Ickle Pickles Children's Charity launch video highlighting the vital role of the London Neonatal Transport Service for World Prematurity Day 2026

Wednesday 11 November, 2026

In the run-up to World Prematurity Day on 15 November, the Ickle Pickles Children's Charity is raising awareness of the vital role of neonatal transport services in caring for premature and sick newborn babies through a new awareness video, created with support from ITV Creative volunteers.

This year marks the first time World Prematurity Day will be officially observed on 15 November, following its official addition to the World Health Organisation's calendar in 2025. The date has been moved from 17 November to avoid a clash with other mandated World days. This landmark recognition strengthens the global effort to raise awareness of preterm birth and champion better care and support for babies born too soon and their families.

Every year, more than 90,000 babies are born premature or sick in the UK. For some of these babies, specialist care means being transferred between hospitals to access the treatment and support they urgently need. Neonatal transport teams play a crucial role in these journeys, helping ensure that the most vulnerable babies can access specialist care when they need it. Yet, despite the life-saving work they do, these services are often overlooked in fundraising efforts and face significant funding challenges, making it vital to raise awareness of their essential role and the support they need to continue providing this critical care.

Ickle Pickles is the only charity that raises funds to donate intensive and special-care equipment to neonatal units and transfer services across England and Wales. Since 2009, Ickle Pickles has raised £4 million for specialist equipment, purchasing more than 1,000 pieces of equipment to support over 50 hospitals and three neonatal transport services.

Ickle Pickles' main awareness video aims to shine a light on the importance of the London Neonatal Transport Service and the dedicated teams who help give premature and sick newborns the best possible chance of survival and recovery. By raising awareness of the service and sharing a shorter social media video, the campaign shows an often unseen but life-saving part of neonatal care.

Mum Rebecca is featured in both awareness videos with her daughter Rhyleigh, who was born very prematurely at a gestation of just 23 weeks. Baby Rhyleigh weighed less than a bag of sugar, 665 g, and received neonatal care for 5 months. She was transferred by the London Neonatal Transfer Service from the neonatal unit at the Royal London Hospital when she was well enough to be looked after by the neonatal staff at her local neonatal unit at Whipps Cross Hospital. Both Neonatal units are supported by Ickle Pickles. Rebecca says, "Ickle Pickles is a vital charity to support. It is very important to know that parents of premature babies go through so much. Being supported by Ickle Pickles and being able to read other families' stories on their website helps you understand what is going on and what is needed to keep these little babies alive. Your support makes all the difference."

Ickle Pickles co-founder and mother of two, Rachael Marsh, says: "Being supported by ITV Creative professionals allowed Ickle Pickles to highlight the exceptional work of the neonatal teams at the London Neonatal Transfer Service and the Royal London Hospital. We are thrilled to launch this initiative on World Prematurity Day to acknowledge the experiences of families affected by premature birth, celebrate the dedicated professionals who care for premature or sick babies, and emphasise the critical importance of providing newborns with the care they need."

More babies than ever need specialised care when they are born. Ickle Pickles mission to give every newborn a chance relies on the support of volunteers and generous individuals. Get involved in World Prematurity Day with Ickle Pickles.

View and share Ickle Pickles awareness videos at https://youtu.be/S_L6vCicvnk and https://youtu.be/BoMltq5qE9M (released on the 15th of November).

Photos supporting the press release, crediting the "Ickle Pickles Children's Charity" can be found here: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1SvRKVxfz-rxO4oqGlCRjAMZoYfkIEeQi?usp=sharing

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The Ickle Pickles Children's Charity

E. press@icklepickles.org
W. https://www.icklepickles.org/

Additional Contact(s):
kat@icklepickles.org

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