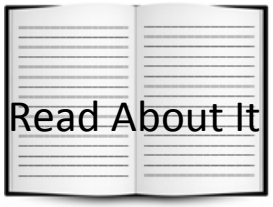
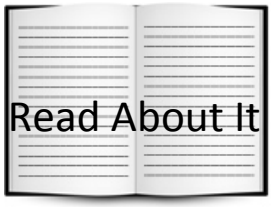


Prematurity Landing Pad

One in every 8 births in the United States is considered to be preterm (prior to 37 weeks gestation). Medical advances in neonatal care have greatly increased the survival rate for these children. Yet children born prematurely often have ongoing medical and developmental needs after hospital discharge. Practitioners and families alike need information and support to best meet the needs of this special population.

This landing pad highlights research and position statements (Why Do It?), print materials (Read All About It), videos and DVDs (See for Yourself), and Web resources (Find It Online), to support those efforts. Featured resources are high-quality, readily available, and mostly no-cost or low-cost. A special section (Virginia Guidance) features Web sites, organizations, and other state-specific resources.

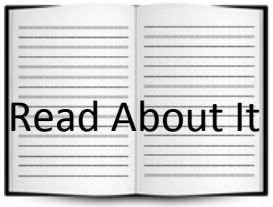


Why Do It?

Engle, W.A., Tomashek, K. M., Wallman, C., & the Committee on Fetus and Newborn. (2007). "Late-Preterm" infants: A population at risk. *Pediatrics*, 120 (6), 1390-1401. Late-preterm infants, defined by birth at 34-37 weeks gestation, are less physiologically and metabolically mature than term infants. Therefore, they are at higher risk for significant illness and death than term infants. The purpose of this report is to define "late preterm," and to recommend using this term as opposed to the current phrase "near term". The characteristics of late-preterm infants that predispose them to a higher risk for significant illness and death than term infants are discussed and guidelines for the evaluation and management of these infants after birth are proposed.
http://aappolicy.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/pediatrics;120/6/1390?eaf

Als, H., Duffy, F.H., McAnulty, G.B., Rivkin, M. J., Vajapeyam, S., Mulkern, R.V., Warfield, S.K., Huppi, P.S., Butler, S.C., Conneman, N., Fischer, C., & Eichenwald, E.C. (2004). Early experience alters brain function and structure. *Pediatrics*, 113(4), 846-857. The Newborn Individualized Developmental Care and Assessment Program (NIDCAP) is a powerful tool that many neonatal ICUs use to alter preemie infants' environment to meet their needs as determined by reading infant individual cues. This study uses the NIDCAP for a group of infants born at 28-33 weeks gestational age. Significant improvements were seen in neurobehavioral functioning as well as in obtained MRIs and EEGs compared to the control group at 9 months corrected age.
http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/113/4/846.abstract

Clements, K.M., Barfield, W.D., Ayadi, M.F., Wilber, N. (2007). Preterm birth-associated cost of early intervention services: An analysis by gestational age.
Pediatrics 119 (4), 866-874. Using Massachusetts program costs, this study critically examines how the cost of early intervention therapies differs relative to the gestational age of the child.
http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/119/4/e866.abstract



See For Yourself

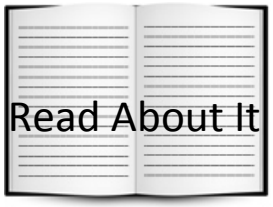
What is Prematurity?
This video shares the birth histories and ongoing developmental needs of children born prematurely.
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PdH7qVXFSDk

No Matter How Small (VIDA)
This DVD serves as an introduction to the development of preterm babies. Parents are given ways to support the normal growth and development of their infant's brain. The DVD is available in both Spanish and English and can be bought for individual usage or a site license may be purchased.
http://www.vida-health.com/products/no-matter-how-small

Newborns and Neonatology
This podcast features an interview with Dr. Cynthia Bearer, pediatrician and head of neonatology at the University of Maryland Hospital for Children and professor of pediatrics at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. Part 1 of this interview covers topics such as medical conditions, advances in neonatology, feeding, physical touch, light therapy, and developmental practices in the NICU.
http://www.umm.edu/media/video/mht_newborns_neonatology_bearer_1.htm

Focus on the Brain 1-2
Topics covered in Part 1 include: brain development, the role of the environment, sensory development, the role of sleep. Part 2 covers strategies proven to support optimal brain development in infants born preterm. The purchase of the DVD includes a site license.
http://www.vida-health.com/products/focus-brain-parts-1-2

Understanding my Signals by VORT Corporation
Signs of stress and coping strategies for parents to learn are explained in this pamphlet. Photographs included provide great visuals of infant cues.
http://www.vort.com/products/188.html



Find It Online

The March of Dimes

http://www.marchofdimes.com/baby/premature.html

The March of Dimes provides family-friendly explanations on prematurity and why this might have occurred. A question and answer section answers common concerns of parents. There is a link to on-line support from other families who have had a preterm infant.

Zero to Three

http://www.zerotothree.org/child-development/health-nutrition/early-arrival_eng.pdf

Zero to Three provides this free printable resource to help parents understand how to assist their child in the NICU and as they transition home. A list of resources is included.

Primer on Preemies

http://kidshealth.org/parent/growth/growing/preemies.html#

This "Primer on Preemies" discusses the basic needs of preemies (warmth, nutrition, and growth), common health problems of preemies, and care after the NICU.

My Child Without Limits

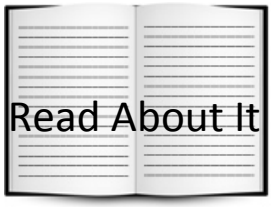
http://www.mychildwithoutlimits.org/?page=prematurity

A thorough discussion of prematurity is presented with topics ranging from prematurity causes to common medical problems of premature infants and treatments. Other resources and references are provided.

Share Your Story

http://shareyourstory.org

Share is an online community for parents of babies born prematurely or who have spent time in a neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). Brought to you by the March of Dimes, share is intended to offer parents a safe place to talk about their experiences and gain support from each other. This online community offers online discussions and blogs, formal and informal chats, etc.



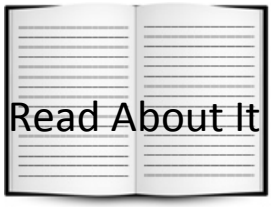
Read About It

Graven, S.N., & Browne, J.V. (2008). Sensory development in the fetus, neonate, and infant: Introduction and overview. *Newborn and Infant Nursing Reviews*, 8(4), 169-172. This article discusses how the development of both the structure and function of the brain is shaped by four factors: (1) genetic endowment and effects from the environment, (2) internal stimulation of the brain and sleep, (3) external stimulation of the senses, and (4) the physical, chemical, sensory, and social/emotional environment. Individualized developmental care is encouraged to support the best outcomes for preterm infants.
http://www.wonderbabiesco.org/UserFiles/File/Graven%20and%20Browne%20Introduction%2008.pdf

Kalia, J.L., Visintainer, P., Brumberg, H.L., Pici, M., & Kase, J. (2009). Comparison of enrollment in interventional therapies between late-preterm and very preterm infants at 12 months' corrected age. *Pediatrics*, 123 (3), 804-809. The Regional Neonatal Follow-up Program of Westchester Medical Center in New York compared 77 very preterm and 50 late-preterm infants who qualified for early intervention services at 12 ± 2 months' corrected age. The groups were compared on prenatal, demographic, and neonatal factors. Both very preterm and late-preterm infants with certain complications needed the same therapies, regardless of gestational age.
http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/123/3/804.abstract

Weschler Linden, D., Trenti Paroli, E., & Wechsler Doron, M. (2010). Preemies – Second Edition: Essential guide for parents of premature babies. New York, NY: Gallery Books. An invaluable resource and handbook for parents not only as they navigate their time in the NICU but also as they bring their preterm infant home.

Pankow, Valerie. (2004). No bigger than my teddy bear. Family Books. A children's storybook describes the NICU from the viewpoint of a small child. This is a resource for siblings or family members with intellectual disabilities.



Virginia Guidance

Talks on Tuesdays Webinar Series

Prematurity and Early Intervention: Prevalence, Issues, and Trends. Presented By: Beth Tolley, Nancy Farmer Brockway, Tina Hough, and Ginny Heuple. A 1-hour presentation explaining both the newly adopted eligibility guidelines for preterm infants and trends to keep in mind while working with preterm infants once they are home.

http://www.eipd.vcu.edu/talks_tuesdays.html

An Early Interventionist's Guide to Prematurity

In this free online learning module, you will learn about prematurity and how the preterm infant develops. Specific information regarding eligibility for VA early intervention supports and services for premature babies is also explored. The seven chapters, including 1) Attachment and Bonding, 2) Sensory Systems,3) Arousal and Attention, 4) Cues, 5) Motor, Tone, and Positioning, 6) Communication, and 7) Feeding, allow the participant to explore each topic in depth. Tips to support families with premature infants are included throughout the module.

http://veipd.org/elearning/

Virginia Early Intervention Professional Development Center

Virginia Commonwealth University | Partnership for People with Disabilities | www.eipd.vcu.edu

This professional development activity is supported by the Integrated Training Collaborative (ITC), with funding support from the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS), American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)

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