

MBC BACKGROUNDER

Who We Are

Multiple Births Canada (MBC) is the only national support organization for multiple-birth individuals and families in Canada. We represent the interests of approximately 150,000 Canadian multiple-birth children and their families - a population that is increasing by over 12,000 multiple-birth infants annually (Appendix 1).

The birth of two or more infants at the same time often presents overwhelming physical, emotional and financial strains that can reduce a family's ability to cope. As they grow, multiples and their families may face special challenges academically, socially, and sometimes medically. As a result, MBC exists to provide education, information and support to multiple-birth individuals, multiple-birth families and professionals engaged in their care (i.e. health, childcare, education, etc.).

Mission

MBC's mission is to improve the quality of life for multiple-birth individuals and their families in Canada.

Critical Issues Multiple-Birth Families Face

- Although multiples represent only 1 in 31 births, about 58% of twins and 96% of higher order multiples (triplets or more) are born prematurely, accounting for 22% of all Canadian preterm births. 1, 2
- The fetal death rate among multiples is 17.4 per 1,000. The national average is 6.0 per 1,000 births. 1
- Disabilities and birth defects are over five times higher for multiples as compared to single babies.
- Multiple-birth babies are at a higher than average risk for both immediate and long-term health problems.
- Multiple-birth children with special needs require expensive medical and educational support.
- Prenatal education and information about multiple pregnancies are difficult to find.

Multiple Births Canada Offers

- Hands-on support from 20+ Affiliate Chapters across Canada.
- *Multiple Moments*: The Canadian Multiple-Birth Family, an electronic quarterly magazine.
- Information kits, books, booklets, pamphlets and fact sheets on the issues that are of most concern to families and individuals with a personal or professional interest in multiple-births.
- Support Networks and Links –Breastfeeding, Fathers, LGBTQ, Loss, Francophone, Higher Order Multiples, Lone Parenting, and Special Needs.
- An extensive website providing access to educational resources and support.
- Networking and peer support through the MBC Facebook Support Groups.
- Access to information and support from a Professional Advisory Board through the National MBC Office,
- Access to national and international information through partnerships with other organizations such as the International Council of Multiple Birth Organizations (ICOMBO) and the International Society for Twin Studies (ISTS).

For more information about Multiple Births Canada and the educational resources offered, please visit the national website www.multiplebirthscanada.org.

Appendix 1

Births – 2009

Table 12-1
Live births and fetal deaths (stillbirths), by geography — Type of birth (single or multiple)

Place of residence of mother	Type of birth								
	Total			Single			Multiple		
	Total, births	Live births	Fetal deaths (stillbirths)	Total, births	Live births	Fetal deaths (stillbirths)	Total, births	Live births	Fetal deaths (stillbirths)
	number								
Canada	383,597	380,863	2,734	370,717	368,156	2,561	12,880	12,707	173
Newfoundland and Labrador	4,952	4,915	37	4,781	4,747	34	171	168	3
Prince Edward Island	1,467	1,457	10	1,401	1,393	8	66	64	2
Nova Scotia	9,055	8,989	66	8,748	8,684	64	307	305	2
New Brunswick	7,437	7,391	46	7,222	7,182	40	215	209	6
Quebec	89,237	88,867	370	86,426	86,076	350	2,811	2,791	20
Ontario	141,502	140,370	1,132	136,477	135,409	1,068	5,025	4,961	64
Manitoba	16,076	15,940	136	15,609	15,476	133	467	464	3
Saskatchewan	14,357	14,241	116	13,906	13,798	108	451	443	8
Alberta	52,076	51,722	354	50,251	49,913	338	1,825	1,809	16
British Columbia	45,428	44,993	435	43,939	43,551	388	1,489	1,442	47
Yukon	385	383	2	363	361	2	22	22	0
Northwest Territories	720	711	9	707	698	9	13	13	0
Nunavut	897	877	20	879	861	18	18	16	2
Unknown	8	7	1	8	7	1	0	0	0

Note(s): See "Data quality, concepts and methodology — Explanatory notes for the tables".

Source(s): Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics, Birth and Stillbirth Databases (CANSIM table 102-4515).

Sources

1. Statistics Canada. (2011). *Births – 2008*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada. Retrieved from www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/84f0210x/84f0210x2008000-eng.pdf
2. Health Canada (2008). *Canadian perinatal health report, 2008 edition*. Ottawa: Public Health Agency of Canada. Retrieved from www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/2008/cphr-rspc/pdf/cphr-rspc08-eng.pdf