

# Creation of new Attachment Leave EI benefits recognizes the needs of adoptees and their families, supporting long term healthy outcomes for youth.

November 21, 2023

OTTAWA – **Adopt4Life** and the **Child and Youth Permanency Council of Canada (CYPCC)** welcome the introduction of a new **15-week Adoption Benefit for adoptive parents as part of enhancements to Canada’s Employment Insurance program**, as announced in today’s Fall Economic Statement by Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland. This long-awaited benefit is a significant step forward in supporting strong, healthy attachment in families, no matter how they are formed.

Since 2018, the **#TimeToAttach awareness campaign** has raised visibility to the experiences and needs of adoptive parents / caregivers, former youth from care, adult adoptees, and other family members in their desire to ensure adoptive families have the critical time necessary to form healthy attachments with their children. Currently, Canada’s parental leave benefit system allocates a longer paid, job-protected EI leave to biological parents (50 weeks of combined maternity and parental leaves) than to those formed by adoption (35 weeks of parental leave). This disparity means that many families do not receive the support needed to establish safe, trusted, secure attachment with their children, building strong bonds for the future.

*“Time to Attach has been a heartfelt advocacy for the past 6 years.*

*Today, I am deeply moved for all children and their parents and caregivers who will benefit from the additional 15 weeks of attachment leave, strengthening their bond and build a stronger foundation.*

*I am grateful to all who have shared their stories, voices, and experiences”.*

*Julie Despaties, Executive Director, Adopt4Life*

Attachment is a human need and a critical component of a healthy childhood that, for many children experiencing adoption, has been disrupted due circumstances outside of their control. According to the [Time To Attach: An Argument in Favour of EI Attachment Benefits from Western University](#) in 2019, most children adopted in Canada are over the age of 10 at the time of placement and many have a history of trauma or serious loss. Often, they also have co-existing complex medical, developmental, and/or neurodevelopmental factors that require additional support. Having their new parent or caregiver(s) at home longer, in the critical first year, is crucial to helping them form healthy, trusted attachments and begin processing their grief and loss.

*“The Child and Youth Permanency Council of Canada is thrilled with the outcome of our advocacy work with Adopt4Life! We thank all the families, children, and youth who have worked so diligently over the last six years, and we honour them at this time. We are thrilled with today’s announcement to introduce Attachment Leave benefits, recognizing the critical need to ensure families have TimeToAttach.”*  
*Cathy Murphy, Chairperson, Child and Youth Permanency Council of Canada*



To learn more about the need for attachment leave and the experiences that have been shared by youth, parents, and caregivers across Canada in support of **#TimeToAttach**, visit [adopt4life.com/time-to-attach](https://adopt4life.com/time-to-attach).

#TimeToAttach has had extensive bi-partisan support from members of the Liberal, Conservative, NDP, and Bloc Quebecois parties. Further, #TimeToAttach has [cross-Canada support](#) from employers across multiple sectors, business and healthcare leaders, [family advocacy groups](#), and most importantly youth and [young adults](#) with direct lived experience of adoption and permanency. Both organizations wish to thank the many individuals who have been strong advocates for families in this journey, including:

- **Carolyn MacLeod**, Professor & Department Chair at Western University, in leading the 2019 Time To Attach research study and engagement with more than 1000 participants across Canada.
- The Honourable **Randy Boissonnault**, current Minister of Employment and Workforce Development, and the Honourable **Carla Qualtro**, former Minister of Employment and Workforce Development, both of whom have listened carefully to the needs of families, and how best to support parents in returning to the workforce while also caring for their children and families.
- **Rosemarie Falk**, MP, Battlefords-Lloydminster, for introducing and championing Bill C-318 (An Act to amend the Employment Insurance Act and the Canada Labour Code (adoptive and intended parents)).
- **Leah Gazan**, MP, Winnipeg Centre, for leading a national petition (e-4095, Employment and Labour) to the House of Commons in support of new Attachment Leave benefits for adoptive families.
- **Louise Chabot**, MP, Thérèse-De Blainville, for bringing awareness and visibility to the needs of families on a permanency journey.

*"We are so pleased for the many prospective parents and caregivers across Canada who are striving to form their families through adoption. Today's announcement provides them, and the children and youth who will join their families, with the best possible chances for long-term permanency and success together."*

*Marlyn Wall, Executive Director, Child and Youth Permanency Council of Canada*

Adopt4Life and the Child and Youth Permanency Council of Canada extend their deepest appreciation to the partners and advocates across Canada who have worked together in support of adoptees and their families, through #TimeToAttach. **Most importantly, thank you to the adoptees, youth, adoptive parents, kinship and customary caregivers, and intended parents who have shared their experiences and voices in advocating for their families.**

The work on #TimeToAttach is not done – today's announcement is a significant step forward yet must also continue to grow in supporting the many Canadian families formed by kinship and customary care. For families formed by kinship and customary care who are not represented in today's announcement – we see you, we hear you, and we will continue to fight for you.

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### Media Requests

Adopt4Life: Julie Despaties, Executive Director, please contact [media@adopt4life.com](mailto:media@adopt4life.com)

Child and Youth Permanency Council of Canada: Cathy Murphy, Chairperson, Board of Directors, please contact [cathy@adoption.ca](mailto:cathy@adoption.ca)



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