

# Precious Prints Project: The Touch That Remains

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## BACKGROUND

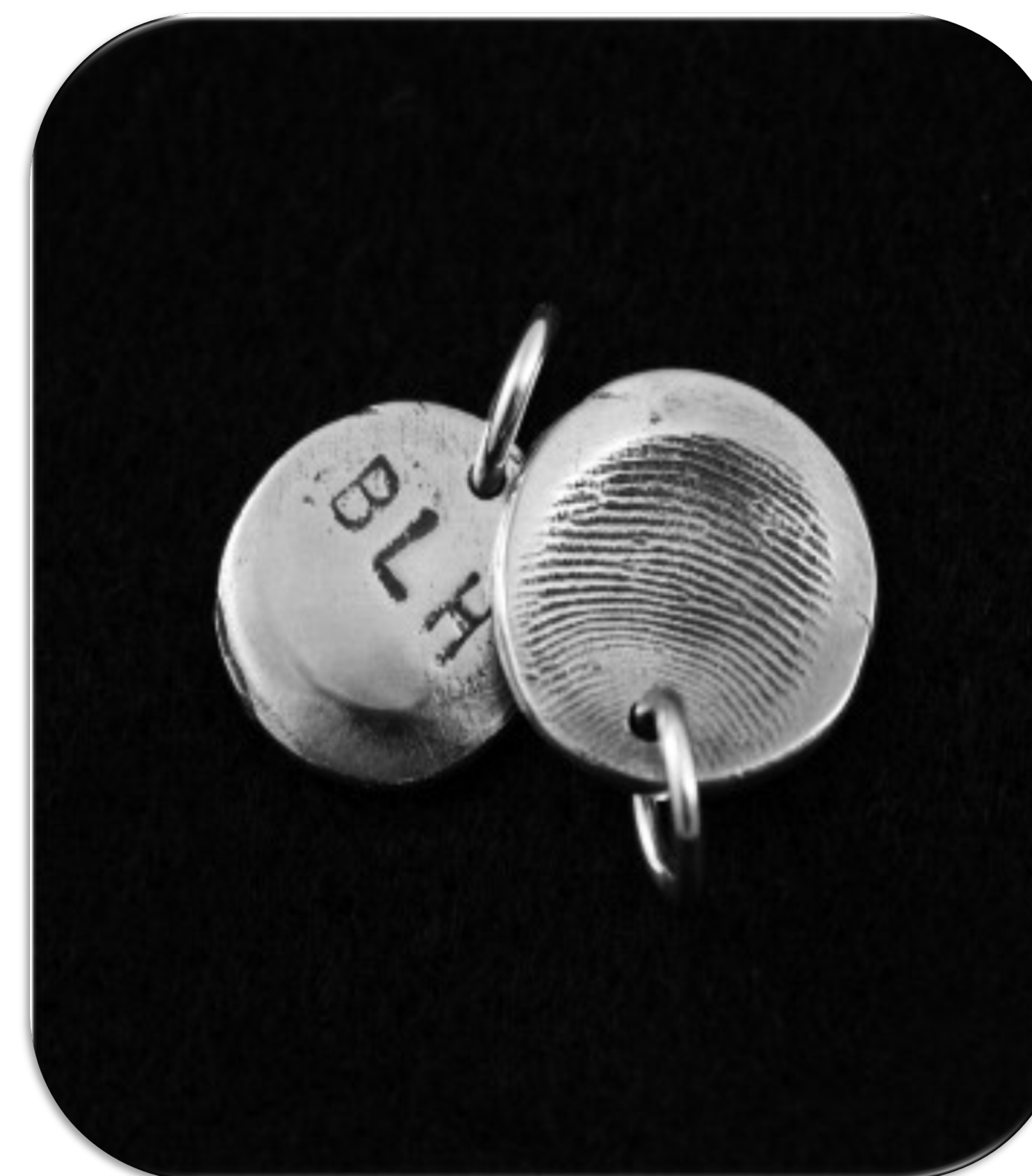
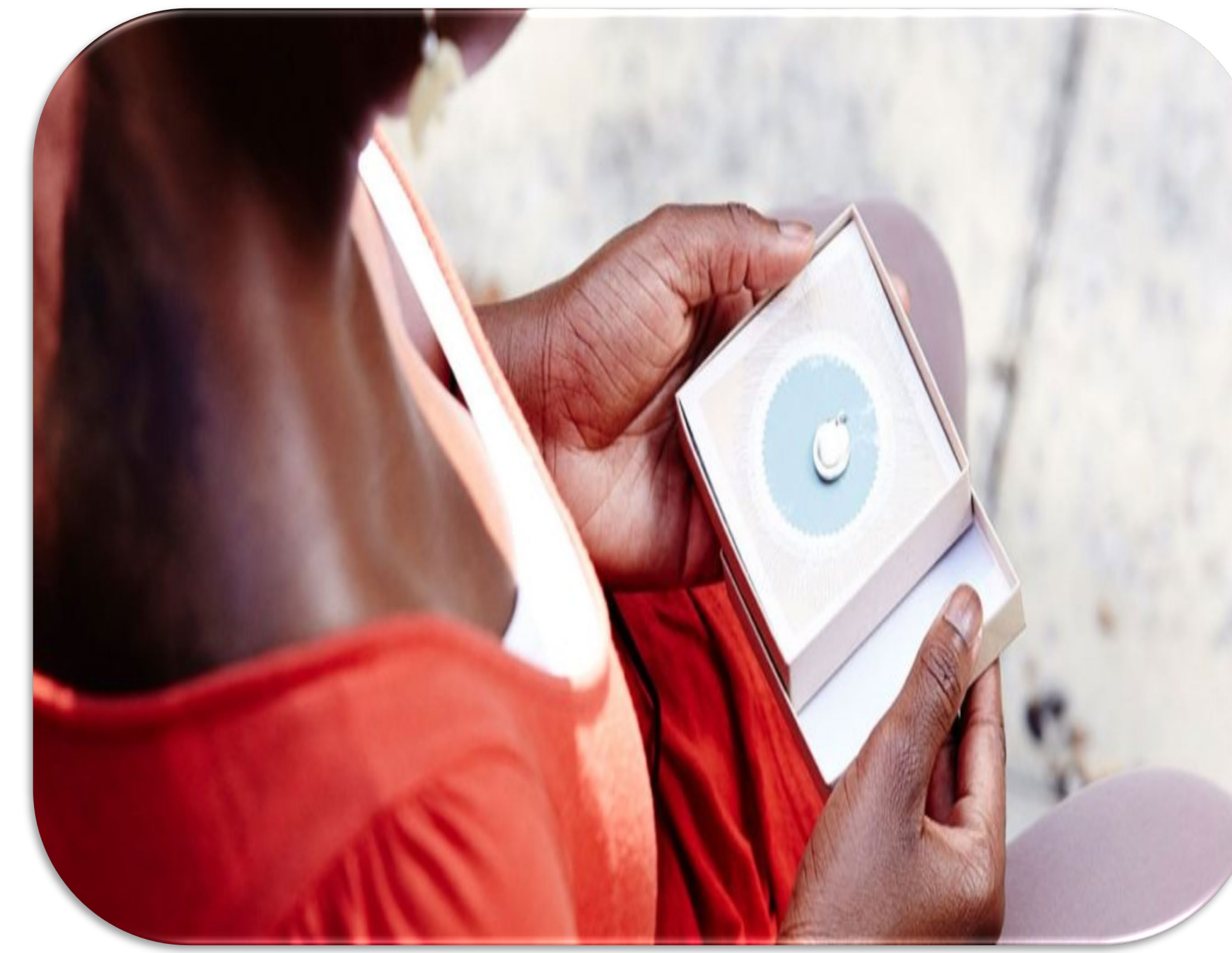
The Precious Prints Project provides a physical memory and keepsake for grieving parents whose child has died. The program originated at the College of Nursing at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville in 2011 and spread to other hospitals, including University of Las Vegas (UNLV). UNLV teamed up with UMC's Child Life Program to provide another level of bereavement care to the pediatric bereavement program. The Precious Prints Project has been implemented across UMC's pediatric units, including PICU, NICU, and ED. The project includes creating a finger or toe print of the child that is then made into a beautiful pendant, sent directly to the bereaved family. Through this collaboration and funding from UNLV SNA, families are provided one pendant at no cost to them. Families can purchase additional pendants through direct contact with the company if they choose.

## PURPOSE

Many clinicians and staff express feelings of inadequacy about providing bereavement outreach and end-of-life communication. By having the opportunity to provide a keepsake, clinicians can compassionately humanize the medical-family relationship and provide closure knowing that they did everything they could for a devastated family. Providing keepsakes can help parents feel attached and close to their child and to provide comfort. Over time, the keepsakes can help the parents in remembering the child and help parents with processing the loss and memories of the child in order to adjust to their new reality. Over time, when the parents have adjusted to the new reality, the tangible memories of child serve as a form for expressing the continuation of the bond between the parents and their child.

## METHODS

- UMC child life and nursing staff attended multiple training sessions sponsored by UNLV SNA to gain hands on experience in creating a print.
- Needs assessment completed and brought to UMC Bereavement Committee which decided to move forward with the Precious Prints Project
- UMC and UNLV has created a Precious Prints Committee.
- In June of 2020, UMC child life staff piloted the precious prints program in PICU/ED.
- An inventory tracking sheet was developed
- Families were provided with education about Precious Prints and the opportunity to receive one at no cost to the family.
- Consent forms, reflecting the UNLV and UMC partnership, were approved by UMC legal department to comply with HIPAA regulations.
- Following a review of the pilot program, a UMC Education training module was created and implemented as required education for PICU, PEDS, ED, and NICU nurses and child life staff.
- The Precious Print Project went live in August of 2020.
- Nursing and child life staff are responsible for offering to parents the Precious Print program
- A copy of the signed Consent Form is placed in the patient's medical record.
- Families are given the option in helping with the print process including but not limited to choosing toe, finger, or thumb print.
- After prints are created, child life mails prints and order form to Precious Metal Prints
- Precious Metal Prints mails the beautiful completed pendant directly to the address provided on the Consent and Order forms.



A note from a mom, "To those that help make Precious Prints possible, I extend my deepest gratitude. Thank you for helping me hold on to the missing piece of my heart."

Matthew Mastalski, a former UNLV SNA leader and a current UMC PICU nurse shared, "I feel like [Precious Prints] adds another level of care to what I provide. At the darkest time for a parent or family, it allows me one more way to give something finite, something they can remember. It's an experience that while not positive, is reassuring and comforting."

Cassie Ricci, a former UMC child life specialist shared, "This is, to me, the first truly tangible, beautiful item we can provide the families."

## RESULTS

Initially, the program was started in PICU and later expanded to the Emergency Department and Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. To date, we have successfully provided a total of 18 Precious Prints to families in the following units:

UNIT	Number of Prints Provided
NICU	4
PICU/ED	14
Total	18

Identified barriers to obtaining Precious Prints for families Include:

- Families declining services
- Did not meet eligibility requirements (e.g. ongoing investigation)

## CONCLUSIONS

Overwhelmingly, families have welcomed this priceless remembrance of their child, in addition to the emotional and grief support provided by the UMC pediatric nursing and child life departments. The Precious Prints Project not only provides families with a physical memory but assists in providing staff with a sense of closure knowing that they provided every all the support they could.

## REFERENCES

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Photos provided by UNLV and Precious Metal Prints

