



A PREEMIE'S BILL OF RIGHTS

I deserve your recognition that I may be completing many months of my physical and neurological development outside the protection of my mother's womb. Even as you give me the life sustaining care I so badly need, as much as possible I deserve to have the boundaries, quiet, warmth, gentle stimulation, dim lighting and foetal positioning I would have in my mother's womb.

I deserve to be understood and treated as the individual I am. I deserve to have my language of cues and signals understood by you, my caregiver. My grimaces, hand stretches, frowns and hiccups are as meaningful as any words, but delivered in the only language I know.

I deserve periods of uninterrupted quiet so I can use my energy to grow and not hopelessly trying to overcome excess light, noise and over stimulation.

I deserve the warmth, tenderness and comfort of being held by my parents as soon as my medical condition allows.

I deserve the positive energy of love your kind thoughts and words as you care for me my father's soft touch my mother's gentle words a volunteer's quiet rocking. I deserve these things because in your heart you know their worth even though their absolute clinical value will never be proven.

I deserve your understanding that what is normal and routine for you, as my caregiver, is abnormal and frightening for my mom and dad. So please answer kindly no matter how many times they ask the same question. They deserve your support and the support of other families as they go through the roller coaster experience of the NICU.

I deserve your recognition that my parents are an integral part of my care giving team and should be allowed and encouraged to the best of their ability to help care for me during my stay in your hospital.

I deserve your understanding that part of your job is to help my family and me bond as we learn to trust each other as they prepare to bring me home.

I deserve continuity of care from the NICU to my home from my neonatologist to my primary caregiver so together my family and I can reach our full potential.



You deserve my thanks and recognition
I am here because of YOU!

By Read McCarty