



Gouveia, Susan

From: Lashway, Lisa
Sent: Wednesday, September 24, 2014 2:10 PM
To: Canning, Sean; Gouveia, Susan; Brett, Lisa
Subject: FW: March of Dimes

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From: Keyes, Wendy [mailto:WKeyes@marchofdimes.com]
Sent: Wednesday, September 24, 2014 2:03 PM
To: Keyes, Wendy
Subject: March of Dimes

November 17, 2014 is the fourth annual World Prematurity Day, a global movement to raise awareness about prematurity highlighting the burden of preterm birth, informing on simple, proven cost-effective solutions, and invoking compassion for families who have experienced preterm birth. **To commemorate this day, we are asking buildings and attractions in New Jersey to join this world wide effort and light up purple.**

Last year, numerous buildings and places in the United States from the Empire State Building to Niagara Falls to Cinderella's Castle in Walt Disney World, and many more buildings world-wide, turned purple on November 17th. We would like to ask you to help raise awareness for prematurity by lighting a building or location in your town purple.

An estimated 15 million babies around the world are born premature each year and more than one million of them do not survive their early birth. Although the United States has seen consecutive years of sustained improvement in its preterm birth rate, it has one of the highest rates of preterm birth of any industrialized country. In 2013, through the efforts of the March of Dimes and other organizations, **New Jersey** lowered its preterm birth rate to 11.2 percent. This represents over 11,000 premature babies annually in our state. This was accomplished through such programs in **New Jersey** as Healthy Babies are Worth the Wait, NICU Family Support, Centering Pregnancy and an allocation of \$1.3m in grants in 2013. The March of Dimes goal is to lower the US preterm birth rate to 9.6 percent of live births by 2020.

Premature birth, birth before 37 completed weeks of pregnancy, is a serious health problem that costs the United States more than \$26 billion annually, according to the Institute of Medicine. It is the leading cause of newborn death, and babies who survive an early birth often face the risk of lifetime health

challenges, such as breathing problems, cerebral palsy, intellectual disabilities and others. Even babies born just a few weeks early have higher rates of hospitalization and illness than full-term infants. At least 39 weeks of pregnancy are important to a baby's health because many important organs, including the brain and lungs, are not completely developed until then.

You can find additional information on World Prematurity Day at:

- World Prematurity Day <https://www.facebook.com/WorldPrematurityDay>
- March of Dimes <http://www.marchofdimes.com/mission/world-prematurity-day.aspx>
- Pictures from 2013 World Prematurity Day <http://on.fb.me/1mYa7iA>

By **lighting up purple**, you will be joining the March of Dimes, parent groups and organizations in countries around the world to raise awareness about premature birth and how it can be prevented.

Please let me know if you will be able to join us this November. Thank you in advance for your help in raising awareness in New Jersey about premature birth, the leading cause of newborn death.

Wendy S. Keyes

Director of Communications (Monday 9:30-2:30, Wednesday & Thursday 8:15-2:15)

New Jersey Chapter

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