



Tools for Facilitators: Including the Baby

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At APppAH, we encourage including the baby in what is happening for the mother, couple, or family. This means telling the baby what is happening. Some people call this “telegraphing.” If you are going to go out of the room, tell the baby. If you are going to shift your attention, tell the baby. If you and the baby are going somewhere, tell the baby what you are doing. You can wait for the response.

If you are presenting to an audience, acknowledge the babies that are there, speak to them. Welcome the babies who are in utero, too. Hold a wide space when you do this to notice any responses in the room. Audience members may feel empowered by this modeling of including the baby, and when you do this with moms, babies, families and groups, it will model for them that babies are conscious.

A recent journal article about improving services in a neonatal intensive care unit advocating telling the baby what is going on in the hospital when it comes to their care, and talking with them like any other patient. The authors state:

*“When an adult patient is hospitalized and does not have the opportunity for family or visitors, **the nurse takes time to talk to them, which is a practice that should be replicated with the infant.**”* Emphasis, ours.

Source: Altimier, L & Phillips, R. (2016). The neonatal integrative developmental care model: advanced clinical applications of the seven core measures for neuroprotective family-centered developmental care. [Newborn and Infant Nursing Reviews](#) Volume 16, Issue 4, :230-244.
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