

march of dimes[®] bulletin

New Jersey chapter

State Director's Corner

Dear Friends,

I hope that 2015 has gotten off to a great start for you and your family.



It is my great pleasure to communicate to you for the first time in this forum as the New Jersey State Director for the March of Dimes. We have many exciting opportunities, programs and events planned for this year and beyond, and I am honored to lead the NJ Chapter. The March of

Dimes has been helping babies and their families for over 75 years and countless lives have been saved thanks to research, education and programs funded by the organization. I look forward to working with our dynamic volunteer/staff team to help in the fight for stronger, healthier babies.

One of the many ways in which you can help in the fight for stronger, healthier babies is through participation in our upcoming March for Babies. We have 14 walk locations throughout the state scheduled for the last weekend in April (April 25th-26th) and first weekend in May (May 3rd). Please bring your family, friends and co-workers and join thousands of others to ensure that every baby has the opportunity for a healthy first step. For additional event and registration information, please visit marchforbabies.org.

Thank you for your interest and commitment to the March of Dimes. Please feel free to contact me at (732) 952-9012 or jyoung@marchofdimes.org. I look forward to meeting and working with all of you to help make the NJ Chapter of the March of Dimes the best that it can be.

Jim Young

It's March for Babies time!

A baby's first steps are one of the most precious moments in life, and the March of Dimes believes every baby deserves a healthy first step. Take your own first steps by joining March for Babies and make sure more babies get that chance.

About 4 million babies were born in the United States last year, and the March of Dimes helped each and every one through research, education, vaccines, and breakthroughs. March for Babies is a family-friendly event where the community comes together to raise money to support research, services, education and advocacy in the fight against prematurity, birth defects and infant mortality. Visit marchforbabies.org to sign up as an individual or family, start a team, or donate.



Calendar of Events

2014 Nurse of the Year Awards

[Complete list of winners](#)

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

[March of Dimes Night at the New Jersey Devils](#)

March for Babies:

Saturday, April 25, 2015

[Salem](#) - Riverview Beach Park, Pennsville

Sunday, April 26, 2015

[Bergen](#) - Darlington Park, Mahwah

[Camden](#) - Virtua, Voorhees

[Essex](#) - Brookdale Park, Bloomfield/Montclair

[Gloucester](#) - Rowan University, Glassboro

[Hudson](#) - Liberty State Park, Jersey City

[Mercer](#) - Mercer County Park, West Windsor

[Middlesex](#) - Johnson Park, Grove 5, Piscataway

[Morris](#) - Fairleigh Dickinson University, Madison

[Passaic](#) - Wayne Hills High School, Wayne

[Raritan Valley](#) - Spruce Run Park, Clinton

[Skylands](#) - Sussex County Fairgrounds, Augusta

[South Jersey Shore](#) - Boardwalk, Ocean City

Sunday, May 3, 2015

[Jersey Shore](#) - Asbury Park Boardwalk, Asbury Park

Identifying Prematurity Genes

Premature birth is a leading cause of infant death and disabilities in this country. In about half of all cases, doctors don't know why a woman delivers too soon. But some of the answers may lie in our genes.

Jeffrey C. Murray, MD, a March of Dimes grantee at the University of Iowa in Iowa City, is conducting a comprehensive search of the entire human genome for gene variants that may contribute to premature birth. Genetic factors are known to influence at least 40 percent of spontaneous premature births – but the actual genes are unknown. Dr. Murray also is seeking to identify environmental factors, such as smoking and maternal weight, that may interact with these variants to cause premature birth.

A new study by Dr. Murray and colleagues has identified two potential prematurity genes. One of these genes is carried by the mother, and the other by the baby. Presence of either of these genes may cause a pregnancy to be more prone to premature delivery. Most research on the role of genetics in preterm labor has focused on the mother. However, this and other studies suggest that genetic factors in the baby may sometimes contribute.

Identifying prematurity genes is an important step in predicting which women are at increased risk of premature delivery and eventually developing new treatments to help prevent it.

Volunteer Spotlight

Cynthia Green has been with New Jersey Natural Gas for 34 years and has been a March for Babies team captain for the past 10 years. She leads events at her office such as Blue Jeans for Babies, bake sales, cook-offs and cut out sales. She says she does this all for the babies - "The services the March of Dimes provides for families and babies are exceptional." New Jersey Natural Gas has raised over \$111,000 in funds for the March of Dimes since they became a March for Babies sponsor 14 years ago.



Christina Kindler is the Team Captain for the Family Team "Brandon's Bunch" which participates at the Passaic County March for Babies. Christina has been supporting the March of Dimes since 2005 and her team has raised over \$42,000. She is the Chair for our Passaic County Family Teams Committee and has helped to support and mentor our family teams as well as generate new family teams. She coordinates the family activities at our Family Teams tent each year. Christina is a model volunteer who is legendary for her successful Wonder Walks at area schools that raise a significant amount of money while also sharing our mission in the community.

The **PSEG Nuclear Volunteer Team** walks at our Salem County March for Babies. In 2014, this amazing group of volunteers raised over \$108,000. They have raised over \$100,000 for the last three years straight, which has brought them to a grand total of over \$750,000 since 2002.



March for Babies Sponsors

March for Babies is sponsored nationally by the March of Dimes number one corporate supporter Kmart, and top sponsors Famous Footwear, Macy's, Cigna, United Airlines and Mission Pharmacal, and locally by PSEG, UnitedHealthcare, Virtua, Comcast NBCUniversal, and New Jersey Monthly.



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