

HOW CAN WE PRACTICALLY SUPPORT AND ENGAGE NICU FAMILIES?

Details of NICU family support programs already in action at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre

INTRODUCTION

Sunnybrook has a varied set of programs for NICU families. Initiatives often support families in multiple ways, such as:

- ★ Food
- ★ Financial
- ★ Emotional
- ★ Education
- ★ Own parent's milk
- ★ Transportation
- ★ Mental health
- ★ Welcoming atmosphere

Is there an idea you'd like to adapt for your NICU? We're glad to share our experience!

WELCOME BAGS



Families whose babies will be in the NICU at least five days receive a welcome bag with:

Information

- orientation booklet
- essentials checklist
- parking pass options
- Cuddler Program

Support

- hug scent cloths
- storybook
- journal and pen



Funded by generous donors & NICU budget.

FOOD WITHOUT BARRIERS



Free, self-serve food in NICU Family Lounge.

- Sandwiches, cheese & crackers, bananas, oranges, muffins, granola bars, cookies, oatmeal, applesauce, yogurt.
- Food sourced from hospital Food Services at cost.
- Funded by NICU operating budget.
- Replenished every weekday by staff.



PEER SUPPORT



- Peer emotional & breastfeeding support in-person, 5 days/week by NICU graduate parent staff.
- Online weekly support group and 1:1 phone or video chat with NICU grad parent staff & volunteers.
- Paid roles began as temporary and donor funded; now permanent, NICU-funded.



TRANSPORTATION SUPPORT



To families for whom cost is a barrier to being present in-person with their baby, we provide parking discount vouchers and/or gas or grocery gift cards to decrease parking fees or offset the cost of getting to the NICU.

- Need assessed and supports distributed by NICU social workers.
- Funded by NICU operating budget.

COUNSELLING



- Families with babies born under 30 weeks gestational age receive an automatic referral to social work.
- DAN Women & Babies Program social workers (team of 4) on-site 5 days/week.
- Canadian Premature Babies Foundation Parent Care free counselling discussed with and information given to families.

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QUESTIONS? CHAT WITH US OR GET IN TOUCH!

