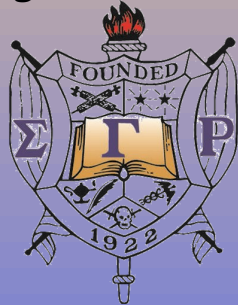


Prematurity Awareness Month



Fredrick Logan Thomas, born January 24, 2011, 17 weeks Premature



March
of Dimes®
Saving babies, together®

World Prematurity Day - November 17, 2011

Working together for stronger, healthier babies -

Honor the **1 million** babies worldwide who died this year because they were born too soon, and the **12 million** more who struggle to survive.

Help fight premature birth and show your support by:

- ♦ Purple Day: Wear purple every Monday in November and Thursday, November 17, 2011 World Prematurity Day
- ♦ March for Babies: Begin formation of your 2012 March For Babies Teams
- ♦ \$1922.00: Set up your group e-mail or Facebook through the March of Dimes website for fun and easy fund raising
- ♦ Project CRADLE Care: Plan your 1st Annual Prenatal Education Fair scheduled for January 21, 2012

Who do you know? Help fight premature birth

What We Know About Prematurity

Today more than 1,400 babies in the United States (1 in 8) will be born prematurely. Many will be too small and too sick to go home. Instead, they face weeks or even months in the newborn intensive care unit (NICU). These babies face an increased risk of serious medical complications and death; however, most, eventually, will go home.

But what does the future hold for these babies? Many survivors grow up healthy; others aren't so lucky. Even the best of care cannot always spare a premature baby from lasting disabilities such as cerebral palsy; mental retardation and learning problems; chronic lung disease; and vision and hearing problems. Half of all neurological disabilities in children are related to premature birth.

Although doctors have made tremendous advances in caring for babies born too small and too soon, we need to find out how to prevent preterm birth from happening in the first place. Despite decades of research, scientists have not yet developed effective ways to help prevent premature delivery.

In fact, the rate of premature birth increased by more than 20 percent between 1990 and 2006. This trend and the dynamics underlying it underscore the critical importance and timeliness of the March of Dimes Prematurity Campaign. The rate fell to 12.3 percent in 2008 from 12.7 in 2007, a small but statistically significant decrease.

