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DAY ONE: FRIDAY, OCTOBER 13TH

AGENDA

8:00 am

Registration

9:00 am - 10:00 am

Welcome Remarks

Keira Sorrells + Gigi Khonyongwa-Fernandez

10:00 am - 11:15 am

Inclusion on Purpose: Creating a Culture of Belonging in Your Organization

Ruchika Tulshyan

Few would disagree that inclusion is both the right thing to do and good for business, but there continues to be a gap between intention and action. If we believe in the morality and the profitability of including people of diverse and underestimated backgrounds in the workplace, why don't we do it?

11:15 am - 11:45 am

Break - Exhibit Hall

sponsored by



11:45 am - 1:00 pm

Family-Centered Care: Overcoming Barriers, a Collaborative Approach

Malathi Balasundaram + Nicole Nyberg + Meegan Snyder

A Family-Centered Care (FCC) model in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) has been shown to reduce the length of NICU hospital stays for infants, improve neurobehavioral outcomes in preterm infants and increase the likelihood of breastfeeding at discharge. Research shows that families of infants admitted to an FCC unit experience less stress than those admitted to a standard care unit. Unfortunately, the FCC care model is lacking in many NICUs, and family integration is not routinely part of the standard of care. This has been further exacerbated by fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic. This panel will explore the existing barriers to FCC and review current work to overcome those barriers. Attendees will also learn ways in which they can incorporate and promote FCC in their own organizations and hospitals with which they work.

1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

Lunch & New Member Introductions

2:00 pm - 3:15 pm

The Power of Attachment: Exploring Infant-Parent Bonding in the NICU

Tiffany Gladolis

This session will take a deep dive into the critical importance of healthy attachment in infant development. Discover the challenges that NICU experiences can pose to bonding, infant mental health and parental mental health and explore the vital role that NICU Parent Leaders and Family Support Advocates play in supporting healthy bonding opportunities.

3:15 pm - 4:30 pm

We Are Not Our Labels

Lisa Grubbs

Becoming a NICU Parent Leader is not a career path chosen during your educational journey, it is a path chosen after a traumatic experience around pregnancy, birth and/or the loss of a baby. We are drawn to this work and to one another out of a shared experience with the most precious part of life - parenthood. We continue on as we grow and develop into change-makers, advocates, and leaders. This engaging and interactive session will explore the many labels we have carried throughout our lives and how shedding those labels leads us to a place of freedom and empowerment as we pursue excellence in service to NICU families everywhere.

6:30 pm - 9:30 pm

Networking Reception & Awards Dinner

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AGENDA

DAY TWO: SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14TH

8:00 am

Registration

9:00 am - 9:45 am

Day 2 Opening Remarks

Keira Sorrells + Gigi Khonyongwa-Fernandez

9:45 am - 11:45 am

Navigating Compassion Fatigue & Creating Resilience Through Parallel Process

Jennifer Middleton + Beatriz Vides

Don't miss this essential workshop designed specifically for NICU Parent Leaders! We'll equip you to navigate the challenges of compassion fatigue and leadership in high-stress environments. Learn the power of the parallel process for both personal and team growth, while deepening your understanding of trauma and the polyvagal nervous system. This session will empower you to lead more effectively, support parents empathetically, and foster a culture of resilience and well-being in your organization. This workshop will equip NICU Parent Leaders with the knowledge and tools to identify, understand, and address trauma, leveraging this awareness to build a culture of safety and resilience within their organizations. Participants will learn about the parallel process and how to utilize the parallel process in leadership to simultaneously foster personal growth and team development, transforming challenges into opportunities for resilience and healing.

11:45 am - 12:45 pm

Lunch

12:45 pm - 1:30 pm

Big Ideas Sessions - Helping the Helpers

Ali Dunn + Keira Sorrells + Rachelle DeOliveira

Most people have heard the famous advice of Fred Rogers, to look for the helpers when dealing with a tragedy. But what if it is the helpers that need help? Stress, vicarious trauma, and compassion fatigue are all occupational hazards for NICU Parent Leaders. Helping people going through intense levels of trauma is rewarding, but also quite emotional. Add to this a 3-year-long pandemic that altered the healthcare landscape and it's easy to see why resources and morale are low. In this series of two TedX-style talks, you will learn some best practices for supporting staff and volunteers and how to work towards aligning your energy with your intention.

1:30 pm - 3:30 pm

Courageous Communications: Intentionally Creating Diverse & Inclusive Spaces

Gigi Khonyongwa-Fernandez + Teast Leverett + Erika Goyer

Join us in the thought-provoking workshop module, where you'll gain greater awareness of how your messages impact others, understand the potential unintentional harm caused by your actions in the community, and identify your blind spots through assessment tools. Through engaging facilitation, we'll delve into marketing and communications practices to foster inclusivity. By applying your newfound insights, you'll have the power to transform the space in which you work and make a positive impact on diversity and inclusion. By the end of this module, attendees will be equipped with the necessary tools and knowledge to make transformative changes, ensuring their work truly embraces and celebrates diversity in all its forms.

3:45 pm - 4:00 pm

Short Break

4:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Advocacy for Policy Change: Red & Blue States Aligning for Families

Sophia Rosenblatt + Brittney Crystal + Lisa Grubbs + Bekah Bischoff

No matter how you serve, as a NICU Parent Leader you are a voice and an advocate for NICU and bereaved families, representing their needs and best interests in an array of settings. This panel discussion will highlight the advocacy work of The Iris Fund and Saul's Light Foundation to pass a stillbirth tax credit in their respective states. We'll share a framework for attendees to tailor for policy change in their area of interest.

6:00 pm

Optional Group Dinner or Dinner on Your Own

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DAY THREE: SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15TH

9:00 am - 9:15 am

Day 3 Preview

9:15 am - 11:45 am

Defining a Scope of Practice for NICU Parent Leaders

As we explored on Day 1 of the NICU Parent Leadership Summit - the path to NICU Parent Leadership is one we choose to pursue after the life-altering experience of a traumatic pregnancy, birth, NICU stay, and/or loss of a child. There is no degree or certification (yet) allowing us to establish our credibility and professionalism as leaders within the healthcare system. In the current NICU and healthcare climate, where Family Centered and Integrated Care are severely lacking and inequities abound, our roles as advocates and leaders are all the more important. As we step into the responsibility to define the core competencies we need to succeed as leaders we must first define the Scope of Practice for NICU Parent Leaders. This collaborative session will allow each of you to participate in charting the path for the future of our profession.

11:45 am - 12:00 pm

Closing Remarks

AGENDA