

# *Speak Up When You're Down*

## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **Thousands of New Jersey Babies Expected to be Born this Summer**

#### ***New Jersey Offers Free Resources for Women with Postpartum Depression and Other Perinatal Mood Disorders***

TRENTON, N.J. – Among the babies born in the United States every year, 35 percent are born from the beginning of June through the end of September. For every 8 in 10 births, new mothers will experience at least a brief episode of the "baby blues" – feelings of sadness, anxiety, loneliness, or moodiness – within the first few days of giving birth.

After a couple of weeks these symptoms typically disappear. However, when symptoms persist or deepen in intensity, they may be a sign of postpartum depression or another perinatal mood disorder.

Perinatal mood disorders (PMD) include: anxiety disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder, post traumatic stress disorder, bipolar disorders and postpartum depression. The depression may be mild, moderate or severe.

In New Jersey, women have numerous resources available to help them overcome the effects of PMD. These disorders can be serious, but they are highly treatable. Help is available, and it is important that a mother gets the support and treatment needed to recover so that she can enjoy her baby. The first step is to ask for help.

Resources include an informational website, [www.njspeakup.gov](http://www.njspeakup.gov), which provides a comprehensive list of support groups throughout New Jersey, general advice, fact sheets and written and video testimonials about personal experiences with PMD from women, their partners and other family members. In addition, the 24/7 toll-free telephone helpline – 1-800-328-3838 – helps with general questions and referrals to treatment services, support groups and counseling.

Indeed, New Jersey has been on the forefront in developing resources to help women with PMDs. In 2006, New Jersey enacted the first law in the nation requiring all hospitals and birthing centers to screen new mothers for PMDs. New Jersey is the only state to mandate this type of screening.

Furthermore, in an effort to educate New Jersey women about the signs and resources available for treating PMD, informational palm cards on the signs of PMD are being distributed throughout the state. Locations include hair and nail salons, spas, day care centers, nursery schools, restaurants and other retail establishments.

Any woman who has recently had a baby, ended a pregnancy, or who has stopped breast-feeding, can be affected by PMD. The disorders usually occur within the first year after childbirth, miscarriage or stillbirth, but the signs of depression can also appear earlier – when a woman is pregnant, or even planning to be.

Talking about PPD and other PMDs is the first step. There is no need for any woman to suffer alone with a Perinatal Mood Disorder.

- njspeakup.gov –