



## ***Katie Reginato Cascamo***

*Courageous Steps, USA*

### **Examining the role of a servant-leadership paradigm within existing NICU initiatives**


Parents who have had a baby in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) are at higher risk for anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder and depression when compared with parents of healthy full-term babies (39% to 63%). Studies show families who receive emotional support, parent empowerment, a welcoming neonatal environment, and parent education with an opportunity to practice through guided participation are better equipped to care for a medically fragile infant following NICU hospitalization. The initiatives of Family Centered Care and Trauma-Informed Care when coupled, invite cultural transformation of practitioners to improve the developmental outcomes of neonates, improve the emotional well-being of NICU parents, and decrease the burnout of neonatal practitioners. Servant-Leadership, when applied to the NICU, is a paradigm of transformational leadership that seeks to improve the developmental outcomes of neonates through the alignment and integration of ten key characteristics modeled by practitioners within existing organizational initiatives. Servant-Leadership strives to help practitioners develop skills that include: Listening, Empathy, Healing, Awareness, Persuasion, Conceptualization, Foresight, Stewardship, Commitment to the Growth of People and Building Community. The Interdisciplinary

Recommendations for the Psychosocial Support for NICU Parents model characteristics of Servant-Leadership through the inclusion of a multidisciplinary workgroup that includes 29 professional and parent groups. By introducing 10 Characteristics of Servant-Leadership a shared language of cultural transformation will emerge within existing initiatives to support the individual and collective growth of interdisciplinary professionals.

#### **Speaker Biography**

Katie Reginato Cascamo is the mother of a premature son born at 30-weeks' gestation at 2lbs, 8oz (1131 grams). Her NICU experience and subsequent pediatric challenges with her son Giovanni's developmental delays led her to found the company Courageous Steps. Courageous Steps provides leadership tools to health organizations that manage the care of babies born premature and children with pediatric disabilities. By focusing on employee training and analyzing the business management of these organizations, she strives to increase provider wellness, as well as decrease neonatal and pediatric provider burnout. An accomplished entrepreneur, she has modeled a Servant Leadership approach across her career by empowering people with the skills necessary to manage adversity. Katie believes in investing and guiding people, serving as both a motivational speaker and volunteer with organizations that support NICU and Pediatric families. She holds a Master of Arts in Organizational Leadership with a Concentration in Servant-Leadership

[e: Katie@courageoussteps.org](mailto:Katie@courageoussteps.org)

 Notes: