



Welcome to the spring edition of our SSNAP newsletter, this short update provides a brief overview of what the charity has been up to. Do remember to follow us on social media and visit our website to stay informed throughout the year.

Our 2025 events calendar has been finalised and can be found within this newsletter. As always, we appreciate each and every one of our incredible fundraisers, whether you are partaking in a SSNAP organised event, or an event of your own – we simply wouldn't be here without you. If you have any ideas for fundraising (specifically non-sporting events) we would love to hear from you!

On behalf of our Trustees, staff, volunteers and the babies, families and NHS staff that we help, thank you for your continued support and commitment to SSNAP.

With very best wishes,

Martin and the SSNAP Team

Martin Realey SSNAP Charity Lead



WHY WE ARE HERE

Natasha's journey was an emotional and challenging time for the whole family, here she gives a brief insight of how she felt supported during this time.

In March 2019, at 23 weeks gestation, I began early labour. The three weeks leading up to my son's birth were marked by multiple hospital stays. My son was born on Thursday 21 March at 26 weeks and three days gestation. Time seemed to stop as the medical team worked on him before taking him to the NICU. I managed to kiss him before he was taken away, and my husband went with him so he wouldn't be alone.

We spent three months in the NICU and HDU, which was an incredibly stressful rollercoaster of emotions. My son required light therapy, treatment for a PDA, and ongoing oxygen support due to chronic lung disease. His condition was constantly changing, and not always for the better. I made it my priority to stay informed and involved in his care. This experience impacted our 2.5-year-old daughter, with me constantly at the hospital and her dad taking care of her. Leaving her every day was one of the hardest things.



We were so thankful for the daily support SSNAP gave us. During such a difficult time, we often neglected our own needs, but they made sure we at least ate something and felt cared for. Their kindness meant the world to us. Throughout this journey, we met incredible nurses and doctors who provided exceptional care. Vinnie (pictured above) was one of them, and we even visited him six years later.

NEW FAMILY CARE TEAM MEMBER, DONNA



We are thrilled to welcome Donna to the Family Care Team.

"I have been fortunate to dedicate over 20 years of my life to working in schools, supporting children in various capacities. In 2004, I gave birth prematurely to my twin daughters, Aalya and Zahra, who were born at just 25

weeks. After spending four months in the Special Care Baby Unit (SCBU), they grew into strong, resilient young women. I am excited to be part of the SSNAP team and look forward to meeting and working alongside all of you"

LITTLE SSNAPLINGS UPDATE



We're here to support families with babies and toddlers who have been through a neonatal unit. It doesn't matter which unit, how long, or the reason for your stay – everyone is welcome at Little Ssnaplings!

Our classes are designed to nurture your little one's development while creating a supportive space for families to connect and grow together.

- Encourage physical, cognitive, and emotional growth.
- Build strong parent-child connections.
- Create a supportive community for families.



Check out our latest classes using the QR code above.
bookthatin.com/BookingWidget?id=11880

2025 EVENTS

Sky Dive for SSNAP

Various dates through the year

Experience the thrill of a lifetime and sky dive for SSNAP.

Blenheim Family Fun Run

18 May 2025

Four events to choose from: one mile children's run, buggy run, canine run or the main 7k.

Summer Garden Party

22 June 2025

Everyone is welcome to attend our annual summer garden party.

Tough Mudder South West

16 August 2025

A new event for SSNAP – why not join us?

Oxford Half Marathon

12 October 2025

Our biggest event of the year, whether running or supporting we would love to see you there.

Christmas Service

7 December 2025

Our annual family focused service with festive treats (at an earlier time of 2pm).

More details for all of these events are available on the SSNAP website and social media.

V-CREATE

We're thrilled that SSNAP funds vCreate for the Neonatal Unit!

This innovative platform allows families to stay connected with their babies, even when they can't be at the hospital. Through vCreate, neonatal staff can securely share updates, photos, and videos, giving parents peace of mind and a virtual window into their baby's journey.

This is a huge step in supporting families during such a critical time, and we couldn't be prouder to provide this level of care and connection.



FIFTEEN FOR FINNLEY

Finnley was born on 29 January 2010, 12 weeks prematurely. He was a resident of the NICU in Oxford for 18 weeks. So far, in Finnley's memory his family have raised in excess of £120,000 for SSNAP.



Well, Fifteen of what you want. Run fifteen sponsored miles, bake fifteen cakes to sell, complete a fifteen sponsored book read or simply donate £15 if you would prefer. All we ask is if Finnleys life has touched you in some way then please challenge yourself to do something"

PLEASE DONATE TODAY:
justgiving.com/page/gemma-froude-3



"In 2025 Finnley should be celebrating his 15th birthday. But sadly, due to being born severely premature that was never to be. We have come to terms with losing him and channel our grief as positively as we can. Keeping Finnleys memory alive, supporting our chosen charity SSNAP, fundraising and raising awareness where we can. To mark Finnleys 15th year we are challenging ourselves and everyone we know to do "Fifteen for Finnley". Fifteen of what I hear you ask!

RECOGNISING ANNUAL EVENTS

Recognising annual events in the Neonatal Care Unit (NCU) plays a crucial role in fostering a sense of community, celebrating milestones, and offering hope to both parents and staff.

1. Providing emotional support for parents

For families navigating the challenges of having a baby in neonatal care, these events offer moments of reflection, encouragement, and unity.

2. Boosting morale and team spirit for staff

Celebrating events like International Neonatal Nurses Day or NCU Awareness Month is a way to show appreciation for the dedication and commitment of neonatal staff.

3. Raising awareness and advocacy

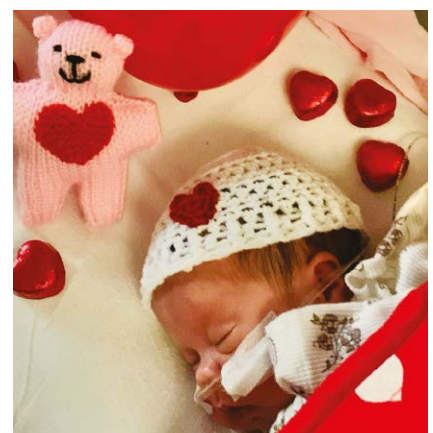
Annual events also serve as an opportunity to educate the wider community about neonatal care, prematurity, and the importance of ongoing support for families.

4. Creating lasting memories

Simple gestures like decorating the ward, hosting small celebrations, or giving parents keepsakes help create positive memories even in the midst of difficult times.

5. Strengthening the NCU community

Recognising annual events brings together parents, staff, and supporters in a shared experience.



A small gesture, a big impact

Taking the time to acknowledge these events through decorations, messages of hope, staff appreciation, or family-centered activities can bring warmth, encouragement, and strength to everyone involved in neonatal care. It reminds parents that they are not alone and reaffirms the dedication of the incredible neonatal teams who care for their babies.

CELEBRATING FIVE YEARS AT SSNAP

Charity Lead, Martin, has just passed his five year threshold and is still fiercely passionate about his work.

Whilst leading the charity in all aspects, he and his family continue to independently fundraise for us too. From running with washing machines and dogs, to his son Jacob winning the Blenheim run and his daughter Florence taking part in family fun and colour runs. The whole family complement Team SSNAP.

The charity has grown significantly under Martin's tenure. The Family Care Team is now delivering over 90 hours of care a week on the unit. Their aim is to provide cover 365 days a year. In the last five years the unit has received over £2 million of support, from innovative and revolutionary equipment purchases to supporting over 200 staff with their continued developmental education and training. A limited amount of money has been spent on research, but as experts, it is the Family Care Team input to research that is most noticeable as we continue to advise the world's best Professors.

Led by Martin and augmented by Emily, the charity has more opportunities to fundraise now than ever before. The breadth and depth of our community branding and awareness continues to grow and SSNAP is known far and wide. Martin added, *"It remains an absolute privilege to lead such professional and passionate staff, whilst also supported by the most positive volunteers, donors and fundraisers any charity could ask for. Thank you so much for your trust and ongoing support."*



Jacob winning the Blenheim Family Run

BECOME A MEMBER

Join our SSNAP Society by giving regularly and becoming a valued SSNAP Member

SSNAP
MEMBER

For a minimum of
£5 per month you
can ensure that
we can continue
to champion
the right of all sick
and premature babies
treated in Oxford.



Regular giving offers
SSNAP stability and
enables us to plan
for the future with
your support. See our
website or scan this QR
code for more details.



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