The Project for Expansion of Education in Pediatric Stroke (PEEPS) committee would like to thank:

- Gina Thompson, BSN, RN, CPN and Tonya Stafford, BSN, RN, Co-Authors.
- The stroke survivors, parents and caregivers that participated in the development of the content and pictures.
- The North Carolina Stroke Care Collaborative.
- The Stroke Patient, Family, Caregiver and Community Advisory Board at the University of North Carolina Medical Center.
- The Departments of Neurology and Neurosurgery at the University of North Carolina Medical Center.
- The International Alliance for Pediatric Stroke.
- North Carolina Children’s Hospital.
- Rehabilitation Services at the University of North Carolina Medical Center.

References

What Is A Stroke?

A ‘stroke’ happens when blood flow is blocked in an area of the brain. These changes in blood flow can cause brain cells to die. When it comes to stroke, kids are not just little adults. They do share one thing in common though: quick diagnosis, treatment and therapy can help to reduce death and improve outcomes.

There are two types of stroke:
- **Ischemic Stroke** Occurs when a blood vessel is blocked.
- **Hemorrhagic Stroke** Occurs when a blood vessel bursts within the brain.

There are two age groups of strokes in kids:
- **Perinatal Stroke** (22 weeks pregnant - 1 month old)
  - About 80% are Ischemic Stroke and 20% Hemorrhagic and other causes.
  - In most cases, the cause is not known.
  - Risk factors:
    - Congenital heart disease
    - Disorders of the placenta
    - Blood clotting disorders
    - Infections, like meningitis
  - What to look for:
    - Seizures: Rhythmic face, arm or leg twitching. Pauses in breathing along with staring episodes.
    - Hand preference: Before age one, the baby may only be using one hand or prefers using one hand over the other.
    - Developmental Delays: As the baby grows, delays may be noticed.
    - Decreased Movement or Weakness: usually on one side of the body.
  - What to do: Call 911 for sudden signs of stroke
  - Notify your child’s doctor if you have concerns about any of these signs.

- **Childhood Stroke** (1 month old - 18 years old)
  - About 50% are Ischemic Stroke and 50% are Hemorrhagic Stroke.
  - In many cases, a cause cannot be found.
  - Risk factors:
    - Congenital heart disease
    - Disorders of brain vessels
    - Infections
    - Head injury
    - Sickle cell disease
    - Autoimmune disorders
  - What to look for:
    - Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg. Usually on one side of the body.
    - Sudden confusion, difficulty talking or understanding.
    - Sudden trouble seeing (loss of vision or double vision).
    - Sudden difficulty with walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination.
    - Sudden severe headache.
    - Sudden headache with vomiting and sleepiness.
    - New seizures (usually on one side of the body).
  - What to do: Call 911 for sudden signs of stroke

Addison, Perinatal Stroke

“Our children are an inspiration, they are much more than a diagnosis, and they will continue to teach us all that differences can be beautiful and to never underestimate what they can overcome”
-Kaycee (Addison’s Mom)