

# SMALL WINS FOR SMALL BABIES: A PROGRAM CELEBRATING BABIES' SUCCESSES HELPS PARENTS COPE WITH NEONATAL HOSPITALIZATION

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## BACKGROUND

NICU hospitalizations can be long and complex. In investigations, parents report clinicians are often pessimistic and rarely focus on what is going well.

## OBJECTIVE

To describe the creation and implementation of a project to celebrate babies' achievements and progress throughout the hospital course and examine parental perspectives.

## METHODS

- Suggested by and developed with parent partners (feasibility and pilot phase lasted one year)
- Inclusion: For babies likely to be hospitalized > 1 month, parental consent obtained after 1 week of life.
- Weekly certificates: physical certificates attached on a garland in the baby's room & text messages sent)
- Parental perspectives were investigated



Celebrating weekly accomplishments of babies hospitalized in neonatology with text messages and certificates helps parents cope with the NICU hospitalization

## PARENTAL QUOTES

*"It helps to keep the light at the end of the tunnel in sight!"*

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*"(it helps us) remain optimistic and above all patient"*

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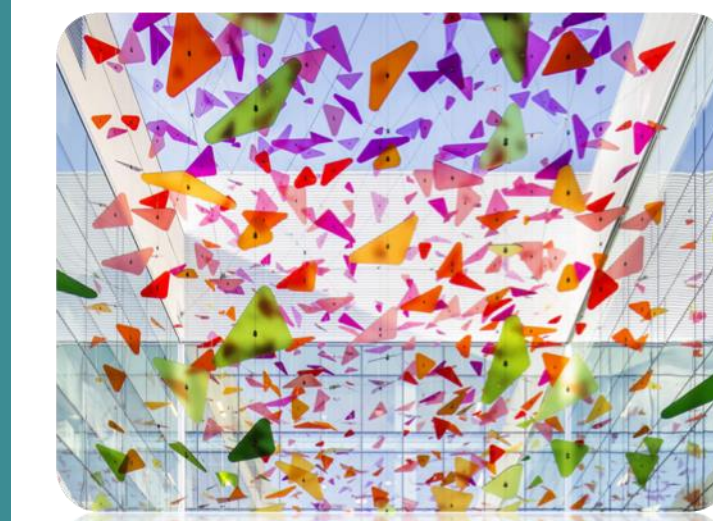
*"Very positive experience, I want to thank all of your staff for all the work they do for families"*

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*"Honestly you guys are amazing. I love getting these messages it makes my day!"*

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*"Taking care of yourself, being positive and trusting doctors"*



## PARTICIPANTS

- 136 participating families over 6 months (99% consent rate)/ 128 received certificates (8 babies died)
- Average length of stay: 99 days
- Average certificates/baby: 12 (3-40)
- Some certificates were "generic" while others had to be created for some sicker babies (60% created at the beginning of the project – 25% after creating the new "generic" certificates)

## RESULTS

- Total certificates sent: 1182
- Overall evaluation: 9.4/10
- 85% of parents report it has helped them cope with the hospitalization.
- 83% report the weekly frequency is appropriate, the rest would want more
- Suggestions have been implemented during the project:
  - Removing some certificates
  - adding some certificates
  - adding dates on certificates
  - creating more certificates celebrating the bond between fathers and babies.
- No adverse impacts were reported

It is possible to instill healthy optimism in the NICU and celebrate babies' achievements