



3RD EDITION | SUMMER 2017

ROSWELL EDITION

FAMILIES LIKE US

CHILDREN & THEIR DEVELOPMENT

Grand Opening!

**MECA THERAPIES
OPENS NEW CENTER!**

**READY FOR
SOME GOLF?**

ROSWELL'S 1ST ANNUAL
MARCH OF DIMES
Golf for Babies Tournament

Saving Lives:

**NICUs CARING FOR ROSWELL'S
PREMATURE BABIES**

NICU Advice from Cassandra Box, Roswell Mother: "Just Breathe."

Just Breathe. It became my motto after having Danika, my daughter. Everything that happens in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) good or bad will feel like it is huge. Every time your phone rings with the hospital number, your heart will skip a beat. You will bond with nurses over conversations about feedings and bowel movements. You will feel every setback like someone is physically stealing your opportunity to go home from you.

Just breathe.

The day will come when the doctor will send you home. It will happen so fast that

you'll sort of panic thinking, "Am I truly ready?" And you will be. When you're about to leave, you will get handed follow up appointment(s), medical equipment, or maybe medications, and it will feel like more than you can handle.

Just breathe.

NICU babies are given to parents who are tough. You are tough enough to get through this. Take care of yourself. It hurts to be away from your baby for even a little while, but taking breaks and getting some time away is something that you need.

Cassandra Box

Go to page 6 to read the full story.

WHAT'S IN THIS EDITION:

PAGE

3

FAMILY RESOURCES:

Roswell is a community full of support. Learn more about the resources in your community!

PAGE

6

A STORY OF NICU FAMILY

The journey families go through in the NICU challenges families, but with the help of the NICU staff families prevail and come out stronger than ever. Learn more about a Roswell Family who has been in the NICU.

PAGE

4

SAVING LIVES IN THE NICU

Hospitals in Albuquerque care for the premature births in Roswell. Learn more about the hospitals that care for the NICU families in Roswell.

PAGE

7

MECA THERAPIES' GRAND OPENING

MECA Therapies has provided services in Chaves county for over 13 years, and has recently moved to a new location! Learn more about the great services MECA Therapies offers Roswell!

Welcome TO



FAMILIES LIKE US

A Publication for the Families of New Mexico

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ABOUT US

Families Like Us is published monthly by Cheddar Advertising and is free to our readers. This publication aims to inform the Southern New Mexico public and beyond of the issues facing our communities in regards to child development. Our goal is to shed light on child development and the issues surrounding this subject.

SUBMISSION POLICY

Families Like Us is always open to collaboration that will create awareness to child development and welcomes submissions. Submissions can be emailed to anthony@cheddarize.com. Families Like Us reserves the right to edit submissions and cannot guarantee publication.

ADVERTISING POLICY

Space in this publication will be available soon for paid advertising.

A Healthy Child Is a Happy Child:

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES



ROSWELL AREA SERVICES FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS

NM FAMILY, INFANT, TODDLER (FIT) PROGRAM SERVICES

MECA Therapies • 575-623-2615 •
Free Services
Los Pacitos • (575) 623-6402 • Free Services

CHILD CARE SERVICES

Child Development Center • 575-624-7301
• Prices Vary by Age & Full-Time/Part-Time
Care

BREAST FEEDING & NEW MOTHER SUPPORT SERVICES

La Leche League of Roswell • 575-317-3510 •
Free Services

R OSWELL OFFERS GREAT SERVICES FOR FAMILIES

Roswell and surrounding communities can benefit from several early childhood development and care programs sponsored by local groups and by state-governmental entities.

NEW MEXICO FAMILY INFANT TODDLER (FIT) PROGRAM

The most prominent of these programs is the New Mexico Family Infant Toddler (FIT) program, run by the state Department of Health. This program provides services to families who have infants and toddlers at risk for developmental delays.

Children are eligible for the FIT program if they: live in an environment that poses a substantial risk to their development; they have at least a 25-percent delay in motor, language, cognitive, sensory, adaptive, and/or social and emotional development; have established medical conditions or biological risk, such as Down Syndrome, retinopathy, prematurity, low birth weight, or prenatal drug exposure, that increases their risk for developmental delays.

Such children can benefit from the FIT program through state-funded physical, occupational, and/or speech therapy, as well

as other services that increase, maintain, or improve the functional abilities of a child to improve their independence in daily activities.

FIT can also provide family and child counseling, technology and therapy to improve the hearing, speech, and vision of children, nursing and health services.

Roswell is also home to MECA Therapies, which offers services to children who have speech, language, physical, and developmental delays and disorders, feeding and swallowing difficulties, neurologic/neuromuscular conditions, sensory-integration conditions, and autism-spectrum disorder. MECA Therapies is a contracted provider with the State of New Mexico to provide early childhood development supports.

Los Pasitos is another provider of early intervention services, childcare and education. For more information on Los Pasitos, call 575-623-6402. For more information on MECA Therapies, call 575-623-2615.

ROSWELL'S CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Another child-development program Roswell and families in nearby communities

can utilize is Eastern New Mexico University – Roswell's Child Development Center (CDC), operated by Family Resource and Referral, Inc.

The Center offers a child development program which provides training for students in teaching, care-giving, nursing and occupational therapy. Services are available to a limited number of young children in the Center's role as a learning lab for students as well as to provide the community with child care.

For more information on the Child Development Center, contact call 575-624-7301.

LA LECHE LEAGUE OF ROSWELL

Mothers in and near Roswell can also attend twice-monthly breastfeeding-support groups hosted by the La Leche League of Roswell.

La Leche League meets the third Monday of each month at 6 p.m. and the third Thursday of each month at 10 a.m. at Grace Community Church in the Children's Building, 935 W. Mescalero Road.

For more information, or for breastfeeding help, contact Kim Lusk at 575-317-3510 or kimlusk23@yahoo.com.



Lovelace Women's Hospital

Photo Courtesy: Lovelace.

LOVELACE WOMEN'S HOSPITAL'S Well Equipped to Aid NICU Babies

Lovelace Women's Hospital's neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) in Albuquerque is a key component to saving the lives of premature babies born in Chaves County.

Lovelace Regional Hospital in Roswell does not have a neonatal intensive care unit, said Katherine Cox, communications manager for the Lovelace Health System, but patients who are in need of such services are referred to Lovelace Women's Hospital in Albuquerque.

The Lovelace Women's Hospital NICU has 53 beds and 24/7-in-house neonatologists to care for ill, prematurely born babies.

The Lovelace Women's Hospital NICU also has physical and occupational therapists and speech-language pathologists to help with feeding, swallowing and movement issues and help mothers learn proper positioning.

Ophthalmology and cardiopulmonary specialists provide pre-birth testing, monitoring, and pre- and after-birth intervention.

Social workers provide case-management and social services for families and their newborns.

Dietitians offer nutritional care and dietary counseling services for parents.

Mothers experiencing lactation issues can receive help from Lovelace lactation specialists.

Families not from the Albuquerque area can receive temporary lodging during their time at the Lovelace Women's Hospital NICU through partnerships with the Ronald McDonald House and Casa Esperanza.

Further, prematurely born children can be transported to Lovelace Health System hospitals and partner hospitals, such as UNM, from around the state through the New Mexico Newborn Transport Program (NMNTP).

The NMNTP, established in 1975, is partnered with 7BAR Aviation, certified through the Federal Aviation Administration and the Commission on Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems, and team members are

certified annually in flight safety/evacuation and air medical resource management by appointed safety officers.

The NMNTP is available 24/7 for transport of sick infants from birth to 44 weeks of age. The transport team includes a neonatal nurse practitioner and an emergency medical technician or registered nurse specifically trained to care for sick newborns.

"No parent plans or intends on having their baby stay in a neonatal intensive care unit," says the Lovelace Women's Hospital NICU website. "But if that should become necessary, we want you to rest assured that Lovelace Women's Hospital is here for you and your baby with the best available care."

Lovelace Health System includes Lovelace Medical Center, Lovelace Rehabilitation Hospital, Lovelace Women's Hospital, Lovelace Westside Hospital, Heart Hospital of New Mexico at Lovelace Medical Center, Lovelace Regional Hospital in Roswell, and Lovelace Medical Group.

UNM CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OFFERS SPECIALIZED CARE AND TREATMENT FOR ROSWELL'S PREMATURE BABIES

Albuquerque's University of New Mexico Children's Hospital's neonatal intensive care units (NICU) serves families in and around Roswell.

The UNM Health System includes UNM Hospital and clinics, UNM Sandoval Regional Medical Center, and UNM Medical Group.

The UNM NICU, established in 1971, has 52 beds and 12 intermediary care beds.

UNM's services include: ventilator support, high frequency inhaled nitric oxide, bedside radiologic diagnostic technologies, extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO), neonatal surgery, cardiac catheterization, cardiovascular surgery, whole-body cooling, retinopathy of prematurity treatment, access to consultation from faculty in pediatric subspecialties, developmental specialty care, nursing care, and respiratory therapists

"Our specialized group of neonatologists offers phone-consultation and transport from all areas of New Mexico and neighboring states," says UNMCH's website. "We provide our out-of-area families with accommodations at Casa Esperanza, the Ronald McDonald House, or family rooms available in the NICU. Also available are breast-pumping rooms, isolation rooms,

and pre-discharge family rooms."

Prematurely born children can be transported to UNM hospitals and partner hospitals, such as Lovelace, from around the state through the New Mexico Newborn Transport Program which was established in 1975.

The program is certified through the Federal Aviation Administration. Because the program provides services to infants, members of the program are certified annually in flight safety protocols. The program is also certified through the Commission on Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems.

The New Mexico Newborn Transport Program operates 24/7, and provides a transport team of a neonatal nurse practitioner and an emergency-medical technician.



A Story of HOPE, COURAGE AND GRIT:

A Roswell mother endures back to back NICU births.



Families can never predict how a pregnancy will unfold. When a baby is born premature due to unforeseen circumstances, they are admitted into the neonatal intensive care unit, or NICU, to receive life-saving treatment. The NICU is sometimes referred to as "a special care nursery," "an intensive care nursery," or "newborn intensive care."

One in 10 babies are born prematurely each year in the United States. Babies who need NICU treatment and care are often admitted within the first 24 hours after birth. These babies are admitted for various reasons: premature birth, delivery complications, and other signs of health issues during the first few days of life.

Families pull together with love and support to make it through this difficult journey.

MEET CASSANDRA BOX, MOTHER & FIGHTER

"My mother was my most valued asset during both of my NICU experiences," said Cassandra Box, a Roswell mother who gave birth to two babies who needed NICU care. "There are so many ups and downs when your baby is in the NICU and when you are on the downs where your life just consists of the same repetitive routine of getting up, eating, going to the hospital, eating, leaving the hospital then sleeping, the NICU can be a lonely place, so having someone, anyone to share that experience with keeps you sane."

Cassandra never thought she would be experiencing the hardships of the NICU. She not only gave birth to a daughter at 38 weeks but also gave birth to a second daughter a few years later at 33 weeks.

BIG SISTER DANIKA BORN AT 38 WEEKS

Cassandra's daughter Danika was born with spina bifida, a serious defect of the spine. At 38 weeks, Cassandra was scheduled for a cesarean section, but her water broke about 1 a.m., the same day of the C-section. This began her first experience in the NICU.

Although the NICU and even after the transition home were tough times for the family, Cassandra had the will and courage to get her through the experience along with the aid of loved ones and the care providers in the NICU.

"NICU nurses are some of the most amazing people you will ever meet. They are teachers, advocates and comforters, both to parents and babies," Cassandra said. "The NICU is the first step into the world of the unknown, and the nurses and staff help you learn everything involved in taking care of your new baby." (cont'd)



NICU BABIES ARE GIVEN TO
PARENTS WHO ARE TOUGH. YOU
ARE TOUGH ENOUGH TO GET
THROUGH THIS

- Cassandra Box



The NICU was a place of healing and knowledge for Cassandra and her family.

"Both times the NICU was a learning center for me," Cassandra said. "With Danika, I had to learn not only how to be a mother, but also learn about an entire new world of procedures, medications, and surgeries."



(cont'd) During the birth of Danika, the family spent 34 days in the NICU at the Children's Memorial Hermann Hospital in Houston, Texas before transitioning home. During the time in the NICU, Cassandra and her newborn baby were far from home in New Mexico.

"I would say the most challenging part was living in a different state while Danika was in the NICU," Cassandra said. "The decision to go to Houston to have her was a difficult one, but we truly believed she would get the best care there. Unfortunately, being there left me and my mother completely alone for a month and a half with no vehicle and living in a hotel."

BABY NOVA BORN AT 33 WEEKS

Almost four years later, Cassandra found herself in the NICU once more with the birth of her youngest daughter Nova.

Baby Nova was born at 33 weeks and spent 22 days in the NICU to receive care Nova

received care at University Medical Center in Lubbock, Texas.

"I was having 'uterine irritability' for two days which was finally stopped with medication, but then Nova's heart rate started to drop and they didn't know why so they decided to deliver her," Cassandra said.

Cassandra explains that although both her daughters received care from different NICUs and that you never get used to your child being in the NICU, the routine was very similar.

"The experience with Nova was very different for me because it was so unexpected. I truly wanted to have the "normal" experience of having a child," Cassandra said.

During this NICU, Cassandra faced increased emotional challenges that she worked through.

"Since, I had been through it before it was almost like I went on autopilot once we got

there. Emotionally I was a wreck, I felt like I was robbed what I wanted most," Cassandra said. "I just wanted to know what it was like to have a baby and bring that baby home, to have all the newborn moments without fear. It took a little while for me to accept being in a NICU again."

Today, both children are healthy and making strides every day.

Danika is almost 4-years-old, and is attending an Early Literacy School, where she receives therapy. She walks with KAFOs (Knee Ankle Foot Orthosis) and a walker.

Nova has recently been transitioned home and is about a month old during the time of this story's publication. She has hit the 5-lb. mark.

"She has my breast milk fortified with extra calories to help her gain weight and takes a multivitamin. Aside from being tiny she is healthy and growing," Cassandra said. ■

MECA Therapies Celebrates New Location IN ROSWELL



MECA Therapies is no stranger to Chaves County, serving the communities for over 13 years with quality NM Family Infant Toddler (FIT) Program Services and a full spectrum of early childhood services. However, the community will be seeing something new this summer with MECA Therapies.

MECA Therapies will be moving to a newly renovated location to better serve the community's early childhood development needs.

Recently, MECA Therapies renovated a building that harbored restaurants in the past on 2nd Street in Roswell. According to Pat Frosch, Director of MECA Therapies Roswell facility, the new location is centrally located for easy access for clients. The new

location is a state of the art facility conducive for specialized evaluation sessions for children. The facility includes a private room for evaluations and a conference room equipped with the appropriate technology to be used for agency trainings and meetings. The conference room will be available for community use as well.

Already scheduled are trainings for local daycare educators, a CPR class, the FIT Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) statewide meeting, and MECA Therapies regional trainings.

Children birth through age three are eligible for MECA Therapies free FIT Services. Children must be residents of NM. MECA Therapies offers free intake screenings, MECA Therapies has been serving New Mexico since 1998 providing NM FIT Program

Services and other quality early childhood development and intervention services to six counties in southern NM.

The agency employs highly-trained and state qualified team members and provides evaluation and therapy for the following conditions:

- Speech and language delays and disorders
- Feeding and swallowing difficulties
- Physical delays
- Developmental delays
- Neurologic/neuromuscular conditions
- Sensory Integration Conditions
- Autism Spectrum disorder
- Nursing

For more information on MECA Therapies' services, call 575-623-2615, or go to mecatherapies.com.

Community Efforts Bring



1ST ANNUAL

march of dimes[®]
golf for babies[®]

TOURNAMENT

to ROSWELL



A forged alliance between MECA Therapies and the Wee Warriors Project has led to Roswell's First Annual March of Dimes Golf for Babies Tournament.

Roswell's First Annual March of Dimes Golf for Babies Tournament will be held on June 10 at the Roswell Country Club located at 2601 Urton Road, Roswell, NM 88201.

The tournament is a four-person scramble with two shotguns at 7:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. There is a \$300 fundraising fee for each team. Included in the event is a delicious BBQ lunch that will be provided along with a silent auction and prizes.

The community organizations saw a need of more awareness and fundraising to aid in the March of Dimes' mission which is to improve the health of babies by preventing birth defects, premature birth and infant mortality.

All efforts during the March of Dimes Golf for Babies Tournament go towards March of Dimes reach to end prematurity. One in 10 babies is born premature and many within our own community. Funds go toward helping to fight prematurity, birth defects, and other issues that complicate the lives of children and mothers.

"We have sponsorship opportunities. We are looking for silent auction donations, and Hole Sponsors. Hole Sponsors can be represented by their business logos, family names, or you can honor or celebrate a preemie in your life," said Camille Plante, founder of the Wee Warriors Project.

PLEASE CONTACT US FOR SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES OR IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO DONATE TO OUR SILENT AUCTION.

HOLE SPONSORSHIP: \$100

• Business logo, family name or baby info

June 10th

at the Roswell Country Club

\$300 per 4 person team

**2 SHOTGUNS:
7:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.**

BBQ LUNCH WILL BE SERVED ★ SILENT AUCTION & PRIZES

OUR PROUD SPONSORS:



Lovelace
Women's Hospital

PRESENTED BY:



CO-PRESENTED BY:



PLEASE CALL FOR INFORMATION OR SPONSORSHIP SET UP:
CAMILLE HINES PLANTE: 575-644-9109 BETHANY WILLIAMS: 575-496-9388