

NurtureGroup Parent Guide



Australia's leading organisation helping to improve, support and enhance all lives impacted by a premature or sick birth.



NurtureLine 24 hour family support helpline:

1300 622 243 (1300 MBABIES)

miraclebabies.org.au | @miraclebabiesfoundation

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Your *NurtureGroup* Coordinators are:

name	phone
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name	phone
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Welcome

A warm hearted welcome to *NurtureGroup*! We hope that you find this guide to *NurtureGroup* informative and that both you and your child enjoy your time here with us..

NurtureGroup Overview

NurtureGroup is a free play and support group for families and carers who have experienced the birth of a premature or sick newborn.

NurtureGroup enables babies and children (up to starting school) that have been challenged by prematurity or sickness to learn and develop through play in a fun and relaxed environment.

The sessions offer families ongoing parent support after leaving the safety of a NICU/SCN and an opportunity to share stories, exchange ideas on parenting, tackle ongoing medical and developmental issues, build support networks, form friendships and ease the isolation often felt by families of premature and sick newborns.

NurtureGroups are geared specifically towards the children's ongoing developmental needs and are equipped with toys and activities recommended by therapists to help advance physical development.



NurtureGroup offers children

- a healthy, safe and secure environment
- regular time away from home
- an ideal place to learn and develop through play
- help develop social skills in a group situation with a parent or caregiver for support
- create a family setting with parents, babies, toddlers and preschool aged children playing together
- provide a large range of toys and play experiences geared specifically towards their ongoing development, often not available at home
- time with qualified health professionals to assess and engage their development and need for specialised therapy or services.

NurtureGroup offers parents

- regular time with our Miracle Babies *Nurture*Program Team
- social interaction and adult conversation
- ease the feeling of isolation, anxiety and depression
- time to share experiences, interests and ideas
- time with qualified health professionals to gain information, assistance, and advice on their child's development

What happens at **NurtureGroup**?

NurtureGroup sessions usually meet fortnightly for 2 hours.

At your first session your *NurtureGroup* Coordinator will give you a tour, explain routines and introduce you to other families and our team.

You should generally have completed a Registration Form online.

An Attendance Register is kept for all present at each session including children, parents and volunteers. We kindly ask that you remember to sign the register upon your arrival and departure.

Each *NurtureGroup* runs slightly different depending on the families in attendance and the children's ages. As a general guide, each session includes time for; setting up, free play, morning tea (supplied for all in attendance), activity, general clean up and pack away.

During the sessions, parents, carers and children participate in a variety of play activities and experiences which may include: outdoor and free play, music and singing, imaginative play, arts and craft activities.

You are welcome to contribute any suggestions to assist with the future planning of *NurtureGroup* sessions and to develop skills to help run the *NurtureGroup*.

Parents and caregivers are required to stay for the session to interact with the other adults and to play with the children.

NurtureGroup is not a child minding event.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who can attend a *NurtureGroup*?

NurtureGroup welcomes children from birth to starting school who were cared for in a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit or Special Care Nursery, either through prematurity or complications as a result of their birth or congenital abnormalities. Parents or carers of these children and siblings are all welcome to attend.

Who will be involved in facilitating *NurtureGroup*?

Each *NurtureGroup* is facilitated by a minimum of one approved Miracle Babies Foundation *NurtureProgram* team member (staff or volunteer).

Health Professional Involvement

It is important to note that *NurtureGroup* is NOT a specialist therapeutic provider; however health professionals may attend *NurtureGroup* intermittently to provide information, assistance and expert advice of the children's development. These health professionals may include a Social Worker, Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist, Speech Pathologist, Dietitian, Nurse and other disciplines as arranged.

Can siblings attend *NurtureGroup*?

Siblings are welcome at *NurtureGroup* and provides them with an important opportunity to play with their sibling.

Will families need to pay for *NurtureGroup*?

Funding from Miracle Babies Foundation enables families to attend *NurtureGroup* at no cost.

Wellness Policy

Due to the ongoing health concerns of children challenged by prematurity or sickness we do not allow attendance of children or parents/carers, who are unwell, have a temperature, sickness, diarrhoea, or who have an infectious disease.

In addition we ask that children or parents do not attend where there is a case of sickness or diarrhoea in another member of the family.

Infectious diseases can spread quickly among young children. It is therefore very important that parents notify the *NurtureProgram* team member for that service immediately if their child is suspected of having an infectious disease. Parents/carers will be informed if there has been a notified case of an infectious disease at *NurtureGroup*. Any child/parent/carer unwell within 48 hours of attending *NurtureProgram* services should not attend or must provide a medical clearance from a qualified medical Doctor before attending.

Symptoms which will exclude a child, parent/carer from attending *NurtureProgram* services:

- A common cold, with listlessness, green runny nose, watery eyes, persistent cough or sore throat, loss of voice – should not attend until symptoms have fully ceased.
- Sore throat or trouble swallowing – should not attend until symptoms have ceased or the child is diagnosed as not contagious.
- Difficulty breathing, wheezing or a persistent cough – should not attend until symptoms have fully ceased or the child is diagnosed as not contagious.

- Nausea and vomiting may be early signs of illness – should not attend until symptoms have fully ceased for 48 hours.
- Children with known or suspected communicable diseases eg. chicken pox, mumps, etc – should not attend until the incubation period recommended by their doctor has passed.
- Infected skin or eyes, or an un-diagnosed rash (including conjunctivitis) should not attend until the prescribed treatment is completed or the incubation period recommended by the doctor has passed.
- Unexplained diarrhoea or loose stool which may indicate a bacterial or viral gastrointestinal infection, which is very easily passed from one child to another – should not attend until symptoms have fully ceased for 48 hours.
- Pain – any complaint of unexplained or undiagnosed pain (not including complaints such as teething) – should not attend until symptoms have ceased or the child is diagnosed as not contagious.

A Clearance letter may be required for any of the above.



Safety and Security

Each parent and caregiver attending a *NurtureGroup* must be responsible for the welfare and safety of the child/ren they bring.

There is also a collective responsibility of the whole group to ensure everyone has a safe environment in which to play. Keeping this in mind, remember that *NurtureGroups* need to keep a balance between being safe and allowing the children to take the risks necessary to develop new skills.

Our *NurtureProgram* team members are to never be alone with a child or provide personal care to a child such as; feeding, toileting including nappy changes, administering medication, applying sunscreen.

NurtureGroups are a SMOKE-FREE zone because of the proven danger of passive smoking to small children and toxicity of cigarette butts.

Food and Drink

Snack and meal times are an important part of *NurtureGroup* and we aim to provide nutritious food. As some children can have serious allergic reactions to nuts we request that *NurtureGroup* remain a nut-free zone and no nuts or nut products are allowed.

However, while it is in the best interest for *NurtureGroup* to be nut free, due to the shared use of our venues, this can not be guaranteed. It is the responsibility of the parent/carers to ensure the safety of their child.

Hot drinks are a burn hazard around children so it is mandatory that all hot drinks consumed at *NurtureGroup* MUST have lids. Travel mugs with screw on lids are helpful, you are more than welcome to bring one along.

Confidentiality

NurtureGroup registration forms contain the names, addresses and telephone numbers of attendees and emergency contacts in case of a child's illness or accident as well as allergies, dietary requirements and illnesses of individual children.

Any such information will be regarded as completely confidential and will not be given to a third party for any reason. Such records will be kept by the *NurtureGroup* Coordinator and will be available should they be required during a session.

Confidentiality also extends to the families attending *NurtureGroup* and all attending should refrain from sharing confidential information divulged at *NurtureGroup* without consent. Confidentiality helps provide a safe place for families to share any challenges or difficulties with their premature or sick baby/child.

Grievance Policy

A parent with concerns about any aspect of *NurtureGroup* should in the first instance raise this issue with the *NurtureGroup* Coordinator.

An appointment can be made to discuss the matter and what action/suggestions they would like to see happen. Every effort will be made to resolve any matters within the setting of the *NurtureGroup*.

Should the matter not be resolved at this level a parent/carer may communicate their concerns or complaint in writing to the CEO of Miracle Babies Foundation. If the matter raises concerns about a policy or practice a review will be undertaken.

NurtureGroup - Code of Ethics

- Create a safe and respectful environment and community. Any bullying, slander or defamatory behaviours will not be tolerated.
- Be impartial, non-judgemental and non-discriminatory towards all board members, staff, volunteers and Miracle Babies Foundation service users; this includes discrimination based on race, sex, age, ethnic origin, religion, disabilities or sexual orientation.
- Adhere to the Wellness Policy, safety and security, food and drink rules in attending services or events.
- A copy of the Code of Ethics is emailed at registration and can be viewed on our website.

Establishing a safe & respectful **Nurture**Group

Be kind and courteous – we are all in this together to create a welcoming environment. Let's treat everyone with respect. Healthy debates are natural, but kindness is required.

No hate speech or bullying – make sure everyone feels safe. Bullying of any kind is not allowed, and degrading comments about things like race, religion, culture, sexual orientation, gender or identity will not be tolerated.

Respect everyone's privacy – being part of this Group requires mutual trust. Authentic, expressive discussions make groups great, but also may be sensitive and private. What's shared in a group should stay in the group.

Evaluation

Miracle Babies Foundation may request feedback of our services through evaluation forms, surveys and feedback forms from time to time.

We appreciate your cooperation in completing these forms, as this feedback goes towards improving and expanding our services and sourcing funding and supporters to continue this vital service for families.

Audio Visual (AV) Consent

On registration each parent/carer will be asked to complete an Audio Visual Consent form for yourself and your child/children.

Please complete this form if you consent to photos and imagery being used for promotional and sharing use, such as social media, website, media. This consent can be revoked at any time in writing to info@miraclebabies.org.au.

Suggestions

We welcome any ideas you may have with regards to *NurtureGroup*.

Please provide your feedback by talking to the *NurtureGroup* Coordinator or send an email to info@miraclebabies.org.au.

National Referral Contact List

Miracle Babies Foundation	1300 622 243 (24hr <i>NurtureLine</i>)
Australian Multiple Birth Association	1300 886 499
Autism Spectrum Australia	1800 069 978
Autism Advisory Support Service	0432 327 096
Beyond Blue	1300 22 46 36
Breastfeeding Helpline	1800 686 268
Commonwealth Carelink Centre	1800 052 222
Lifeline	13 11 14
Kids Help Line	1800 55 1800
National Association for Loss and Grief	02 9489 6644
Poisons Information Centre	13 11 26
Pregnancy Birth & Baby Helpline	1800 882 436
Grief and Loss 24/7 Support Line	1800 308 307
Ronald McDonald House Retreats	1300 307 642
Stillbirth Foundation Australia	02 9557 9070

Miracle Babies Foundation

Miracle Babies Foundation is Australia's leading organisation supporting premature and sick newborns, their families and the hospitals that care for them.

Every year in Australia around 48,000 newborn babies require the help of a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) or Special Care Nursery (SCN). 27,000 of these babies are born premature and up to 1,000 babies lose their fight for life.

For families, the experience of having a baby come into the world not as expected or planned is life changing. Without support, this overwhelming and traumatic experience can have lifelong effects on the emotional wellbeing of these miracle families. It affects the entire family unit.

Since 2005, Miracle Babies Foundation has been passionate in developing and providing vital programs and resources to support and enhance a family's experience from a threatened pregnancy, hospital journey with a premature or sick newborn, the transition to home and beyond.

Australia is home to 23 state of the art intensive care units designed to meet the unique and critical needs of our earliest and sickest babies. Working with health professionals on the joint agenda of better outcomes for families, Miracle Babies provides informative education and insight on a family's experience and funding for equipment, resources and research.

Purpose

To improve, support and enhance all lives impacted by a premature or sick birth.

Mission

Working in partnership with families and health professionals, we provide a community of shared experiences, peer emotional support and access to education and evidence-based information. We use our parent voice in research and advocacy to influence positive change. Our life saving and life changing work aims to enhance lives for all to reach their potential.

Vision

Happy and healthy families reaching their potential.

Values

Empathy – Community – Commitment - Respect.

Get Involved

Professionals, students, retirees... Miracle Babies Foundation volunteers come from all walks of life, yet they share one common goal; a passion for improving the lives of premature and sick newborns, and their families.

We are also dedicated to supporting Newborn Intensive Care Units and Special Care Nurseries, for without the NICU/ SCN many of our children would not have survived and for that we are extremely grateful.

How to Apply:

We have various opportunities to suit. We look for passionate, skilled and committed people and match them to specific volunteering opportunities.

The best way to learn about current volunteer opportunities at Miracle Babies Foundation is to check our website miraclebabies.org.au regularly and apply for any volunteer opportunities you think suitable for yourself.

Or stay in touch via our Instagram or Facebook pages:
[@miraclebabiesfoundation](#)

Volunteering at Miracle Babies





Miracle Babies Calendar

Miracle Month of May	1st - 31st May
Kangaroo-A-Thon	1st - 15th May
Mothers' Day	2nd Sunday in May
Kangaroo Care Awareness Day	15 May
World Breastfeeding Week	1st - 7th August
International Neonatal Nurses Day	15th August
Fathers' Day	1st Sunday in September
November NICU Awareness Month	1st - 30th November
International Infant Loss & Remembrance Day	15th October
World Prematurity Day	17th November
Thank U NICU Day	Last Friday in November
Grandparents Day	Last Sunday in October
Christmas Day	25th December

Mission for Miracles



132 babies are born each day requiring specialised care.

Just \$2 per week will make a difference.
Every \$143 supports one more family throughout their hospital journey.

Join our Mission today.

missionformiracles.com.au

NurtureNetwork



Our *NurtureNetwork* is a community of committed miracle parents and carers who are willing to participate and share their experiences, information and points of view through, mostly, online surveys to help the joint mission of advancing health and outcomes for babies born early or sick.

Find out more: miraclebabies.org.au

NurtureLine



NurtureLine is a free 24hr family support helpline for families of a premature or sick newborn.

1300 622 243 (1300 MBABIES)

Nurture 'E' Information Hub



Miracle Babies *Nurture* Information Hub is designed to assist you and your family through different life stages of your growing and developing child beyond the baby, infant and toddler years. *Nurture E - The EEE Impact* has been created in collaboration with parents and health professionals to provide you with Evidence, Education and Empowerment.

Find out more: miraclebabies.org.au

Online Shop



Our Online Shop features a range of special keepsakes and merchandise items including Teddy Bears, Bibs and Candles.

All products across our range include FREE SHIPPING and all proceeds support families with premature and sick babies.

Shop now: miraclebabies.org.au

Miracle Moon Walk



The Miracle Moon Walk event is our annual event held each year. This special night aims to raise important funds for the work of Miracle Babies Foundation, Australia's leading organisation supporting premature and sick newborns, their families and the hospitals that care for them.

Find out more: miraclemoonwalk.com.au

NurtureGroup

Miracle Babies Foundation *NurtureGroups* are free play and support groups for families who have experienced the birth of a premature or sick newborn. We welcome all NICU and SCN families with children from birth to starting school.

Parents and carers can exchange ideas on parenting, tackle medical issues, share stories, build support networks, form friendships and ease the isolation that can often be felt by families of premature and sick newborns. whilst offering families on going parent support after leaving the safety of a NICU or SCN.

"Having a group specifically for sick & premmie babies is such a blessing and comfort. I have attended a regular group once my baby came home from hospital and it was just too difficult. I couldn't relateto any of the mothers and the information we received was irrelevant. I love this group as it'svery inviting and welcoming, and everyone has their own unique story and they understand the NICU journey." - Miracle Mum, Nicole

You're Invited!

Come have a cuppa, chat and play with people who understand. Visit our website to locate your nearest *NurtureGroup*.



Scan here to find out
more information
and to register