

# FiCare Home: A home visitor and peer-to-peer support program to improve the health of families experiencing the challenges of preterm birth post-NICU discharge



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## Background

The negative psychosocial effects of the NICU can persist in parents >2 years post birth. Long-term sequelae, including respiratory illnesses, neurocognitive and behavioral delays have been shown to cause both financial and psychosocial impact on quality of life of infants and their families. Providing support pre and post-NICU discharge is an important part of the holistic approach to care.

## Objective

To ascertain if providing multifaceted hospital and community-based support and education at discharge helps mitigate the risk of long-term adverse outcomes in the infant and family

## Methods

This feasibility study is a prospective double cohort study comparing the health of families of infants <34 weeks gestation who receive standard discharge care to the health of those in the FiCare Home Model of discharge care. Families in this model will be provided specific education pre-discharge and community resources including peer to peer support post discharge.

## Summary of Findings

- The recruitment is ongoing. Proposed outcome measures:
- To evaluate the level of contact that families have with Public Health Services (Healthy Babies Healthy Children), veteran parents and peer support groups.
  - To determine the feasibility of conducting the FiCare Home program
  - To assess the impact on family function, parental stress, infant feeding status and hospital re-admission rate.
  - Assessing parental participation in pre-discharge and post discharge programs.

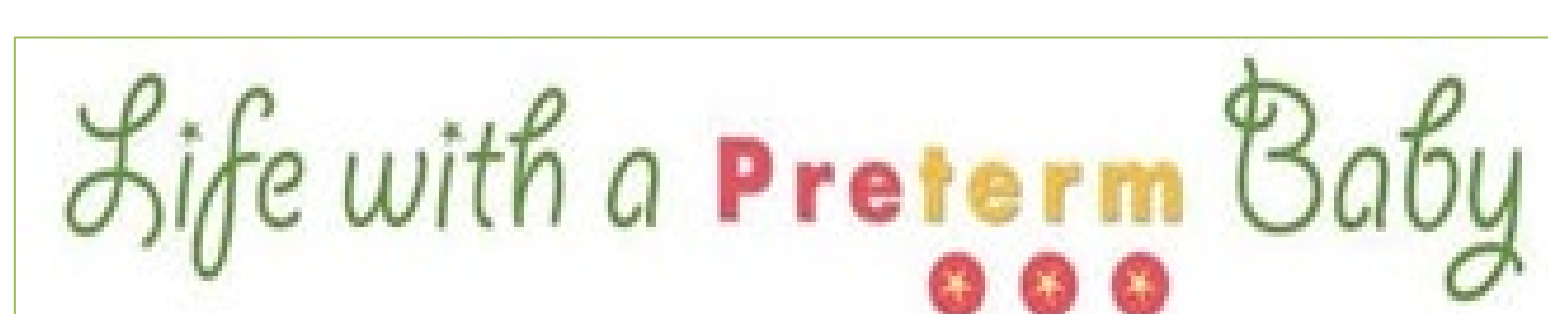
## Implications for the Patient Population

Availability of continued community-based support for NICU families is important to gain an understanding of the impact of peer support. Research has shown women at high risk for postpartum depression after a term pregnancy, showed benefits of peer support in reducing their scores on depression scales. Parent mental health ultimately affects the infant and entire family unit.

## References

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## In Partnership with



## Method

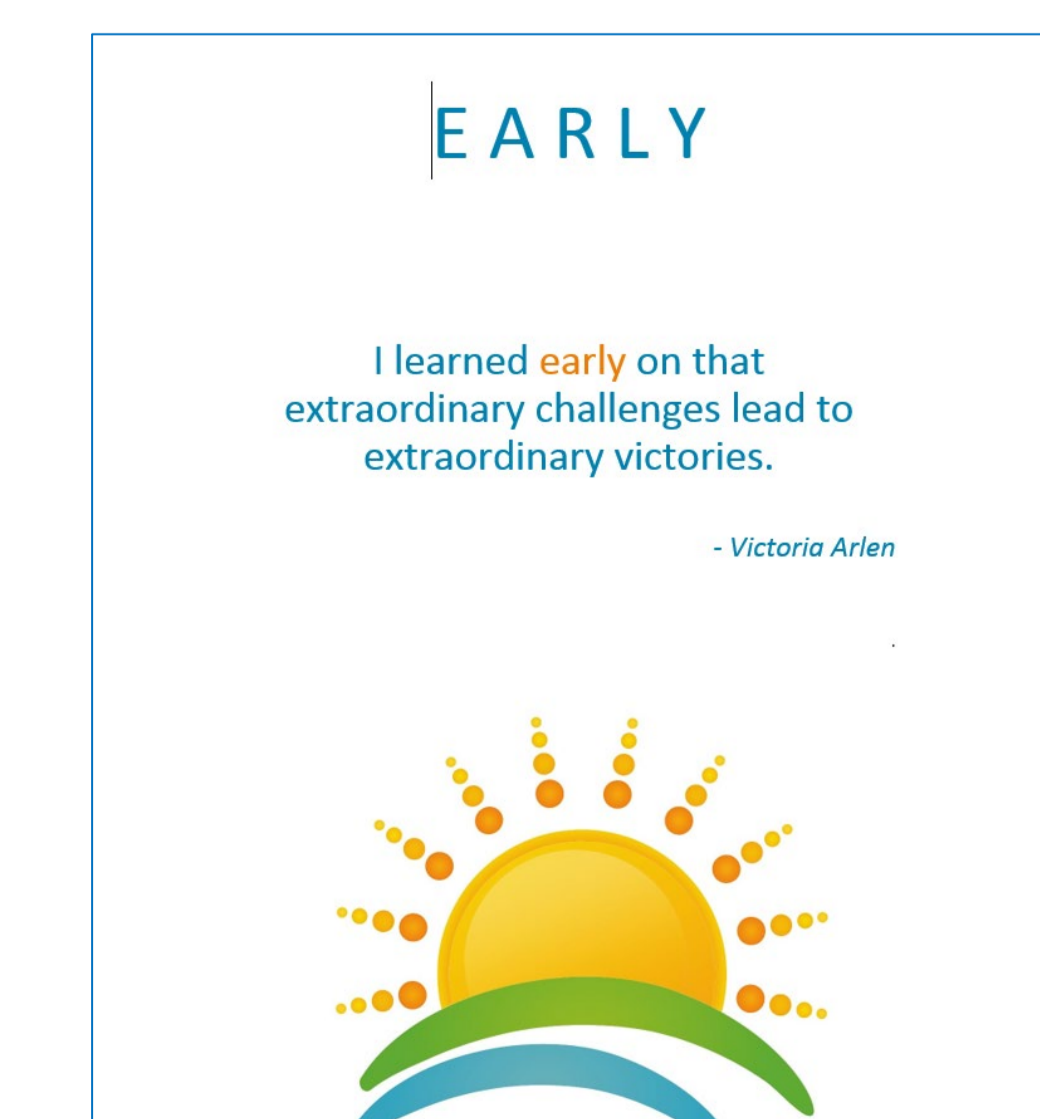
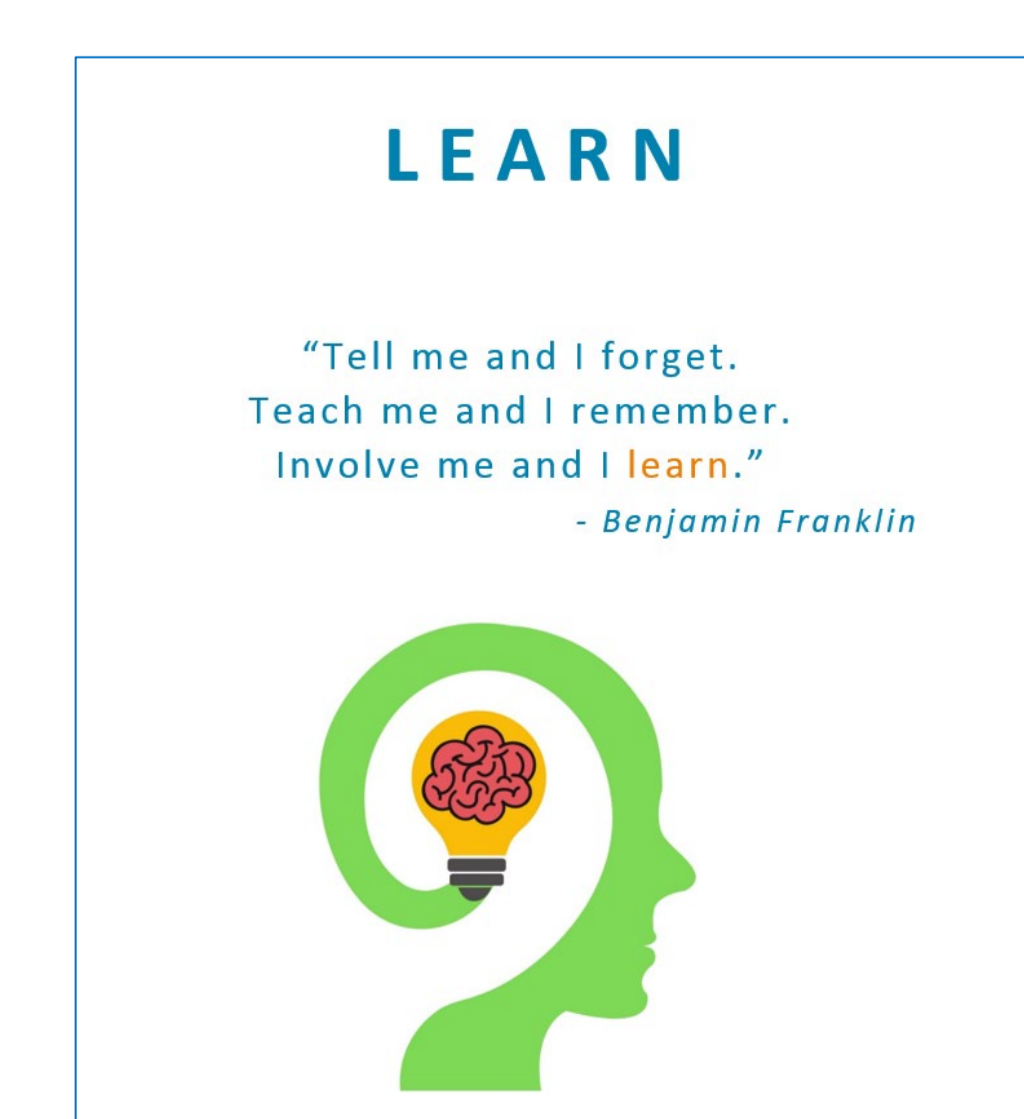
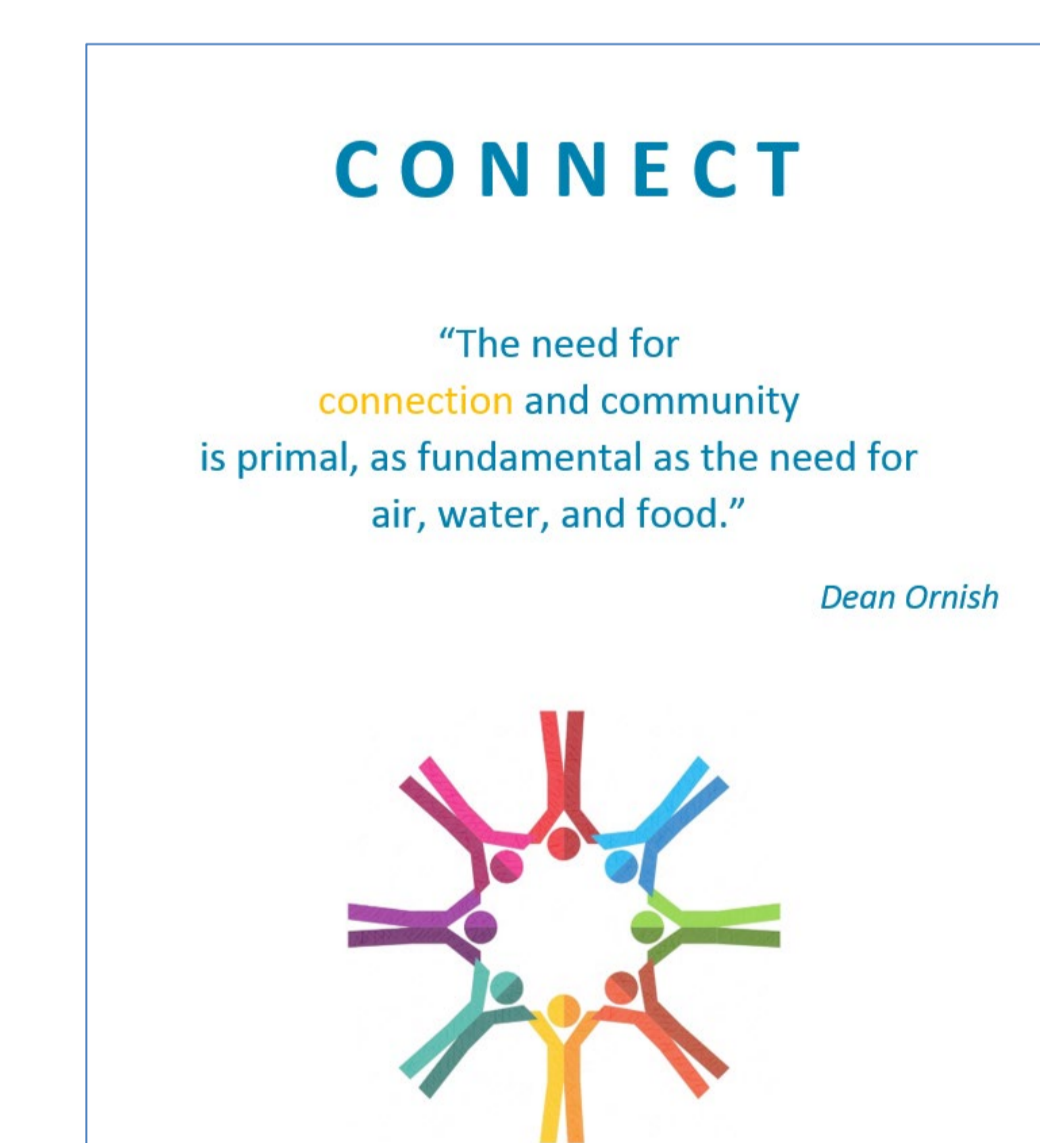
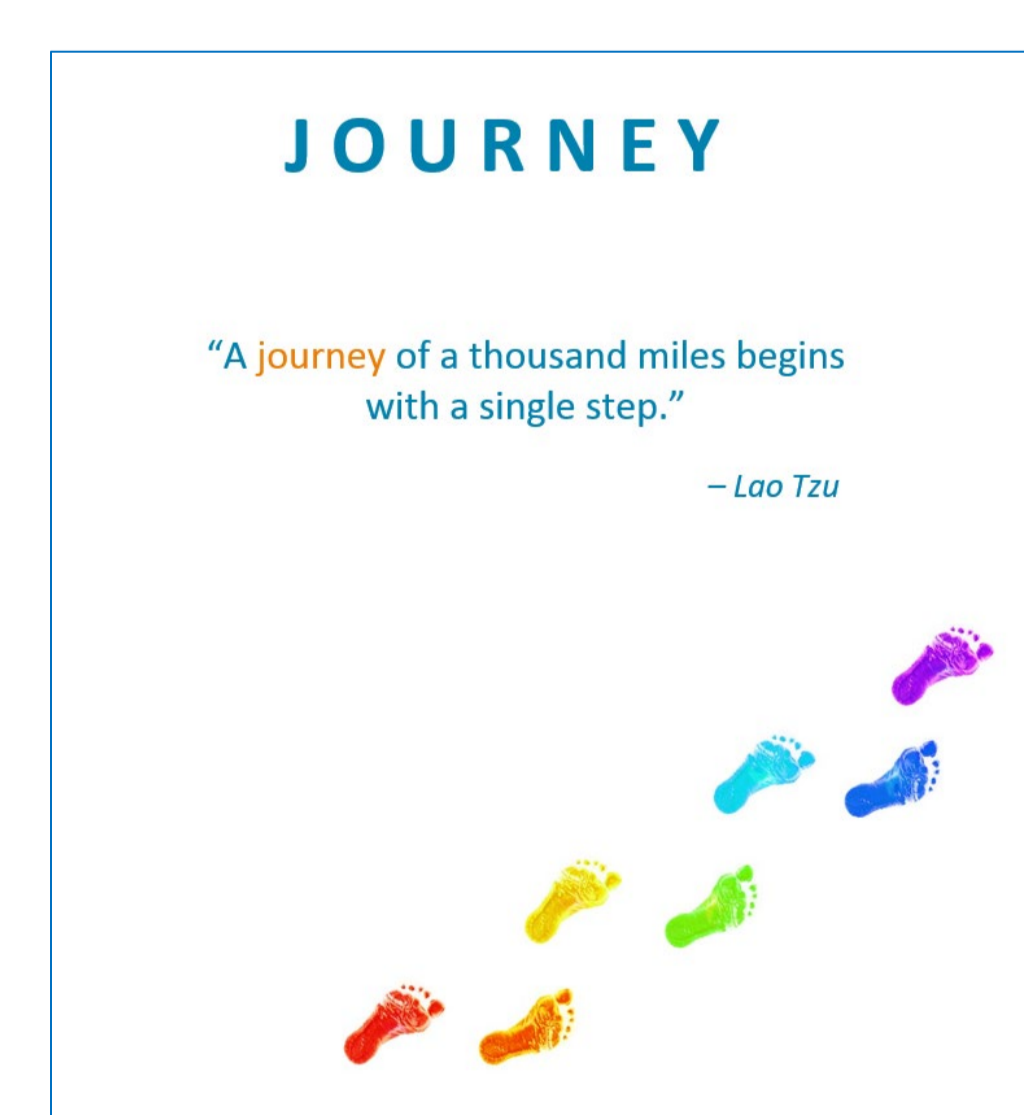
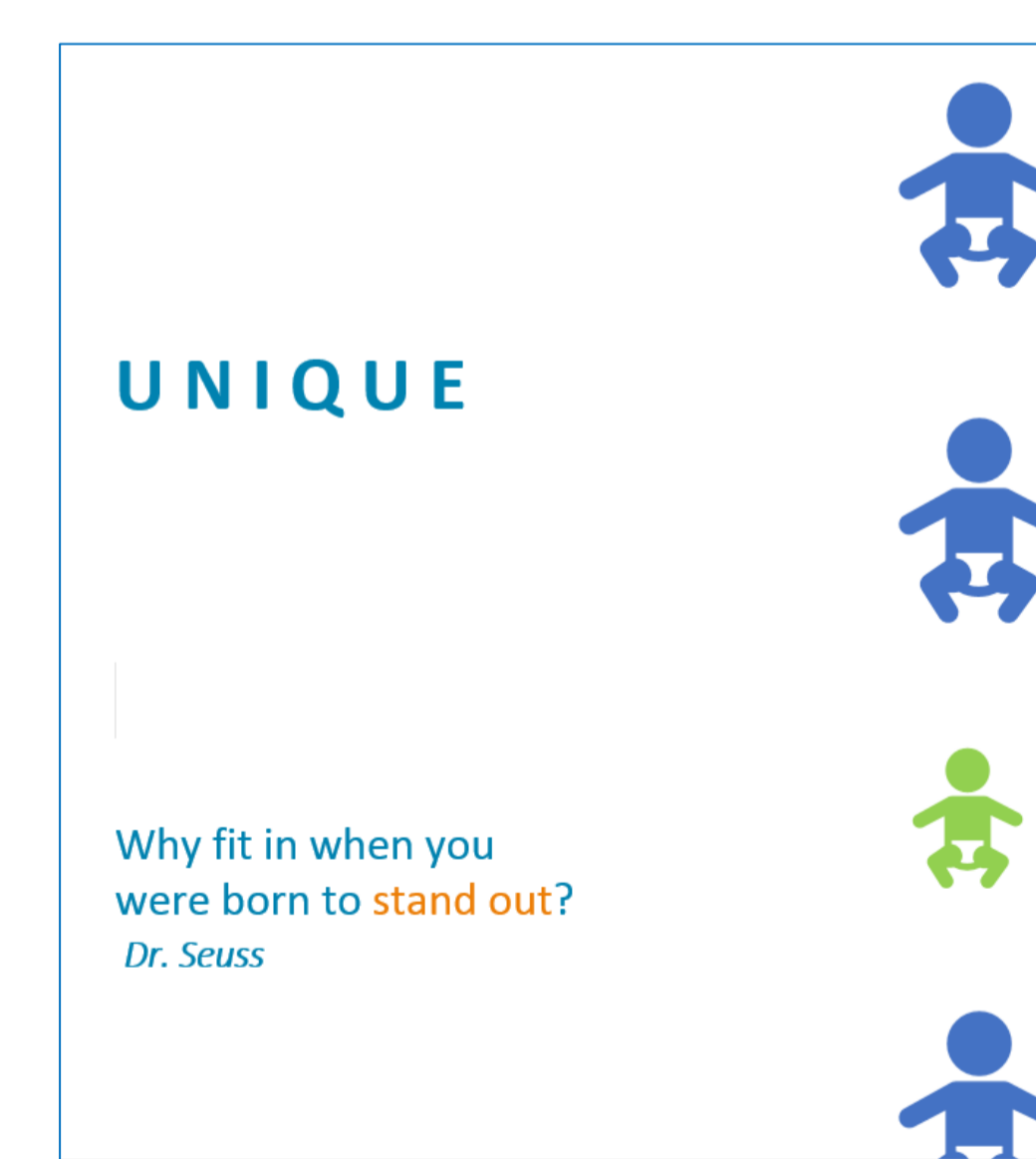
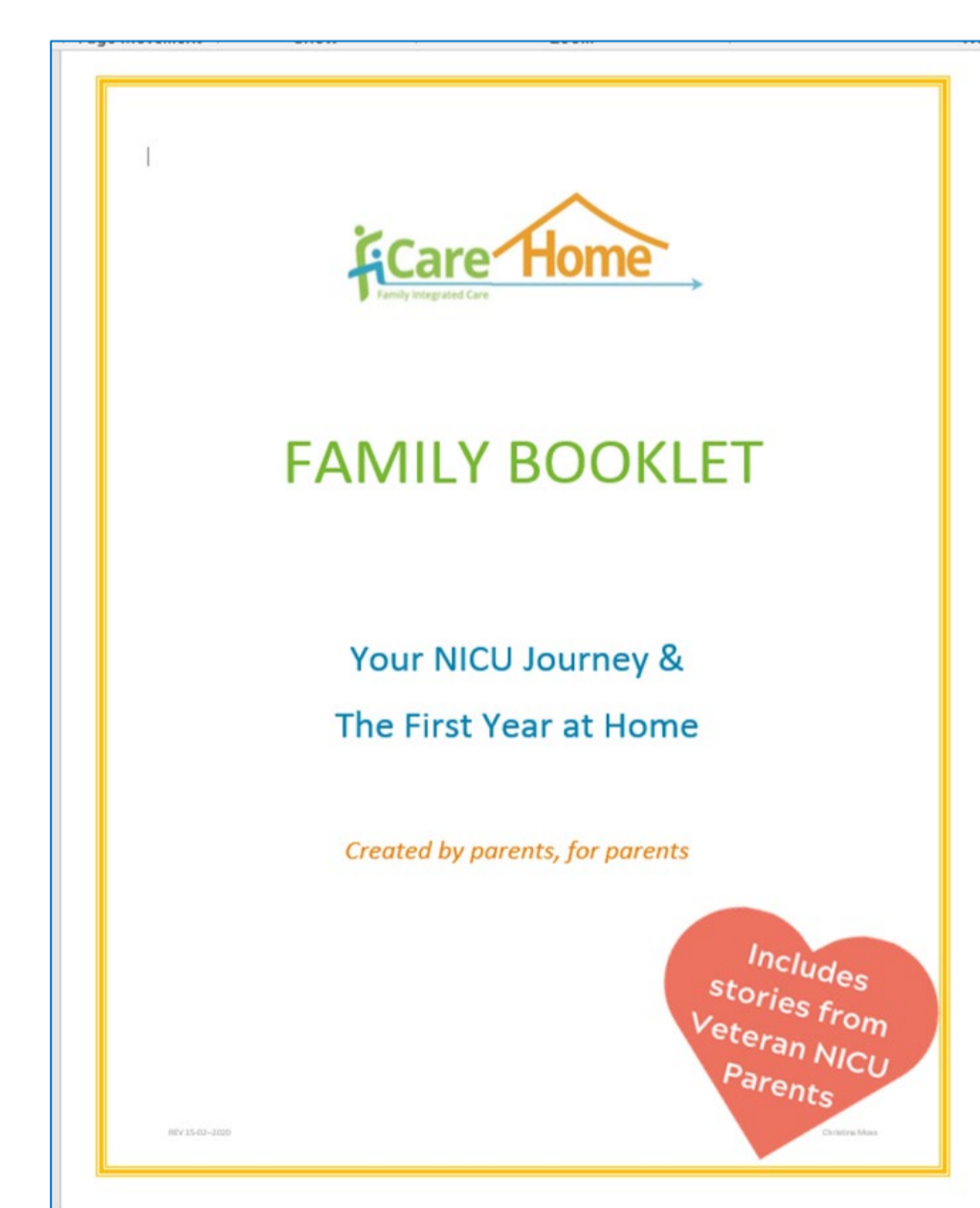
- For parents:
- Providing Parent Education groups before discharge to facilitate the transition from the NICU to home
  - Providing Community Peer to peer support groups
  - Connecting with a veteran parent
  - Training of Public Health Nurses to better understand challenges of the preterm infant



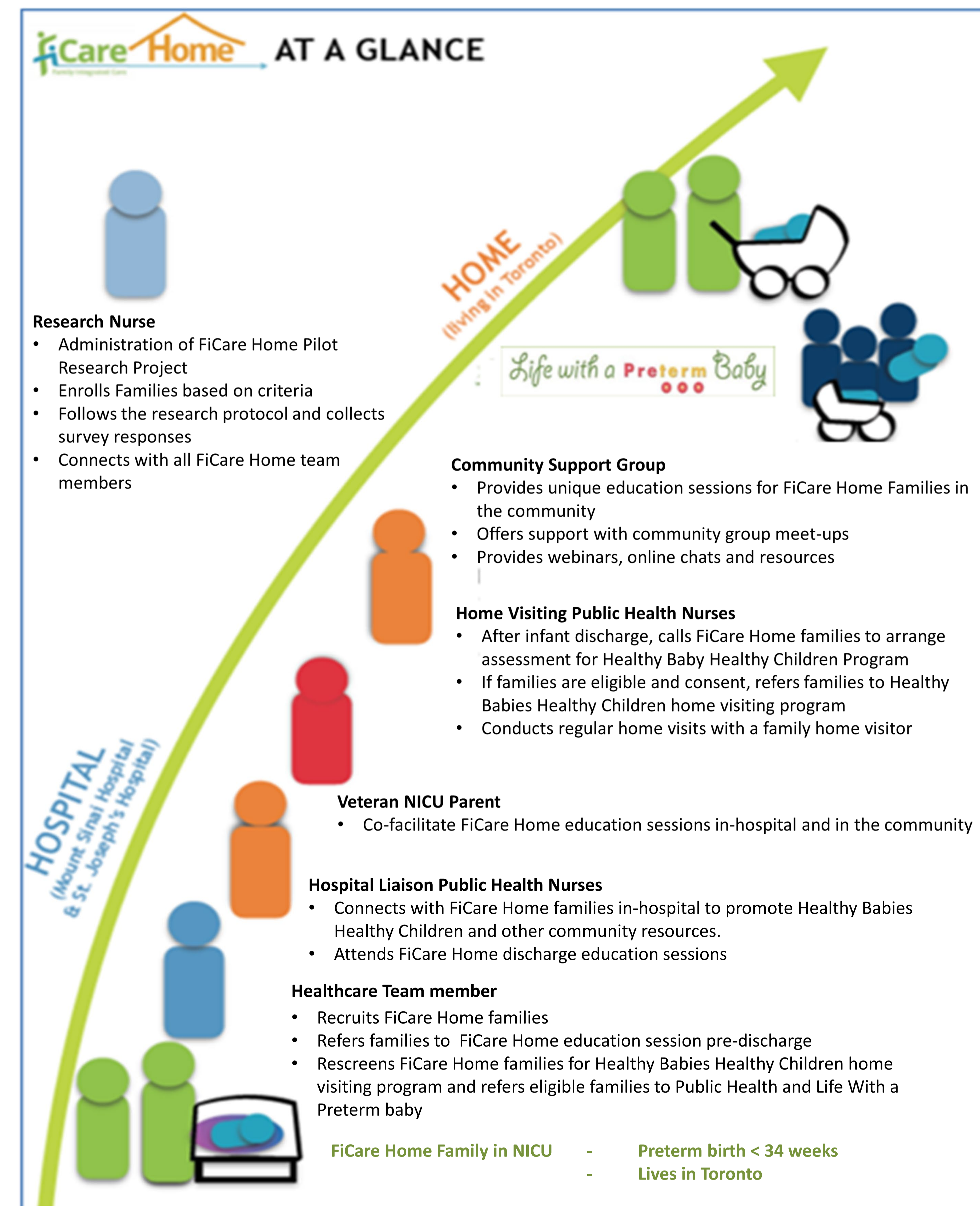
- For staff:
- Training of Public Health Nurses and Family Home Visitors
  - Training of NICU Nurses

## The Innovation: Development of a toolkit

### The Parent Binder- Parent Resources specific to the premature infant



## Implementation



## The Goal of FiCare Home

The FiCare Home Study has the potential to empower NICU parents with confidence to care and advocate for their infant following discharge. Giving them a network of support, through parent groups and peer to peer support we will be able to tailor effective supports by evaluating stress and improving outcomes. This will further assist us to develop a program which meets specific NICU parent needs.

