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**CONTACT:**

Melissa Smart  
972-981-8532 office  
509-619-5801 cell  
MelissaSmart@TexasHealth.org

**Texas Health Plano gifted with ‘Peek-a-Boo’  
cameras to help connect parents with babies**

*Peek-a-Boo Neonatal ICU cameras enable parents to see and talk to babies*

**PLANO, TEXAS, October 11, 2013** – On May 26, 2011, Celina residents Chris and Amy Skaggs were blessed with the birth of fraternal twins, daughter Leighton Sophie Taylor and son Jaxon Cohen. Born at just 28 weeks and 6 days gestation, and weighing 2lbs., 8oz. and 2lbs., 6oz., respectively, the Skaggs twins needed extra medical attention in the Level III neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) at Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital Plano.

The twins were fighters from the beginning, impressing their parents and caregivers by reaching key milestones quickly. At only two weeks of age, they no longer needed oxygen or the continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP), which helps premature babies breathe on their own. The Skaggs family was confident they were on the road to bringing home two healthy babies when their world was rocked by a concerning phone call.

“On June 16, we got a call in the middle of the night that Leighton had an unusually high fever,” Chris said. “Leighton had been diagnosed with late-onset (after 7 days of age) group B streptococcus (GBS), a bacteria that can be passed from mother to baby during birth. In less than 48 hours after being diagnosed, Leighton passed away.”

“Leighton’s blood had been tested at birth for the GBS bacteria, but it does not always show itself,” said Antonio Santiago, M.D., NICU Medical Director and neonatologist on the medical staff at Texas Health Plano. “Pregnant women are usually tested for the presence of GBS before birth, and if found positive are treated with antibiotics during pregnancy and birth.”

Screening for GBS is typically done later in pregnancy, according to the Centers for Disease Control, due to the fact that if a mother is treated too soon in her pregnancy, it is likely that the infection will return, and she will have to be treated again.

“The screening and treatment of mothers before and during delivery have proven to help reduce the number of infants who acquired early-onset GBS, which affects newborns immediately after birth. At this time, even with the screening and treatment of mothers in place, it does little to prevent late-onset GBS, like Leighton had,” said Dr. Santiago.

After Leighton's passing, the Skaggs family knew that they wanted to turn their heartbreaking loss into something positive to honor her legacy. At Leighton's funeral, the Skaggs told their family and friends to make a donation in Leighton's name to the Texas Health Resources Foundation in lieu of flowers. From this, the concept of Leighton's Gift, a non-profit foundation to honor her legacy, emerged.

"The rules in the NICU are very strict, but for good reason," said Amy. "These little ones are very fragile and need to have limited visitors. But, one of the hardest things as a family was that no one ever got to meet our sweet angel. Even at only three weeks of age she had a spunky personality. She looked our way when we were there, and kicked her little foot out and shook it back and forth, and would hum when we held her, just like her brother. These are a few of the things we wish everyone could have seen before she passed away."

While raising their son Jaxon, now two, the Skaggs reached out to friends and family to raise funds to help other parents with babies in the NICU. Fundraisers included letter writing campaigns and an annual motorcycle rally.

"Not being there for every moment is hard," Chris said. "You want to see everything they do and be participating in their care, and if we had had access to cameras to see the babies it would have been such a relief."

### **A wish becomes a reality**

Thanks to their generous donation, parents will now be able to see and talk to their children when they are unable to be at their bedside. Ten Peek-a-Boo Neonatal ICU cameras are now connecting families via computer or smart phone 24 hours a day.

"The arrival of a new baby is a special time for families, but for those whose babies have to stay in the NICU it can be difficult," said Michelle Kelly, R.N.C., N.I.C., nurse manager of the Level III NICU at Texas Health Plano. "Most families don't plan for their baby to be in the NICU for long stretches of time. Many try to save their maternity leave for when the baby actually comes home from the hospital, so they have to go back to work. With this system, mom and dad can see and talk to their baby, and that peace of mind is a huge comfort."

Peek-a-Boo cameras are hosted through a secure website that requires a special password for each family. Parents can share access with other family members and friends as they wish.

"Every parent's wish is to stay close to their new baby, and having to leave them can cause feelings of stress, guilt, and even fear," Dr. Santiago said. "With the cameras they feel more connected to their infant, watching over them even when they are not able to physically be in the hospital. This helps alleviate those feelings. They can also share their newborns with siblings, friends and relatives, and this brings the family together."

“We are pleased that Texas Health Plano is able to offer this new service to families – thanks in great part to the generosity of the Skaggs family and Leighton’s Gift,” said Mike Evans, R.N., M.S.N., president of Texas Health Plano. “We believe that this technology will help ease parents’ stress and promote bonding between family and baby. We are very proud to be one of the only hospitals in the area to provide this service, and we look forward to adding more cameras in the near future.”

The cameras are a second-generation design from Angel Eye®, an Arkansas-based health care technology company, which offers hospitals an internet-based, HIPAA compliant video and audio system that allows families to interact with their newborns at any time.

Cameras are mounted in a protected casing that swings above the crib, or isolette. When a nurse positions the camera, it gives the parents a wide view to ensure that they can see the baby, even in the dark. The audio feature regulates sound levels, no matter how loud the sound is from the parent’s microphone. The speaker inside the isolette is limited to 65 decibels.

Texas Health Plano has a Level III NICU with board-certified neonatologists on the medical staff and specially trained nurses to care for infants in the unit. With 45 beds, the NICU has the largest bed capacity of any NICU in Collin County.

The NICU’s goal is to have one camera for each bed, and each camera costs approximately \$3,400 to purchase and install. For every \$3,400 given by an individual or family, a camera will be named in their honor and commemorated with a plaque on the camera for families to see. To make a donation to the Texas Health Foundation NICU camera fund, visit [www.TexasHealth.org/Giving](http://www.TexasHealth.org/Giving).

“We are so excited to reach our first milestone in this project,” Chris said. “By no means are we (Leighton’s Gift) done, but this is the first big step!”

For more information about Leighton’s Gift, visit [www.LeightonsGift.com](http://www.LeightonsGift.com)

For more information about the hospital, please visit [www.TexasHealth.org/Plano](http://www.TexasHealth.org/Plano).

#### **About Texas Health Plano**

Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital Plano is a 366-bed acute care hospital and recognized clinical program leader, providing technologically advanced care to Plano and surrounding areas since 1991. The hospital’s services include orthopedics, cardiovascular services, oncology, pediatrics and women’s services. An affiliate of the faith-based, nonprofit Texas Health Resources system, Texas Health Plano has more than 1,600 employees and 1,300 physicians on the medical staff. For more information, call 1-877-THR-WELL or visit [TexasHealth.org/Plano](http://TexasHealth.org/Plano).

#### **About Texas Health Resources**

Texas Health Resources is one of the largest faith-based, nonprofit health systems in the United States. The health system includes 24 acute care and short-stay hospitals that are owned, operated, joint-ventured or affiliated with Texas Health Resources. It includes the Texas Health Presbyterian, Texas Health Arlington Memorial and Texas Health Harris Methodist hospitals, a large physician group, outpatient facilities, and home health, preventive and fitness services, and an organization for medical research and education.

For more information about Texas Health Resources, call 1-877-THR-WELL, or visit [www.texashealth.org](http://www.texashealth.org).

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*Doctors on the medical staff practice independently and are not employees or agents of the hospital.*