

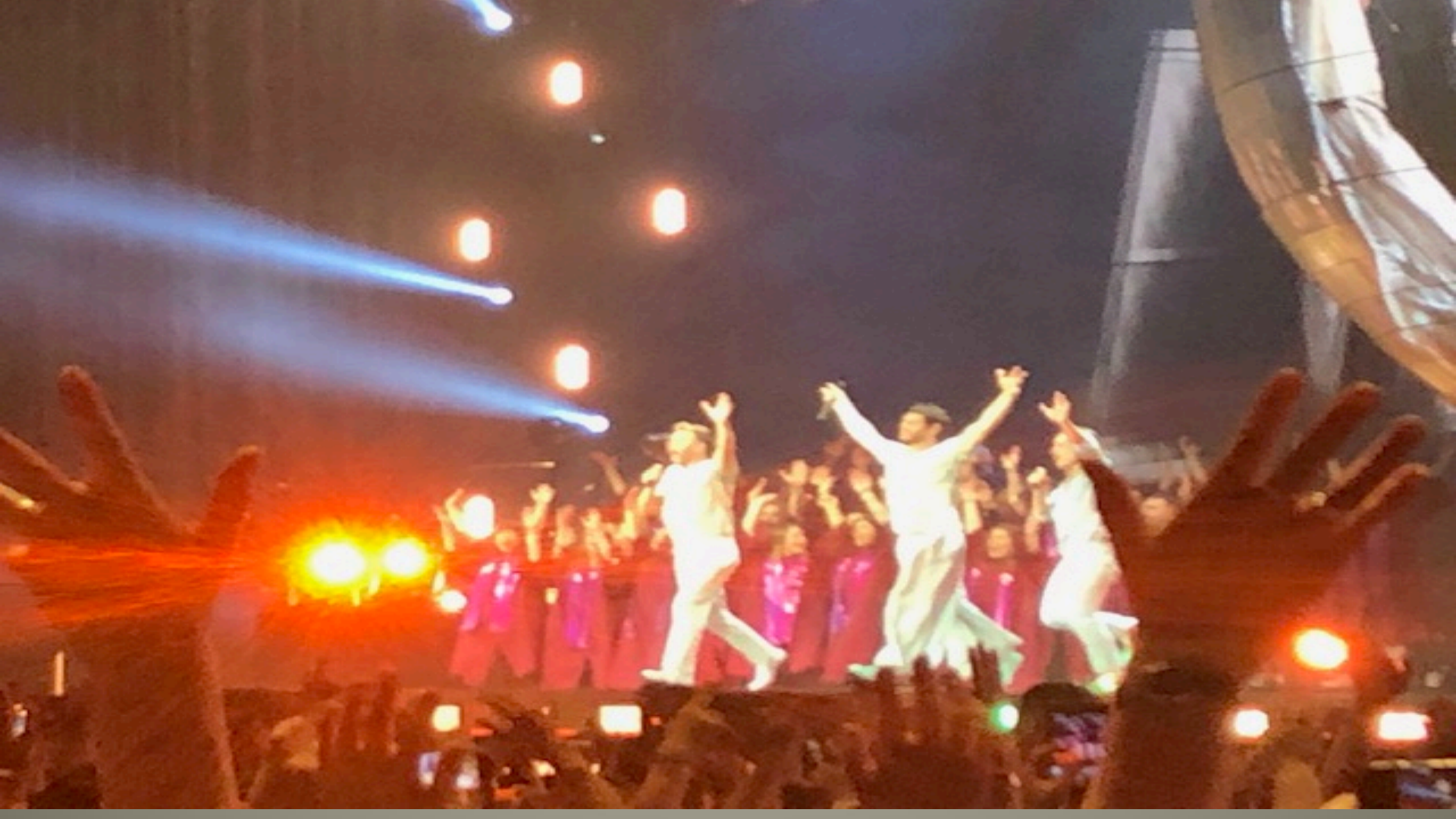
# Promoting attachment for medically fragile babies

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@nicdoc72







# the best start in life for your child

HSC Public Health  
Agency

HSC Western Health  
and Social Care Trust



Five ways to support the development of your  
baby's emotional health and wellbeing.

Infants come into the world completely dependent  
on a primary care giver



The relationship with this primary care giver will become the  
template for all other relationships throughout life and the  
growth and development of the infant brain is also dependent  
on this relationship



All human infants are born with a 'premature' brain which will  
develop rapidly throughout the first three years in life

- Information about the 'dance'
- Touch
- Turntaking
- Eye contact
- Rhymicity
- Cues/signals
- Modelling
- Identifying interaction interrupters



# What can impact on optimal brain development?

- Stressful or chaotic environments
- Insufficient interaction with primary caregiver/s
- Lack of opportunities to explore, play and learn
- Inconsistent or inattentive care

## Cortical folding



25 week



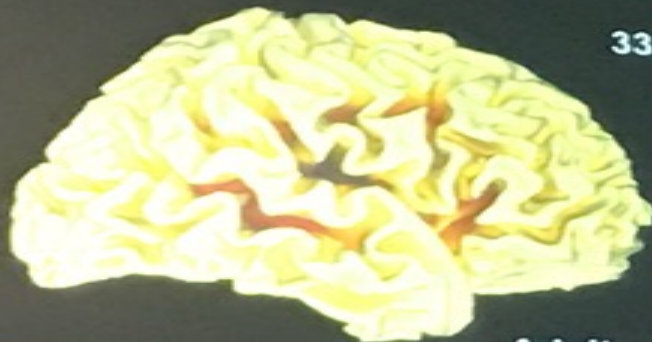
30 week



33 week



Term equivalent  
(37 weeks)



Adult



control



## How pain affects the neurodevelopment of premature babies



### Dr. Ruth Grunau

Senior Scientist  
Child & Family Research Institute

Professor  
Division of Neonatology, Department of Pediatrics, University of British Columbia

Associate Member  
Department of Psychology, UBC

- “you don’t actually feel its your child, because he’s being looked after by a medical team..under scrutiny more, how you’re feeding him..”
- “Most mothers are bonding, feeding their baby..I wasn’t able to do that as G was placed in an incubator, then a transport incubator. I had a baby but it didn’t feel as if I had a baby, he was taken away quite quickly and his first trip was in an ambulance rather than taking him home”

- **Living in the shadow of the illness**

- *“You run through the scenarios like what if he doesn’t make it? And you know I still go there all the time...ever since he was born, I can’t stop thinking at the back of my mind, what happens if he dies?” Liam*

- **Relinquishing and reclaiming control**
- *It's the normal way of things, it's always to the mother and you just do the support act...you don't really know what to do and the mothers normally take the lead, you basically just stand there and you wait to be told to do something" Tom*
- *"It was like a pantomime. There were so many people in the room. There was the three nurses, there was like a midwife and two doctors and it was just it was just like a pantomime. And there's me just in the corner standing there" Noel*





# CARA

[connectedforlife.co.uk](http://connectedforlife.co.uk)

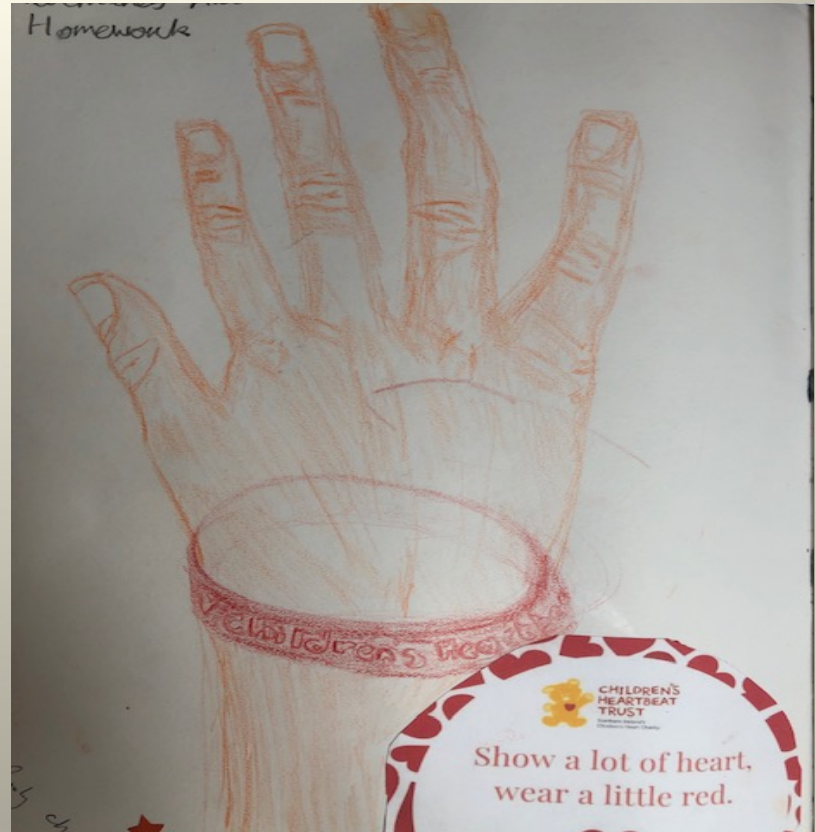
**DAVID**







# DONALL



# PIN









- Reduced distress / psychological symptoms in mothers
- Reduced worry
- Increased knowledge and understanding
- Improved coping skills on some dimensions
- Improved infant mental, social and emotional development at 6mths (but not motor)
- Some evidence for reduced feeding difficulties

**BEYOND THE  
DIAGNOSIS:  
FAMILY ADAPTATION  
TO CONGENITAL  
HEART DISEASE**

Manual of The Congenital  
Heart disease Intervention  
Programme (CHIP)



The ROYAL  
HOSPITALS



# Infant Massage



# Results

	Massage Group	Control Group
Attachment	Improved	No change
Stress	Reduced	Increased
Anxiety	Reduced	Increased
Parental Competence	Increased	Increased
Baby Vulnerability	Reduced	Reduced

# Reach out..

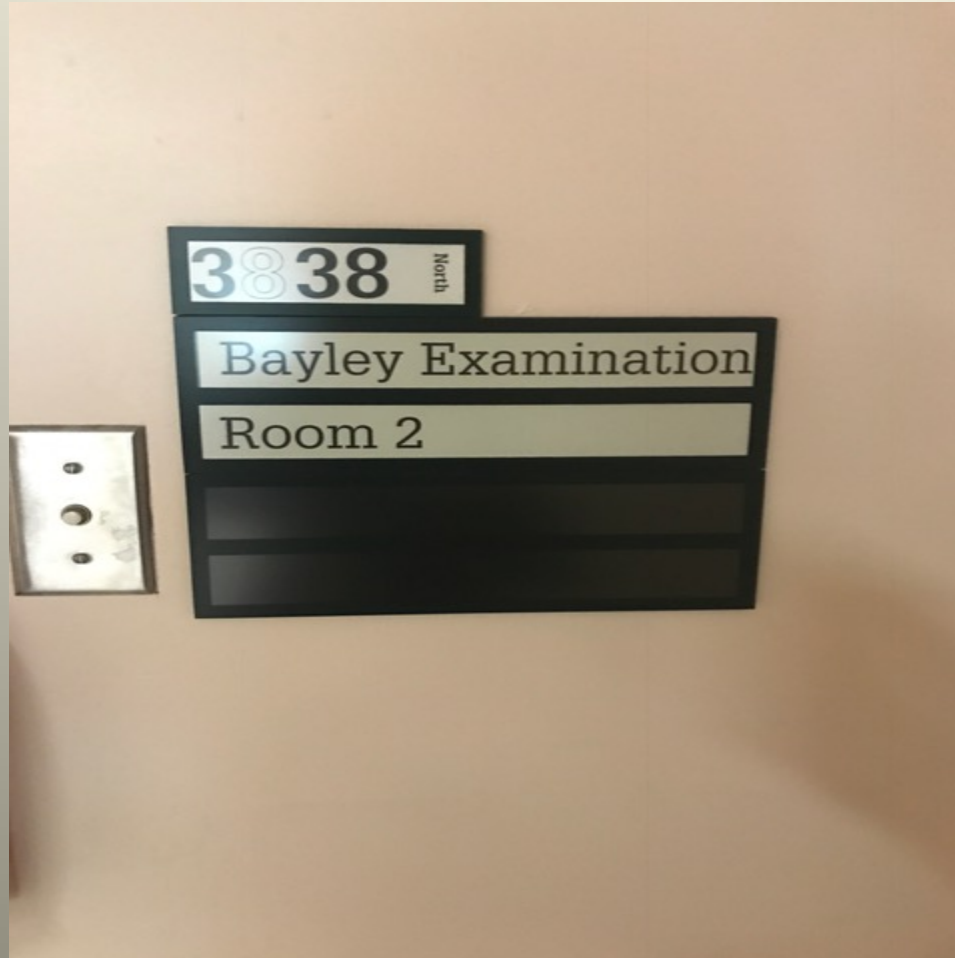


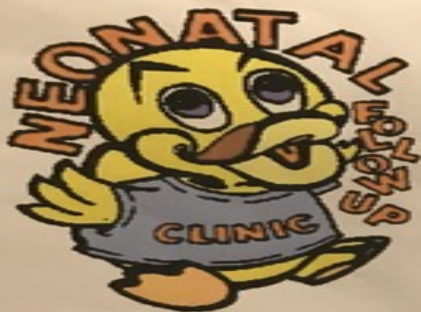
<http://lifeathome.tinylife.org.uk/>



← Neonatal Follow-Up Clinic

WINSTON  
CHURCHILL  
MEMORIAL  
TRUST





## **NFU Mission**

***“To optimize long-term health outcomes for high risk infants and children through individualized screening and facilitating access to early intervention, while simultaneously carrying out audit and research to enhance future neonatal care.”***


OUR PATIENTS  
ARE TINY,  
BUT THEIR  
NEED IS  
GREAT

If you have the  
words, there's  
always a chance that  
you'll find the way.

Seamus Heaney





A black letterboard with white text is centered on a white shelf. To the left of the board is a small yellow clock with a red face. To the right is a potted plant with green leaves. Above the shelf is a green lamp. The background is a light gray wall.

WE'RE ALL  
IMPERFECT  
PARENTS, AND  
THAT'S PERFECTLY  
OK. TINY HUMANS  
NEED  
CONNECTION  
NOT  
PERFECTION.  
L.R. KNOT