



# AIR CANADA

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## Dreams Take Flight: One child's trip of a lifetime changed his life



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When he was in grade five, a boy was nominated by the local Boys and Girls club to go to Disney World for a day along with several dozens of other children. Recently, he learned that a colleague of his' child recently went on a similar trip, which led him to reconnect with the non-profit organization that sponsored his trip: Dreams Take Flight.

In a video, the Dreams Take Flight volunteer said that he blacked out much of those years, but that day in 1992 shines bright in his memory. Today he is a psychiatric nurse who also teaches nursing and he attributes the trip of a lifetime to turning around his life.

In 1989, for the very first time, several Air Canada employees in Toronto planned a trip of a lifetime for 70 kids facing medical, mental, physical, social or emotional challenges and flew them on a DC-9 aircraft to Walt Disney World in Florida. Since then, volunteers and donors have raised money each year to cover all the expenses, plus cash for souvenirs and gifts.

Each year since, volunteers including many Air Canada employees and retirees, operate eight flights from Canada to Florida or California.

"For a very long and exciting day, deserving children have an adventure in a world-renowned theme park in California or Florida. All expenses paid—thanks to sponsors and volunteers," said Bev Watson, President of Dreams Take Flight Canada. "These children would never have this opportunity if it were not for our program. They have challenges that might be medical, mental,

physical, social or emotional.”

Thrilled to highlight this milestone, Priscille LeBlanc, Chair of the Air Canada Foundation, said: “We’re proud that the Foundation along with Air Canada, as the exclusive carrier, has been supporting Dreams Take Flight since the beginning. Today, Dreams Take Flight has expanded, and the Air Canada Foundation and Air Canada enable eight Dreams Take Flight trips from across Canada (YVR, YEG, YYC, YWG, YOW, YYZ, YUL, YHZ).”

Between 1989 and 2018, more than 40,000 children experienced a trip of a lifetime.

In 2019, the Toronto chapter celebrated its 30th anniversary, and the Montreal and Ottawa chapters celebrated their 25th anniversary. This year, over 1,000 children boarded Dreams Take Flights around the country this year.

Visit [dreamstakeflight.ca](https://dreamstakeflight.ca) to donate or volunteer.



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A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER 