

# WESTJET AND RONALD McDONALD HOUSE CHARITIES CANADA

## from bc to mb...



### THANK YOU FOR BRINGING FAMILIES TOGETHER.

On June 3rd, 2014, in celebration of Father's Day, WestJet and Ronald McDonald House Charities Canada came together to surprise one lucky family with a flight to bring them together during a difficult time. Video of this heartwarming reunion quickly went viral, and upon reaching 400 000 views, Ronald McDonald House Manitoba was presented with a voucher to host a reunion of our own.

After trying to have a baby for five years, Erin and Devin Morgan made the decision to adopt. On February 16th (or Family Day in some provinces), the couple found out that they were becoming parents to a baby from Arviat, Nunavut – a long way from their home in Victoria, B.C.

On May 23rd, at 4lbs and 7oz, baby Olivia was born two months early in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Devin recalls being awoken by a phone call at 5 am in Victoria, and arriving in Winnipeg just 12 hours later.

After staying with friends for a week, Devin had to return to Victoria for work and Erin needed a place to stay closer to the NICU. It was then that nurses and social workers at the hospital recommended Ronald McDonald House Manitoba for both its care and its proximity.

The Morgan's admit that they were not sure what to expect when Olivia arrived two months early. "She seemed to be doing really well the first week," recalls Erin, "but after Devin left things started to go downhill. You could tell she was struggling."

After many tests – including taking spinal fluid – Olivia was found to have a blood infection, she was not eating, and was having trouble breathing. "She wanted to just stop. I was holding her little hand and coaching her, telling her 'You can do this! You can do this!' and she would start breathing again."

In this midst of this difficult time, Erin remembers thinking to herself, "Oh gosh. I'm out here by myself. One day at a time. One day at a time."

That changed when WestJet and Ronald McDonald House Charities Canada presented the Manitoba House with the opportunity to fly Devin to Winnipeg the weekend of June 27th – something the Morgan's say never would have been possible on their own.

Devin recalls, "As soon as we found out about the flight I started counting down the days until I got to see my little girl and my wife."

"Having Devin here has been great. I mean, I have absolutely no family out here, so doing this by myself day in and day out has been hard. This is the longest we have been apart," shares Erin, "for him to see her again means a lot to me."

The Morgan's say that they are not sure how they would have survived without the House, and having WestJet and RMHCC make Devin's visit possible has been "icing on the cake."

"There's no way we could have financially done what we have been able to do," explains Devin, adding, "for me, I've had peace of mind knowing that my wife has had a safe space to call home."

The generosity of WestJet and Ronald McDonald House Charities Canada could not have come at a better time, as the Morgan's celebrated their 7th wedding anniversary on June 30th, spending the day with Olivia before celebrating like any couple might – with dinner and a movie.

Erin and Devin are hopeful that they will be able to return home soon, noting that Olivia has been breathing strong and eating better. "She likes to show off now," laughs Erin, "It's like 'Look what I can do! I can take a whole bottle!'"

Reflecting on their experience at the House, Devin and Erin cannot express their thanks enough for all of the support they have received along the way.

As new dad Devin explains, "You don't know how much you need it, until you need it."



thank you **WESTJET**

