

MULTIPLE BIRTHS CANADA E-NEWS

October, 2016

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URGENT MESSAGE REGARDING EI CONSULTATIONS

An urgent message to Canada's multiple-birth community:

Earlier this month, the Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, launched an online consultation to seek the views of Canadians on providing more flexible EI maternity and parental benefits.

"The Government is looking to all Canadians, particularly parents and caregivers, to join the conversation and share their views and experiences. This is an opportunity for Canadians to share their thoughts on the sort of adjustments that are required to improve Canada's EI maternity, parental and caregiving benefits programs."

For over a decade, MBC and Canada's multiple-birth community has been advocating for a correction to how the Government allocates EI parental leave benefits to parents of newborn multiples. **This is our opportunity to mobilize and provide a unified message.** Please join MBC as we rally our membership to add their voice to the consultations.

[Here is the letter](#) the MBC Board sent to Minister Duclos. Please read it to familiarize yourself with MBC's advocacy comments on behalf of future multiple-birth parents. In addition, we ask you to visit [the consultation page](#), [complete the survey](#), and [join the conversation](#). You will need to register first, then it takes a few minutes to contribute your thoughts.

When commenting on [the survey page](#), you will have a chance to share your views in section 1. You will be asked:

"Are there additional approaches to benefits and leave that you would like to see to better support your family situation in relation to leaving work to care for a newborn or a newly adopted child or children?"

Please answer - YES. Then, post your comments in the box, where it says **please explain**.

Please note that MBC feels a unified message is the best approach, and to that end we feel that the following sentence could be the starting line of your comments in this section, and

then the 5 points to consider could be added to your comments, or you could use them as talking points adding in your own experiences and ideas.

“Multiple birth families are currently not fairly supported under the EI system. Each infant deserves the same attention, care and bonding time with parents that a single-born baby receives.”

Points to consider in your comments could include:

- Increased EI parental benefits and extending parental leave time for multiple-birth families means more opportunities for parents to interact with their children individually, improving the critical bonding with their children and responding to each child’s unique needs;
- Extended parental leave would better equip the primary caregiver to deal with the emotional and physical stress of caring for more than one baby at a time, especially if there is more than one parent at home to help share the responsibilities;
- Many multiple-birth infants require extra medical attention including but not limited to extended hospital stays after birth, and extensive long term health needs. Increasing EI parental benefits and extending parental leave would allow families to focus on these short and long term health care needs of their infants and improve outcomes for the whole family.
- Increasing the number of weeks of fully funded parental benefits and the weekly benefit rate would reduce the financial strain of having one or both parents on reduced incomes, and the associated stress;
- The current practice of allocating the 35-week parental leave and benefit on the basis of the pregnancy short changes parents of multiples. The basis is poorly matched with the purpose of the program which is to provide time away from work and financial resources to enable parents to spend time with their newborn child. Every child and every parent matters. The 15-week maternity portion of the system is designed to address pregnancy related matters.

Copy your comments so that you can paste/add it on the [join the conversation](#) page.

The more people who add their voice to this consultation, the louder our message will be heard by the Government. You can affect the outcome; you can bring positive change to EI parental benefits for the future!

Please note: The consultation period is short, if you want to make a difference please complete it as soon as possible. Closing date is November 4, 2016.

*Supporting the Multiple Birth Community
for over 35 years!*

SAVE THE DATE

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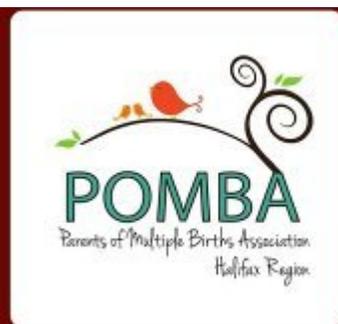
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