



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



**Multiple Births Canada /**

**Naissance multiples Canada**

**PO Box 432**

**Wasaga Beach, ON**

**Canada L9Z 1A4**

**Tel. / Tél. : 1-705-429-0901**

**Fax / Téléc. : 1-705-429-9809**

**Toll Free / No. sans frais :**

**1-866-228-8824**

**[office@multiplebirthscanada.org](mailto:office@multiplebirthscanada.org)**

**[www.multiplebirthscanada.org](http://www.multiplebirthscanada.org)**

***Supporting  
Multiple Births  
Together***

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**2006 NATIONAL MULTIPLE BIRTHS AWARENESS DAY FOCUSES ON PRENATAL RISKS  
AND POST-NATAL ISSUES FACED BY MULTIPLE-BIRTH FAMILIES**

**CHATHAM** – May 28, 2006. The lead event for the 2<sup>ND</sup> Annual National Multiple Births Awareness Day (NMBAD), a Multiple Births Canada (MBC) initiative, was held today at the Wheels Inn Banquet Room, in Chatham, Ontario.

Delegates at the MBC 2006 National Conference, along with chapters in many cities across Canada, celebrated the event by ~ *Raising awareness of the unique risks of multiple-birth pregnancies and the post-natal issues faced by parents and multiples*. The 35% increase of multiple births during the past two decades represents about 10,000 multiple-birth babies born every year. Considered a high-risk pregnancy, most new parents of multiples only discover after the first ultra sound all the risks involved, including twin-to-twin transfusion syndrome, poor fetal growth, premature birth and low birth weight. "Health professionals have a basic understanding of the issues, but the statistics are still too high. For example, multiples account for 1 in 5 preterm births, and 1 in 4 low birth weight births. These statistics can improve with better education and earlier intervention," said Kim Weatherall, MBC Chair.

With regard to better education, MBC is promoting the use of a new resource piece called **LOW BIRTH WEIGHT & PRETERM MULTIPLE BIRTHS: A Canadian Perspective**. The document can also be viewed and purchased online at [www.multiplebirthscanada.org](http://www.multiplebirthscanada.org). The educational brochure was a collaborative effort of Multiple Births Canada with Best Start: Ontario's Maternal, Newborn and Early Child Development Resource Centre.

Earlier intervention involves a number of professionals. Physicians need to inform families who seek infertility treatments, about the known risks of multiple pregnancy, multifetal reduction, and parenting demands before starting therapy. To ensure that the pregnancy goes as near to term as possible, women expecting multiples require early diagnosis (before 16 weeks) in order to identify monozygotic multiples sharing a single placenta, there needs to be an appropriate obstetrical care management plan in place, the mother and her family need adequate time to adjust, and early nutritional counselling and dietary resources should be provided to support a potential weight gain of 40 to 60 pounds.

MBC and its 31 local chapters have supported multiple-birth families in Canada for over 28 years. It is the only national, non-profit, non-governmental organization solely committed to improving the quality of life for multiple-birth individuals and their families in Canada. MBC's mandate includes improving access to support, resources and informed care for multiples and their families, building stronger member chapters across Canada, and encouraging government and service providers to recognize the unique needs of multiples and their families and to provide appropriate services to them. For more information on MBC, call 1-866-228-8824 or visit the website at [www.multiplebirthscanada.org](http://www.multiplebirthscanada.org).

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

*Gail Moore, Vice Chair & Director of Communications*

Toll Free: 1-866-228-8824

[communications@multiplebirthscanada.org](mailto:communications@multiplebirthscanada.org)