



[www.support4NICUParents.org](http://www.support4NICUParents.org)

**The following is a list of things that nursing staff can give do to provide support and memories for parents who lose their fetuses or babies, whether on Labor and Delivery or in the NICU:**

These are just some ideas to offer parents; they may not know what they want, and some of these things may not be congruent with their cultural practices. Be creative! This is the parents' time to make special memories with their baby.

- Offer parents:
  - A Lock of Hair (if baby had hair)
  - Handprints
  - Footprints
  - Molds of Handprints and Footprints
  - Newborn Picture
  - Birth Certificate
  - Identification Bracelets
  - Record of Weight, Length, Head & Chest Measurements
  - Receiving blanket the baby was first wrapped in
  - Card hanging on door to notify hospital personnel of loss
- Offer parents the chance to:
  - Hold the baby
  - Bathe the baby
  - Dress the baby in a special outfit
  - Sing to the baby
  - Rock the baby
  - Invite family to spend time with baby
  - Take pictures of baby and others holding baby (consider using Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep, remembrance photographers, at [www.nowilaymedowntosleep.org](http://www.nowilaymedowntosleep.org))
  - Have the baby baptized by the hospital pastoral care staff or parents' own clergy person (if desired)
  
  - Say a special prayer, blessing, or verse
  - Request Autopsy (if desired)
  - Ask Questions
  - Receive information about Support Groups
  - Receive information about Funeral Homes and Costs
- Counsel parents to make clear to family members what they want done with nursery items by the time they come home; they shouldn't let their family decide what is best for

them. Do parents want everything put away, nursery door closed, baby items around house stored away, or things left as is?

**Tasks for Parents to Do Once Home:**

- Pick out Cemetery Plot

\*\*\*Recommend they don't rush picking out a grave marker. This does not need to be decided right away. Parents should shop around and find exactly what they want.

- Visit Funeral Home
- Take anything they want their baby buried with to Funeral Home, for example: special outfit, pictures, receiving blanket, doll or stuffed toy
- If having a closed casket, request funeral home to take a picture with disposable camera
- Write obituary for local paper
- Visit florist for floral arrangements for casket
- Plan Memorial Service
- Gather special mementos to display at Memorial Service

Adapted from Crouse Hospital materials

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