



Jo-Anne Shellum – Founding Director

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The Beginning

Identified Need

- Emotional support provided to sibling(s) reduces issues with bonding and separation anxiety and reduces the risk of sibling rivalry between the children (Munch and Levick, 2001), which promotes effective family relationships in the future.
- Siblings are at risk of behavioural and psychological difficulties associated with feelings of neglect, isolation and confusion in unfamiliar circumstances.
- Supporting Family Integrated Care

Parents Sibling Challenges

- “guilt and worry”
- “other kids would only sit on the NICU for a maximum of one hour”
- “I couldn’t spend much time on the unit with my baby”
- “It was so hard to juggle”
- “Impacted on me be able to express milk”
- “I could only visit my baby at night as I could not afford childcare”
- “I felt torn”
- “I wasn’t bonding with my baby as I was not able to hold her when my husband was not there as I had to take care of my other child”

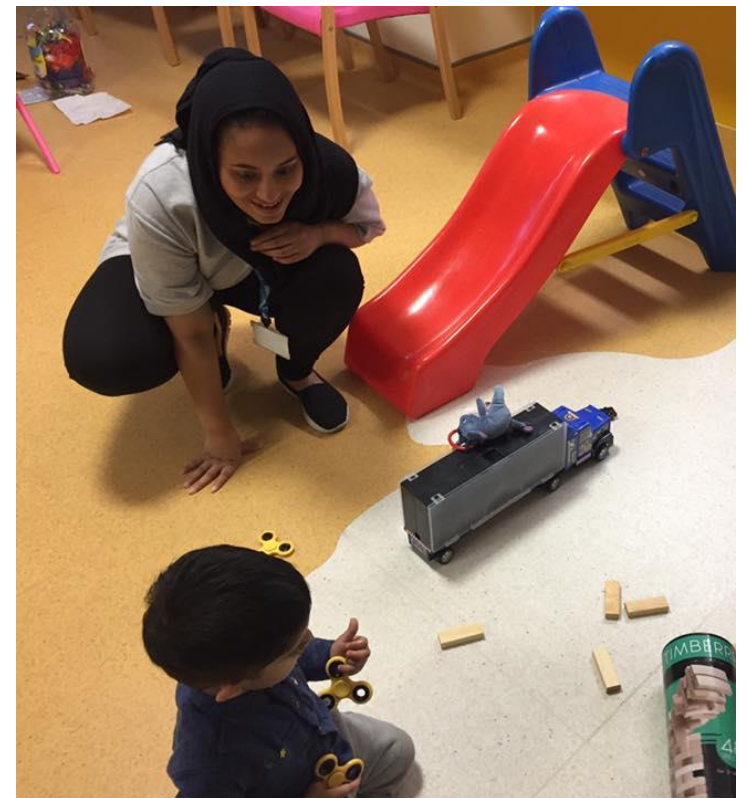
Volunteer Process

Recruitment

- Completed Application
- Interview
- References
- Training
- DBS
- Occupational Health
- Hospital Training

Ongoing Support

- Monthly Reviews (group and 1:1)
- FB group
- Policies and procedures
- Quartly social meet ups
- Annual Training Review
- Volunteer of the month award
- Opportunities for qualifications (QCFs)



Sibling Support



Parent Support



Comfort and Hold Babies



Themed Family Sessions



Community Support

Benefits



NHS



Parent



Baby



Sibling

Angela Williams - Parent

“Every weekend Isla attended the ‘hospital club’ which gave her dad and I some much-needed time to spend with our little boy who needed us so very much,”

When the family was later moved to a different hospital, Isla was devastated. “There was nothing like this provision at the other hospital and although the staff on the unit very kindly provided a DVD player for her, there wasn’t any time spent with an adult in the same way,”

“We can honestly say that throughout our NICU journey, the support we had from the volunteers at Noah’s Star meant such a lot to us as a family. Our daughter was safe, happy and entertained.”

Dr Gemma Holder, Consultant Neonatologist

“Noah’s Star has made such a difference both for our parents and families and our staff. The Neonatal Unit can be a daunting place for young children and having dedicated volunteers to support siblings is fantastic. It is a key component of our Family Integrated Care project and helps facilitate our parents becoming true partners in their baby’s care, safe in the knowledge that their children are in good hands. “We are delighted to be working in partnership with Jo-Anne and Noah’s Star”

Elizabeth Penny - Clinical Psychologist

"Noah's Star is an exceptional organisation. As a psychologist working in Birmingham women's neonatal unit I have seen the impact it has made for our families. Support for siblings makes a significant emotional and psychological difference to the sense of safety and emotional well-being of children who are scared and confused regarding their sibling's poor health or prematurity.

Unfortunately, NHS services are able to do very little to support siblings and therefore Noah's stars work is invaluable. Knowing that siblings are welcome in our unit and have a special place to go with friendly people to care for them is a massive relief for our parents and allows them to commit some time and resources to their very needy babies.

Lastly Noah's Star impresses me in how responsive it has been to different needs within the unit. It has developed its support of parents, helping them to feel welcomed into the unit and sensitively listening to their concerns and stories.

In life changing and traumatic journeys, such as those experienced by our families, a wise and kind word or offer of support can make an incredible difference. Noah Star makes this difference every day"

Impact from October 2017 – October 2019

- 700 siblings supported at Birmingham Women's Hospital (BWH)
- 4000 families supported
- 3000 hours of support on the NICU at BWH
- Themed sessions delivered at Ronald McDonald House (RMH) and New Cross Hospital (NCH)
- 50 active volunteers

Future Plans

- Expanding our Stay and Play
- Book Case and Family Library
- Fundraising
- Mental Health Focus (parents and siblings)

Any Questions?

