

# Developmental Observer

The Official Newsletter of the NIDCAP® Federation International

## NIDCAP Federation International (NFI)

Founded in 2001, the NFI is an international, non-profit membership organization. The NFI encourages highly attuned implementation of the Newborn Individualized Developmental Care and Assessment Program (NIDCAP) for all intensive, special care and newborn nurseries around the world. The NFI serves as the authoritative leader for research, development, and dissemination of NIDCAP, and for the certification of trainers, healthcare professionals, and nurseries in the NIDCAP approach.

“Rejoice with your family in the beautiful land of life.”

ALBERT EINSTEIN

## Table of Contents

The Strength of NFI's Collective Experience .....	1
Editorial .....	2
Putting Beauty at the Heart of the Healing Process .....	3
Family Voices .....	5
Reflections on Infant Feeding .....	8
Global Perspective of Developmental Care – Cyprus .....	10
My NIDCAP Journey as an Interpreter .....	12
NIDCAP Training Centers Around the World .....	16
The Science Desk .....	18
Publications .....	21
Poet's Corner .....	25
NIDCAP on the Web .....	27

## The Strength of the NFI's Collective Experience

Deborah Buehler, PhD

President, NIDCAP Federation International

DOI: [10.14434/do.v13i2.31301](https://doi.org/10.14434/do.v13i2.31301)

One of my very early experiences as a NIDCAP Trainer took me to Falun, Sweden. While I was there, I shared NIDCAP's introductory lecture and guided a few introductory bedside observations. With that visit, the healthcare team learned about NIDCAP and a new group of NIDCAP trainees was launched. What I remember most about that trip was how much I learned. My understandings of what was and what could be possible within hospital care was completely expanded by the people I met and the care I observed. During one particular NIDCAP observation, I vividly remember a mother and her baby and the nurse caring for them. They were so beautifully attuned with one another that I was mesmerized. Over the several days I visited the nursery, I learned that aspects of medical and nursing care could be done in different ways than I had seen practiced in U.S. hospitals. During the breaks of my lecture, I remember a physical therapist leading the whole audience, of physicians, nurses and therapists, through joyful stretching breaks with children's songs, which included *The Itsy-Bitsy Spider*. It was evident these small, yet powerful moments of silliness were remarkable for the respect and cohesiveness of the whole healthcare team. I especially remember this NIDCAP training session, nearly 30 years ago, in part, because it was my first solo international trip which posed challenges on many levels for me. Perhaps being stretched in new ways created opportunities to be open to seeing and being shaped by my experiences. This moment in time captured my imagination and continues to inform my NIDCAP training and mentoring of trainees and health care professionals and their resolve to evolve their care to be ever more supportive.



Deborah Buehler, PhD

Continued on page 2



Used with permission

## *NIDCAP Care in the Moment*

### Family Strength

*Collaboration and support for and from each infant's family is the core of NIDCAP.*

2020 is continually described as *unprecedented* (our world has never faced this scale of international pandemic before) and as creating a *new normal* (life is very quickly changing as we adapt around the world). Everything appears to be affected. This most certainly includes access to and the experience of hospitalizations and healthcare. Within newborn and infant intensive and special care nurseries, parents are being separated from their newborns and young infants because of hospital infection precautions. Healthcare professionals are tasked with providing medical care in the face of tremendous barriers, workloads and sacrifices. How do healthcare professionals, and the families they serve, understand and navigate all of this extraordinary adversity? One key to these understandings may be hearing and reflecting on the stories, the struggles and the triumphs, of everyone who is part of these systems of care. Brené Brown, PhD, LMSW, a research professor, wrote “maybe stories are just data with a soul.” Families’ and professionals’ lived experiences, including ones of pain and suffering, may provide insight, inspiration and direction for healthcare’s next steps. Much has been written on how hardship impacts individuals. For instance, Kaufman and Gregoire (2015) stated that “experiences of extreme adversity show us our own strength.” (p. 146) Beyond survival, these authors optimistically described how individuals may also thrive with adversity. This capacity for resilience is a profound strength that offers stability and growth for individuals as well as for healthcare systems.

This unprecedented year is also creating challenges and a new normal for the NFI and NIDCAP efforts. NIDCAP Training

Centers and their Trainers are faced with how to educate and guide trainees and hospitals with in-person and travel restrictions. This comes at a time when individual and system-wide support is needed more than ever. How will the NFI navigate the short and long-term challenges ahead? To thrive as an organization in this rapidly changing world, the NFI must respond to the incredible realities faced by NIDCAP Trainers around the world. Examining difficulties, strengths and opportunities are crucial at this time. Drawing on the remarkable skill, passion and experience within our community, we must listen, question, discuss, reflect, learn and create with one another. Innovations for training, education and support may emerge as the NFI’s members, its NIDCAP Trainers and supporters, continue to share their own experiences and perspectives with one another. Our global NFI community offers tremendous strength and wisdom to draw upon for stability and direction. Support for and from one another may lead to inspiration of creative possibilities to build future directions. The NFI, and its members, have a tremendous opportunity to rise up to meet this extremely difficult moment in time. How 2020 captures our collective hearts and imaginations and informs our next steps will ensure that the NFI and NIDCAP’s capacities and reach thrive for years to come for newborns and infants and their families.

Reference:

Kaufman, S. B. & Gregoire, C. (2015). *Wired to Create: Unraveling the Mysteries of the Creative Mind*. New York, NY: Perigee Books.

## Greetings from the Editor

DOI: 10.14434/dov13i2.31064



Kaye Spence, AM

Welcome to the second issue for 2020. What a year it has been so far. There have been many challenges for the NIDCAP community. Resilience is a prime focus at the moment.

This issue has a theme of reflection from our global community. There are a variety of interesting perspectives. Michiko Doi reflects on her journey as a NIDCAP translator in Japan,

giving us a unique glimpse into her world. Bronagh McAlinden from Australia reflects on her observations of two newborn feeding episodes showing the importance of close observation. Ita Litmanovitz joins us from the Science Desk reflecting on the effects of COVID-19 through her examination of stress on the developing brain, and in our new Poet’s Corner, Julia Giesen, NIDCAP Professional, reflects on her NIDCAP Training through her poetry. In our Family Voices column we hear a father’s journey through the NICU with his twin daughters.

These manuscripts show the power of reflection, not only as a learning strategy but as a way of enriching the experience of the journey. We journey to Barcelona, Spain to hear about the work of the NIDCAP Training Centers and we travel to Cyprus in the Mediterranean to learn about developmental care initiatives. The Rimini team share their beautiful story of their using beauty to minimise stress in the NICU. Deborah Buehler, President of NFI shares her essay on what she sees as the strength of the NFI collective during these challenging times. The global spread of NIDCAP is evident with contributions from Japan, Australia, Canada, Israel, Italy, Spain, Cyprus and USA. We are certainly a global community.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "K Spence".

Kaye Spence AM  
Senior Editor – Developmental Observer  
Adjunct Associate Professor / Clinical Nurse Consultant  
Australasian NIDCAP Training Centre / Sydney Children’s  
Hospitals Network / Western Sydney University / Australia