

March of Dimes NICU Family Support®
***Close to Me* Implementation Guidance for the participating sites of the**
Perinatal Quality Collaborative of North Carolina



HISTORY

March of Dimes NICU Family Support® *Close to Me* is a comprehensive set of awareness and educational activities, tools and products designed to increase the onset and frequency of Kangaroo Care (KC) and other positive holding experiences in Newborn Intensive Care Units (NICUs). *Close to Me* (CTM) was developed in response to results from the NICU Family Support (NFS) national evaluation published in the *Journal of Perinatology* (“Impact of a Family-Centered Care Initiative on NICU Care, Staff and Families,” *Journal of Perinatology*, 2007, Cooper LG, Gooding JS, Gallagher J, Sternesky L, Ledsky R, Berns SD.). Some of the evaluation’s key findings include:

- NFS has a positive impact on the stress level, comfort level and parenting confidence of parents in the NICU
- Family respondents find the most comforting activity they can be offered in the NICU is to hold or KC their baby (99%)
- Staff rated KC/holding very highly in terms of facilitating bonding and reducing stress, but only 8% stated that they routinely perform KC in their NICUs

It was the concerning gap between families’ desire for KC and staff implementation of it that prompted the March of Dimes to design a KC module. In 2008, the March of Dimes launched the CTM pilot in three March of Dimes NICU Family Support sites: Kansas, Washington D.C. and Alabama. Through the pilot, the three sites developed KC interventions, materials and learning

activities; obtained feedback from families and staff; and refined the approaches, messages and materials. By the end of 2009 the *Close to Me* module was complete and ready to be implemented and evaluated in additional sites. In 2010 the March of Dimes began to evaluate the effectiveness of the *Close to Me* module in three March of Dimes NICU Family Support sites: Connecticut, Oregon and Delaware; the results of which will be reported by in the end of 2011.

The goal in conducting the *Close to Me* module evaluation is to assess the module's effectiveness in:

- (1) increasing the date of onset after birth (first KC experience of a family);
- (2) increasing the frequency of Kangaroo Care experiences in the NICU and
- (3) Demonstrating overall perceptions of impact on families of these changes.

CLOSE TO ME MODULE USED IN MARCH OF DIMES NICU FAMILY SUPPORT SITES

The *Close to Me* module rolled out to the network of seventy-six NICU Family Support sites nationwide in 2009. The following components comprise the complete module:

- Access to the *Close to Me* **Parent Education** PowerPoint Slide Set; a 30-minute education session for families in the NICU, to be led by a NICU staff member
- Access to the *Close to Me* **Staff Education** PowerPoint Slide Set; a 30-minute education session for NICU staff members, to be led by a NICU educator
- *Close to Me* **Awareness Fliers** to distribute to families in the NICU, raising parent awareness to the benefits of skin-to-skin holding for baby and parent
- *Ask Me About Skin-to-Skin* **Awareness Pins** for staff who complete the staff education session; to act as a visual reminder for parents to ask about holding their baby skin-to-skin
- *Close to Me* **training webinar** for the NICU educator by a March of Dimes national staff member
- Plush **Kangaroo** Beanie Babies, to be distributed to parents upon completion of the *Close to Me* Parent Education session. Each Kangaroo is tagged with the *Close to Me* message: "Love your baby through touch, holding and kangaroo care (skin-to-skin). It's good for your baby. It's good for you."
- **Hand Mirrors**, to be used by families when holding their baby skin-to-skin. Each hand mirror has a sticker on the back with the *Close to Me* message: "Love your baby through touch, holding and kangaroo care (skin-to-skin). It's good for your baby. It's good for you."
- **Standing Mirror**, to be used by families for hands-free viewing of their baby when holding skin-to-skin. This rolling mirror is on casters for easy movement within the NICU and has a rotating mirror face that is easily locked into position for optimum viewing. The *Close to Me* message sticker is placed on the back on the mirror
- Laminated **Staff Education Poster** from National Association of Neonatal Nurses (NANN) on the Transfer Procedure for Ventilated Kangaroo Care

- **Privacy Screen** with NICU Family Support embroidered logo patch enabling parents to hold their baby skin-to-skin discreetly. Sites where private rooms or privacy curtains are not available find the privacy screens to be every useful
- Comfortable, reclining **Zero Degree Chairs** provide a foot-rest and arm support, are easily wiped down, are light enough to be moved bedside to bedside and can be folded up and hung on the wall in the NICU. Sites where budget or space restricts the purchase of more costly, kangaroo care-specific chairs find the zero degree chairs a good option

CLOSE TO ME MODULE IN NORTH CAROLINA COLLABORATIVE

March of Dimes will partner with participating hospitals within the North Carolina Collaborative by offering for free the following components of the *Close to Me* module:

- Access to the *Close to Me* **Parent Education** PowerPoint Slide Set; a 30-minute education session for families in the NICU, to be led by a NICU staff member
- Access to the *Close to Me* **Staff Education** PowerPoint Slide Set; a 30-minute education session for NICU staff members, to be led by a NICU educator
- 100 *Close to Me* **Awareness Fliers** to distribute to families in the NICU, raising awareness to the benefits of skin-to-skin holding for baby and parent
- 25 *Ask Me About Skin-to-Skin* **Awareness Pins** for staff who complete the staff education session; to act as a visual reminder for parents to ask about holding their baby skin-to-skin
- *Close to Me* **training webinar** by a March of Dimes national staff member for participating sites within the Collaborative. Webinar content will include information on the two Education PowerPoint Slide Sets, how to promote the education sessions to families, how to encourage staff to empower families to hold skin-to-skin, suggested activities for families, and a time for questions and answers.

CLOSE TO ME STAFF PINS



CLOSE TO ME AWARENESS FLIER



Touching or holding a baby skin-to-skin ("kangaroo care") in the NICU is one of the most comforting things many parents can do for their child, and no equipment can substitute for it.

It's good for a baby's health because it often can:

- Keep a baby warm
- Stabilize a baby's heart rate
- Help a baby gain weight
- Reduce discomfort a baby may feel



"I will never forget the first time my newborn was placed on my chest. She curled right up into me, and in that moment, I finally felt like a mother. Nothing else existed but my daughter and me."

— Denise R.



For information on pregnancy and newborn care, visit marchofdimes.com