



**National
Multiple Births
Awareness Day!**
May 28th



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***Supporting
Multiple Births
Together***

Members of Parliament
YOUR MP –
HIS/HER OFFICE

The full list of MPs is available online at:
webinfo.parl.gc.ca/MembersOfParliament/MainMPsCompleteList.aspx?TimePeriod=Current&Language=E

May 2010

Dear MP,

Please find attached a letter I recently sent to Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada requesting a review of Canada's EI Parental Leave benefits for multiple-birth families.

When Employment Insurance (EI) maternity and parental benefits were first enhanced ten years ago, the intent was communicated clearly to all Canadians. Minister Stewart's news release states - "Through the extension of EI maternity and parental benefits, the Government of Canada is providing families with the support they need to ensure that their children get the best start in life. As a result of the EI changes, a growing number of working parents can better balance their work and family responsibilities by staying at home with their newborn for one year without fear of losing their job."

The objectives of the enhanced programme state - *The first year of a child's life is considered to be a critical window of opportunity during which the foundation is laid for the development of the child (McCain and Mustard, 1999; Brooks-Gunn, Han and Waldfogel, 2002). Infants benefit from increased opportunities to be nurtured and stimulated by their parents (McCain and Mustard, 1999). A "secure attachment" between the infant and parent sets the basis for later relationships, emotional and social behaviours, problem solving, and academic performance (Berkwith, 1990; Main, 1990; Keating, 1993). Over the long-run, this could enhance human capital development leading to better labour market options.*

As forward-thinking this announcement was ten years ago, it did not then nor does it now address the needs of Canada's multiple-birth community. Many of our families cannot return to work with a secure attachment to their multiple infants, due to the double and triple demands on their time by their babies; many cannot find places for two or more in the same daycare facility nor in private daycares; many regrettably cannot return to the workplace and contribute as before because of these realities – an indication that current EI Parental Leave provisions are failing them.

I ask that you please consider the attached information and voice your desire to facilitate change to current EI Parental Leave benefits for multiple-birth families.

Respectfully submitted,

(Your Name
Your Chapter or non-member group)
Attach - 2

cc. (My local MP)