

Hello. My name is Gail Moore, and I'm the National Chair for Multiple Births Canada.

On behalf of MBC - and the Multiple Birth Families Association of Ottawa Gatineau - I THANK YOU for joining us today for National Multiple Births Awareness Day.

We are here - on Parliament Hill in Ottawa - to speak out on behalf of all Canadian multiple-birth families.

Our federal government needs to understand that ***Canada's El Parental Leave must reflect the needs of multiple-birth infants!***

Why?

Because additional parental leave for parents of multiple birth infants is necessary!

The positive outcome of additional leave time for parents of multiples is:

Mothers have better support during pregnancy complications - with a second parent at home, mothers have more time to rest and recover.

Parents can better focus on short or long term health problems of the infants - with both parents home, or more weeks of leave, parents have more time to care for infants in hospital and at home, to attend many medical appointments or therapies, or to grieve the loss of one or more babies.

The Primary caregiver is better equipped to handle physical and emotional stress - with a second parent at home, or more weeks of leave, parents can take shifts more easily and be less sleep deprived and less exhausted. They have more time to breastfeed, to bond with each baby individually, and to spend one-on-one time with each baby attending to their needs and promoting healthy development.





Parents can focus on their babies, not their financial challenges - with longer paid parental leave, families will have less urgency to return to work, more financial resources to meet the increased costs of two or more babies, and more flexibility to work when it best meets their needs. Also there will be less need to seek daycare for the infants, which is difficult to find and extremely expensive for twins or more.

Babies will have better (quality and quantity) bonding time with parents - parents will be provided with more opportunities to interact individually with their children, accomplishing the best start outcome desired from Canada's EI Parental Leave benefit.

We asked the Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development to join us today.

We asked for someone within her ministry to join us.

Before these invitations, letters were sent to the Honourable Diane Finley and her ministry explaining the unique situation of Canada's multiple-birth parents. In 2006. In 2009. And, again in 2010.

In all these cases, not once has this Minister or a member of her staff contacted us for further dialogue.

That is why we are here today.

Sweden recognizes the uniqueness of the multiple-birth experience. As does Finland. As do other countries. Why not Canada?

That is why we are here today. This dialogue began five years ago today. It is time for dialogue to become legislation.

To the Honourable Diane Finley and Stephen Harper's government we say

“ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL”

Canada's EI Parental Leave must reflect the needs of multiple-birth infants!

Thank you.

