

**CONTENTS:** 

about us...3
ceo welcome...5
chair report...8
prematurity facts...11
product & services...12
partners & supporters...16
financials...23
meet our community...26







## We provide:

- Easily accessible and relevant information.
- Programs offering practical and emotional support.
- Pathways for parents to address mental health issues that have emerged due to the stressful circumstances of their child's birth.
- Continued <u>assistance</u> to ease the transition from hospital to home.
- A resolve to increase community awareness of the unique issues faced by our families.
- Education opportunities for families and healthcare providers who support the families of premature/sick babies.

## ceo welcome

"Despite the challenges we have all faced throughout the year, the Life's Little Treasures community has continued to support us and show incredible loyalty through adversity."

FELICIA WELSTEAD
Life's Little Treasures Foundation CEO

## ceo welcome

# FELICIA WELSTEAD

### Life's Little Treasures Foundation is not government funded.

All our financial support comes through our major donors and corporate partners, from our families who join Walk for Prems and all those that support our fundraising appeals, including our Tax Appeal and our newest campaign, Milestones in March.

We rely on community support to help us raise awareness of Life's Little Treasures Foundation and how we help families with premature or sick babies. Shared personal stories give new families hope and a point of reference. We also offer them the opportunity to belong to a community with shared experiences and the chance to connect with other parents across Australia.

This year, we took many of our services online to ensure that families could still access help wherever they were in the country. Access from home meant that more parents could join our new weekly NICU Connections Facebook groups and enjoy the peer support opportunities they presented. The response to these online groups has been extremely positive and we are planning to include a Dads group in the new year.

Our LLTF staff and volunteers worked hard this year to ensure family support continued through the many hurdles the pandemic presented.

Going 'virtual' for Walk for Prems was a big change for our community but one they embraced with passion and the usual dedication. Thanks to Rebecca Strahan from Petite Marguerite who worked tirelessly to ensure the online success of this event. She helped us pivot successfully by producing all of our marketing collateral and ensured our social media was on point and plentiful. We truly could not have presented Walk For Prems without Rebecca and our dedicated team of staff and volunteers.

I'll admit, at times this year, we wondered what other unexpected issues we would have to face, but families stayed first and foremost in our thoughts as our team of staff and volunteers continued to band together. I thank them for their determination and passion.

I look forward to seeing what we can achieve together for families in 2021-2022. ❖





**Thank you** to our generous community of volunteers, packers, makers, knitters, bakers, sponsors, donors, fundraisers, health professionals, ambassadors, families and online community who have supported LLTF this year.

#familieshelpingfamilies





































"Friendship is born at that moment when one person says to another: 'What! You too? I thought I was the only one..."

C.S LEWIS

# chair report

"The 11th Walk for Prems was run online for the first time ever, raising more than \$348,000. Baby Bunting was instrumental to it's success, galvanising its workforce to fundraise and get involved, despite restrictions. The total raised will allow us to carry on supporting families beyond 2021."

CHRISS MANNIX
Chair of the Board

# chair report

# CHRISS MANNIX

"2021 was full of new beginnings with a shift to working digitally, new specialist team members and a new Chief Executive Officer to lead us."

The most overused word over the past 12 months has to be 'pivot'. But pivot we have. And this has been the key to our success for 2020/21.

We made it through a challenging year; as a not-for-profit learning to navigate a new COVID world and as a community mourning the loss of cofounder and CEO Shusannah Morris.

Karin Vosmansky kept the LLTF 'plates spinning' by stepping into the role of interim CEO whilst we searched for a permanent option. Karin is one of our co-founders, a board member and has generously shared her sharp financial nous and professional experience. Karin led our transition to the digital space, while still ensuring families received personalised, warm and

knowledgeable care. Thank you to Karen Peters and Merryn Csinsci, who in addition to their roles, supported Karin and provided practical and emotional support to the team throughout this period.

We are now in the very capable hands of the new CEO, Felicia Welstead. She has found her place within the team and is reshaping the team culture by introducing new initiatives to enhance our current systems and drive the recruitment of new team members. Felicia is showing herself to be both financially savvy and people-centric and is in a great place to navigate the foundation through the pandemic and beyond. I look forward to seeing things take off from here.

We welcomed Adriana Gomberg to the role of National Partnerships Manager, taking over from Merryn Csincsi who made a huge impact on Life's Little Treasures over the past five years. Adriana is doing a fantastic job introducing us to new partners, whilst still taking care of existing internal and external stakeholders, including our major partner Baby Bunting.

Seona Emanuelli was welcomed to the board. Her hands-on experience within the NICU wards will be a fantastic resource for us.

The 11th Walk for Prems was probably our biggest pivot yet – becoming a 100% online event for the first time in 2020 and raising more than \$348,000. One of our longest partners, Baby Bunting, was instrumental to its success, galvanising its workforce to fundraise and get involved, despite restrictions. The total raised will allow us to carry on supporting families beyond 2020/2021.

Overall, we've seen significant growth in the number of programs we offer, as well as their outputs and the increase of participants. This includes:

 Cementing our position as a national not-for-profit with a 13% increase in the number of hospitals we support across Australia, moving from 132 to 149.

- Running a hugely successful Little Readers' Readathon with 36 hospitals taking part. This event is a fantastic connection point between hospitals and LLTF and we are grateful to our sponsor, Lake Press for their continued support of the event.
- Introducing individual COVIDsafe food packs to meet health requirements to allow us to continue our NICU Food from the Heart program which focuses on providing food/meals to a family in a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) with a premature or sick baby. There are now six hospitals providing 'brekkie bars' for families to enjoy a free breakfast.
- Establishing or continuing partnerships with well-respected medical bodies including MCRI, EFCNI, NIDCAP Australasia and GLANCE.
- Continuing several programs in a new digital format including Precious Prems Packs and our weekly NICU Connections, with separate groups for families still in hospital and for those that have made their way home, 443 Precious Prem Packs

### CHAIR REPORT:

were distributed to provide critical information to help families through the journey of having a premature or sick baby, including booklets and tip sheets.

- Providing family financial support through a year that saw unprecedented demand, no doubt due to COVID.
- Little Bag of Calm, which takes a holistic approach to self-care has done incredibly well. Developed by our Products and services team, it's been snapped up by more than 3363 families wanting to treat themselves or to give as a lovely gift to parents of premature and sick babies. The end of the 2021 financial year saw a complete reorder of 3000 units which are already flying out the door.
- My Colourful Journey which was developed in partnership with NIDCAP Australasia, has already helped thousands of families prepare siblings for what to expect to see in the Neonatal Unit through storytelling and colouring-in activities. We've also recently launched My Brave Journey, a resource to help siblings of premature or sick babies that

have passed away understand grief and work through their feelings. It's been extremely well received by all our hospitals.

 We've invested in psychological support for our staff and volunteers through the pandemic, and for training in public speaking.

A huge thank you to our partners who have helped make all this happen as they have continued to support us on so many levels with their passion for our work so apparent in everything they do for us. Thank you Baby Bunting, Britax Safe-n-Sound, Medela, Earlybirds, Oricom, Lake Press, Web Intelligenz, as well as The Datt Family Foundation and the Gourlay Family Trust.

So that's a wrap for FY 2021. It's been one of change, but because of it, we can continue to provide support to some of the 46,000 babies born premature and sick in Australia. None of the above could be achieved without the tireless work of our 75+ quality volunteers and our team at head office. We are all so grateful for their time, commitment, expertise and passion.

Thank you to everyone who has been involved with Life's Little Treasures Foundation, from fellow board members, management, volunteers, supporters and suppliers, to our families and friends who have been generous in their time and energy to support this cause.

Chriss Mannix, Chair 🍎

"2021 has been one of change, but because of it, we have been able to continue providing support to some of the 46,000 babies who are born premature and sick in Australia."



# product & services

"Demand for LLTF support services increased significantly as families of premature and sick babies felt more isolated and more vulnerable navigating the hospital alone."

KAREN PETERS
Product and Services Manager

# product & services



Last year brought many challenges for the Life's Little Treasures Foundation team and the community we support.

COVID restrictions suspended critical face-to-face support services. Demand for our support services increased significantly as families felt more isolated and vulnerable navigating their hospital experience alone.

Our team was able to find alternative solutions to continue our commitment to supporting families, extending our accessibility and focus on mental health and crisis support.

Our online support groups for families in hospital, and more recently home, extended our access to support to families in regional locations. These facilitated support groups are run by trained parent volunteers with lived experience. They provide a village of support to listen, guide, and refer new families to essential services to empower them to advocate for their baby and family. Our small team of volunteers and staff were able to deliver 99 online groups supporting 1228 families.

Our Family Assistance program extended its funding to 136 families.

Food, fuel, and accommodation vouchers ensured parents in crisis could cover essential family costs enabling precious time by the cot side building infant-parent attachments, which are critical for baby's development and parent's mental health.

The Brekkie Bar launched in two new tertiary hospitals, bringing our total to six NICU hospitals providing 1620 Brekkie Boxes for families spending long days with babies in intensive care.

We proudly delivered 3363 Little Bags of Calm which educates parents on the importance of well-being.

Our achievements would not be possible without the dedication and hard work of our Product and Services team and volunteers, many of whom have lived the experience of having a premature and sick baby.

2022 will bring unique challenges for our community dealing with the long-term effects of the pandemic on mental health. Our focus will be on reaching more families with essential information and new ways to connect our community.









### PRODUCT & SERVICES REPORT: HIGHLIGHTS



1620 Brekkie Boxes delivered nationally & expanding to six new hospitals



**864** 'My Brave Journey' distributed nationally



**2114** 'My Colourful Journey' delivered nationally









49 NICU
Connections
Facebook closed
group sessions
delivered to parents &
carers in hospital



**50** NICU Connections Facebook closed group sessions delivered to parents/carers at home



**36** hospitals took part in the Little Readers Read-a-thon

### PRODUCTS & SERVICES REPORT: LLTF PRODUCT/SERVICE **2020-2021 FIN YEAR RESULT** Financial Assistance packs 136 families assisted Partnering hospitals 149 hospitals supported Tip Sheets 11846 distributed 'My Colourful Journey' colouring-in book 2114 books distributed SCN Guides and NICU Guides 5300 books distributed Precious Prem Packs 348 packs distributed Digital Precious Prem Packs 172 downloads Hospital gifts 12.630 distributed Little Bag of Calm 3363 packs delivered NICU Connections closed Facebook group/In hospital 49 weekly group sessions delivered with 441 hospital participants NICU Connections closed Facebook group/At home 50 weekly group sessions delivered with 787 home participants **Brekkie Boxes** 1620 delivered nationally to families in hospital Brekkie Bar Expansion 6 hospitals serviced (2 in VIC, 1 each in TAS, NSW, QLD, ACT) Little Readers Read-a-thon event 36 hospitals participated New Product: 'My Brave Journey' colouring-in book 864 books distributed since 15 Oct launch

# partners & supporters

"At LLTF, we are honoured to have the opportunity to partner and receive support from stakeholders who share our vision and values. Their incredible support, combined with the collaborative nature of our partnerships allow us to amplify the positive impact we can have on the lives of families with premature and sick babies."

ADRIANA GOMBERG National Partnerships Manager

# partners & supporters

# ADRIANA GOMBERG

# BabyBunting **55**



Life's Little Treasures Foundation is very proud to call Baby Bunting a Major Corporate Partner.

Since 2015, their passionate team has been with us every step of the way - offering support, funding a diverse range of activities and helping us raise awareness about premature and sick babies throughout Australia.

Baby Bunting understands the needs of families and the importance of specialised support, and together, we can help more families in more ways than ever before.

As Presenting Partner of LLTF's 'Walk for Prems' for the fifth consecutive year,

Baby Bunting unreservedly backed our virtual version of this event in 2020, once again engaging their staff, suppliers, and customers during their in-store and online campaign, raising critical campaign funds for LLTF.

Through their Major Sponsorship of our 'Precious Prem Packs' and 'A Guiding Hand for Families in Special Care Nurseries' booklet, Baby Bunting enabled our families to continue to receive vital resources and keep connected during very challenging times.

We thank our loyal Major Corporate Partner, Baby Bunting and their CEO and Managing Director Matt Spencer for their ongoing partnership and commitment to our organisation.

A special mention must also go to Sue Dawson, Jessie de Vries and Josie Graham for their hard work and dedication to our cause, & "The entire team at Baby Bunting was extremely proud to partner with Life's Little Treasures Foundation to support the 2020 Walk for Prems..."

The work the Foundation does is incredibly important to help families navigate the complex physical and emotional demands that often go hand-in-hand with premature birth.

2020 was a year like no other in many respects, and the Walk for Prems was no different. With lockdowns preventing physical events from taking place, a new approach was needed. As we shifted to a fully virtual walk, the theme of 'One Walk, One Thousand Locations' was very fitting. This theme of being united for a common cause no matter our geographic location was a timely reminder that no matter where we were, we could come together to raise awareness and funds for such an important cause.

At Baby Bunting, we aim to support new and expectant parents through the early years of parenting, and we know that those first years are more difficult for some families, especially when little ones are premature or unwell. This is why we align so strongly with the values of the Life's Little Treasures Foundation and appreciate all the assistance they provide to families who find themselves faced with these challenges.

This was Baby Bunting's fifth year partnering with the Foundation, and we were thrilled to contribute a large donation after a six-week fundraising campaign. We look forward to continuing this partnership in years to come.

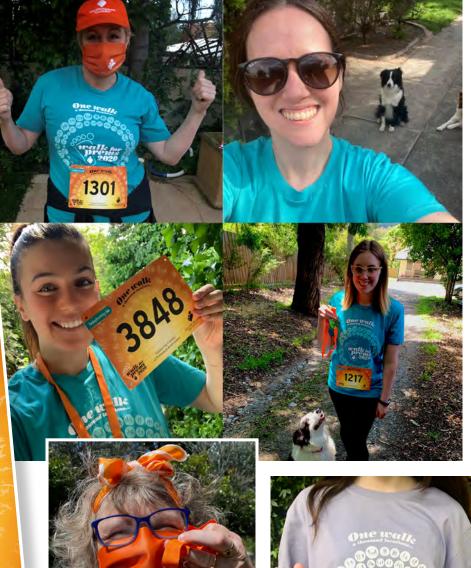
MATT SPENCER, CEO, BABY BUNTING

### PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS:

"We are very grateful for Baby Bunting's long-standing partnership with Life's Little Treasures as our Major Corporate Partner and Walk for Prems Presenting Partner. Your support over the years has enabled us to deliver our products and services to families across Australia, and your engagement and commitment have been overwhelming and heart-warming. Year after year, you all get behind our cause raising vital funds for our organisation, while encouraging others to do the same – the result is inspirational, and we couldn't be more grateful!"

FELICIA WELSTEAD, LLTF CEO









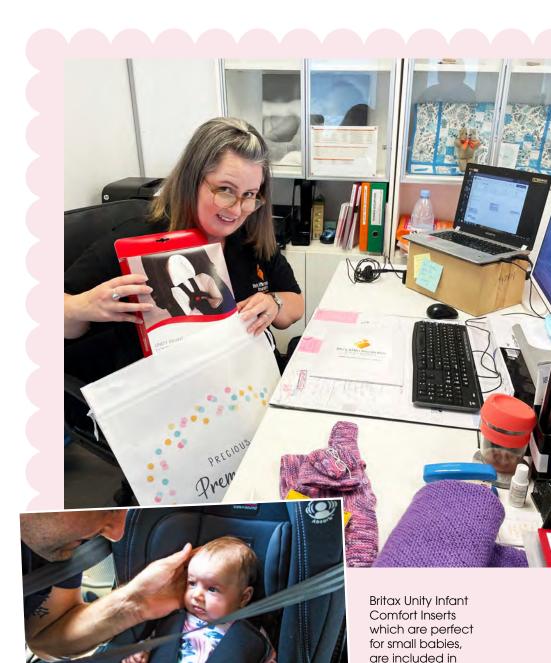
**Britax Safe-n-Sound** has been a passionate supporter of LLTF for the past four years and we are grateful and proud to align ourselves with a brand that is synonymous with safety, comfort and quality.

Britax Safe-n-Sound continued their commitment to LLTF and our community in 2020/21 as a Major Sponsor of our 'Precious Prem Packs' and donating 1200 Britax Unity Infant Comfort Inserts included in the packs. We were thrilled that Steelcraft joined us again as a Major Sponsor of 'Walk for Prems' 2020, also generously donating eight Steelcraft Strider Signature V5 bundles as prizes.

We thank General Manager, Dirk Voller and his entire team for their tireless support, especially Marketing Manager, Narelle Miller and Marketing Coordinator Francisca Schilling

"We are proud to continue to support and recognise the amazing work that Life's Little Treasures provides for families and their babies. We hold the well-being of children close to our hearts and we are honoured to sponsor such a worthy cause."

DIRK VOLLER, General Manager APAC, Britax Safe-n-Sound



our Precious Prem

Packs

LIFES LITTLE TREASURES FOUNDATION ANNUAL REPORT 20/21 PG19

### PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS:



# THANK YOU FOR THE VERY GENEROUS SUPPORT FROM OUR PARTNERS:

### **Supporting Partners:**



THE SCIENCE OF CARE™

Medela and Jarrod Percy, Senior Business Director, Managing Director and Company Director, as well as Marketing Manager Margarita Magdalinos for their long-standing partnership. Medela has partnered with LLTF since 2014 and our collaboration has only strenathened over the years. Medela remained dedicated to our cause as we pivoted our activities online, sponsoring our 'Walk for Prems' and our 'NICU Connections' online events, also providing discount vouchers and breast pads for inclusion in our 'Precious Prem Packs'.

# earlybirds

**Earlybirds** and Director Lynda Day for donating gorgeous premmie clothing included in our 'Precious Prem Packs', and contributing towards the new booklet 'A Guiding Hand for Families in NICU and Special Care Nurseries'

### oricom<sub>®</sub>

Oricom and Marketing Manager Marlene Silva for being a valuable Sponsor of our 'Walk for Prems' and donating incredible prizes for our online competitions. We'd also like to acknowledge Oricom's generous donation of 120 baby monitors distributed to our most vulnerable families as part of LLTF's 'Financial Assistance Program'.



Lake Press and Director David Horgan for their sponsorship of LLTF's 'Little Readers Read-a-thon' and their generous donation of 650 books distributed as prizes to participating hospitals.



**Web Intelligenz** and Operations Manager Myfanwy Thewlis for developing our 'Walk for Prems' website and assisting with promoting the event digitally.



We are also honoured and humbled to receive support from philanthropic bodies, and Trusts & Foundations, including:

- The Datt Family Foundation
- The Gourlay Family Trust;

and to receive Pro Bono and In-kind support from:

- Lander & Rogers Lawyers
- Bird & Bird
- Crayola
- Twinings
- Gloveman ONE Packaging





Pulling together an online event for the first time was quite a challenge. We'd like to thank the following people who generously donated their time and services to ensure our 2020 event was a great success. A huge thank you to:

### **WALK ENTERTAINMENT:**

MC: Wendy Ealey
Remembrance song: Dawn Faith
Music: The Bethany Fisher Show
Warm up: KIrsten Turner from KT FIT

### **DOVE CEREMONY:**

<u>Doves:</u> Fiona Robinson, White Wings Dove Service <u>Dove Release:</u> Claire Penny and Tash Foote <u>Dedication Reading:</u> Tash Foote <u>Official Walk Starter:</u> Ethan Bunn <u>Film Editor:</u> Jared Bazley

#### **MARKETING & PUBLICITY:**

- Darren & Jodie from Progressive PR
- Petite Marguerite Design
- Josie Graham, Jessie De Vries & Harry Williams, Baby Bunting
- Francisca Schilling & Narelle Miller, Britax
- Kerryn Marlow, SMS Express
- Our army of loyal supporters and ambasadors: Craig Ferguson, David Molly-Rose Morris with Bailey & RJ, Amy Sanderson, Michelle

Worthington, Brooke Hanson, Annie McFarlane, Jazz, Bella & Robbie, Jet & Lexi, Noah, Esther, Barb, Dave & Dan Harper and every single family who shared their story in a media interview, a social post or a poster!

#### **WEB MAGICIANS:**

 Myfanwy Thewlis & Harsh, Webintelligenz

#### **TECH SUPPORT:**

• Puska Grange at Frontstream

### **SOCIAL MEDIA:**

- All who liked, commented and shared our posts
- Petite Marguerite Design

### KIDS' CORNER ENTERTAINMENT AND MARKETING SUPPORT:

- Story Surprise (Laura and Anthony)
- Maddy & Jimmy
- Larrikin Puppets
- B Minor Music 🍎



































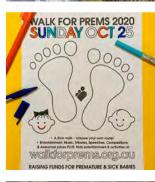




































# 2020/2021 financials

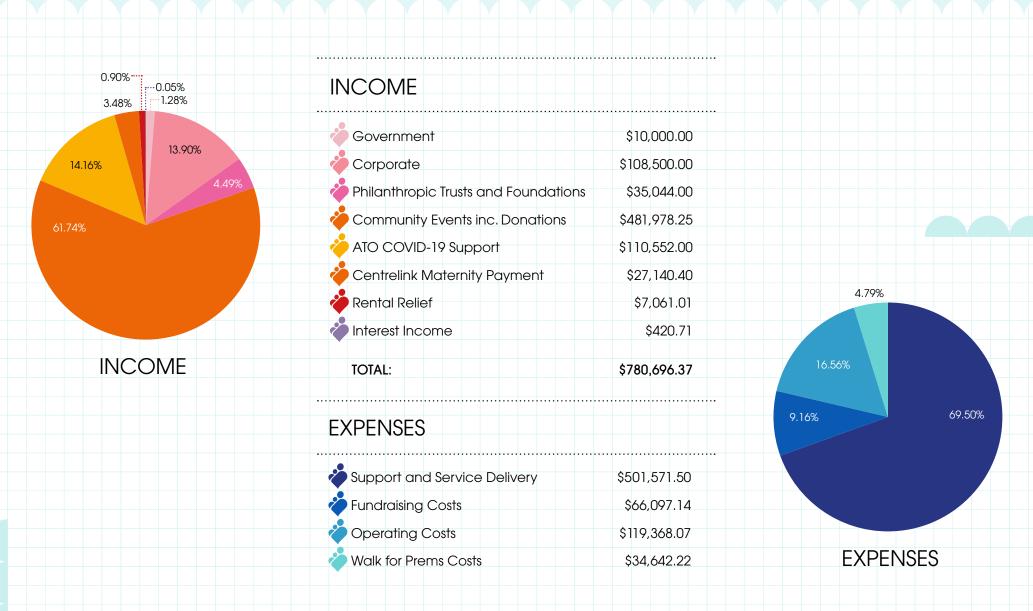
"Another amazing year at the foundation and we again managed to support thousands of families that are not only suffering the life changing effect of a premature baby but also dealing with another year of Covid-19."

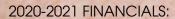
KARIN VOSMANSKY
Treasurer, Co-Founder & Board Member

♦ LIFES LITTLE TREASURES FOUNDATION ANNUAL REPORT 20/21 PG23

# **2020/2021 financials**







## BALANCE SHEET AS OF JUNE 2021

ASSETS		
Current Assets	\$419,795.45	
Other Assets	\$425.00	
Property & Equipment	\$31,380.53	
Total Assets		\$451,600.98
LIABILITIES		
Current Liabilities	\$32,176.34	
Non-Current Liabilities	\$17,888.00	
Total Liabilities		\$50,064.34
Net Assets		\$401,536.64
EQUITY		
Directors Capital	\$60.00	
Retained Earnings	\$342,459.20	
Current Year Surplus/Deficit	\$59,017.44	
Total Equity		\$401,536.64



# our community

"We are so impressed with the work the Foundation does. Having a group in the background that really does care, means so much."

NATASHA, MUM TO AARON



# Natasha's pregnancy experienced trouble at 17 weeks...

When it was discovered that Twin 1's membranes were bulging, she was rushed to the hospital where it was expected she and her husband Matt would lose our precious babies before the weekend was through.

The pregnancy stabilised but was still at high risk, so at 22 weeks Natasha was transported to the Mercy Hospital where, if the boys were born at this early gestation, they would stand a



small chance of survival. Sadly, however, Twin 1 Thomas, sadly passed away in the womb.

This is their story...

"We were given 8 days to grieve the loss of our first-born baby boy before his brother decided it was his turn to meet us. Aaron Jack was born at exactly 25 weeks gestation weighing a tiny 748g."

"I got to see my tiny little bear before I was whisked away. When we saw Aaron in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, I finally allowed myself to believe he was really alive. I held his tiny little fist in my hand and told him I loved him through



the isolette that would be his home for the next 6 weeks."

Living away from home and not being able to see their family in Melbourne lock down, made life difficult. The normal ring of support that one would have when losing a child and coping with a baby in NICU was not available to them.

"Thankfully some of the financial strain of living away from home was eased through the very generous support that Life's Little Treasures provided us. We received a \$200 voucher that helped us with petrol and food, some beautiful little blankets, beanies and booties that had been handmade, a soft newborn insert for our car seat and a book for Aaron among other things. The most touching and personal gift was a small gift-wrapped package for Thomas. It included a beautiful little Angel outfit for him, a blanket, a teddy bear and



"We received a \$200 voucher that helped us with petrol and food and Life's Little Treasures Foundation sent us handmade beautiful little blankets, beanies and booties, a soft newborn Britax insert for our car seat and a book for Aaron."

### **OUR COMMUNITY:**

a journal where we could record the special moments we shared together."

Aaron had a relatively smooth journey through NICU. After almost 100 days in the NICU, he was transferred back to his hometown Special Care Nursery where he celebrated his 100th day of life, coming off his oxygen support. Aaron was discharged from the hospital at 117 days old to go home.

"If there could be one thing we would wish for those on the NICU path, is that you are not alone in this journey. I know it feels like a lonely, scary way to start out but there are people who will help support you when it feels like you can't go on. Throughout our stay in hospital, the Life's Little Treasures Facebook page and website helped us to know there were others who had made it through this journey and taken their babies home at the end of it."

Natasha, Mum to Aaron and Thomas &



"The most touching gift LLTF sent was a gift-wrapped package for Thomas which included a beautiful little Angel outfit for him, a blanket and a journal to record our special moments we shared together."







"LLTF are a wonderful community run by other parents who have experience with sick and premature kids.

I particularly appreciated the Friday group chats during COVID-19 which meant we couldn't connect with other parents in the NICU/SCN physically.

And a chat function was a lot more accessible than a video or audio call..."



"I couldn't help but consult 'Mr Google'. Sometimes what I read made me feel so anxious and sick I just didn't know how I would get through the day and other times I read things that inspired me and gave me hope.

One of the things that I read that gave me the most hope was these parent stories on the 'Life's Little Treasures' page, I feel like I read every single one!"

JENNIFER, MUM TO 31 WEEKER, SANTINO



..."Being able to share in other parents challenges and highlights was really helpful in knowing we weren't alone, could ask questions, could share our experience and gave us the light at the end of the tunnel."

AMANDA, MUM TO PATRICK, 32 WEEKER & ONLINE NICU CONNECTIONS FB GROUP MEMBER



"NICU Connections live chat...
has helped me and my partner get
through one of the toughest times
of our lives with the unexpected
and sudden birth of our 27 week
son, Jai. It's comforting to be able
to talk about your experience and
emotions with other parents,
past and present..."

RACHEL MUM OF 27 WEEKER JAI & ONLINE NICU CONNECTIONS GROUP MEMBER



"You guys are amazing!
And even at the start when
it was the hardest, just receiving
a bag full of information was
so helpful and really did make the
difference. So it's been nice sharing
the journey and having you guys
understand everything."

CHRISTINA, MUM OF A 25+6 WEEKER



"... All the peer support team members make you feel so welcome! We can chat from anywhere and let our feelings out without having to worry.

Zoom catch ups were not for us there are days where you just don't feel like putting on a brave face."

RACHEL MUM OF 27 WEEKER JAI & ONLINE NICU CONNECTIONS GROUP MEMBER Please consider supporting us by donating, volunteering or fundraising to join us in advocating for premature and sick babies across Australia.



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<u>lifeslittletreasures.org.au</u>