

## Event Details:

We, here at Project Cameron's Story, are excited to announce a "bookraising" event from February 16<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>. Participating bookstores will offer various promotions either to the foundation or to customers as an incentive to donate a book to the cause. In addition, Barnes and Noble offers the availability to shop and donate a book online. You may also donate a book through Scholastic book clubs. To find out how to donate a brand new book AND to find out more information about storytimes and other fun events happening at some of these locations during these dates, please visit our website or our Facebook page.

### Participating Bookstores:

Barnes & Noble (NY state)-In Store 2/17-2/18  
ONLY; ONLINE 2/17 - 2/20

Northshire Bookstore (Saratoga) - 2/20

Scholastic Book Clubs - NOW - February 20th

(visit website for information)

\*\*Be sure to tell your cashier that you are purchasing book for Project: Cameron's Story. **IMPORTANT:**

Ask for a label to personalize the book!

\*\*\*\*\*

### Partnering Hospitals:

We currently partner with 12 hospitals in NYS to supply their NICU's with books. Every baby in the NICU at these locations receives a book. This ensures that even babies who are born too sick or too soon and are not able to be held or touched, can still bond with their families. Here is the list of partnering NICU's as well as the average number of babies in their NICU each year.

- Albany Medical Center (850)
- St. Peter's Hospital (450)
- Crouse Hospital (900)
- Stony Brook University Hospital (1,000)
- UHS Wilson Medical Center (400)
- Golisano Children's Hospital (1,200)
- Bellevue Women's Center (450)
- NY Presb. Morgan Stanley (1,000)
- John R. Oishei Children's Hospital (900)
- Millard Fillmore Suburban Hospital (100)
- Special Care Unit at Glens Falls Hospital (400)

## Mission Statement

"The goal of Project Cameron's Story is to support the bonding of parents with their premature babies in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), through the use of children's literature and storytelling. We strive to empower parents to form unique and profound connections with their babies within an environment that is often uncertain and intimidating. Our mission is to place a brand new, quality, children's book in the hands of every parent of a premature baby upon admission to the NICU. We, at Project Cameron's Story, are committed to providing information regarding the benefits of this type of bonding and continue to seek ways to encourage parents to utilize this as one important way to interact with their new little one."

## Book Guidelines

**NEW BOOKS:** Books will be delivered to babies in a sterile environment (NICU), so all books **MUST** be brand new with as little handling as possible.

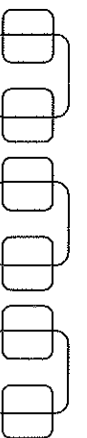
**RELIGIOUS BOOKS:** Due to the various religious beliefs of the families in the NICU, please avoid

donating books that are overtly religious in nature.

**TYPES OF BOOKS:** Typically when choosing books for babies, the suggestion is to choose books with just a few words on each page. These suggestions are great for a full-term baby. **HOWEVER**, for parents who are trying to connect with their premature/sick babies through oral communication, the suggestion is for the books to be "picture storybooks". It would be helpful if the books were of medium to large size, with lots of pictures, and a long storyline (ie. lots of words!). The purpose is for the parents of the premature babies to have an opportunity to engage in an experience that involves a 10-15 minute period of time involving storytelling and bonding with their little one.

Some of "Cameron's Favorites" include:

- Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel
- Stellaluna
- Love You Forever
- Where the Wild Things Are
- Danny and The Dinosaur
- The Grant Jam Sandwich
- The Poky Little Puppy
- The Little Engine that Could
- The Gingerbread Man
- Rainbow Fish



Support the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual  
"Bookraiser" to Benefit:

Project:

Cameron's Story

February 16<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>

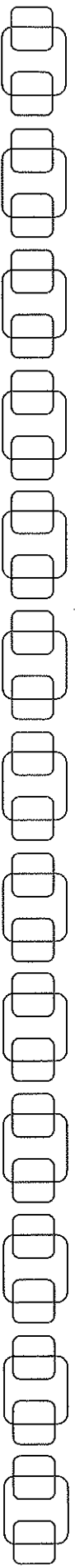


"Before I could hold him...before I  
could touch him...I read to him..."



Like us on  
Facebook

<http://www.projectcameronstory.org/>



## A Miracle is Born!

On February 16th, 2009, our son, Cameron Jace Quarters was born. He came into this world under some of the scariest of circumstances, 16 weeks premature, weighing 530 grams (equivalent to just under 1 lb 3 oz.). He was just 10.2 in long.

The first time I ever walked into the NICU to see my baby boy, he looked so fragile. I was a very scared mom. For a short while, I could barely touch him due to the doctors and nurses wanting to keep a "womb-like" environment. Then while he was on a special ventilator, I was unable to hold him. For those first few days, every day I went to the NICU and just sat quietly staring at him for hours and hours. I finally decided I needed to find a way to bond with this beautiful little boy so I bought some picture books with lots of words in them -and I just sat with the incubator door open and read. I read, and read, and read, and read. The payoff? Cameron and I created the closest bond two people can ever have. No matter where I was in a crowded room, if Cameron could hear my voice, he would turn his head and look all over just to find me.



*Cameron, at 6 weeks old*

## Our Brave Fighter ...

From the second he was born, Cameron defied all the odds. Doctors said Cameron would probably not make it through the delivery...but he did. They said he probably would not survive his first 48 hours ... but he did. When he had heart surgery at less than 3 weeks of age, the surgeon told us that Cameron probably would not make it through the procedure... but he did. After struggling for months with severe Broncho-Pulmonary Dysplasia (BPD) coupled with a secondary diagnosis of Pulmonary Hypertension, Cameron's only option to sustain his life was a tracheotomy. Due to the fact that he still required a ventilator along with his trach, his care was immense. For these reasons, doctors said we might never get to take our precious boy home...but after 213 days in the NICU/PICU ... we did.

After a short time at home, Cameron was readmitted to the PICU. After battling infection after infection, our beautiful little boy was granted his angel wings on October 20, 2009. And although the pain of losing him seems unbearable at times, we feel so grateful to have had every blessed moment with our precious Cam. And right to the very end, I read and talked and told stories to Cam...those are some of the finest moments of my life...

We have named our foundation, "Project: Cameron's Story" for 2 powerful reasons. The first, is because of the power that reading and storytelling had in helping us bond and assist with Cameron's development. The second, is because despite the fact that our precious boy never spoke a single word, it became clear to us, and all of those who were touched by his journey, that Cameron absolutely had a story to tell...a story of strength, hope, and love. As his parents, his family, and his supporters...we are blessed with the responsibility of sharing his story.

## The Project ...

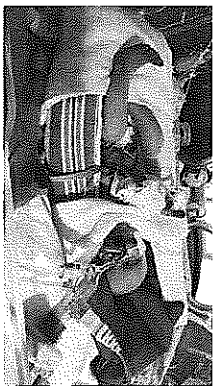
The goal of Project Cameron's Story is to support the bonding of parents with their premature babies in the NICU through the use of children's literature and storytelling. We strive to empower parents to form unique and profound connections with their babies within an environment that is often uncertain and intimidating. Our mission is to place a brand new, quality, children's book in the hands of every parent of a premature baby upon admission to NICU's at 12 of the largest hospitals in NY state.

So, when a scared new mom enters the NICU to see her baby for the very first time...there, sitting on the incubator, will be a beautiful new children's book for her to have and read to her baby and eventually take home. It is my greatest hope that others can be helped by Cameron's story, that they can develop new and powerful ways to bond with their babies. I like to believe that we tried desperately to give Cameron a chance. There are other babies who deserve that opportunity too. Maybe, in some small way this gesture can help other families in similar situations.



## Lucy's Story:

Lucy was born on April 1, 2014...tiny but fierce. After a few crazy but wonderful days at home, she was rushed to Glens Falls Hospital and later, as what we thought was just a precaution, she was brought to Albany Med by the fantastic children's hospital transport team. Upon arrival, Lucy had more breathing difficulties and we sat in the waiting room, helplessly while the doctors and nurses intubated her and hooked her up to all sorts of foreign devices. It was several hours before Lucy was settled enough for us to go to her room, and we had no idea what we would see when we got there. As I was adjusting to tubes and wires and the incessant beeping noises, I caught a glimpse of The Very Hungry Caterpillar (donated by CNY Fertility) on the couch in Lucy's room out of the corner of my eye, and sighed in relief. I knew about Project: Cameron's Story from working in the same school district as Cameron's mom. That moment was the only "normal thing" that happened that night. A book I was familiar with, a project I was familiar with, and a task I was familiar with-reading! Lucy spent about a week in the Albany Med NICU. It was a traumatic experience to say the least, but we were extremely lucky to be able to take her home after only a week. My husband and I read to Lucy when we could do nothing else but wait, and I was able to experience firsthand what I had only read about with Project: Cameron's Story. Lucy is 3 1/2 now and her The Very Hungry Caterpillar book still holds a prominent place in all of our hearts and we are forever grateful for all of the work Project: Cameron's Story does.



## Carter's Story:

Becoming parents was a journey my husband and I did not realize would be the roller coaster it was. After a long road and with the help of fertility treatments, we became pregnant through IVF and were enjoying the relatively easy pregnancy I was blessed with. At 34 weeks and 5 days, I unexpectedly went into labor. Carter Michael was born on April 18th, 2014 at Albany Medical Center. He weighed 4 pounds 2 ounces and spent the first 16 days of his life in the NICU, as his preemie body learned to regulate his bodily functions and learned to eat without a feeding tube. We are one of the recipients of Project Cameron's Story as we received the book, Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel. The book was donated by "Hoosick Falls 1st Grade". It was the first book we ever read to Carter and has special meaning to us. That book brought us hope and a sense of normalcy during the most difficult time in our lives. What Cameron's Project does for families like mine is invaluable. Carter is now 3 1/2 years old, thriving, and still loves reading Mike Mulligan.



Mrs. Mullins at FMS' SON

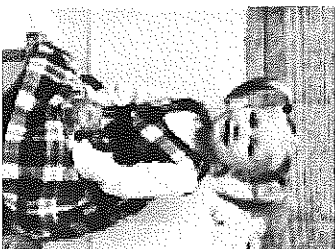
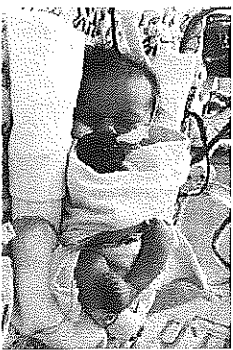
## Alison's Story:

Alison was born 11.5 weeks early by emergency c-section due to sudden onset severe pre-eclampsia. She was whisked off to the NICU before I could even see her and I spent the next 24 hours tethered to an IV and stuck in my own hospital bed so I was not able to see her. I was able to see pictures but it just wasn't the same and I struggled with the fear of not being able to bond with her. When I was finally able to see her I had no idea what to expect. That walk to the NICU at Albany Med was one of the hardest walks I have ever taken. There she was, my tiny (but feisty and unbelievably strong) girl weighing only 2 lbs 3 oz with wires and tubes attached to her. There was all of this equipment and so many beeps and noises that I didn't understand. I was afraid to talk to the doctors and nurses - afraid I would say or ask something stupid. And worse, I was even afraid to talk to her. I saw the book The Napping House on the couch in her room with a sticker showing that it was from Project Cameron's Story. I quietly read it to her during each visit. My voice got stronger and stronger. Reading to Alison helped me find my voice as a mom. It helped me find my voice as a NICU mom, as Alison's mom. It allowed me to talk to her without feeling self-conscious. I asked questions, I learned all I could and I became her advocate. I realized that even though I could not touch or hold her just yet, she knew me and I knew her. Reading bonded us from the beginning. I could probably recite The Napping House by heart - that book will always have special meaning to me and I can't wait to tell her the story of the first time I read it to her. Alison is now 2 1/2 years old and she has found her voice too. She loves to laugh and smile and read with mommy and daddy.



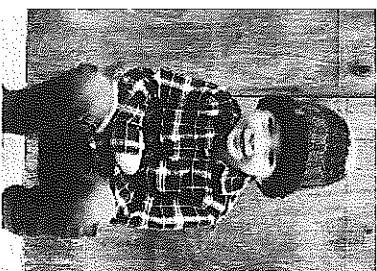
## Madelyn's Story:

Madelyn was born a week early on Mother's Day 2016. The pregnancy was easy with no complications. After a few hours doctors told us they heard a slight murmur in her heart but to not be alarmed. The following day we were told we needed to be seen by a cardiac specialist and she was rushed to Albany medical center. We knew something was wrong when we noticed her coloring was off, she was having trouble breathing and couldn't maintain her body temperature. When we got to Albany Med we were told Madelyn suffered from pulmonary stenosis. Our entire world was flipped upside down in a matter of minutes. We watched as she was hooked up to monitors and tubes and all different types of machines in the NICU. It was terrifying to see her laying there and feeling so helpless. I didn't notice the book the first day but the second day after spending hours on my feet realizing that I needed to sit and take care of myself also I saw a book sitting on the couch. "Please Mr. Panda" I picked it up and read it quickly to her and tossed it to the side. I knew the story behind the books as a friend of mine has been a donation site for a few years prior. As that day went on and I realized more and more I couldn't hold Maddie because my body temperature mixed with her meds were causing her body temperature to rise too high I began to look at that book more and more. The book then became something for me to do in a situation where I felt very helpless. I read that book to her at least ten times a day for the entire week she was in the NICU. While she was in surgery I kept the book close and read it to her sister who was out in the waiting room. When we left we brought it with us to read at home. We read "Please Mr. Panda" every day for the first month we were home from the hospital. Maddie would be awake just enough to hear the beginning and her older sister loved turning the pages for her to see. We still keep the book in her room and read in on nights when things aren't going as well as we hoped. It has brought a connection to our family that we otherwise might not have gotten. When given the opportunity to run a collection site myself I knew I had to so that other families could have a sense of hope in an otherwise dark time.



## Tucker's Story:

Tucker was born on 8/13/14 at 9:14 am at 41 weeks. He weighed 9lbs 3.1oz and was 22 inches long. Less than 24 hours after delivery, a doctor informed us that Tucker had vomited a significant amount of blood and that he would be transferred to the NICU. Within an hour, my husband and I were following an ambulance to Albany Medical Center, not knowing what the fate of our new baby would be. The best moment of our lives had so quickly changed to the scariest. There are no words to describe the emotions that a parent endures during a time like this. Tucker was diagnosed with having Hemorrhagic Gastritis. His Doctor estimated that he lost approximately 1/3 of his blood supply and his little body was in shock. We were so scared and sad for our baby. I was so angry that he was in the situation he was in. I did everything I could for 9 months to protect my baby and keep him healthy and now all I could do was pray. I saw a book on the windowsill of his room, Yummy Love. The book was donated by Aviation Mail. I knew instantly that it was a Project: Cameron's Story book and I smiled. I smiled at a time that I didn't think it was possible to smile. We read that book over and over and over again to Tucker. We couldn't feed him, rock him when he cried or hold him whenever we wanted, but we could read to him. Our Project: Cameron's Story book helped get us through a very difficult time. It is very difficult to put into words how much this book meant to us. It gave us something that we could do for our son when we felt helpless.



## Samuel's Story:

Our sweet Samuel was born at 37 weeks 5 days - a little bit early - but we had been told that was a possibility so it wasn't a complete surprise. What we did not expect was that we would spend the first 17 days with our son together in the NICU at Albany Med. Sammy's arrival was rough going - for Sam and Mom - but thanks to Dad and the support of family and friends we made it through. Not everything in life goes according to plan, that we knew. But we never prepared for the arrival of our baby to be one of those times. Seeing our newborn quiet and still, wired up, under the lights and enclosed in his isolette was the kind of experience that takes the wind right out of you. As in love with our new little bundle as we were, seeing him so very fragile left me, as his mom, feeling like I'd let him down. I thought I was prepared to snuggle and nurture and care for my son but I found myself in the NICU, working on recovering from a rough c-section, and totally frozen. I knew the story of Project Cameron's story from an outsider's perspective but, after 'settling in' to the NICU we found our copy of Harry The Dirty Dog and realized that we were now familiar with PCS first hand. Our plans for our little one always included books; we started building his library well before he joined our family. And we are 100% dog people so to have the chance to introduce Sammy to Harry and his adventures at the start was a perfect fit for us—and a great addition to his bookshelf! We are now six months in to our 'year of first' and our Sammy continues to grow and learn and astound all of us. Through this whole process, we have been so surrounded by love and support from our family and friends and we can't express how grateful we all are! It's been an incredible experience already and it's only just begun. We are grateful for the amazing work that Project Cameron's story does. We are honored to have been touched by their generosity and are grateful for the reminder that when things around you seem to be out of order, it helps to sit down and take the time to just be and share together. And there's nothing better to share than a great book! And we can't believe how lucky we are that he's our Sammy.

