



State of New York

Executive Chamber

Proclamation

Whereas, ensuring the health and well-being of children is a priority in New York State and our success in achieving this goal is furthered through efforts to increase awareness, education and prevention so as to reduce the number of birth defects – the leading cause of infant mortality which accounts for one in every five deaths among children under a year old; and

Whereas, birth defects affect one in every 33 babies and can occur in any family, regardless of the parents' race, health history, economic status or education and, in New York, birth defects account for nearly 20% of infant deaths every year; and

Whereas, birth defects also are the cause of more than 100 conditions, some more visible than others, some structural and some chromosomal, and many that can seriously affect an infant's health, development, and functional abilities; and

Whereas, early identification of a child with a birth defect coupled with early intervention services typically improves the child's quality of life and may even save his or her life; and

Whereas, the possibility for all types of birth defects – and especially of multiple birth defects – is increased when the mother has type 1 or type 2 diabetes; women who have gestational diabetes are at greater risk for complications, including preeclampsia and delivery by cesarean section, and are at greater risk to develop insulin dependent diabetes in future; and

Whereas, the prevalence of gestational diabetes has increased, with medical sources indicating that its onset occurs among 5-9% of expectant mothers statewide and nationwide; in the last decade, the prevalence of pre-gestational diabetes mellitus in women of childbearing age also has increased by 50% and currently affects an estimated 2.5% or 1.3 million nationwide and approximately 2.1% or 77 thousand women of childbearing age in the State of New York; and

Whereas, nearly 9 in 10 women of childbearing age with pre-gestational diabetes are overweight or obese, illustrating that the obesity epidemic contributes to the development of preventable diabetes and other conditions that are associated with poor reproductive outcomes, including birth defects; and

Whereas, New Yorkers support causes that address critical health concerns affecting our fellow human beings and join in national initiatives that promote education and prevention efforts; in order to decrease the incidence of birth defects across the country and throughout New York State, the month of January is annually dedicated to raising awareness about birth defects and strategies for their prevention, such as reminding expectant mothers of the risks associated with diabetes and to attain a healthy weight so as to reduce the possibility of diabetes onset and, therefore, improve the outcome of their pregnancy;

Now, Therefore, I, David A. Paterson, Governor of the State of New York, do hereby proclaim January 2010 as

BIRTH DEFECTS PREVENTION MONTH

in the Empire State, as the New York State Department of Health and the New York State Congenital Malformations Registry demonstrate statewide leadership by supporting and participating in this promotion.



G i v e n under my hand and the Privy Seal of the State at the Capitol in the City of Albany this twenty-eighth day of December in the year two thousand nine.

David A. Paterson

Governor

Lawrence Schwartz
Secretary to the Governor