



NICU BABY'S *Bill of Rights*

1

The Right to *Advocacy*

My parents are my voice and my family are my best advocates.

My parents know me well. They are my voice and my best advocates. They need to be knowledgeable about my progress, medical needs, and prognosis, so they celebrate my achievements and support me when things get challenging.

2

The Right to *My Parents' Care*

Welcome my family and include them in everything we do.

My parents are my essential caregivers. In order to care for me, they need lots of opportunities to learn. Ensure that hospital policies and protocols, including hours & rounding, are as inclusive and expansive as possible. Then be patient with them.

3

The Right to *Bond With My Family*

Create opportunities for my family and me to be together and bond.

Bonding is crucial for my healthy growth and development. Support my parents so that we can practice skin-to-skin care as soon and as often as possible. Encourage them to read, sing, and talk to me.

4

The Right to *Neuroprotective Care*

Protect my developing mind and senses.

Protect me from things that startle, stress, or overwhelm me. Support things that calm me. Ensure I get as much sleep as possible. My brain is developing for the first time - and faster than it ever will again. The way I'm cared for today will affect me as I continue to grow & develop.

5

The Right to *Be Nourished*

Support our feeding decisions and help us develop our skills.

Encourage my parents to feed me at the breast or by bottle, whichever way works for us both. Support our feeding goals and make sure my parents know all the nutrition options available to meet my needs.

6

The Right to *Personhood*

Respect me as the amazing, unique individual that I am.

Use my name. Talk to me before touching me. If one of my siblings passes away, ask my family how we want to talk about and acknowledge them.

7

The Right to *Confident and Competent Care Giving*

Support my parents and caregivers.

The NICU may be a traumatic place for my parents. Ensure that they receive tender loving care, information, education, and as many resources as possible to help inform them about my unique needs, development, diagnoses, and more.

8

The Right to *Family-Centered Care*

Teach my family how to care for me.

Help me feel that I am a part of my own family. Teach my parents, grandparents, and siblings how to read my cues, how to care for me, and how to meet my needs. Encourage them to participate in or perform my daily care activities, such as bathing and diaper changes.

9

The Right to *Healthy and Supported Parents*

Care for our mental health and wellbeing.

My parents may be experiencing a range of new and challenging emotions. Be patient, listen to them, and lend your support. Share information with my family about resources such as counseling, support groups, & peer-to-peer programs, which can help reduce the impact of perinatal mood and anxiety disorders (PMADs).

10

The Right to *Inclusion and Belonging*

Celebrate what makes us special and unique.

Celebrate our diversity. Honor what makes us unique. Ensure that my parents, grandparents, siblings, and friends feel accepted and welcomed in the NICU, and respected and valued in all forms of engagement and communication.

