**EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY FOR PARENTS**

We suggest you first consider creating and/or adopting an **Educational Philosophy.** Your Educational Philosophy should be shared with all educators and staff. Ideally, it should include guiding principles for interactions between teachers and learners, styles of communication, materials to be used, and method(s) of evaluation. It is an important document to ensure that best practices in adult education are used. Program outcomes can be measured against the guiding principles in your Educational Philosophy.

**Family Integrated Care Strategies for Teaching** is a document that acts as a guide for the variety of educators participating in the education program. Important **Adult Learning Principles** are included as reminders of some key factors in the teaching-learning relationship.

**CONSIDER…**

How will you engage staff?

* Newsletters
* In-services
* Lunch and learn
* E-mails
* Encourage participation in parent education sessions

How will you engage and educate parents?

* Group discussion
* One-on-one
* Videos
* Demonstrations
* Veteran parent reflections

**SAMPLE FAMILY INTEGRATED CARE EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY FOR PARENTS**

* We understand and respect the needs of our learners, both as parents of an infant in the NICU and as adult learners; and have based our curriculum on this understanding
* We seek to increase and facilitate parental involvement with their infants and with the learning process
* We support parents in self-directed learning and deliver appropriate material to parents as they need it
* We choose material that is empowering and accessible and that recognizes the parental role as unique and irreplaceable; our materials have been vetted and approved from a clinical, as well as educational perspective
* We use educational tools to increase parental confidence and decrease parental stress
* We encourage an ongoing dialogue about educational needs and we will remain flexible in order to adapt our material to suit the diverse needs of our families
* We recognize that learning can only happen if it fits into a family’s life; we understand materials cannot replace dialogue and support
* We are prepared to accommodate a variety of learning styles and personalities; we offer a mixture of visual material (videos, live demonstrations, photos, posters) and written material either in a group format or on a one-to-one basis
* We follow-up after the learning sessions with an opportunity to put the lesson into practice
* We use items like posters to make the NICU environment a learning environment; for example, posters that provide information on the importance of skin-to-skin care will be hung in the parent lounge
* We will ensure that parents will be given many opportunities for hands-on practice in collaboration with nurses, other NICU staff and graduate parents. Models will be available for practice sessions on developmental positioning, bathing and dressing
* Dialogue and evaluation about the curriculum will be ongoing so that parents have an opportunity to develop and enrich the program for the benefit of future families
* Nursing staff will be apprised of the program and information so that they can support learning and ensure continuity of care and good communication
* Let us not forget to support parents with the charting/ giving report on rounds