



*March of Dimes
Birth Defects Foundation*

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GARLAND ISD WALKS TO SAVE BABIES

DALLAS, DECEMBER 9 –Garland ISD has been a staple at March of Dimes WalkAmerica since they began participating in 2002 and in the last 4 years have raised over \$337,000. Each year, their participation has grown dramatically. 2005 was a banner year for Garland ISD – they raised over \$84,000 – a 40% increase over the previous year, but they knew they had even greater potential.

They banded together in a grassroots effort to do what seemed impossible – raise over \$100,000 for March of Dimes in 2006. Throughout the year, they sponsored fundraisers such as Taters for Tots, Blue Jeans for Babies and Burgers for Babies; they sold awareness wristbands and bean bag babies. Everyone participated – students, faculty, and administrators alike – fostering a community spirit of fun and camaraderie. In 2006, former Dallas Cowboy wide receiver Drew Pearson addressed the Garland ISD team at their annual WalkAmerica Leadership Breakfast, congratulating his audience for their valuable work on behalf of the March of Dimes. Garland ISD went above and beyond anything they had done before, and they raised over \$115,000 in 2006, ranking them at the pinnacle of school districts in the nation for WalkAmerica fundraising.

The effort is lead by Dr. Curtis Culwell, Garland ISD Superintendent, himself the father of premature twins. His personal connection to the March of Dimes mission inspires the faculty, staff and students of Garland ISD, leading them to rank fourth among the top WalkAmerica fundraising teams in Dallas, surrounded by such names as Bank of America, Ernst & Young, Macy's and Citigroup. Garland ISD and March of Dimes are proud to partner to instill the spirit of volunteerism and community service to the area's youth.

WalkAmerica, the March of Dimes biggest fund-raising event, will take place April 21, 2007 at Norbuck Park, White Rock Lake, to help the March of Dimes fight prematurity – a growing crisis that now affects half-a-million babies born in the U.S. every year. The number of babies born prematurely each year has increased by 30 percent since 1983. In Texas, 52,162 babies were born prematurely in 2003. Premature birth is the leading killer of newborns and a major cause of disabilities.

The March of Dimes is a national voluntary health agency whose mission is to improve the health of babies by preventing birth defects, premature birth and infant mortality. Founded in 1938, the March of Dimes funds programs of research, community services, education, and advocacy to save babies and in 2003 launched a campaign to address the increasing rate of premature birth. For more information, visit the March of Dimes Web site at marchofdimes.com or its Spanish Web site at nacersano.org.

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