



## A Premature Problem

### Learning Targets

- Learn how premature births affect an entire family
- Collaborate with peers to determine how to meet needs in your community

### Standards

- UN SDG 3 – Good Health and Wellbeing
- NFTE Mindsets – Critical Thinking; Communication & Collaboration



When a baby is born prematurely (or early), it can impact the whole family in many ways. The baby is at risk of death or lifelong disabilities and often requires an extensive stay in a hospital neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). This type of care is expensive and hard on the emotional wellbeing of the whole family.

### Time Commitment

- 30-45 minutes

### Age Range

- 4<sup>th</sup> grade and up

## Your Challenge

Determine the best way you can support a local NICU or families impacted by premature births in your area.

Start by talking to classmates, it is likely someone you know spent time in the NICU or has a sibling who was born prematurely. What do these families need? What do the medical professionals who serve them need? Is there something you can make for them or collect for them?

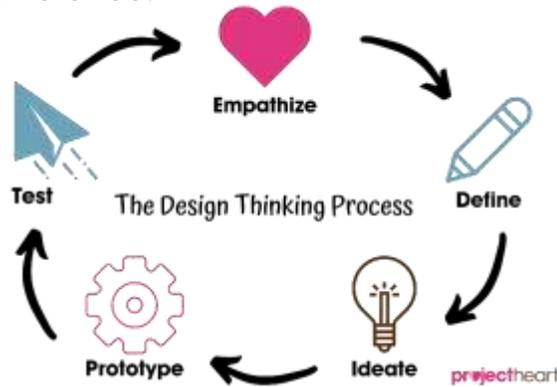
What more can be done? Can you and your friends devise a campaign to encourage others to care about this cause and join you in your efforts? Can you host an event to get more people involved? How will you use your 3Ts to make a difference?

Helpful websites could be

- <https://handtohold.org/>
- <https://www.marchofdimes.org/index.aspx>
- <https://brightfutures.aap.org/>
- <https://www.loveforlily.org/>
- <https://www.greeleytribune.com/2022/01/15/with-blankets-and-baskets-windsor-high-school-students-launch-nicu-heroes/>

## Getting Started

To effectively create change, you need to follow a plan of action. We use the Design Thinking Process to help us better understand the problem we see and walk us through steps to creating a plan to make a difference!



## The Design Thinking Process



Empathize

To **empathize** means to understand and share the feelings of another. As it relates to the design thinking process and [Project Heart](#), to empathize specifically means to learn about the audience or group that you wish to impact.



Define

**Define** means to share your problem statement with others. As it relates to Project Heart, the define stage of design thinking means you've thought about your personal passions and how to apply the 3Ts of your group to make a greater social impact. The define state helps you clearly state the need or problem so others can understand.



Ideate

To **ideate** means to form an idea, thought or concept. As it relates to the design thinking process, to ideate specifically means to brainstorm ideas based on what you have learned about your target audience and the point of view or problem statement you have defined. Related to Project Heart, your ideas should also incorporate the specific time, talent and/or treasure that you wish to contribute.



Prototype

To **prototype** means to model or create an example. As it relates to the design thinking process, to prototype specifically means to execute one or more of your ideas.



Test

To **test** means to check the quality, reliability or performance of something. As it relates to the design thinking process, to test specifically means to gain feedback on your prototype from your target population.

## Activity

**Use the spaces below to work through the design thinking process.**

Tips: To build empathy, do some research and interview experts in this area (which can include your peers!). Find out what people impacted by premature births really need. Think about the medical professionals and the families impacted, then choose either to impact a NICU or an organization that serves families with premature babies.

When you decide on your prototype idea, remember to access the Illumination Fund for materials funding or a matching donation to a non-profit

<https://myprojectheart.org/illumination-fund>



**Empathize**



**Define**



**Ideate**



**Prototype**



**Test**

**Reflect**