

Mums of Zuidas join the fight for infant health

500 babies are born in the Netherlands every day. And every day, four infants die due to delayed growth, premature birth or congenital disorders. Other babies pull through, but face a lifetime of chronic illness or disability. Gezond Geboren is a foundation dedicated to funding and expanding scientific research that will improve healthy development before and after birth. On 9 September, these Zuidas mothers will be visiting companies and partners to raise awareness about this issue! More info visit www.gezondgeboren.nl



EEFJE VOOGD

Owner Eefje Voogd estate agency

'Recent years have seen the government forced to make heavy cuts to scientific research, yet more research and the use of new technologies are precisely what we need to reduce infant mortality. I was invited to become an ambassador right around the time that my daughter went off to live on her own. That's one of those moments when your entire life briefly flashes before your eyes -

remembering the miracle of her birth at VUmc 18 years ago, a picture of health. But being born sound and healthy is never something to be taken for granted.'

MARIJE STAMAN

Tax partner, Deloitte

'I was drawn to the objectives of Gezond Geboren partly due to personal circumstances, but also because I feel it's important to enlarge the sense of social responsibility here in Zuidas. What we ultimately hope to do is raise funds for scientific research and the development of educational programmes. Anyone who wants to contribute to this cause is encouraged to contact one of the ambassadors.'



MARTINE GRÜNDEMANN,

Head of commercial affairs, G&S Vastgoed

'In my immediate family I've seen the suffering that premature birth (and death) can cause, in this case as a consequence of indirect problems with the placenta. That's why I feel so strongly about this cause. We expect to find lots of friends for the foundation here in Zuidas, in the dynamic heart of the Dutch business sector. Our task as 'Mums of Zuidas' is to find friends for the foundation and, ultimately, to garner donations for scientific research.'



MARIEKE VISSER

National grant and marketing director, RAI Amsterdam

'I'm still fairly new to motherhood, with two children now. It's a wonderful experience, but sometimes it does hit me just how lucky we've been. No doubt that thought occurs to most parents every now and then. It can seem so natural when things progress as they should, and yet it isn't at all. More research into causes is crucial, and, as a mother, I want to do my share. We all have babies in our lives, whether you're a mother or father, an aunt or an uncle, a friend or a neighbour. So remember those little ones and, please, give generously, with a personal contribution or a donation on behalf of your organization.'

ELINE HOOGENDIJK

Project manager, Zuidas Development Office

'As the mother of two sons, both born in perfect health, I was shocked at the number of infant mortalities and babies born with illnesses or disabilities in this country that might have been prevented.

But even just within my own circle of acquaintances I know of several cases. Something like that leaves a scar. Zuidas has lots of companies with many talented young professionals, and I'm always delighted to hear when someone in my network has had a baby! I'm positive that there are lots of people working in Zuidas who will be eager to contribute to this cause.'



FREDERIEKE LEEFLANG

Member of the Board of Directors, BOEKEL

'We take it for granted that babies will be born healthy, but every day another four babies die as a consequence of complications during the pregnancy. That's a lot for a country like the Netherlands. I know from personal experience what it's like to be in a situation where there are obstacles to becoming pregnant and having a healthy baby. I know how difficult that is. Everyone around you is getting pregnant and having bouncing babies, except you. I received close personal supervision from my gynaecologist Niek Exalto, Niek Exalto was the founding father instead of one of them. Thanks in part to him, I ultimately had the good fortune to become the mother of two healthy children. Naturally, when he asked me to support this initiative, I was happy to say yes.'



ILSE VAN DE VEER

Dentist, Tandartsenpraktijk van de Veer

'There's nothing more beautiful or wonderful than the birth of a child. And there's nothing more upsetting than the idea of losing a child. We have to do all we can to prevent needless suffering for parents. Wherever research can make a difference, we have to make sure that it does! When I was asked to support this cause, I didn't have to think twice: I myself became a mother in early 2015, and that feeling of being emotionally dependent on something so close to me was sometimes scary. For me as a mother, it feels only natural to contribute to this worthy cause.'

CHRISTIANNE DE GROOT

head and chair Obstetrics and Gynecology, Vumc

'Most expectant mothers have a pregnancy and delivery free of complications and return home with a healthy newborn. Yet, unfortunately, complications can arise during the pregnancy or birth that may have adverse effects on the baby (perinatal outcomes), from disability to death. One of the main causes of death and mortality in the Netherlands is premature birth. It occurs in five to ten per cent of pregnancies and is among the top ten contributors to the 'global burden of disease'. Research into prevention and proper treatments is vital when dealing with complicated pregnancies. However, the cause of the complications isn't always evident, and that's why more research is needed.'



MARIANNE VERHAAR-STRIJBOS

Director of fundraising institutions and sector organizations, ABN AMRO MeesPierson

'If research can help to reduce the mortality rate among newborns, then it goes without saying that we should do all the research that's needed. I hope the foundation will enjoy a successful launch and that this day will help it to build a name and contribute to its goals. We're keen to share knowledge about the facts and possibilities with other mothers and fathers in Zuidas. As well as forging a more dynamic community, in this case it should also benefit the work being done by this foundation.'