

When your grandchild is in the NICU the stress, grief, and fear that you feel can be overwhelming. To see your child in such despair as they try to understand the diagnosis their beautiful baby was just given leaves you feeling helpless. The NICU is often one of the most challenging, stressful times for any parent. Your love and support during this time is needed more than ever.

Your child will grieve the baby they had planned for, you will grieve with them. It is crucial that you are available to your child; to listen, comfort and help them with anything they may need. Here are a few ways you can support your child.

* Care for the other grandchildren that are at home, they are feeling very confused and missing their parents. If your child knows their other child(ren) are being safely cared for it will give them a little peace.
* Listen to what your adult child needs; is it someone to sit with them in the NICU, a cup of coffee, or someone to give updates to family so they do not need to.
* Learn all you can about PWS. Contact PWSA | USA to receive the Grandparent Package of Hope. Understanding PWS and finding positive outcomes to share with your child will help them and you through the grieving process.
* Allow yourself time to grieve; this is not what you were planning but your grandchild WILL bring you an immeasurable amount of joy.
* If your child wants you to be in the NICU with them make every effort to be there when the doctors round. When a lot of medical information is thrown at a parent it is quite common to shut down, to not hear what is being said. Take notes and ask questions as needed, your child is overwhelmed and exhausted.
* Encourage your child to take a break from the NICU. Sit there with your grandchild so your child can spend time with their other kids or simply shower.

How you respond to your child and this diagnosis will impact how your child responds. Adult children look to their parents for answers and understanding, your unconditional love for your children and grandchildren will help ease the pain.