INTRODUCTION
Meeting the needs of parents’ and identifying factors that impact their needs is crucial in facilitating the best possible outcome for vulnerable preterm infants and their families. Evaluating how nurses’ make sense of the parents’ needs is essential because most of the communication and education that parents receive, and time spent in the NICU, is with the nurse.

PURPOSE
The purpose of this pilot study was to investigate parents and nurses perspectives on parental needs, the extent to which those needs are viewed as met; and to understand the association between parental needs and the infant’s illness severity for parents with preterm infants that are born before 32 weeks gestation in the first 10 days of admission.

QUESTIONS
The primary research question was:
What are the perceived needs of parents of preterm infants born under 32 weeks’ completed gestation during the first 10 days of admission to an NICU setting?

The secondary questions were:
Is there a difference between nurses’ perception of parents’ needs and parents’ perceived needs?
To what extent are parental needs perceived as being met or unmet from the parents’ and nurses’ perspectives?
Is there an association between parental needs and illness severity in the initial 10 days in the NICU?

METHODOLOGY
This was a prospective, descriptive-correlational quantitative study that used the NICU Family Needs Inventory and a modified version of the Needs Met Inventory to collect data from parents (n= 24) and nurses (n= 16) that were directly involved in the family’s care. Each participant self-administered the questionnaires once during the 10 day period. The Score for Neonatal Acute Physiology, Version II was as an objective measure of illness severity, and data was extracted from n= 14 infants chart.

RESULTS
Preliminary results of the study indicates that there are discrepancies in parents and nurses perception of needs in relation to there importance and the degree to they are viewed as met. Parents rated 6 needs as very important while, nurses only considered the needs as such. Differences were also noted in how parents and nurses rated the needs as met wherein, n= 24 parents indicated that the need to, ‘see my infant frequently’ was always met but, only n= 9 nurses reported the same view.

CONCLUSION
Nurses need to engage in continuing assessment of parental needs as they grow into their role as parents. Parents need to understand, be shown and made to feel that they are recognized, respected and valued for their position in the infants life which is best demonstrated through a caring and compassionate approach in the delivery of nursing care.