

NATIONAL MULTIPLE BIRTHS AWARENESS DAY

May 28th, 2005

Gail Moore

Director of Communications, MBC

There is truth to the adage that one must “walk a mile in someone else’s shoes” to understand the challenges and issues faced by another person.

Even within our own multiple-birth community there are differences in the journeys we travel, be it higher order multiples, more than one set of multiples, single parenting, special needs including health and learning challenges, and extreme financial issues. That said, as multiple-birth families we definitely share a common bond.

I’ve learned, just as other parents of multiple-birth children have learned, that multiple-birth children have a special relationship with each other. As parents, we are the secondary relationship. We take a back seat to co-multiples, which is not the way it is with our singleton children. Is this important? Does it make a difference? Yes. It’s this reality that shapes the interaction multiple-birth individuals have with others – their friends, their teachers, their spouses.

Will it enrich the non-multiple-births community to recognize this reality, to be “aware” of the challenges faced by multiple-birth individuals? Yes. It will provide a multitude of insights that will enrich the lives of anyone open to “walking in someone else’s shoes.”

And so, with the blessing of Annette and Cécile Dionne, who have taught the world so much about the “individual side of multiple-birth children”, we gather today to celebrate our First Annual Multiple Births Awareness Day. Today, May 28th, the day that Annette, Cécile, Emilie, Marie and Yvonne, the Dionne quintuplets, were born will become the date that we unite to commemorate National Multiple Births Awareness Day across Canada every year.

At this very moment... celebrations are currently being held from Vancouver Island to Eastern Ontario. Over a dozen locations including today’s Blue Jays and Minnesota Twins baseball game. National Multiple Births Awareness Day... a true Canadian celebration.