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**Promoting mothers' ability to communicate with their  
very-low-birthweight infants: A pilot study**

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The purpose of this pilot study was to assess the feasibility of a program to teach mothers how to interact sensitively with their VLBW infant in the NICU. A single group, pretest-posttest design was used to examine feasibility. The participants were 12 mothers of infants born weighing < 1500 grams. Pre-intervention, mothers completed self-report questionnaires to assess their anxiety, beliefs about competence, post-traumatic stress symptoms and NICU-related stress. Mother-infant interaction was observed. The same measures were administered post-intervention, and mothers completed a satisfaction questionnaire to assess the acceptability of the program. Feasibility analyses examined: 1) ability to enrol eligible mothers, 2) ability to retain participants, 3) adherence to planned methods of data collection, and 4) adherence to planned methods of program delivery. The rate of participation was high (almost 70%). Four mothers (33%) withdrew, 3 before they even began the program. 2/4 of the mothers who withdrew were mothers of multiples who withdrew when one infant was discharged home, thus the program is not feasible for this group. The measure of interaction used (*Index of Parental Behaviour NICU*) demonstrated poor reliability pre-intervention and interaction between mother and infant was limited at this time. 80% of the mothers received all of the program content, but over 4 sessions rather than the 6 originally planned. Mothers' responses to the satisfaction questionnaire indicated that most were very satisfied with the program and felt it meet most of their needs. They reported that the program design and methods were appropriate. We conclude that the program is both feasible and also acceptable to mothers.

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