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National Association of Neonatal Nurses



In the NICU, Parents Are Essential Caregivers Too

A Consensus Statement on Family Presence in Neonatal Intensive Care Units

Washington D.C. January 12

The emergence of SARS-CoV-2 has understandably altered the way we deliver neonatal care. As we navigate this global pandemic, neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) staff are challenged not just with the demands of providing expert critical care to fragile infants and families, but with doing so under extraordinary risks and ever-changing conditions.

The Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN), The National Perinatal Association (NPA) and National Association of Neonatal Nurses (NANN) recognize the unique challenges facing healthcare providers in reducing the risks of COVID-19 transmission while encouraging parent presence and engagement in care. We also re-affirm our commitment to delivering family-integrated care that promotes parent-infant attachment and supports parents' roles as primary caregivers for their infants. We believe NICU parents are "essential caregivers."

Incorporating the collective, multidisciplinary perspectives and expertise of our organizations, we've created this Consensus Statement. In it, we put forward recommendations for traumainformed policies and practices that support family-integrated care in our Neonatal Intensive Parenting Units (NIPUs). We advocate for parents' primary role in providing essential care to their hospitalized infant. We encourage parental presence knowing its benefits for providers, families, and infants.

We recognize that our understanding of this virus changes rapidly and we acknowledge that hospital policies must change in response to unique concerns and regional developments. As we look for timely, interdisciplinary responses and solutions, our organizations advocate for the incorporation of trauma-informed care for all interactions during the pandemic and for the recognition of parents as essential caregivers for their hospitalized newborns.

Respectfully,

Boquell Darf APAN, CNS

Gail A. Bagwell, DNP, APRN, CNS President, NANN

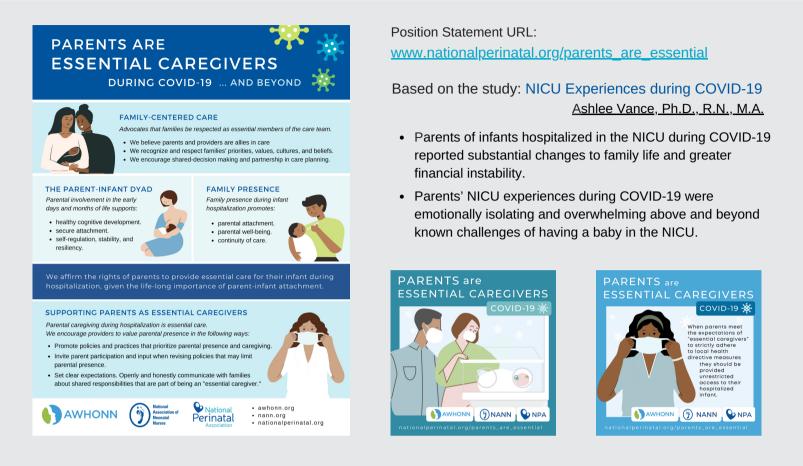
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www.nationalperinatal.org/COVID-19 www.nann.org/about/position-statements awhonn.org/news-advocacy-and-publications/awhonn-position-statements

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The Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN) www.awhonn.org is a 501(c)3 nonprofit membership organization. Our mission is to empower and support nurses caring for women, newborns, and their families through research, education, and advocacy.

The National Association of Neonatal Nurses' (NANN) <u>www.nann.org</u> is the professional voice and home of neonatal nurses, nurse practitioners, and clinical nurse specialists. NANN supports the advancement of the neonatal nursing profession through opportunities for neonatal nurses to influence care for neonates and their families, collaborate with leaders and peers in their field, and gain clinical knowledge to improve daily practice.

The National Perinatal Association <u>www.nationalperinatal.org</u> brings together healthcare providers, parents & caregivers, educators, and service providers - all driven by their desire to support and advocate for at-risk babies and families. Our shared purpose is to give voice to the needs of pregnant people, infants, their families, and their healthcare providers so that collectively we can have the greatest positive impact on perinatal care.

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