

Supporting

NICU

Families

Through The Trauma
Informed Lens



TINY LITTLE TREASURES

About Us

Founded by Kristin Ayuste after the birth of her twin boys who spent about a month in the NICU.

We are an LA-based nonprofit organization that helps families navigate the NICU journey.



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Life in the NICU

The Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) can be a challenging environment for families.

Challenges Include:

- Emotional stress
- Separation from baby
- Medical Uncertainties
- Financial Concerns



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Trauma - Informed Care

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A framework that recognizes the impact of trauma

Key principles:

- Safety
- Trustworthiness & transparency
- Collaboration & mutuality
- Empowerment, voice, & choice
- Cultural, historical, & gender issues

Trauma - Informed Care

This approach is crucial in the NICU because families may face significant stress and emotional challenges while their newborns receive critical care.



A trauma-informed approach helps mitigate these feelings by providing a supportive and understanding environment.

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Common Traumatic Events in NICU

Common traumatic experiences:

- Premature birth
- Medical complications
- Separation from infant
- Loss of control

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Signs Of Trauma

Emotional Signs:

- Heightened Fear
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Sadness
- Anger
- Irritability

Behavioral Signs:

- Avoidance of Care Activities
- Hypervigilance
- Difficulty Concentrating

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Signs Of Trauma, cont.

Communication Signs:

- Needing constant reassurance
- Expressing guilt or shame

Physical Signs:

- Somatic complaints (headache, stomach ache, etc.)



Responding to Trauma



- Creating a supportive environment
- Clear communication and transparency
- Involving parents in care decisions
- Providing emotional support and resources
- Culturally sensitive care practices

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Effective Communication Strategies



- Active listening
- Use clear and simple language
- Body language/ body positioning
- Provide regular updates
- Encourage questions
- Use visual aids
- Validate feelings

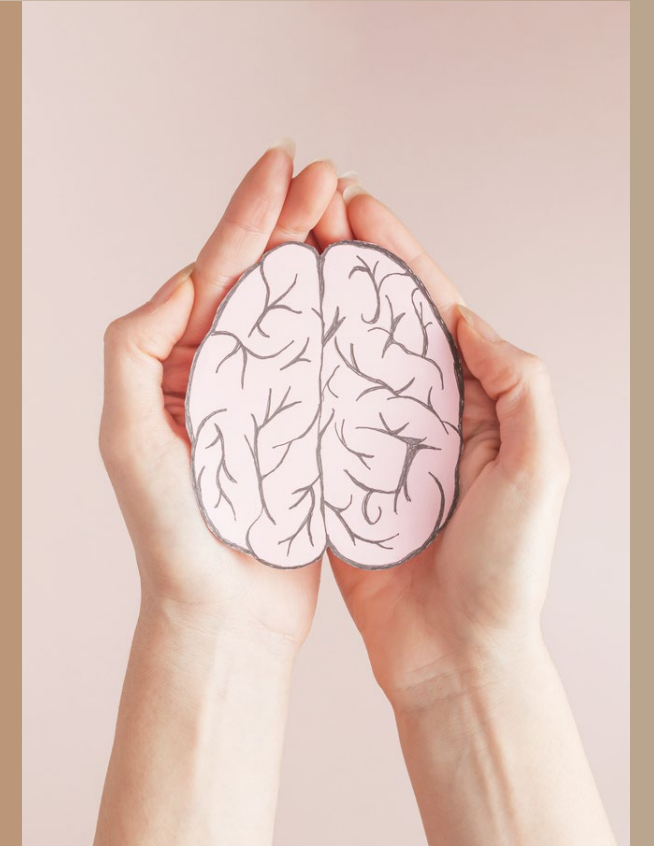
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Benefits of Trauma- Informed Care

By fostering a positive work environment where staff feel empowered and supported, TIC can alleviate some of the stressors that contribute to staff burnout.

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Let's Stay In Touch



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