



Pictured: Baby Kole with his Dad

Save the Date! Join us for the 39th Annual Gravens Conference

“Sensitive Issues in Sensational Times”

*New date & location, same great topics,
workshops, abstracts, and networking for those
who work in Newborn Intensive Care Units.*

Come learn with us!

June 15th Preconference,
June 16th, 17th, and 18th, 2026
at University of Notre Dame
Notre Dame, Indiana



Loma Linda Publishing Company



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JOINTLY ACCREDITED PROVIDER™
INTERPROFESSIONAL CONTINUING EDUCATION

39th Annual Gravens Conference: On the Environment of Care for High-Risk Newborns and Their Families (live & virtual)

Dates: June 16-18, 2026

Location: Notre Dame University, Notre Dame, IN

Learning Objectives:

- Analyze the impact of the NICU sensory and caregiving environment on neonatal brain development and long-term neurodevelopmental outcomes.
- Apply evidence-based neuroprotective and developmental care strategies—including sleep protection, cue-based caregiving, and pain mitigation into routine clinical practice.
- Integrate family-centered and relationship-based care models by engaging parents as active participants in caregiving and clinical decision-making.
- Evaluate their local NICU environment, workflows, and culture to identify gaps between current practice and developmental care best practices.
- Develop and implement multidisciplinary quality improvement initiatives to advance neuroprotective care and measure their impact on clinical and developmental outcomes.

Interprofessional Continuing Education - Rush Accreditation

Accreditation Statement:

In support of improving patient care, this activity has been planned and implemented by Rush University Medical Center and **Loma Linda Publishing Company**. Rush University Medical Center is jointly accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE), and the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) to provide continuing education for the healthcare team.

Credit Designation Statements

For Medicine

Rush University Medical Center designates this live activity for a maximum of **16.0 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s)**™. Physicians should claim only credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

Successful completion of this CME activity, which includes participation in the evaluation component, enables the learner to earn credit toward the CME of the American Board of Surgery's Continuous Certification program. It is the CME activity provider's responsibility to submit learner completion information to ACCME for the purpose of granting ABS credit.

For Nursing:

Rush University Medical Center designates this live activity for a maximum of **16.0** nursing contact hour(s).

For Pharmacy:

Rush University Medical Center designates this knowledge-based live activity for a maximum of **16.0** contact hour(s) for pharmacists.

For Psychologists:

Rush University Medical Center designates this live activity for **16.0** CE credits in psychology. Continuing Education (CE) credits for psychologists are provided through the co-sponsorship of the American Psychological Association (APA) Office of Continuing Education in Psychology (CEP). The APA CEP Office maintains responsibility for the content of the programs.

For Social Work:

As a Jointly Accredited Organization, RUSH University Medical Center is approved to offer social work continuing education by the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) Approved Continuing Education (ACE) program. Organizations, not individual courses, are approved under this program. Regulatory boards are the final authority on courses accepted for continuing education credit. Social workers completing this course receive **16.0** general continuing education credits.

To claim Continuing Education Credit, attendees must:

- Attend the entire session.
- Evaluate and generate a certificate according to the instructions.

Disclosure Information

Unapproved Uses of Drugs/Devices: In accordance with requirements of the FDA, the audience is advised that information presented in this continuing medical education activity may contain references to unlabeled or unapproved uses of drugs or devices. Please refer to the FDA-approved package insert for each drug/device for full prescribing/utilization information.

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Individuals in control of content for this activity have the following relevant financial relationships with ineligible companies to disclose, and all financial relationships have been mitigated.

Disclosures:

Name	Company(ies) and Nature of Relationship(s)
Ramya Kumar	Consultant: Neotech; and Speaker: Mead Johnson
Brianna Leigh, MD	Advisor: SIME Diagnostics Ltd.

All other individuals in control of content have no relevant financial relationships with ineligible companies.

39th Annual Gravens Conference

On the Environment of Care for
High Risk Newborns and Their Families

June 15-18, 2026

“Sensitive Issues in Sensational Times”

Monday, June 15th

Let the Festivities Begin!

TIME	SESSION / EVENT	LOCATION
8:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Reimagining the NICU - Troy Savage <i>Optional Pre Conference with Separate Registration</i>	
4:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Registration Desk Open	
7:00 pm - 9:00 pm	Welcome Reception <i>Cash Bar Only</i>	Podium at Embassy Suites

Tuesday, June 16th

Science & Application

Welcome, Breaks, Awards, and Closing Do Not Count for CME/CE

TIME	SESSION / EVENT	LOCATION
7:00 am - 5:00 pm	Registration Desk Open	
7:00 am - 8:00 am	Continental Breakfast Provided (1 hour)	

8:00 am - 5:00 pm Plenary Sessions Downes Ballroom - Corbett Family Hall Moderator: (Robert White and Joy Browne)

TIME	SESSION / EVENT	PRESENTER
8:00 am - 8:15 am	Welcome & Introductions	Joy Browne
8:15 am - 9:00 am	FamilyCentered Collaborative Care Models that Support Families and Optimize Preterm Infant and Child Health Outcomes	Jessica DiBari
9:00 am - 9:45 am	Care of the Mother is Care for the Baby	Heather Burris

9:45 am 10:15 am Break (30 min)

10:15 am - 11:00 am	Central Autonomic Network Connectivity is Altered in an ExtraUterine Environment	Catherine Limperopoulos
11:00 am - 11:45 am	All Care is Brain Care: Lessons learned from an international quality improvement collaborative to improve brain health and outcomes (Part 1)	Roger Soll, Elizabeth Rogers, Sonia Bonifacio

11:45 am - 1:00 pm Lunch (75 min)

1:00 pm - 2:30 pm	All Care is Brain Care: Lessons learned from an international quality improvement collaborative to improve brain health and outcomes (Part 2)	Roger Soll, Elizabeth Rogers, Sonia Bonifacio
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2:30 pm - 3:00 pm Break (30 min)

3:00 pm - 3:30 pm	Gravens Recognition Award Presentation	Mitchell Goldstein
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TIME	SESSION / EVENT	LOCATION
3:30 pm - 4:15 pm	Sensitive Issues for Babies, Parents, and their Relationships	Joy Browne
4:15 pm - 4:45 pm	Panel Discussion Among NICU Parents on RealWorld Impact of Topics Presented	Molly FraustWylie, Susanne Klawetter, Alex Zavala
4:45 pm - 5:00 pm	Family CenteredCare (FCC) Scholars Introduction	Malathi Balasundaram
5:00 pm - 5:15 pm	Final Thoughts and TakeHome Messages	Robert White

6 :30 pm - 8:30 pm
Reception & Poster Walk
Poster Session - Jordan Hall Galleria
Substantial Snacks Provided
7 00 pm - 7:45 pm, Poster Authors Available
8 10 pm - 8:30 pm, Door Prize Raffle: Vincent C. Smith

Wednesday, June 17th

Themed Tracks

Welcome, Breaks, and Closing Do Not Count for CME/CE

TIME	SESSION / EVENT	LOCATION
6:30 am - 7:15 am	Run, Walk, Skip Around Notre Dame Campus	
7:00 am - 8:00 am	Continental Breakfast Provided / Networking Tables (1 hour)	
7:30 am - 1:30 pm	Registration Desk Open	

8:00 am - 1:00 pm Themed Tracks

Track A Infant and FamilyCentered Developmental Care Jordan Hall Room 101 Moderator: Joy Browne		Track B Newborn ICU Design Jordan Hall Room 105 Moderator: Robert White	
8:00 am - 8:15 am	Introductions & Announcements	8:00 am8:15 am	Introductions & Announcements
8:15 am - 8:45 am	The Importance of a Developmental Point of View of Sensory Processes - Robert Lickliter	8:15 am9:00 am	Therapeutic Design - Mardelle Shepley
8:45 am - 9:30 am	Clinical Application from Chemosensory Research - Julie Mennella	9:00 am9:45 am	Designing NICU Spaces for Ritual and Healing - Anya Vanacek and Julia Jude
9:30 am - 10:15 am	Development and Clinical Application from Embodied Vocal Presence Research - Manuela Filippa	9:45 am10:30 am	Soundscapes - Bobbi Pineda
10:15 am - 10:45 am	Break (30 min)		
		10:30 am - 11:00 am	Break (30 min)
10:45 am - 11:30 am	Reflections on Sensory Developmental Ecology and Its Applications for Care - Jeff Alberts	<i>Exhibitors to Break Down</i>	
11:30 am - 12:00 pm	Clinical Application of the Environment of Care from the NICU Parents' Perspective – Jessica DiBari, Mia Malcolm, Jessi Barnes	11:00 am - 11:45 am	New Unit Presentation - Brianna Leigh, and Karizma Maxson
12:00 pm - 12:05pm	Summary & Next Steps - Joy Browne	11:45 am - 12:45 pm	Using AI for NICU Design - Troy Savage

Track A Infant and FamilyCentered Developmental Care Jordan Hall Room 101 Moderator: Joy Browne	Track B Newborn ICU Design Jordan Hall Room 105 Moderator: Robert White
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12:05 pm-12:35pm	Break (30 min)	12:45 pm-1:00 pm	Summary & Next Steps - Robert White
12:35 pm - 1:00 pm	Development and Clinical Application from Auditory Tactile Research - Nathalie Maitre <i>(*This session is not designated for continuing education credit. This is in no way a reflection of the integrity or quality of the content)</i>		

1:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Lunch, Rest, Play, Network, NICU Tour
Tour of the Beacon Children's Couplet Care/Single Family Room NICU

4:00 pm - 4:45 pm Welcome Back & Networking
Coffee and Light Snacks Provided

4:45 pm - 6:00 pm Workshops (75 min)

TIME	SESSION / EVENT	MODERATOR
4:45 pm - 6:00 pm	A: Culture Club: Culture as a Foundation for Quality Improvement Elizabeth Rogers and Sonia Bonifacio (Room: Jordan Hall 101)	Mitchell Goldstein
	B: Taking Steps Toward Postpartum Care in the NICU - Heather Burris and Katey Mari (Room: Jordan Hall 105)	Morgan Kowalski
	C: Reimagining the NICU: Wrap Up - Troy Savage (Room: Jordan Hall 325)	Robert White
	D: Are We Really Seeing Delirium in Babies? A Conversation About Behavioral Assessment and Intervention - Jeff Alberts (Room: Jordan Hall 310)	Kathleen Kolberg
	E: Support for NICU Fathers and NonBirthing Parents - Cameron Boyd, Alex Zavala, and Craig Garfield (Room: Jordan Hall 322)	Molly FraustWylie
	F: Partnering with NICU parents and professionals: Methodological lessons from developing the PATH program - Susanne Klawetter (Room: Jordan Hall 326)	Mardelle Shepley

6:30 pm - 9:00 pm Dinner Banquet Heritage Hall - Joyce Center
Included with Conference Registration

Thursday, June 18th
Family Topics & Reflections Abstracts & Workshops
Welcome, Breaks, and Closing Do Not Count for CME/CE

TIME	SESSION / EVENT	LOCATION
6:30 am - 7:15 am	Run, Walk, Shuffle Around Notre Dame Campus	
7:00 am - 8:00 am	Continental Breakfast Provided (1 hour)	
7:00 am - 11:15 am	Registration Desk Open	

8:00 am - 12:00 pm Plenary Session Downes Ballroom - Corbett Family Hall Moderators: (Vincent C. Smith and Molly FraustWylie)		
8:00 am - 8:10 am	Introductions and Announcements	Vincent C. Smith & Molly FraustWylie
8:10 am - 8:40 am	A NICU Dad's Perspective	Alex Zavala
8:40 am - 9:15 am	Experiences of NICU Fathers and NonBirthing Parents	Cameron Boyd
9:15 am - 10:00 am	NICU Discharge Planning Considerations for NICU Fathers and NonBirthing Parents	Craig Garfield
10:00 am - 10:30 am Break (30 min)		
10:30 am - 11:05 am	Audience Engagement Activity	Troy Savage
11:05 am - 11:50 am	Parent Panel	Molly FraustWylie & Mia Malcolm
11:50 am - 12:00 pm	Acknowledgement & Celebration of Juneteenth Wrap Up/Warm Send Off	Joy Browne & Robert White
12:00 pm - 1:15 pm <i>Planning Committee Meeting</i> Lunch (75 min)		
1:15 pm - 2:30 pm Abstracts (75 min)		
TIME	ABSTRACT	MODERATOR
1:15 pm - 2:30 pm	Developmental Care (Room: Jordan Hall 322): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ParentDelivered Neurodevelopmental Care: Standardizing an Approach to Parent Education - Grace King, Tierney Morrison, Aimee Godett, Marge Day, Emily Whitesel (Abstract 30) 2. Interventions Designed to Improve the Postpartum Health and Wellbeing of Parents of Infants in the NICU: A Scoping Review Sarah Verbiest, Wayne Price, Kimarie Bugg (Abstract 19) 3. Multidisciplinary Journey to Reliable Social Determinants of Health Screening for NICU Families: Navigating Barriers in the NICU Village - Rosanne Buck, Dory Ziperstein, Molly FaustWylie, Erika Sevieri, Gina Story, Emily Whitesel, Yarden Fraiman (Abstract 7) 	Vincent C. Smith
	Family Support (A) (Room: Jordan Hall 101): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Harmonizing Developmental and Medical Communication in the NICU: A Dynamic Digital Platform to Augment FamilyCentered Care - Ansul Asad, Yaya Ren, Bree Andrew (Abstract 36) 2. Early Parental Presence in the NICU: Social Determinants and Maternal Mental Health Shape Family Engagement for High Risk Infants - Jaclyn Ruggiero, Allison Davidson (Abstract 47) 3. FamilyCentered Care: Increasing Positive Family Engagement and Interactions with Infants in the NICU - Terri Sandoval, Alison 	Malathi Balasundaram

	<p>Smith, Jamie Lujan, Jennifer Guadalupe, Rachel Carlos, Candice Martinez (Abstract 4)</p>	
	<p>Developmental Care/FamilyCentered Care (Room: Jordan Hall 310):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Journey to a Developmental Care Continuum: An Interdisciplinary Collaborative Approach to Developmental Care in the NICU - Tiara Bolden, Lisa Miller, Cynthia Ruggles, Mary Beth Sanders, Laura Schacht, Lindsay Schuler, Kelly Crombie, Janet Dierstein, Susannah Dillender, Christine Houlihan, Amy Salisbury (Abstract 51) 2. Designing the NICU of the Future: National Survey Insights on Workforce Support, Digital Integration, and Family Partnership Lisa Davenport, Jaylee Hilliard (Abstract 32) 3. Reimagining the NICU Environment of Care: Applying Human Factors and Ergonomics to Support Safe, Sustained SkintoSkin (Kangaroo) Care for High Risk Infants and Families - Yamile Jackson (Abstract 6) 	<p>Molly Fraust-Wylie</p>
	<p>Family Support (B) (Room: Jordan Hall 105):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mapping Neonatal Transfer Patterns to Inform FamilyCentered Care: Capacity and Distance Across Levels of Care - Amanda Luff, Emily Malloy, Veronica Fitzpatrick (Abstract 15) 2. Advancing Family Engagement in the NICU: A Qualitative Exploration of Barriers and Facilitators - Laura Rose, Kayla Schmittau, Kristen Schaffer, Alejandro Chavez, Katherine LopezLepe, Linda Franck, Henry Lee (Abstract 8) 3. Effect of Parent Education Classes on Confidence and Stress of Parents of Infants Admitted to the NICU of a Tertiary Care Hospital in India - Pooja Dekhane, Puja Padbidri, Madhura Gandhi, Madhuri Patil, Eilish Byrne (Abstract 22) 	<p>Mia Malcom</p>
	<p>Potpourri (Room: Jordan Hall 325):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reaching NICU Families: Feasibility of Recruiting High Risk Infants Ashlee Vance, Eman Dannaway (Abstract 33) 2. Beyond Just Cuddles: Creating a Medical Student Cuddlers Program for an Evolving Level 4 NICU - Stephanie Bernard, Lauren Felzani, Rivky Barnetsky, Likhitha Patlolla, Jordan Bryan, Donessa Jenae Colley, Andrea Weintraub (Abstract 17) 3. Development of a Conceptual Framework for Financial Hardship in Neonatal Care - Ashlee Vance (Abstract 26) 	<p>Joy Browne</p>
	<p>Design (Room: Jordan Hall 326):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acoustic Comfort in Newborn Intensive Care - Kathleen Philbin (Abstract 52) 2. Beyond SingleFamily Rooms: A Hybrid NICU Model Responsive to Community Demographics - Zoraya Stern, Maria D'Souza, Whitney K. Fuessel (Abstract 24) 	<p>Robert White</p>
<p>2:30 pm - 3:00 pm Break (30 min)</p>		
<p>3:00 pm - 4:15 pm Workshops (75 min)</p>		

3:00 pm - 4:15 pm	A: FamilyCentered Care in Action: Collaboration, Measurement, and Improvement- Malathi Balasundaram and Morgan Kowalski (Room: Jordan Hall 105)	Malathi Balasundaram
	B: Words Matter: Navigating Sensitive Situations with Intentional Language in the NICU - Ramya Kumar (Room: Jordan Hall 310)	Judy Smith
	C: TraumaInformed Expectations for Gratitude in the NICU - Mia Malcolm and Jessica Barnes (Room: Jordan Hall 326)	Mia Malcolm
	D: D.R.I.V.E. Better Care: Developing Emotionally Present NICU Teams to Strengthen FamilyCentered Care - Weston Brandon (Room: Jordan Hall 322)	Mitchell Goldstein
	E: Relationships in the NICU: Will AI Foster or Hinder? - Jim Gray and Bridget Davern (Room: Jordan Hall 101)	Vincent C. Smith
	F: The Second Edition of the Infant and FamilyCentered Developmental Care Standards: Discussion and Dissemination - Tiara Bolden, Carol Jaeger and Joy Browne (Room: Jordan Hall 325)	Joy Browne
4:15 pm	Safe Travels, See You at the Next Gravens Conference!	

Friday, June 19th
HAPPY JUNETEENTH!

Juneteenth is a United States federal holiday commemorating the end of slavery.