Vincent Smith, MD, MPH & Kristy Love; "Using Technology to Help Home Transition", Malathi Balasundaram, MD	<a href="https://youtu.be/4UWI_QOAGs">https://youtu.be/4UWI_QOAGs</a>
5/11/2023	"Family Engagement and QI", Meg Parker, MD, MPH & Molly Faust-Wylie; "Family Engagement Examples at the National Level", Marybeth Fry M.Ed & Lelis Vernon S.Q.I.L	<a href="https://youtu.be/sTSvuxPVeUg">https://youtu.be/sTSvuxPVeUg</a>
7/20/2023	"The I-Rainbow: A flexible, evidence-based care path for providing developmental care in the NICU", Melissa Scala, MSPT, Elish Byne, MD; "Social Media: A Tool for Connecting with Families", Daphna Barbeau, MD; "How Mamma is Closing Gaps in Maternal Mental Health Care in NICUs", Maureen Fura, MPA	<a href="https://youtu.be/DefXnPKyuuQ">https://youtu.be/DefXnPKyuuQ</a>



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# April 2024 Poll

**We want to hear from our Family Partners as we address the following questions:**

How would you have felt about using an app to track your milk production?  
How would you have felt about linking this app to Electronic Health Records?



**All poll responses  
can be found here!**



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# FCC Taskforce Office Hours

Mary Coughlin, MS, NCC-E, President & Founder of Caring Essentials Collaborative, LLC and Elizabeth Simonton, Founder & CEO of ICU Baby facilitated our April Office Hours session around Trauma Informed Care. Here are some **highlights from our time together**:

"We need to make sure NICUs are a safe space for families; even despite trainings we need to be role-modelling consistently and being held accountable"

"Trauma Informed Care is not checking a box, training needs to be monitored/measured"

"It can't just be training, it has to be a movement."

"Learning needs to be continual and there has to be accountability and follow-up"

"Equitable Trauma Informed Care should be just as important in every unit as CLABSI"

"Families are suffering from lack of Trauma Informed Care and being labeled as difficult as a result"

"We are positively impacting infant brain development by providing Trauma Informed Care"

"We have to remember that the moment families walk through the door, they are facing trauma in their life. This isn't what they planned for."

We need to make more space for providers to work through their trauma; we expect them to lose a patient, and care for a new admission an hour later."

"In healthcare, we are expected to push our feelings down and keep moving on; that's not Trauma Informed Care! It needs to extend to all."

"Our unit's Palliative Care Team hosted a debrief for staff after the loss of a patient, it was very helpful and informative."

"It's not the providers' job to take away the trauma, they just need to be a buffer for the trauma and offer encouragement - i.e. did you see how the baby calmed at the sound of your voice? - and help develop resilience"

"We don't need to sum up the suffering as providers, we need to help parents feel empowered, included, and confident to build resilience."

"Making parents feel seen, heard, and valued is what it's all about."



# FCC Taskforce Office Hours



Join us for Office Hours **Thursday, 5/23 at 9am PT** to discuss communication and information-sharing as pillars of NICU care with Daphna Barbeau, MD and Lelis Bauzá Vernon.



## **Lelis Bauzá Vernon, S.Q.I.L**

*State Family Leader, Florida PQC  
Editorial Board, PEDIATRICS,  
AAP Publications  
Clinical Advisor, QI Measures Task  
Force, AAP, SoNPM  
Faculty Family Leader, Vermont Oxford  
Network*



## **Daphna Barbeau, MD**

*Attending Neonatologist,  
HCA University Hospital  
Director,  
High Risk Infant Follow Up Clinic*



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# FCC TASKFORCE

## Webinar

MAY 9TH 2024 11 AM PT

Family-Team Dynamics in the NICU: How Bias Can Threaten  
Optimal Communication



**Tamorah Lewis, MD, PhD** (she/her)  
Staff Neonatologist, The Hospital for Sick Children  
Sellers Chair, Pharmacology and Pharmacogenetics  
Division Head, Clinical Pharmacology & Toxicology  
Associate Professor, Department of Pediatrics,  
University of Toronto

NICU Parents Need A Hand to Hold: Early Intervention Mental  
Health Services Improves Outcomes for Parent and Baby



**Kelli Kelley**  
Founder & CEO, Hand to Hold  
NICU Parent, Jackson (24 weeker) & Lauren (34 weeker)

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**Hand to Hold™**  
NICU BABIES · PARENT SUPPORT

# **NICU Parents Need A Hand to Hold**

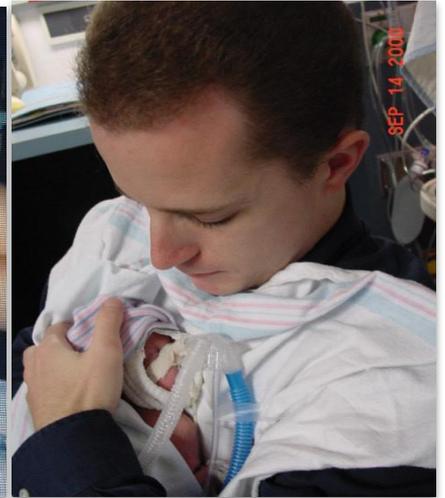
**Early Intervention Mental Health Support  
Improves Outcomes for Mom and Baby**



**Jackson Thomas Kelley**  
**24 weeks gestation**  
**1 pound 8 oz - 12 inches long**



# Physical and Emotional barriers kept us miles apart







## Postpartum Support International lists NICU admission as an example of trauma and risk for developing postpartum posttraumatic stress disorder (P-PTSD)

Symptoms can include:

- Intrusive re-experiencing of a past traumatic event, flashbacks or nightmares
- Avoidance of stimuli associated with the event
- Persistent increased arousal (irritability, difficulty sleeping, hypervigilance)
- Anxiety and panic attacks and feeling a sense of unreality and detachment





# The NICU is hard. We're here to help.

Research confirms that early intervention support can reduce the experience of isolation, increase confidence, and enhance opportunities for bonding, all of which support a healthy beginning for baby.

Bonding with baby helps release hormones and chemicals that encourage a baby's brain growth especially vital to the development of a medically fragile infant.

**Care for the parent is care for the baby.**

<sup>1</sup> Heckman, J.J. (2006). Skill formation and the economics of investing in disadvantaged children. *Science*, 312(5782):1900-1902. doi:10.1126/science.1128898

<sup>2</sup> Bonding and attachment: newborns. (2023, May 26). Raising Children Network. <https://raisingchildren.net.au/newborns/connecting-communicating/bonding/bonding-newborns#:~:text=Bonding%20with%20newborns%3A%20why%20it's%20important,-Bonding%20between%20you&text=Bonding%20also%20helps%20your%20baby,your%20baby's%20brain%20to%20grow.>



# Our Model



Hand to Hold **closes critical gaps** in maternal mental health care **by providing free mental health support programs** for NICU and bereaved parents before, during, and after a NICU stay.





# World Health Organization Recommends Peer Support

Families of preterm or low-birth-weight infants should be given **extra support** to care for their infants, starting in healthcare facilities from birth and continued during follow up post-discharge. The support may include **education, counseling and discharge preparation from health workers, and peer support.**

-World Health Organization (WHO)

*[WHO recommendations for care of the preterm or low-birth-weight infant](#)*



# Hand to Hold provides 3 types of in-person & virtual support



**1-to-1  
Support**



**Support  
Groups**



**Educational  
Resources**

*We provided 72,150 support sessions in 2023*



# Our staff reflects our values



## Leadership Team

- 100% have a NICU experience

## Programs Staff

- 100% of our Certified Mental Health Peer Specialists have a NICU or bereavement experience
- Ethnically diverse team
- 58% are Bilingual



# There are 2 ways that Hand to Hold supports NICU's

## NICU's refer parents to us



### Referral Cards

105+ NICU's refer Hand to Hold's resources and services with referral cards included in parent packets or displayed in NICU waiting areas. Available in English and Spanish.

[Order Resource](#)

## Hospitals partner for Dedicated Support



### In-Person or Virtual

NICU's secure funding for Hand to Hold to provide dedicated in-person or virtual 1-to-1 bedside support, support groups, events and educational resources with our Certified Mental Health Peer Support Specialists.

[Learn More](#)



# About Us - Hospital Partners

Supporting Austin Area hospitals since 2014



# About Us - Hospital Partners

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**NEW**

**Texas Children's Houston  
launching early 2024**

*Currently in contracting*

**Texas Children's  
Woodlands launching  
Dedicated Virtual Support**

*Pilot program; Currently in contracting*



# Texas Children's Hospital<sup>®</sup>



# Comprehensive In-Person Support

Tailored specifically to the needs of your NICU



- **Dedicated 1:1 support from your in-person Certified Mental Health Peer Support Specialist**
  - Weekly hours scoped to the size of your NICU
- **Weekly, private in-person support groups**
  - Led by Hand to Hold Bilingual, Certified Mental Health Peer Specialist(s) in your hospital
- **Holiday and educational events to encourage bonding and celebration in the NICU**

Photo used with permission





**Hand to Hold's Certified Mental Health  
Peer Support Specialists are staff  
members - not volunteers.**

**Certification is through Via Hope, a leader in Peer Specialist training and curriculum since 2010.**

- 40-hours of training.
- 250 hours of supervised work experience
- 2-year certification applied through state certification boards.
- Maintain certification.





# Annual Educational Programs to Support Bonding



**Hand to Hold**  
NICU BABIES - PARENT SUPPORT

## MILK-A-THON Celebration

In celebration of **Breastfeeding Awareness Month**, Hand to Hold invites you to participate in a Milk-a-thon the month of August, every time you pump, feed your baby, you can earn a ticket

# Weekly Support Groups and Special Celebrations



Dedicated Support For Your NICU



Hand to Hold  
NICU BABIES · PARENT SUPPORT

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# Our signature Milestone Bead program



This necklace became **my talisman**. It reminded me **how far we had come** and allowed me to feel connected when I couldn't be at the hospital.

– Kheira A.

Hand to Hold's NICU Milestone Beads celebrate each special step in a family's NICU journey.



*Hand to Hold also offers a special Love and Loss bead kit, a keepsake for families to memorialize their baby after enduring a devastating loss in the NICU.*





### Educational Resources For Hospitals

Educational resources will help NICU Professionals support NICU parents and can be shared with NICU parents to help ease their transition. Available in English and Spanish. Bereavement handbook coming soon.



### Love & Loss necklace

A keepsake for families to memorialize their baby after enduring a devastating loss. A necklace with an angel wing heart bead, a condolence card, and gift packaging to memorialize a family's loss.



### NICU Milestone Bead Program

The NICU Milestone Bead Program provides families with a special celebration for each step in their NICU journey.





## Support beyond the NICU is Vital

Parents' anxiety and fears are heightened as they navigate the care of their baby without nurses, and are isolated from friends and family due to the baby's compromised immune system.

Research demonstrates that NICU mothers experience stressors that place them at a higher risk of developing a mental health issue even after NICU discharge.



## Hand to Hold's National Peer Mentor Program carefully matches a Mentee with a trained Mentor

- Available to all NICU and bereaved parents across the US at no cost.
- Connections are typically made within 2 business days.
- All mentors have gone through training and a background check.
- Matches connect via text, email, call, or video chat.

**97% of parents surveyed would recommend Hand to Hold's peer mentor program to other families.**





Photo used with permission

## Hand to Hold's National Virtual Support Group format is inspired by our in-hospital group support and our proprietary curriculum.

- Available to all NICU and bereaved parents across the US at no cost.
- Led by a Hand to Hold Certified Mental Health Peer Support Specialist
- 6 groups offered:
  - NICU Parents
  - NICU Moms
  - High-Risk Pregnancy
  - Black Parents
  - Love & Loss, Cafecito (Spanish)
  - Military Parents

**100% of parents surveyed would recommend Hand to Hold's support groups to other families.**





Ayesha Youngblood,  
LPC-A



Cynthia Shogreen,  
RMHCI, BCBA



Meghan Biss,  
LCSW

## Hand to Hold's licensed staff counselors provide specialized counseling

- Help parents process their birth experiences, or seek treatment for possible perinatal mood and anxiety disorders
- 8-12 sessions per parent or parenting couple at no cost
- English or Spanish
- Eligibility Requirements
  - Must have experienced a NICU stay
  - Must complete an online survey for screening
  - Must be able to do virtual appointments (Telehealth)
  - Must reside in TX or FL

**100% of parents surveyed would recommend Hand to Hold's counseling program to other families.**



# NICU Babies Parent Support Podcast

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Education and Personal Stories Before, During, & After the NICU

**100+ episodes available 24/7, examples include:**

- Why We Said Yes to Marriage Counseling
- Black Maternal Health, Advocacy, and Awareness
- Immeasurable Love – Love and Loss in the NICU
- Traveling With Medically Complex Children



## 40,000 Downloads & Counting!



# Hand to Hold App

## Support | Community | Resources



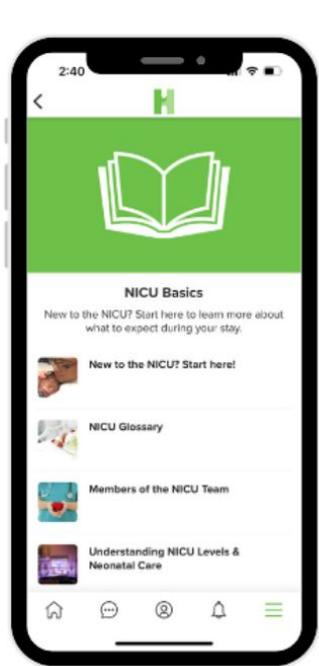
**“This is THE app  
for NICU parents”**  
-A 2023 NICU Mom



Loved by NICU parents from 49 states, launched Feb 2023



2000 parents & counting!



80% of App Audience is a 2023 or 2022 NICU parent

**Removes barriers to our Free National Support**

- Peer Mentor Program
- Support Groups
- Counseling
- Podcast
- Bereavement Support

**Safe place for NICU parent connection across the US**

- Community moderated by Hand to Hold
- Multiple groups (parents, Moms, Dads, love & loss)
- Sharing milestones, photos and encouragement

**Educational Library designed for today's parent**

- 20+ topics to navigate NICU journey
- Quick and easy to read
- Shareable to partner or family
- Library will continue to expand

# NICU Heroes Podcast, Exclusively for NICU Professionals

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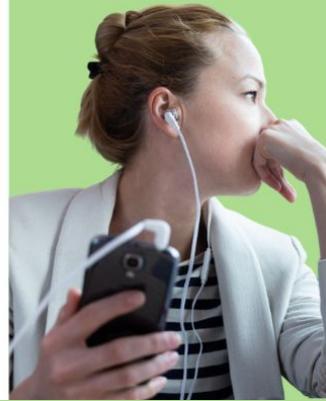
Nursing CEU Credits Available

**25+ episodes available 24/7, examples include:**

- Preventing Burnout Among NICU Professionals
- How to Engage Child Life in the NICU
- Supporting Dads and Their Mental Health in the NICU



## 30,000 Downloads & Counting!



# The Impact of Hand to Hold's Support on NICU Parents



- 96% of parents felt more hopeful
- 100% of parents felt more confident bonding with their baby
- 100% of parents would recommend Hand to Hold to other parents



# The Impact of Hand to Hold's Support on NICU Professionals



“Having a Hand to Hold Certified Mental Health Peer Specialist in our hospital...”

- **“allows hospitals more time to focus on the care of the baby”**
  - 93% of NICU Supervisors/Managers agree
- **“helps with balancing patient care and family support”**
  - 100% of NICU Supervisors/Managers agree
- **“helps provide a better understanding of how to support NICU parents/families”**
  - 100% of NICU Supervisors/Managers agree





**Hand to Hold™**  
NICU BABIES · PARENT SUPPORT

**April 21, 2024**  
**Q2 Stadium**





**Hand to Hold™**  
NICU BABIES · PARENT SUPPORT

The 2024 NICU Grad Then & Now Photo Contest just launched on May 7th!

In 2023:

- 7 age categories
- 50 states represented
- 1,600 Grads entered
- 1,900 Donors
- Donate to Vote



**Winner!**



-Now-



# 12 Months Of Inspiring NICU Grad Stories

NICU GRAD  
**THEN & NOW**  
 PHOTO CONTEST  
 2023

Celebrate · Give Back · Win Prizes

ENTER YOUR GRAD

TEIGAN THEN

TEIGAN NOW

Presented by **HUGGIES**

Hand to Hold.  
 NICU BABIES · PARENT SUPPORT



**NOVEMBER 2024**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Hand to Hold.  
**THEN & NOW**  
 NICU GRAD PHOTO CONTEST

**Koraline**

Then a NICU respiratory therapist and now set up having Koraline at 26 weeks in the NICU that's wonderful. She has been a complete outlier from the beginning! We spent 26 days in the NICU, and she came home on oxygen for a short time. You would never know how long they had been looking at her now. We go outside beyond words all the NICU staff who cared for her. She is the most developed, confident, beautiful little girl. She has the attitude that there is nothing that she cannot overcome.

Hand to Hold.  
 NICU BABIES · PARENT SUPPORT

Hand to Hold is a national nonprofit 501(c)(3) that is dedicated to providing personalized emotional support, education and resources to parents who have had children in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) or have experienced the loss of a baby.

Let's Huddle! Born in the US, graduate from the NICU, then return to the US, and the weekly Huddle sessions have their babies going to the NICU. Support is provided in English and Spanish. All are welcome to attend, and all ages are encouraged to help the community, professional and non-professional in the NICU parent community. For more information, visit [HandToHold.org](http://HandToHold.org)

Hand to Hold.  
 NICU BABIES · PARENT SUPPORT

“Rich was born at 24 weeks gestation due to HELLP syndrome. He weighed only **15 ounces** and was **11 inches long** at birth. Rich was in the **NICU for 128 days**. His strength is inspirational. He is an old soul, and a joy to be around. He’s won medals in swimming, and when he’s not in the pool he’s playing with his bulldog Chuck Roast. Rich is 8 years old now. He is very smart, and quick to tell a joke. We couldn’t be more proud of our fighter.”

-Rich’s Family

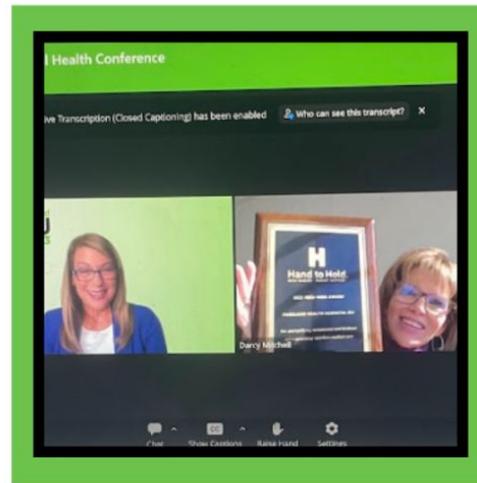
# NICU HERO



Chelsea, BSN, RN, CPST;  
NICU 2023 Professional  
Winner



Parkland Hospital  
Dallas, TX; 2023 NICU  
Team Winner



The **parent-nominated** award represents a **NICU individual and a NICU team** who made a difference in a parent's NICU journey by demonstrating **compassionate and expert medical care**.



# The only National conference bringing NICU professionals & parents together to focus on mental health

**Hand to Hold**  
**NICU**  
MENTAL HEALTH  
CONFERENCE **24**  
NICU PROFESSIONALS & PARENTS

**KEYNOTE SPEAKERS**

**BENJAMIN RATTRAY,**  
DO, MBA, CPE, FAAP

*When All Becomes New: A Doctor's  
Stories of Life, Love, and Loss*

**NOVEMBER  
6TH & 7TH**

**REGISTER TODAY**

2 Days | 11 sessions | 23 speakers

**133 hospitals represented**

444 attendees



38 US States



6 countries



*Ukova*

Exceeded engagement  
benchmarks by 45%





## FCC Improves Outcomes for Parent and Child

**Infants** have less stress, are less likely to have an infection, spend fewer days in the NICU, are less likely to be readmitted to the hospital after discharge and are more likely to be breastfed longer.<sup>1</sup>

**Parents** are better prepared to transition their baby from hospital to home and show improved management abilities and mental health outcomes.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> O'Brien, Karel et al, *A pilot cohort analytic study of Family Integrated Care in a Canadian neonatal intensive care unit*. *BMC Pregnancy Childbirth*, Volume 13 Suppl 1:S12, 2013.

<sup>2</sup> Van Veenendaal NR, et al *Association of a Zero-Separation Neonatal Care Model with Stress in Mothers of Preterm Infants*. *JAMA Netw Open*. 2022 Mar 2;5(3):e224514 doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2022.4514. PMID: 35344044; PMCID: PMC8961319.



# Parenting in the NICU remains at the forefront of improving care for NICU babies



NICU professionals help validate a parent's role in the care of their child. Their words and support have a lasting impact on the NICU parent's transition into parenthood.



# Ensure every NICU parent has a hand to hold before, during and after a NICU stay:



- To mitigate the impact of perinatal mood disorders
- Improve parent bonding
- Insulate baby from abuse and neglect
- Improve the likelihood of parent “buy-in” to therapy and follow-up care
- And thereby improve the infant’s developmental outcome





To whom much is given, of  
him much will be required  
Luke 12:48





**About 10% of NICU parents currently receive support during and after the NICU stay. This highlights a significant gap in awareness regarding early intervention mental health support.**



# Refer parents to us



## Referral Cards

Our Hand to Hold Referral Card provides an overview of Hand to Hold's resources and services, and is perfect for including in parent packets or displaying in your NICU waiting area.

Available in English and Spanish.





**Hand to Hold**<sup>™</sup>  
NICU BABIES · PARENT SUPPORT

Thank you so much for the opportunity to speak with you today and for all you do to care for NICU babies and their families!

# Upcoming Webinars

## July 11th:

- Families as Neuroprotectors in the NICU  
**Paige Church, MD**
- "Delivering Hope Through Words: The Power of Effective Communication in the NICU"  
**Mia Malcolm**



Paige Church, MD



Mia Malcolm

**Subscribe to receive  
calendar & Zoom invites!**



## September 12th:

- Improving Family Engagement in the NICU: The Colorado Experience  
**Susan Hwang, MD, MPH, PhD**
- Title TBD  
**Elizabeth Simonton, JD and Co-Founder/CEO,  
ICU Baby**

## November 14th:

- Title TBD  
**Rafi Mendelson, MD**
- Title TBD  
**Fabiana Bacchini, Executive Director,  
Canadian Premature Babies Foundation**



FAMILY-CENTERED CARE  
**TASKFORCE**

[www.fcctaskforce.org](http://www.fcctaskforce.org)