

[Times listed in CST]

For CEU/PDU credit see the CEU FAQ sheet on pg. 8

10:45am – 12:30pm Welcome

Kelli Kelley

Founder & CEO of Hand to Hold

Jessica Thornton MS, RDN, CSP, CNSC, CLC

Senior Manager, Medical Education Nutrition, Mead Johnson Nutrition

Hand to Hold NICU Hero Award

This award recognizes a NICU professional who provides exemplary Family-Centered Care. NICU Heroes encourage and support the NICU parent's role as a valued member of the care team.

When All Becomes New: A Doctor's Story of Love, Life, and Loss

Grief & Loss

Benjamin Rattray, DO, MBA, CPE, FAAP

Keynote speaker

1:00pm – 2:00pm Cultural Considerations when Caring for NICU Families

Communication

Cynthia Shogreen, LMHC, BCBA; Diana Marrero; Shirin Khanna; Christine Tester, MHPS, PSS

1:00pm – 2:00pm Parent Panel – A Dad's Perspective

Mental Health

Taneisha Stamps, MPH – moderator; Steve Gurvis; Eugene Hinesley; Jim Pryde, MA; Brian Taylor

2:15pm – 3:15pm Discharge Planning: Involving NICU Parents

Communication

Craig Garfield, MD, MAAP; Cristal Grogan

3:30pm – 5:00pm Why Improving Mental Health Care is an Ethical Imperative

Health Equity

Sarah Wakefield, MD

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10:45am – 12:30pm Welcome

Katrina Moline

Executive Director of Hand to Hold

Matt Barresi

Vice President & General Manager NA Diapers at Huggies®

Hand to Hold NICU Hero Team Award

This award recognizes a NICU unit that provides exemplary Family-Centered Care. NICU Heroes encourage and support the NICU parent's role as a valued member of the care team.

Delivering Hope Through Words: The Power of Effective Communication in the NICU

Communication

Mia Malcolm, BS, CDFT

Keynote speaker

1:00pm – 2:00pm Confronting Grief: Myths and What Matters

Grief and Loss

J.S. Park

2:15pm – 3:15pm From NICU Professional to NICU Mom: Bridging Expertise for Family-Centered Care

Mental Health

Ayesha Youngblood, LPC – moderator; Liv Hinton, Jessie Barnes, MSN, RN, RNC-NIC, NPD-BC, C-ELBW, Trauma Informed Professional; Lisa Davenport, DNP, RN, RNC-NIC; Britteny Thrift, BSN, RN, CPN

3:30pm – 5:00pm Family-Centered Care (FCC) Taskforce: The Importance of an FCC Approach in All NICUs

Mental Health

Malathi Balasundaram, MD, FAAP; Keira Sorrells

[Times listed in CST]

10:45am – 11:00am



Kelli Kelley, Founder & CEO of Hand to Hold

Kelli founded Hand to Hold in 2010 after struggling for years with difficulties surrounding the premature births of both of her children. She now invests her time and talents to raise awareness about the high incidence of anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder among NICU parents, and advocating for hospital- and community-based programs to ensure better outcomes for babies and families.



Jessica Thornton MS, RDN, CSP, CNSC, CLC

Jessica is a dietitian and a neonatal/pediatric nutrition fellowship graduate from the IU School of medicine. Her primary role is to act as a conduit of scientific information between Reckitt/Mead Johnson Nutrition and healthcare professionals. Jessica provides scientific support and clinical application of company products, feeding protocol guidelines, and research methods. She strives to pull people together into highly effective teams. Her strong nutrition knowledge drives her to ask insightful questions, identify the most important part of a problem or issue, and see things from a different clinical perspective.



Hand to Hold NICU Hero Award

Individual Award: Dr. Sue Hall, a retired neonatologist and former NICU medical director, began her career as a social worker. She wrote *For the Love of Babies*, a book about NICU families' experiences. Dr. Hall is a past board member of the National Perinatal Association, and co-led the collaborative that developed standards for NICU psychosocial support. She spearheaded development of My NICU Network & My Perinatal Network, online platforms providing continuing education to perinatal and neonatal healthcare workers about supporting parents. She is beloved by all in the NICU community for ensuring the care of the family is as important as care for the baby!

Keynote Speaker



Benjamin Rattray, DO, MBA, CPE, FAAP

Dr. Rattray is a neonatologist and the medical director of Neonatal Intensive Care at the Cone Health Women's and Children's Center in Greensboro, North Carolina. He is the author of *When All Becomes New: A Doctor's Stories of Life, Love, and Loss*, a book of patient stories about the intersection of empathy, faith, and the sacred privilege of drawing near to families in times of crisis.

1:00pm – 2:00pm



Cynthia Shogreen, LMHC, BCBA

Cynthia serves Hand to Hold families as a Virtual Family Support Specialist and a Bilingual Mental Health Therapist. She is responsible for supporting NICU families, with a goal to reduce the negative impact of a NICU stay, and ensure the best outcome for the entire family. She earned her master's degree in clinical mental health counseling and behavior analysis in Florida. Cynthia strives to provide excellent service and support, a sense of community, and a safe space for NICU families.



Shirin Khanna

Shirin was born & raised in India & moved to the U.S. to pursue her master's degree, and now resides in Canada. She is a manager in the cybersecurity practice at Boston Consulting Group. At 23 weeks pregnant & vacationing with her husband, their son Ishaan was born unexpectedly. They spent 4 transformative months in Austin as Ishaan received care in the hospital, deepening their bond as a family. Shirin's journey has been filled with diverse experiences, and she looks forward to all the adventures that lie ahead.



Diana Marrero

Diana is a Dominican American, wife, and 3-time NICU mom. Her oldest NICU baby is 15, and her 2 pandemic babies are now 3 and 2. As an Afro-Latina she understands the cultural dynamics of being both Hispanic & Black. As a Mental Health Peer Specialist/Bilingual Virtual Family Support Specialist at Hand to Hold, she provides vital emotional and psycho-social support to NICU families. Her diverse background enriches her facilitation of the Black NICU & Spanish-speaking NICU support groups. She is pursuing her Master's degree in psychology with a focus on applied behavior analysis.



Christine Tester, MHPS, PSS

Christine is the Hospital Partner Program Manager at Hand to Hold, overseeing the team of Family Support Specialists in hospitals across Texas. She is a certified Mental Health Peer Specialist & Peer Support Supervisor, and has completed additional training with PSI & The Seleni Institute on maternal mental health, perinatal mood and anxiety disorders, & perinatal loss. She is currently working on her Trauma Informed Professional certification.

[Times listed in CST]

1:00pm – 2:00pm



Taneisha Stamps, MPH

Taneisha Stamps is the Virtual Support Program Manager at Hand to Hold and became a NICU mom 4 years ago after her son was born at 28 weeks. After the three-month NICU stay and her own PMAD journey and healing from her NICU experience, she strives to make a lasting impact in the lives of all NICU families by providing them with the virtual support they need.



Steve Gurvis, NICU Parent

Steve Gurvis lives and runs his own business in Chicago. He and his wife share 3 children – 2 living and 1 in Heaven. After the loss of their son Liam in 2016 who lived for four days in the NICU, they have embraced a "new normal," and much of their time is now about honoring Liam's memory and sharing their NICU and infant-loss journey whenever possible. He is passionate about mentoring other dads who have experienced the loss of a child or are currently navigating the NICU.



Eugene Hinesley

I have been a peer mentor with Hand to Hold for more than 10 years. My first son was born at 23 weeks and died that same day. My daughter was born 4 years later at 34 weeks and spent 3 weeks in the NICU. In 2009, I adopted my grandson Caden, who had his own NICU stay due to a septic hip. I am honored that I have had the opportunity to mentor so many men over the years, and I hope I can continue to help even more in the future. I truly believe Hand to Hold is doing God's work for the many men and women who need their help.



Jim Pryde, MA, NICU Parent

Jim's NICU experience began in 2008 when his son Ian was born at 32 weeks. Ian's 38-day NICU stay left Jim deeply impacted by the stress and trauma of the NICU environment, affecting his mental health for years. Motivated by his experience, Jim began volunteering with Children's Mercy through its NICU Patient Family Advisory Council. After discovering Hand to Hold, he connected with other NICU parents, and inspired by their stories, became a Peer Mentor.



Brian Taylor, NICU Parent

Brian is father to a vibrant, thriving, strong, and brave son, Zaiden, who was born 30 weeks 6 days. He and his wife navigated the rollercoaster of the NICU for 63 days. They built a community with their NICU neighbors in a trauma-bonding way. He is honored to be here to share his experience in order to inform and enlighten.

[Times listed in CST]

2:15pm – 3:15pm

Craig Garfield, MD, MAAP



Dr. Craig Garfield, a professor of pediatrics and neonatal hospitalist, has cared for vulnerable infants and their families for more than 25 years. He co-created NICU2Home, an evidence-based app that supports parents from NICU admission through discharge and beyond. Dr. Garfield has earned his MD, a BA in English Literature, and a Masters in the Art of Public Policy. He is also a recent Aspen Institute Ascend Fellow. His work centers on the belief that "Children thrive when families thrive."

Cristal Grogan



Cristal Grogan has worked closely with the NICU and special needs community for 12+ years. She is mother to Seth, born at 29 weeks, who is a surgical NEC survivor and lives with complex medical needs, including autism and cerebral palsy. Cristal emphasizes the importance of parent advocacy and education, and highlights the need for support and resources for families, especially those with children facing complex medical and mental health challenges.

3:30pm – 5:00pm

Sarah Wakefield, MD



Dr. Wakefield is a board-certified adult, child/adolescent, and forensic psychiatrist with training and expertise in reproductive psychiatry. She's completed fellowships in child and adolescent psychiatry, as well as forensic psychiatry. Currently, she is Chair of the Department of Psychiatry at Texas Tech University School of Medicine, focusing on psychiatric evaluations and treatment planning for diverse populations. Dr. Wakefield is also involved in the Texas Child Mental Health Care Consortium and Texas Perinatal Psychiatry Access Network, dedicated to improving mental health care delivery and education.



93% of NICU Managers agree Hand to Hold's support resources allow them to spend more time focusing on the care of the baby.

100% of NICU Managers agree Hand to Hold helps provide a better understanding of how to support NICU parents.

[Times listed in CST]

10:45am – 11:00am



Katrina Moline, Executive Director of Hand to Hold

Katrina became Hand to Hold's Executive Director in 2024 after joining as Operations Director in 2018. She holds a Bachelor's of Science in Communications from Texas State University. Katrina first connected with Hand to Hold in 2009 as a peer mentee following the birth of her son at 24 weeks, later becoming a peer mentor herself. Before Hand to Hold, she spent 14 years as an Account Manager at Screen Solutions, Inc. Now, she focuses her talents on a mission close to her heart, advocating for NICU families and supporting better outcomes for babies and their families.

Matt Barresi



Matt joined KC in April 2023 as US Diapers Mission Leader, transitioning to General Manager NA Diapers in September 2023. With 32 years of leadership experience across CPG and private equity-owned businesses, Matt previously served as Business Unit President and later Chief Commercial Officer at Leaf Home. He spent 26 years at Procter & Gamble, including 12 years in VP roles. Outside work, Matt has been President of an early intervention program that teaches children to listen and speak with the support of cochlear implants and an Advisor to the University of Cincinnati Neurology Department.

Hand to Hold NICU Hero Team Award



Team Award: El Camino Health is a level III NICU in Silicon Valley, California. Stanford neonatologists and ECH NICU staff cares for approximately 500 NICU admissions annually and provides exceptional care in a family-centered environment. One of the NICU moms, Ashley Omwando, says, "Family-Centered Care is just not an academic concept in the El Camino Health NICU; it's actively practiced with compassion, expertise, and care. They go above and beyond to take care of the whole family because when the family thrives, the babies have the best opportunity to thrive."

Keynote Speaker



Mia Malcolm, BS, CDFT

Mia began her healthcare career in pharmacy, but pivoted to advocacy after becoming aware of disparities in minoritized communities. Her journey into pediatrics began when her son Gavin was born at 24 weeks, spending 268 days in the NICU. A NICU mom and EDIB expert, Mia co-authored research on racism in neonatal care. She serves on various committees focused on equity, diversity, and inclusion, passionately advocating for the voices of underserved families. Mia believes that acknowledgment without action is irresponsible, and she fights for equity in healthcare.

1:00pm – 2:00pm

J.S. Park



J.S. Park is a hospital chaplain, author, and online educator. He has served for 9 years as an interfaith chaplain at a level one trauma center, providing grief counseling, attending to deaths and traumas, and supporting end-of-life care. He also served as a chaplain at a large nonprofit for the homeless. J.S. holds an MDiv and a BA in Psychology. He is the author of *As Long as You Need: Permission to Grieve*.

[Times listed in CST]

2:15pm – 3:15pm



Ayesha Youngblood, LPC

Ayesha is a mental health therapist at Hand to Hold. She enjoys providing mental health support to NICU families and families experiencing fertility concerns. Ayesha is a certified trauma professional and earned her Bachelor's degree from Towson University, where she majored in Psychology and minored in Public Health. She also graduated from the University of Central Florida, where she earned her Master's degree in Clinical Psychology.



Liv Hinton

Liv is Hand to Hold's Mental Health Therapist Intern, working alongside the other therapists to support NICU individuals and families. Liv's friends' experiences & her own dedication to mental health have deepened her understanding & commitment to supporting her clients' diverse needs. She currently attends Baylor University as a Clinical Master of Social Work candidate. While completing her studies, Liv is simultaneously part of an Integrated Behavioral Health MSW Certificate Program provided by the Health Resources and Services Administration. Her passion revolves around trauma-informed care and behavioral health.



Jessi Barnes, MSN, RN, RNC-NIC, NPD-BC, C-ELBW

Trauma Informed Professional

Jessi is a clinical nurse educator with a passion for neonatal care. Her practice includes high-risk perinatal care, NICU, and nursing informatics. Her passion for trauma-informed family integrated care drives her work. After her daughter's birth at 27 weeks 5 days, she shares her family's NICU experiences to positively impact others. Jessi holds a Master of Science in nursing education and certifications in high-risk neonatal nursing, nursing professional development, and care of the extremely low birth weight infant. She is also a graduate of the Trauma Informed Professional certificate program.



Lisa Davenport, DNP, RN, RNC-NIC

Lisa is a NICU nurse of 17 years and a former NICU mom. She has served as nursing faculty for 13 years & worked 9 years as a bedside NICU nurse, and currently is Director of the level 4 NICU and clinical practice at Texas Children's Hospital. She earned her Bachelor's in Biomedical Science from Texas A&M, a Master's in Nursing with a Maternity Focus from UT Austin, and a Doctorate of Nursing Practice Nurse Executive from UTHealth Houston. Lisa and her husband Troy have 3 children. Lisa has a heart for NICU families, the patients, and has experienced her own NICU-mom experience with her daughter McKenzie, who was born at 35 weeks and suffered from GBS meningitis.



Britteny Thrift, BSN, RN, CPN

Britteny, a dedicated NICU nurse, has always had a passion for both caregiving and writing. Her journey took a turn when her premature twins spent time in the NICU. She authored *Cradles of Courage: Adventures in the NICU* to offer solace and support to NICU families. The book is meant to be read to NICU babies, and as they grow, show them what they overcame. A percentage of proceeds will be donated Hand to Hold.

[Times listed in CST]

3:30pm – 5:00pm



Malathi Balasundaram, MD, FAAP

Dr. Balasundaram is a clinical professor at Stanford University and a staff neonatologist at El Camino Health, a level III NICU. She is the El Camino Health NICU FCC chair, and actively leads different subcommittees to improve NICU quality goals. Her passion is to provide safe and quality neonatal care in a family-integrated NICU, not only in her local NICU but also to other NICUs. She formed the NICU Family-Centered Care taskforce by recruiting passionate trainees, neonatologists, staff, & family partners in February 2022.



Keira Sorrells

Keira, Founder and Executive Director of the NICU Parent Network, has dedicated more than a decade to elevating NICU parent leaders. After giving birth to triplets at 25 weeks 5 days and losing one daughter at 14 months old, Keira is committed to ensuring NICU and bereaved families' voices are integral to maternal-infant health. Passionate about collaboration, she leads initiatives to inform product development, research, and care standards. As Family Partner Co-Chair of the FCC Taskforce, she advocates for family-centered care at all levels of healthcare.

What Attendees Loved Last Year

As a mother of a preemie, neonatal nurse, manager of Women & Children's, and Nurse Consultant to PAC/LAC I am thrilled and thankful to Hand to Hold for orchestrating this conference. Thank you and Congratulations on a job well done!

Hearing the parents perspective and experience puts a different light on NICU stays.

Thank you all for sharing your stories. As a NICU RN this is very impactful.



CONTINUING EDUCATION INFORMATION

INTENDED AUDIENCE:

RN-CE, LCSW/LMFT: CEUs provided by PAC/LAC
Child Life Specialist: PDUs provided by ACLP

CREDITS:

Continuing education credits available for intended audiences. For specific questions contact events@handtohold.org.

COST:

The event is free for parents. There is a \$40-50 fee for NICU professionals. All fees are non-refundable.

ACCOMMODATIONS:

To request accommodations for special needs, please email events@handtohold.org.

GRIEVANCES:

To obtain the grievance policy or report a grievance, please email events@handtohold.org.

CERTIFICATES:

Credits are awarded per day. To obtain your certificate, you must be present for all sessions each day.

RN-CE, LCSW/LMFT: Once the conference is over, you will take the evaluation survey. Your Certificate will be emailed to you.

Child Life Specialist: After the conference, your certificate will be emailed to you.

Please note: If you do not log in to the conference sessions with the link you receive (e.g., you watch a session with your coworker), we will not be able to award you credit. The CEU/PDU providers require sign-in proof from every participant.

CREDENTIALING SERVICES:

For LCSW/LMFT: PAC/LAC is approved by the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists to sponsor continuing education for LCSW and LMFT. PAC/LAC maintains responsibility for this program/course and its content. This course is approved for 10.0 LCSW and 10.0 LMFT continuing education credits. PAC/LAC's provider number is 128542.

For Nurses: The Perinatal Advisory Council-Leadership, Advocacy, and Consultation (PAC/LAC) is an approved provider by the California Board of Registered Nursing. This course is approved for 12.0 contact hours. PAC/LAC's provider number is CEP 5862. Licensee must retain this certificate for a period of four years.

This activity is jointly provided by Partners for Advancing Clinical Education and Hand to Hold and is approved for AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™, ANCC, APA, and ASWB credits. Full accreditation information available on our [registration page](#).

This program is provided in partnership with PAC/LAC & ACLP.





FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

For CEUs/PDUs

WHAT ACCREDITATION COMPANY COVERS MY FIELD?

PAC/LAC: RN-CE, LCSW/LMFT

ACLP: Child Life Specialist (CCLP)

HOW MANY CREDITS ARE AVAILABLE?

PAC-LAC: RN-CE – 6 CEUs per day. LCSW/LMFT – 5 CEUs per day.

ACLP: CCLS – 5 credits per day.

DO I HAVE TO ATTEND ALL THE SESSIONS TO GET CREDIT?

PAC-LAC: You must attend an entire day to receive credits

ACLP: You must attend an entire day to receive credits

WHERE DO I GET MY EVALUATION TOOL TO GET MY CEUs?

PAC-LAC: [Click here to find your form.](#) You have until Friday, Nov. 22 at 5 pm CST to complete it.

ACLP: Attendees will receive the certificate via email

WHOM SHOULD I CONTACT WITH QUESTIONS ABOUT MY CREDITS AFTER THE CONFERENCE?

PAC-LAC: info@paclac.org

ACLP: jenny@handtohold.org

WHAT IF I REGISTERED AS A PARENT AND WANT CEUs?

Please re-register as a professional so your licensing data is collected to support the CEU approval process.

WILL I BE ABLE TO WATCH THE CONFERENCE RECORDING TO EARN CREDITS?

No, only live sessions will be able to earn credits.

WHEN WILL I RECEIVE MY CERTIFICATE?

We anticipate you receiving your certificate within two months of attending the conference.

For more questions on CEUs/PDUs contact jenny@handtohold.org