

FCC TASKFORCE SPOTLIGHT



ELIZABETH SIMONTON
CEO, ICU Baby
Parent of Benedict

Meet Elizabeth Simonton! She serves as both an Organizational Partner with and an Executive Council Family Partner for the Family-Centered Care Taskforce.

How were you personally activated to advocate for and support NICU families?

My son was in the NICU after I experienced, a high-risk pregnancy with polyhydramnios. His time in the NICU felt like the longest seconds of our lives, but in hindsight, it was a short stay compared to what so many others experience. While I was there, I saw many parents struggle. Their babies were very premature or had more complicated conditions than my son. Many of those parents struggled to be at their babies' bedside and had to deal with the roller coaster of the NICU. Seeing this, I knew I wanted to help NICU families.

Anything else you want our community to know?

This work is critical to ensure the wellbeing of NICU parents. We have seen FCC practices in motion and they change the entire ecosystem of the NICU for the better. ICU baby is so grateful to be meaningfully supporting NICU families here in South Florida.



How does your organization/company/hospital support NICU families?

ICU Baby unites NICU families and offers emotional, financial, and informational support so babies and their families can thrive in the NICU. We offer mentorship programs, peer-to-peer support, meals, packs with NICU supplies, informational programming, and financial support to cover transportation costs.

What are the greatest needs of families in maternal-infant health you observe through your work?

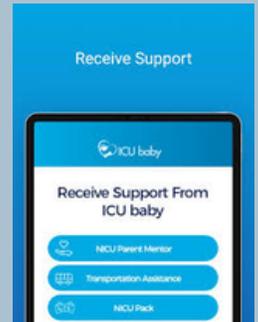
NICU parents have significant mental health issues, yet there is little support for them. If screenings are done, they are typically done early in the NICU stay and not again. As the baby's time in the NICU progresses, parents struggle more and have nowhere to turn.

What is your greatest wish in terms of the positive impact the FCC Taskforce members can make together in maternal-infant health?

My wish would be that parents would never have to leave their baby's NICU bedside and they would feel fully informed, empowered, and confident while there.

What insight or advice do you have for healthcare partners who want to implement/strengthen FCC practices in their hospital?

I think it is critical to engage former NICU parents in driving FCC practices. Those parents have the lived experience in that specific hospital and can guide, advise, and even serve as mentors to future NICU parents. Their insights are critical!



FAMILY-CENTERED CARE
TASKFORCE

What does being part of the FCC Taskforce mean to you personally?

The FCC Taskforce is really laying the groundwork for future care in the NICU across the nation. As the movement to build FCC grows, I am proud that I can share what ICU Baby has learned and the resources we have found helpful with other teams. I'm also excited to hear about others' best practices.

Healthcare partners are... HEROES.

NICU & bereaved parents are... BRAVE.

