

GOVERNOR DOUGLAS A. DUCEY

STATE OF ARIZONA
★
PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the nation's most precious resource is our children, and every baby deserves the best possible start for a healthy, productive, and happy life. Birth defects (congenital anomalies) impact individuals, families, and communities; and

WHEREAS, birth defects are common, costly, and critical; every four and a half minutes a baby is born in the United States with a birth defect. Birth defects cause one in every five infant deaths, and lead to \$2.6 billion per year in hospital costs alone in the United States. In Arizona, birth defects account for more than 100 infant deaths every year; and

WHEREAS, birth defects can occur in any family regardless of race, ethnicity, health history, economic status, or level of education; however, late entry into prenatal care and less than optimal pregnancy management during the crucial first weeks of a baby's development can have a significant impact on the outcome of affected babies and families; 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, while not all birth defects can be prevented, and many unknown factors play a role in birth defects occurrence, steps can be taken to help prevent or limit certain risks for birth defects and to increase a woman's chance of having a healthy baby; and

WHEREAS, the good health and well-being of the people of Arizona are enhanced by the support of a national endeavor to educate about preconception health strategies to prevent birth defects, therefore, as part of a collaborative effort, the Arizona Department of Health Services, along with the March of Dimes Arizona Chapter, the National Birth Defects Prevention Network, as well as many dedicated volunteers, healthcare professionals, and parent groups promote and encourage all citizens to increase awareness, education, and services related to birth defects.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Douglas A. Ducey, Governor of the State of Arizona, do hereby proclaim January 2018 as

BIRTH DEFECTS PREVENTION MONTH



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the State of Arizona

Douglas A. Ducey
GOVERNOR

DONE at the Capitol in Phoenix on this twentieth day of December in the year Two Thousand and Seventeen and of the Independence of the United States of America the Two Hundred and Forty-Second.

ATTEST: *Michele Reagan*

SECRETARY OF STATE