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CONTENTS

MAY/JUNE 2006

COLUMNS

- 10 **Mommy Coach**
Twinsane Asylum
by Pam Eichner
- 11 **Family Coach**
"No bite!"
Parent-to-parent
- 12 **Ask the Doctor**
DHA: Brain Food for Babies
by Rachel Franklin, M.D.
- 20 **Twin Takes**
From the Horse's Mouth
We were together in school
by Jennifer Jordan
- 31 **The First Year**
First Sniffles
by Lauren Kafka
- 32 **Book Review**
The Early Birds
by Patricia Malstrom, M.A.
- 36 **Special Miracles**
It's not over 'til it's over!
by Shelley Montez
- 42 **Life as a Twin**
Who am I?
by Scott Lee
Me, myself and us
by Connelly Hardaway

DEPARTMENTS

- 4 From the Editor
5 Mailbox
15 In the News
38 Great Gear
47 Growing Stages
60 Double Takes
62 Happy Endings

ON THE COVER

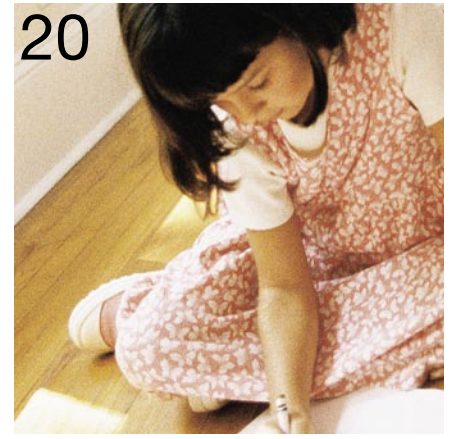


Benjamin and **Nina** Dorighi, Denver, Colo., were born March 29, 2004. Ben loves dogs and Nina is a dancer. They adore their big brother, Peter, 4.

Cover Photography by Bernard Grant



15



20



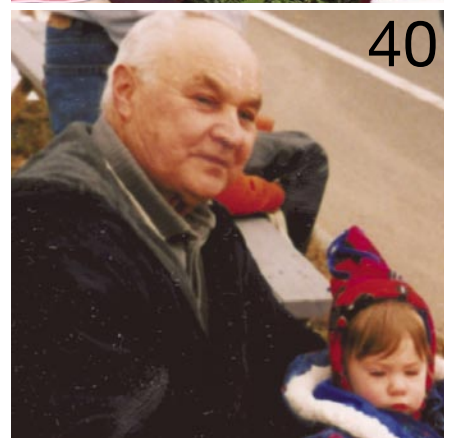
18



24



26



40

FEATURES

- 15 Have faith in your milk supply by Christine Bradley, CLE
- 18 Keep your twins together in school by Richelle Richards Selleck
- 22 Double strollers: What do you really need? by Anik Giguère-Biollo
- 24 How to determine twin zygosity Gary Steinman, M.D., Ph.D.
- 26 Camping with twins by Amanda Webber
- 40 Senior support solutions by Camille St. Onge Magin
- 44 Twin talk: How to teach your twins to speak clearly
by Dorothy P. Dougherty, MA, CCC-SLP
- 52 Plastics and dioxins — it's all a hoax by Susan J. Alt

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Susan Alt

One of the most difficult jobs of an editor is figuring out how to say so much in so little space. There are always more stories, ideas, and topics to tackle than there is space available. That's my way of saying this Letter in every issue is always a challenge for me. I have so much to say to you super-MOMs (that is, Super-Moms-Of-Multiples) and so little space in which to get it out there.

■ **Hot twinny topic #1:** We need you to help us find "school separation stories" that illustrate vividly how twins and triplets have been emotionally or intellectually hurt or stifled by rules mandating forced separation of multiples in different elementary school classrooms. See pages 16-17 and 38-39 for the details.

■ **Hot twinny topic #2:** This one is really a "family" topic. Do you have a kitchen "junk drawer"? Nearly everybody does, and I recently read that some researcher with a lot of time on her hands conducted interviews with 14,000 cooks in 28 countries. The revelations: Almost half the world's kitchens have a junk drawer. (I'll bet it's actually much higher than that!) A third of people use their kitchens for discussions and debates, and for socializing. Beyond age 35, our kitchens are far more important than the bedroom (for both singles and couples!). My favorite: 11% of people use the kitchen for sex and romance. Check out our POLL of the month at www.TwinsMagazine.com, click on Message Board and go to the "Buzz" Forum...look for "Kitchen Drawers" and let us hear from you! What do you stash in your junk drawer?

■ **Hot twinny topic #3:** It's hard to keep our lovely bodies svelte, especially as we age (effects of gravity and "spread") and after having twins or triplets. Gosh it's hard to find time to get real exercise every day! What really bugs me, though, is how clothing in the stores seems to be manufactured in all different sizes, even when labeled with the size I supposedly wear. It's so frustrating having to look at everything from size 10 to size 18 to find things that fit, and then it's hard to find practical styles that are classic and will last a while, but have some pizzazz too. I don't want to be limited to only the Liz Claiborne twill pants that fit me perfectly. Are you as perplexed as I am? Do you have to scurry from the Plus size section to Petites and everything in between? Send me your thoughts and opinions at the TMMB, in the "Buzz" Forum under "Clothes-Minded".

■ **Hot twinny topic #4:** We've launched a new Forum on our TMMB called "For Sale for Members Only". So many subscribers and moms of twins who post online asked us to provide a place where they could find other parents of multiples to sell their twin "stuff" to. So we answered your requests. This isn't eBay, my friends. It's not an "auction site", and we are not enabling your actual transactions. Read the note we put at that Forum about buying and selling, please, and have fun. Let us know if it's working out for you!

■ **Have you ever taken** a long summer road trip with your twins or triplets that turned out to be fantastic fun? Write to me at twins.editor@businessword.com (Subject line: ROAD TRIP) and tell me about it. We may call on you for a longer story about your adventure for a future issue of TWINS™. The two winners we select as "Best of the best" will each get \$50 prizes...pennies from heaven for a special time with hubby or family.

■ **Coming soon in TWINS™ Magazine:** "Ask the Nanny!" is a series of columns we'll start in the July/August issue, featuring Michelle LaRowe, who was named national Nanny of the Year in 2004. She specializes in being nanny for families with twins, and has 12 years of experience at this (she's just starting with her third family with twins.) You are invited to send in your questions for Michelle. See the TMMB "Buzz" Forum, the Toddler Twins Forum, or the Family & Health Talk Forum.

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Are we having fun yet?

We took our twin boys at 20 months to Hawaii. The five-hour plane ride was a nightmare for about the first hour. My boys wanted to run around and when they did not get their way, they screamed.

I made a huge mistake—to save money on airfare, I purchased only two seats, for my husband and me, and had the twins sit on our laps. Wish I had paid the extra \$\$ to reserve seats for their car seats. Life would have been much nicer having them buckled in.

I did pack their favorite toys, books and snacks. Once we arrived in Hawaii, we had a beautiful time. Since we have two daughters 15 and 13 we did get some help. We did lots of driving and the boys were wonderful in their car seats! The boys loved the beaches, parks and walks in their stroller. I took two umbrella strollers instead of their double stroller.

Jamie Trejo

Hawthorne, CA

Joshua and Matthew were born 4/22/04

Via e-mail

Editor's note: Many parents of twins have told us that when taking even short flights with infant twins, it's best to purchase a third seat so at least one baby can be belted into a car seat and can be playing, eating or sleeping while the other is on a lap. Forewarned is forearmed! I have the

feeling that anything more than about a half-hour on a plane with two squirming twin infants on both parents' laps is like trying to corral a bowl of spaghetti, except it's louder.

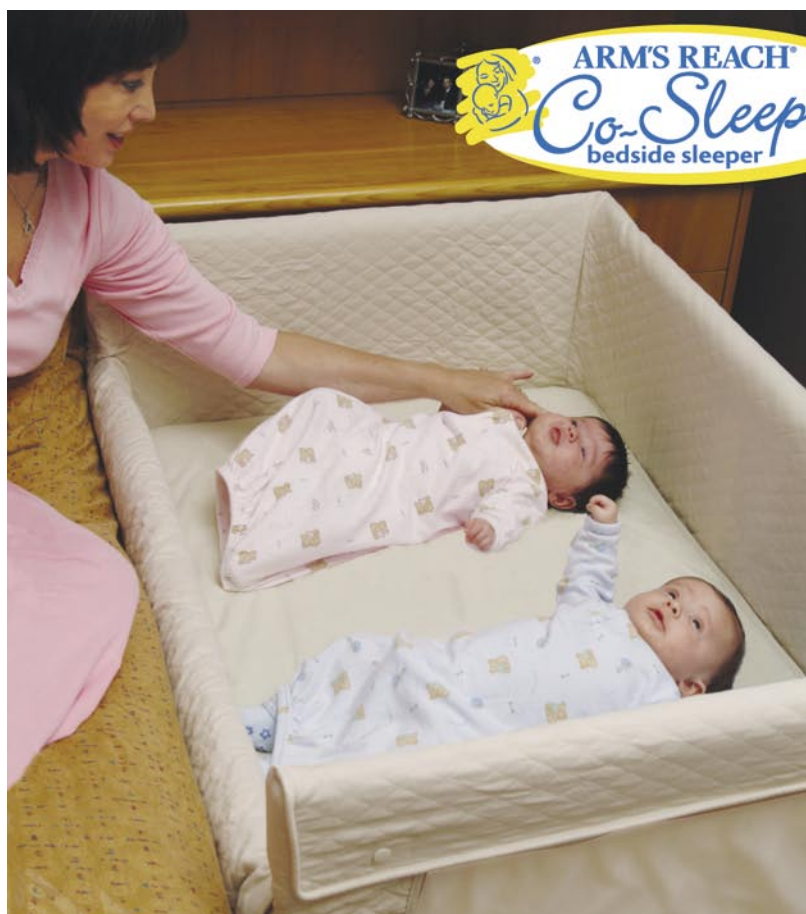
Thanks, NICU medical teams, nurses

I was given copies of TWINS™ Magazine as a gift after I found I was having twins, and now am subscribing myself. Our daughters were born at 28 weeks. In the attached picture, they are 15 weeks and each weighs about 8.5 lbs. Katrell, on the left, was 2lbs. 13 oz., and Kindell, right, was born at 1 lb. 10 oz. We were overwhelmed by emotions during the births of our first children and for the two months the girls were in the NICU. I cannot fully express (enough thanks) to the NICU medical teams and especially the nurses who took such wonderful care of our daughters and us—their knowledge, patience, caring and understanding for our daughters and my husband and me. I spent usually eight hours a day at the NICU. It is because of them that we have vibrant, healthy infants who we love with feelings deeper than we could ever imagine.

Dara Readus

Fishers, IN

Via e-mail



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Dr. William Sears
Author and child care specialist



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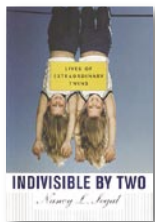
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Message Board helps isolated mom

Thank you so much for your excellent magazine. I love getting it every other month! I appreciate the articles that educate on current events and findings. I have to admit, though, my favorite things to read are the articles that take the stresses of rearing twins and make them comical—i.e., “Twinsitters” and “E-mail from Mona to friend,” both in the Jan./Feb., 2006, issue. Keep up the great work!

Also, thanks for your website. It was a great encouragement to me in those early months when I struggled with breastfeeding and other adjustments. I’m from an area where few people breastfeed and when I asked our pediatrician about a lactation consultant nearby, he chuckled and said he didn’t know of one. I don’t know of any local clubs for parents of twins, so it was easy to feel isolated in the beginning. The moms on your website (message board) were a great help. I’m sure I’ll be back asking lots of questions that only moms of twins can really answer. Thanks!

My twins and their older sister have Reactive Airway Disease (basically asthma), so I was very interested in your mini-article entitled “Childhood Asthma Affects More Than Breathing” in the Nov./Dec., 2005, issue. Did the study give any indication why these children may struggle with anxiety and depression? Do they feel weird because they have to take breathing treatments or use inhalers? Are parents more overprotective? Could it be the medicine we’re using to treat it? Or did they suggest anything that may cause it? I’d love more information on this!



One final question and I’ll be done: I was reading some of the descriptions on the TWINS™ Parents’ Bookshelf under Twin Psychology and am just curious, is Dr. Nancy L. Segal, Ph.D., a monozygotic or dizygotic twin? Under “Indivisible by Two” she is stated to be fraternal, but under “Entwined Lives: Twins and What They Tell Us About Human Behavior” the description says she is identical.

Thanks again for your great work! I’m almost done with this issue and will be looking forward to the next one.

Rebecca Angus
Jackson, KY
Via e-mail

*Editor’s note: Dr. Nancy Segal is a fraternal twin. Sorry we goofed in our description for one of her excellent books. Regarding the study of asthmatic children experiencing more anxiety and depression than the population as a whole, please go to www.blackwellpublishing.com. The study was published in the October 2005 issue of the *Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Nursing (JCAP)*, the publication of the *Assn. of Child Psychiatric Nursing (ACAPN)*, a division of the *International Society of Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurses (ISPN)*. The lead author of the study was Jennifer Bender Berz, MA, MEd, a doctoral candidate at the University of Massachusetts.*

The more letters the better

In the latest issue of TWINS™ (Jan./Feb., 2006), I really enjoyed what seemed to me to be an increase in the length of the Letters to the Editor section and the thorough responses. So many publications seem to use letters to the editor to overtly promote their magazine and the editorial responses are usually very brief. I enjoyed how in TWINS™ it is more of a dialogue and the editor may write back to a letter at length. It reads to me as a two-way discussion, similar to a bulletin board or list group on the Internet, where thoughts are presented and responded to. To me, it makes TWINS™ more relevant and more useful to the parents of multiples who crave dialogue about their experiences.

Jim Schutz
Via e-mail

Twins more likely to be autistic

I am a former subscriber to TWINS™ Magazine and wondered if you have any stats on autism in twins. I have identical twin boys who are both autistic.

Michelle Campbell-Wood
Ontario, Canada
Via e-mail

Editor’s note: We just ran a major article in our Jan./Feb. issue on autism in TWINS™. The stats we have are these:

- *Autism affects an estimated 1 in 166 individuals. It is four times more common in boys than girls. It is found equally in populations around the world. It is thought to be increasing at a rate of between 10% and 17% a year, but no one knows why. It may be more accurate diagnosis, or a broader range of conditions being included within the autism spectrum.*
- *Autism has a higher incidence rate among twins than in the general population, but we have no specific statistics on the actual incidence of autism in twins. However, the higher incidence rate in twins, experts speculate, may be due to a higher rate of prematurity among twins. Studies have conclusively shown that autism occurs at a higher rate among people with other medical conditions, such as Fragile X syndrome, tuberous sclerosis, congenital rubella syndrome, and untreated phenylketonuria (PKU). None of these specifically occurs more in twins, however.*
- *There is clearly a genetic component in autism. One study showed that if one twin is diagnosed with autism, 60% of monozygotic (identical) twins also had autism, while 0% of dizygotic twins (fraternal) had autism. Another study showed that if one identical (MZ) twin has autism, there is a 75% chance that both will have autism, while the rate for fraternal twins is only about 3%, similar to the 2%-6% chance of autism in other siblings, generally.*

Twins™ autism article helpful

I wanted to thank you and Joanne Amoroso for doing such a wonderful job on the autism article (Jan./Feb., 2006). It is extremely informative and I find that it will be very helpful to many who have questions or are dealing with autism.

Isabel Scala
Via e-mail

Great job!

Last week I ordered nine copies of the March/April issue of TWINS™ Magazine. My twin girls were in the Double Takes section (Hayden and Reagan), and I wanted to give copies to the grandparents and other family members. I wanted to make sure the order was placed and was concerned that I had not received the copies yet.

I want to thank you for everything that you do! I love reading the magazine and the issues offer great advice and recommendations for raising twins. These were my first children so it has been very helpful!

Tiffany Aliotta
Via e-mail

DNA testing

I'm not sure if you can help me, but I am the mother of 4-year-old twin girls. No one has been able to tell me if my girls are identical or fraternal. I was told by an urgent-care doctor that your magazine sometimes advertises DNA home kits. I was wondering if you could refer me to a few companies that might do that. Thank you,

Cathy Crocker
Via e-mail

Editor's note: Go to www.proactivegenetics.com for information about DNA testing to help you find out the zygosity of your twins. It is the best company in the business of doing these tests, and people rave about the ease, convenience and accuracy of the Proactive's tests. You will find the company's tests inexpensive and a good value.

Correction

I wanted to thank you so much for the wonderful article about our clinic, Therapies 4 Kids (Nov./Dec., 2005). There is an error that I wanted to bring to your attention: My partner, S. Steven BiFulco, is a Medical Doctor (M.D.) and not a DPM as stated on our website. His specialty actually is Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (also known as Physiatry).

Again, thank you so much for your article about us!
Eileen de Oliveira
Therapies 4 Kids, Inc.
www.therapies4kids.com
eileen@therapies4kids.com

From Suckermother to Smart Mom

I noticed a book mentioned in the Jan/Feb issue of TWINS™. I have forgotten the name, but I would like to get it ... something like suckermother to smart. Please advise.

Catherine Haussler
Via e-mail

Editor's note: Our story was about the 6 dumbest things moms do. The book is entitled "From Suckermother to Smart Mom," by Maxine Schnall. You can go to www.LessStressforMoms.com for more information.

Delayed speech for bilingual twins?

I am the mother of 19-month-old boy/girl twins. We are raising them to be bilingual; I speak German to them, and my husband speaks English. They are just now starting to attempt to say a few words. Have you ever had an article in your magazine about any problems with "delayed" speech in bilingually raised twins. Under those circumstances, what is considered normal, and when should we worry about whether our children are delayed? What are the best approaches to teaching a second language? What can be expected a few years down the road?

Nicolette Jones
Via e-mail

Editor's note: To my recollection, we haven't had any articles on raising twins bilingually, or if teaching them two languages from infancy results in any unusual speech delays. Some twins experience speech delays resulting from their ability to create a language between only themselves, and others because of autism or other diagnosable conditions. Perhaps readers can respond with comments about their own experiences with teaching their twins to be bilingual.

We have back issues of TWINS™

We are trying to obtain a copy of an article published in the May/June 1994 issue of TWINS™ Magazine by Cheryl G. Levitt entitled "Making it Meaningful: A basic guide to breastfeeding prematures." Can you help us obtain a copy of this? This is a request from our lactation nurses at our hospital (of which I am the medical librarian). Any help you could give us would be appreciated. Thank you!

Joyce C. Miller, MLS, Medical Librarian
Anne Arundel Medical Center
Baltimore, Md.
Via e-mail

Editor's note: I groaned when I saw this request...I had no idea where I'd find our "old, old" bound copies of TWINS™ issues published before we even acquired TWINS™ in 1995. Yikes! But we found what we needed, made a photocopy of the article in question and faxed it to Joyce. Nice to know that lactation nurses have very long memories!

Postscript from Joyce Miller: Your efforts are greatly appreciated. Thank you so much for taking the time to do this.

Male au pairs great for little boys

Great article in the Nov./Dec., 2005 issue on a fantastic child-care solution: Au pairs. I feel compelled, however, to note a few additional benefits. I am a single parent who has a male au pair providing childcare for my male toddlers. The children's father works at sea and is absent for months at a time.



Having a male providing the primary care for my boys has afforded a safe and positive male role model for the children and made a real impact in our family and the way that the children interact with others. They have learned to play “like boys” in a way that I as a woman would have never played with them. They “rough and tumble”, they play sports, and build train-track for hours.

I have always felt that men were better caretakers than women in the sense that they “just play”; they don’t overthink the process like we women tend to do. I have seen that in the relationship between the au pair and my children. They just have a blast, while still leaving room for hugs, snuggle time and caring for boo-boos.

Additionally, having a male in the house has brought some comfort to the children’s father, who in the past has worried about their safety when they were in public with female child-care. Their father also finds the transition smoother when he visits, since it is easier for him to talk to a male about the children’s care and needs.

In regards to house-work and schedules, the work is done as well, if not better, than by previous workers. The au pair bakes with the kids, makes play-dough, cleans, and does laundry as well as anyone else.

After having several females providing child-care for us, my experience with a male child-care provider has been so positive that I would never consider any other option. So I will recommend for any family considering an au pair to also consider the benefits of a male au pair. In Europe males frequently work as child-care professionals and babysitters. This is for a good reason: They are great at it!

Linda Harris
St. Augustine, FL
Via e-mail

It’s nice to be appreciated

I am an avid reader of TWINS™ Magazine and look forward to each issue with great interest. It is one of the few magazines that I read cover-to-cover and I am never disappointed: There is always useful and helpful information, as well as touching and humorous stories that leave me wanting more.

Cindy Nooney
Via e-mail

Mirror twins and gramp and his twin

Statistically, 1 out of every 250 births is twins. This number includes the use of fertility drugs. What are the chances of conceiving spontaneous twins?

My Dad and his twin brother were identical and considered mirror image twins. I have 13-month-old twin boys that are identical, and we believe are mirror image twins. I know this occurs by the egg splitting vertically instead of horizontally. I also read it occurs on the 8th day after conception. Other than seeing the subtle differences (between the twins), can this be proven scientifically or

medically, using blood tests, etc.?

Oddly enough, my Dad’s twin (Baby A) is left-handed and his (hair) part went one way while my Dad’s went the other direction. My Dad (Baby B) was right-handed. Now it seems our twins are shaping up just like them— Baby A is left-handed and Baby B right-handed. Their hair parts are also on opposite sides.

My Dad, sadly, passed away unexpectedly 12 years ago so he is not able to share this miracle of genes being passed down. His brother is still alive, whom I see and communicate with as often as the many miles separating us will allow. I have attached a picture of my Dad and his brother along with a photo of my boys. The age of all of them in the pictures is 12 months—1943 and 2005. Bobby (my uncle is on the left, is Baby A) Billy, my Dad, is Baby B on the right. Our boys are Taron (Baby A, on the left) and Braden (Baby B, on the right) To my surprise, after we got our photos back, I noticed that in my Dad’s photo he was touching his brother, and in our boys’ photo Braden is touching his brother as well! It gave me the shivers!

Casi Reynolds
Castle Rock, Col.
Via e-mail

Editor’s note: To our knowledge, there are no statistics that break out definitively the conception rates of spontaneous vs. fertility drug-assisted twins or multiples. We know birth rates, of course, for multiples, but many babies conceived as twins or higher multiples miscarry, or one baby may in utero, resulting in a singleton birth. Moreover, while the twin birth rate was much lower back in the 1970s before the widespread use of fertility drugs or in vitro fertilization—perhaps half the rate the multiples birth rate is today—there are many other factors at work resulting in a higher multiples birth rate. For example, career women waiting until much later to have their babies results in more twins and triplets, as does the simple fact of older moms having second and third children, even without any assistance.

We’ve added grief forum to TMMB

You should include a Forum for loss or parental grief on your TWINS Message Board. Not everyone who subscribes to your magazine or message board while pregnant ends in a success story with two healthy babies. We feel cast aside when that happens but in reality we are still twin moms. We just don’t get to raise them together here on earth.

Diane Schiavo
Via e-mail

Editor’s note: We, too, grieve for your loss. I’ve added a new Forum on our TWINS™ MB (www.TwinsMagazine.com, click on Message Board) for parents who’ve lost one or both babies during pregnancy, or after birth. You’re right, Diane, you’re always a “twin mom”, and there are so many unknowable twists of fate that can take your babies from you.

No one is endorsing cloning

As the mother of MZ 11-month-old twins, I am outraged that you would include the closing comments of Patricia Malmstrom’s

review of "Indivisible by Two..." (Mar./Apr., Research, pgs. 38-39) regarding cloning. My identical twins are wonderfully different individuals, and to suggest that cloning would be anything like identical twins is just wrong. I can't believe that this magazine would condone anything as heinous as human cloning.

Susan E. Duffy
President, PA Mortgage Network, LLC
Via e-mail

Editor's note: We're neither condoning human cloning nor endorsing it nor encouraging it. Neither was/is Pat Malmstrom in her review of Dr. Nancy Segal's book. Nearly everyone agrees there are real chances for abuse and misuse of cloning's medical and scientific uses. Nancy Segal, an academic and noted researcher and writer on twins, also noted that it's unlikely cloning will become widespread anytime soon. Segal's real point in her brief commentary on cloning was that identical MZ twins are most certainly NOT little robotic beings...they are unique individuals, despite their monozygosity and "identical" natures.

Plagiocephaly not caused by neglect

I am responding to two articles in recent issues. But first I want to tell you that I love to have information regarding twins and I love TWINS™ Magazine.

I have 19-month-old twin boys. Life is fun, hard and great with my boys. My oldest twin (by one minute) was diagnosed with plagiocephaly at nine months and wore the D.O.C. band for four months. He had great success.

I didn't park or neglect my children to cause this condition. Research is still in progress as to how and why this happens. Most of the increase in plagiocephaly cases is due to the Back-to-Sleep campaign, but twins have a higher risk of having plagiocephaly due to their position in the uterus. Usually it is twin A who develops plagio, if there is a loss of fluid in the sac, or for many other reasons.

My son Steven is twin A and was not as active as a baby as his brother Jordan was. Steven also had acid reflux and he did sleep in his bouncer from time to time. There is no hard evidence about why this happens, to have (Rachel Moon, M.D., Jan./Feb. issue, pg. 56) in the medical field speak like this is terrible.

Secondly, I dress my twin boys (fraternal) the same. I think it's cute and adorable. But my twins don't look anything alike—their hair, eyes, heights and personalities are different. Steven has light brown hair, blue eye, fair skin. Jordan has dark brown hair, brown eyes and darker skin. Sometimes being at a store or mall people have to ask if they're brothers, much less twins. Once they're older and can express that they don't like to dress the same, then of course I would not do it.

Denise Donatone
Bronx, NY
Via e-mail

Article 'gave me the push I needed'

I have 8-month-old identical twin boys, one of whom has had a flat head and a wide forehead since birth. As he grows older I don't want him to be known as the twin with "the flatter head." Several pediatricians have dismissed my concerns and said, "It will round out with time." Well, it hasn't.



Your recent article "Watch Your Head!" (Mar./Apr., pp. 33-34) gave me the push I needed. Within 48 hours of reading it, I reviewed the suggested websites, called my insurance company, scheduled an appointment with my pediatrician and had my son fitted for his cranial helmet. I can hardly wait to see the shape of his head in another couple of months.

Your article gave me the knowledge to effectively advocate for my son. Now I know he has brachycephaly and that there are safe, effective means for treating it. Many thanks!

Cally Ritter
Framingham, MA
Via e-mail

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by Lynn Lorenz

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Twinsane Asylum

Life with two sets of twins is a determined assault on the normal

The Hunt:

With cat-like tread I stalked my unwary prey. I crept ever closer, trying to keep low and out of the line of sight. She must have sensed my presence because she turned to face me, her doe eyes shining. I had been spotted. Now I would have to chase her, something I had hoped to avoid.

Clutching her purple turtleneck, I took off in pursuit of my giggling 2-year-old daughter in a desperate attempt to get her dressed before noon. Sarah—who can only be described as Martha Stewart meets Godzilla—darts off through the living room in fits of laughter, squealing, “Naked! Naked!” Mere moments later, her twin brother gets in on the act. In an instant, his diaper-clad behind is bouncing off across the living room to join his sister’s chant.

“Yo mom, whaddzup?” From the depths of downstairs, my identical 15-year-old twin sons emerge, engulfed in the sleepy fog unique to teen-aged males.

A typical morning in my house is underway.

The Shock:

When I remarried several years ago, I asked my twin sons, Brian and Andrew, how they felt about the idea of their stepfather and me having a baby. They were beyond comfortable; they were enthusiastic. I recall young Andrew saying, “Cool mom, but what if it’s twins again?” Ah, youth. Being his wizened parent, I explained that twins were a once-in-a-lifetime gift. No one has two sets of twins.

The “twin gods” exercised their bizarre

and twisted sense of humor and saw fit to set me straight on this point. Two sets of twins could happen, and did—to me. Hearing that I was pregnant with a second set of twins, I did what any rational woman would do: Made a bee-line for Starbucks and ordered a scoop of mocha chip ice cream the size of my head.

Discombobulated:

A houseful of toddlers and teen-agers lends itself to a staggering array of chaos. I considered writing a book about it, but I doubt very much that anyone would ever believe me.

Very often, the wheels in my domestic cog get stuck. Brian and Andrew thought it was riot when I got their video rental confused with a movie I had picked up for Matt and Sarah. Brian approached me with a grin and said, “Are you sure we’re allowed to watch this mom? It looks pretty intense.” It was, in fact, “Lady and the Tramp.” Oops. Chalk one up for mom.

Remarkable synergy exists between both sets of twins, manifesting itself when I least expect it. This morning I asked young Matthew to pick up his Legos so that we could get to pre-school on time. Feeling spunky (for a refreshing change), he was moving as slowly as possible while sporting his heart-stopping grin. Andrew walked up to Matt, put a hand on his younger brother’s shoulder and said, “Hey, little dude. Not doing what mom asked you to do is the anti-cool.”

Andrew walked off in pursuit of a bowl of cereal and Matthew diligently began

to pick up the Legos. I was stunned. The anti-cool? I admit it—I never would have thought of that one.

The “Oh!-kid” theory: I have a theory about twins. Medical science hasn’t backed me up on this one, but I am comfortable saying that with two sets, my research has been thorough. I believe in every set of twins there is an “Oh” child. This is the kid who defies logic and gravity, the one you seem to spend all day saying “oh” to. In my first batch of twins, Brian is my “oh” kid. Matt is the winner in the second set. I was certain Brian would grow up thinking he was Irish, having heard “Oh, Brian!” so often.

If Matthew has done something whacky (and when doesn’t he?) he sees me coming and with a smile will say, “Oh, Matt! Oh, Matt!”

Two by two:

I never dreamed, in a million years, that I’d have two sets of twins. But I can tell you now, I wouldn’t trade places with a normal person for all the Legos on earth. ♡



Pam and her husband Jonathan, share the nest with their double-doubles in Salt Lake City.

Biting

Q I have twin sons 16 months old. The oldest boy by two minutes constantly bites his brother. For example, if he becomes angry at his twin for taking a toy away, he bites, hard. How can I stop this from happening? What is the best way to teach him not to bite?

Angela

A My 22-month-old boys have been doing this for a long time. The one who is oldest by two minutes (!!) was the only one biting at first, when angry or about a toy or anything else. He bit really hard—once the mark on my other son's arm lasted 10 days. Then the other boy started to bite back. I tried not to get mad, but went to comfort the one bitten. I told the one who did the biting it was bad behavior and hurt his brother. Then I tried to change the subject. They still bite, but very rarely now, maybe only once or twice a week. Try to head it off if you see it coming. Don't yell—that'll make them do it gain and again.

Ebru

Via e-mail

I comfort the hurt child and tell the biter, "No, that's not nice." As with all unwanted behavior, I try not to respond too much to it. That just encourages them because they want attention. I direct my attention to positive/good behavior, and lots of it!

Laura

Via e-mail

I have the same problem with my son, At 11½ months he started biting his sister if she had something he wanted. It often broke the skin or caused nasty bruising.

Our pediatrician suggested getting down to eye level with him, telling firmly, "No!" and then immediately distracting him by giving him something else to play with. We've been working on it and the biting is now less frequent.

Via e-mail

I had this problem too. There were nights in the bathtub I would be in tears because one boy's back was solid bites. The best I could do was try to stop the bite before it happened. I comforted the hurt child. I tried time-outs. The best thing was to catch it before it happened. The problem went away around 24 months.

Via e-mail

With my twin girls, when one bites I ask them, "What do we use our teeth for?" They tell me, "For eating..." and so on. I tell them what we don't use our teeth for, and I show them that they can bite a pillow if they want to, or an orange or another piece of fruit. They are getting it, but it takes a while.

Jean

Via e-mail

This worked for us really fast. When a bite occurred, I would hold the baby who was hurt, and at the same time take the biter by the face, and squeeze her cheeks in between her jaws, and say, "No bite!" with my face right in her face. I did this every time, and it did not go on for very long at all. I know this sounds bad, but I taught my puppy not to bite the same way.....so that was my first instinct when biting happened with the girls. It worked for them too. It causes the biter a moment of discomfort, and helps associate their mouth with the bad behavior. It worked!

Jenna

Via e-mail

Safe Sleep

Q Please help us! We are the parents of 8-month-old twin girls. Up until now, we were all sleeping great at night! Recently, they learned to roll over onto their stomachs in the middle of the night and will only sleep that way. Because of everything we've learned about SIDS, we spend the entire night putting them back onto their backs! As soon as we do, the babies wake up, scream, eventually fall asleep, and go right back onto their stomachs! Please tell me there is something we can do! ANYTHING!!!!

Jill Murphy

Via e-mail

A I know what everyone says about SIDS, but if the babies are putting themselves on their stomachs, I don't think the chances of them smothering are very high. A really young newborn that can't move its head very well has a much higher chance of smothering than an 8-month-old that can actually flip himself or herself over. My twins are 6 months old, and sometimes the only way my son will go back to sleep is on his belly. I let him sleep on his belly at least part of every night, and I honestly don't worry about it at all. He can lift his head up at almost a 90-degree angle and is in constant motion all night long. I read somewhere that once a baby gets into a position, it is because he wants to be there, and moving him is only going to make him feel like he has to start over again!

Lauren Enjeti

Via e-mail

DHA: Brain Food for Babies

What if there were a drug proven to increase your babies' IQ and vision? Help them achieve larger birth weight? Prevent prematurity and attention deficit disorder? Prevent you from getting heart disease later in life?

Sounds almost too good to be true, doesn't it? Get this: What if there were no known serious reactions and no downside to taking it? Who wouldn't take it? And who wouldn't tell everyone they know about it?

Surely at the very least you'd expect your doctor to discuss it with you—better yet, you'd expect to see it advertised on TV, with some well-dressed, overpaid spokesperson encouraging you to “ask your doctor if it is right for you.”

You're going to be truly amazed to hear that it isn't a drug at all, but rather a naturally-occurring food substance! Even more amazing is that many doctors have never mentioned it to their patients—many physicians, in fact, may not even know about it.

If so far this sounds too good to be true, please remember that I speak not as a salesperson for supplements or alternative-medicine, but as a doctor who works very hard to follow only the evidence available to traditional medicine when advising my patients. What's

more, I have begun to change my own practice to let women know that they have the power to create healthier and smarter babies through the use of a single supplement—one I now take myself.

I don't mean to mislead you into believing that it is the be-all and end-all panacea, one magic answer for your pregnancy or your babies. Nor do I want you to think that taking this supplement will guarantee your twins' admission to Harvard. But the information now available suggests we should all be taking this substance for a few very good reasons. Read on.

Most of us already know how important folate (also called folic acid) is to the development of a normal nervous system, including reducing the risk of spina bifida and anencephaly. We've learned more recently that once the nervous system has begun its normal development, the addition of another supplement is even more important than folate—a fatty acid from the omega-3 family called docosahexaenoic acid, or DHA.

DHA is a fat found naturally in fish, particularly cold-water sea fish, and in chicken and chicken eggs. DHA isn't found in fruit or vegetables (except algae), or even in beans or legumes that otherwise comprise the most reliable source of protein for vegetarian

There are so many omega-3-based supplements on the market that it boggles the mind. You can find fish-oil supplements, flaxseed oils, and algae-based DHA supplements. Experts caution against the use of the fish-oil supplements during pregnancy and breastfeeding because of concerns about the source of the fish oil—could it also be contaminated with mercury?

Flaxseed—even in supplement form—must be processed by our bodies first. After digestion, we convert only a tiny amount of it—1% to 5% of it—into DHA.

The supplement I prefer (also the one I take and recommend to my pregnant patients) is a pure DHA supplement called Expecta Lipil. Marketed by the makers of Enfamil, it provides 200 mg of DHA daily, and is FDA-approved for pregnant and breastfeeding women. I hesitated to mention a name brand in this article, but I believe it to be the best option out there. I want to emphasize that I do not receive money from any drug or formula company, nor do I own individual stock in any company, so this is simply my opinion from what I have studied.

Expecta Lipil is derived from algae, so people who are allergic to algae may have a reaction to it. Also, because of the oil inside the capsule, some people may experience nausea, especially if they take it at the same time as their iron or prenatal vitamin.

In order for your body to best absorb a DHA supplement (whichever one you choose), you need to take it with a meal, preferably one that contains some additional fat. Unlike a fish-oil supplement, there is usually no bad breath or belching due to the Lipil capsule.



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and vegan women. While flaxseed oil does contain fatty acids, only 1% to 5% of it is converted to DHA after digestion.

The World Health Organization recommends that we all consume at least 220 mg of DHA daily. Pregnant and breastfeeding women should have more than 300 mg daily. Yet the typical American diet contains less than 50 mg daily.

In order to get our 220 mg to 300 mg of DHA per day, we would each need to eat at least one serving per day of salmon or tuna, or 10 servings of fried chicken, or about 15 eggs!

None of these seems very realistic. Considering that the FDA warns pregnant or nursing women to eat no more than two servings of tuna or salmon per week (due to concerns about mercury poisoning their developing babies), it is seemingly impossible to achieve the levels of DHA our bodies need without the use of a supplement.

Why should we care about our intake of DHA? DHA makes up more than 25% of all the fat found in nerve cells of the brain, where it assists in making the connections between brain cells stronger and more efficient.

From about 24 weeks' gestation until babies are born, your twins' brains will grow in size by more than 250%. After their birth, brain growth continues until they are 2 years old, after which time it stops—and further intellectual development depends on how well the brain formed its initial connections.

The eyes develop alongside the brain, to which they are directly connected; the optic nerve (the one responsible for sending images

**Table 1 –
Food Sources of DHA**

Food Source	DHA (mg)
Pink salmon filet	638
Canned white tuna	535
Smoked salmon (lox)	227
Jumbo shrimp	96
Tuna salad	47
Fried chicken	37
Large egg (hard-boiled)	19

we see to the visual part of the brain) is actually considered a part of the brain and not a nerve by itself. As the brain develops, so do the eyes.

Studies have recently shown that DHA supplementation to help get our daily intake to the recommended levels improves both our twins' cognitive function and their visual abilities. Infants who were fed formula containing DHA had better vision at 1.5 months and 18 months than babies who did not receive supplementation. Likewise, their IQ scores were between 4 points and 6 points higher

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at 4 years of age than babies who were not supplemented.

By age 5, DHA-supplemented babies scored higher in their ability to concentrate for prolonged periods. Babies who were included in this study aren't yet old enough to be tested to see if these differences translate into higher achievement in their adult lives, but unrelated studies have often linked higher IQ and concentration scores to more success in adult life.

Breast milk has always contained DHA, and breastfed babies have been shown to have higher IQ scores than formula-fed babies long before the connection to DHA was understood. Women who breastfeed and supplement their diet with DHA can raise the DHA levels in their breast milk, effectively supplementing their babies like the study groups.

As if having smarter babies weren't enough to convince us to take it, DHA has also been shown to reduce our twins' preterm delivery rate, increase their birth weights and decrease our own chances of heart disease and premature death. Women who received DHA supplements in the third trimester (with singleton pregnancies) increased the gestational age of their babies at delivery by almost a week. Their babies weighed on average 50 grams to 60 grams more at birth.

If this were true for a twin pregnancy (we're not sure yet), that could mean the difference between delivering 29-weekers needing a ventilator versus 30-weekers that might be able to breathe on their own—or maybe 35-weekers who need to stay in the hospital versus 36-weekers who get to go home with you when you're discharged!

DHA has also been shown to raise HDL (the "good" cholesterol that cleans out our arteries) and lower LDL (the "bad" stuff that clogs our arteries). Over 20 clinical trials have shown that when adults supplemented their diets with DHA, they reduced their risk of heart attack, sudden cardiac death and death from any cause. DHA is currently being studied or used in many areas of medicine to prevent or treat a variety of diseases.

Experts now recommend that, based on these studies, doctors discuss DHA supplementation with women patients who are considering becoming pregnant, those already pregnant and those who are breastfeeding.

As we have done with folic acid, women can improve their chances of delivering healthier babies if they begin DHA now and continue it through the end of breastfeeding. For those unable to breastfeed, the FDA has now allowed formula manufacturers to supplement infant formula with DHA. Most of the formula companies advertise this on their labels with the word "Lipil" or "plus DHA."

For those who do not plan to have more children, continuing DHA along with our multivitamin and calcium supplements can help keep our cholesterol levels under control and reduce our risks of the problems previously discussed.

We all want to do the best we can to help our babies on the path to health and success. Our commitment to regular exercise, proper rest and a healthy diet are important parts of an overall plan for their future health. Taking a DHA supplement without attention to the overall plan will not assure your health or that of your twins. Adding a DHA supplement to the plan is like icing the cake.

Table 2 - Known or Proposed Uses of Omega-3 Fatty Acids in Medicine

Cardiology	Prevent/treat arrhythmias Prevent/treat blood clots Prevent/treat blood vessel inflammation Lower blood pressure, relax heart muscle
Gastroenterology	Treat Crohn's Disease and Ulcerative Colitis
Infectious Disease	Treat Hepatitis C
Pulmonology	Prevent Asthma attacks
Ophthalmology	Treat Retinitis Pigmentosa
Oncology	Prevent/treat breast cancer? Prevent prostate cancer? Prevent colon cancer?
Psychiatry	Prevent/treat Attention Deficit Disorder Treat Bipolar disorder Treat Depression Treat Schizophrenia
Rheumatology	Prevent/treat arthritis Prevent/treat osteoporosis

Talk to your OB about it, but consider adding a DHA supplement now and for the rest of your life. I will bring you more breaking medical news when I hear it. Best wishes for the healthiest twins possible! ♥

Dr. Rachel Franklin, a board-certified family medicine physician in Oklahoma City, is the mother of 4-year-old twins and the author of *Expecting Twins, Triplets and More: A Doctor's Guide to a Healthy and Happy Multiple Pregnancy* (St. Martin's Griffin 2005), available at www.TwinsMagazine.com. She posts advice on the TWINS Magazine Message Board forums "Pregnant with Multiples?" and "Postpartum." Visit her Web site, www.AskDrRachel.com.



Have Faith in Your Milk Supply!

By Christine Bradley, CLE



As a lactation consultant, one of the most common questions that I get from mothers of multiples is, “Will I really make enough milk?” The question regarding milk supply is not unique to mothers of multiples. For some reason, we lack confidence in our bodies’ amazing ability to completely nourish our babies whether we have one or three (or more!).

Mothers of multiples tend to lose sleep over this issue more than mothers of singletons. The good news is that most women can very successfully breastfeed multiples for the same duration and frequency that mothers of singletons do. Here are some tips to make it happen:

Know about supply and demand.

Probably the single most important concept to understand when you’re preparing to breastfeed is that the more frequently your babies nurse, the more milk you will produce.

Lactation is one of the few extremely reliable “positive feedback” systems in our body. If your babies are nursing often, your body will know that it must increase milk supply to keep up with your little ones’ appetites.

You will notice that especially around three weeks, six weeks, and three months of age, your babies may act hungrier and nurse more often. This is not because you are losing your milk! Babies often experi-

Snacktime for breastfeeding moms of multiples

- Hummus dip and veggies
- Whole wheat bread dipped in olive oil
- Fresh fruit
- Yogurt
- Cottage cheese with berries
- String cheese rolled up with 1-2 slices of chicken, turkey or ham
- Whole grain crackers with olive tapenade
- Apple slices with peanut butter
- Tunafish salad or chicken salad on whole grain cracker
- A yogurt & fresh fruit smoothie, with or w/o protein added
- Drink, drink, drink...keep a pitcher or bottle of water at your elbow at all times, and sip constantly

ence growth spurts around these times, and they are nursing more so that they will get more milk to help them grow.

Eat, drink, and be healthy.

The person that you should be worrying about getting enough to eat is you: Mom! You’re No. 1! You place an enormous nutritional demand on your body when you nurse multiples. You’ll be burning 1,000 or more calories per day producing your breastmilk.

You can make sure that you don’t deplete your body’s nutrient and energy stores by taking a few minutes to eat healthy snacks frequently between meals. Keep a pitcher or bottle of water full at all times and have it at your elbow. Drink throughout the day. You may also want to supplement with a multivitamin as a backup source of

vitamins and minerals.

What should you do if you suspect you really aren’t making enough milk?

If your babies aren’t gaining weight, aren’t producing enough wet and poopy diapers, and are constantly acting hungry and unsatisfied, you may want to talk to a lactation consultant about ways to make more milk.

I strongly recommend having some type of breastpump so you can pump between feedings to try to boost your milk supply if necessary. Supplements such as fenugreek are available to help you increase your milk supply.

If you are stressed, not getting enough rest, or losing weight rapidly, this can take a toll on your milk supply. In most cases, with a little help and support, your milk supply will make a big comeback. Good luck, and have faith in your milk supply! ♥

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Christine Bradley, a certified lactation consultant, last wrote in TWINS™ Magazine about breastfeeding twins two years ago. She received an overwhelming number of questions and comments regarding her article and wanted to address those issues. She lives in Holladay, Utah, and can be reached at cbooradley@msn.com.

See our autism story

We received an e-mail from Krista Vance, a mom of twin boys, Jack and Jamie. Jamie became very ill as a baby and was subsequently diagnosed with severe autism. Krista has written an amazing story of Jamie and his recovery from autism by age 4. This disease affects an unusually high number of twins and multiples, and some people say it is incurable. Krista wouldn't accept that. Her intimate look at the journey of their family is heart-wrenching and gripping reading. If you want to see a beautiful website and read a terrific, inspiring story, visit <http://www.healingautism.com>. You won't be disappointed.

Fertility essay contest

Ferring Pharmaceuticals Inc., maker of four drugs that treat infertility, announced its third annual "My Little Miracle" essay contest for women who have been successfully treated with any of Ferring's medications. Eligible women are asked to write an essay (800 words max.) about the journey to achieve parenthood and its impact on your life. The contest celebrates the miracle of birth for mothers who have faced infertility. The winner receives a \$10,000 education fund; runner-up wins a \$2,500 education fund; 10 honorable mentions each receive \$500. Since announcing the first contest in 2004, Ferring has awarded \$50,000 in education funds to its essay winners. For rules and details, go to www.ferringfertility.com. Deadline: June 30, 2006. Winners will be announced at the annual meeting of the American Society for Reproductive Medicine, Oct. 21-25.

Mark your calendars

The enormously-successful annual Conor's Run benefiting twin-to-twin transfusion syndrome (TTTS) has morphed into the "First Annual Twin Angel TTTS Benefit." It will be a musical folk-fest this year. Bernadette Archibald, mom of TTTS twins, one of whom survived, spearheaded the launch of Conor's Run in Williamstown, Mass., more than three years ago. She recently handed her baton to singer-songwriter Lisa Cote and her husband Jeffrey Willson. The event will take place Saturday, Sept. 16 at Camp Sloper/YMCA Outdoor Center in Southington, Conn. The musical event, billed as "an afternoon of live acoustic music, BBQ and more," is in memory of Joshua and Benjamin Willson, victims of TTTS in 2002. They died shortly after they were born at 26 weeks. Lisa has been a vocal performer for more than a decade.

Go to www.conorsrun.org to learn more. Bernadette, an indefatigable organizer, cheerleader and fundraiser for TTTS, urges "support for Lisa in her event...her goals are the same as Conor's Run...awareness and education about TTTS...Let's all go and sing and dance."

At the website, viewers can read Lisa's and Jeffrey's entire story

of her pregnancy, and her singing career.

Conor's Run in 2005 raised nearly \$14,000 and included 321 runners. Funds for education and treatments were donated to the TTTS Foundation (www.tttsfoundation.org) and to Dr. Julian E. De Lia and the International Institute for the Treatment of Twin to Twin Transfusion Syndrome at St. Joseph Regional Medical Center, Milwaukee, Wisc. (http://www.covhealth.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/www/cov_014262.hcsp) Dr. DeLia pioneered fetoscopic placental laser surgery in 1988. His laser procedure is now performed (with some modifications) throughout the U.S., Europe, Africa and Australia. Dr. De Lia began TTTS work at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City, and now performs the life-saving surgery at the Medical College of Wisconsin and the University of Illinois—Chicago. He can be reached at jedelia@covhealth.org.

Twin mom promotes school law changes

A mom of twins in New York state has succeeded in launching a nationwide push for state and possibly federal legislation forcing school officials to give parents of multiples the right to decide whether or not to separate their children in school.

Kathy Dolan, who has 6-year-old twin sons, fought successfully to keep her sons together in school when she encountered inflexible rules mandating they be put into separate classrooms. But she knows she'll have to fight the same battle next year and in subsequent years, and she wants to settle the issue once and for all, to the benefit of twins, triplets and higher-order multiples for decades to come. (Turn to pages 38-39 for more information.)

Dolan read in TWINS™ Magazine several stories about the successful 2005 effort in Minnesota that resulted in a law giving parents the power to choose separation or togetherness for their school-age multiples. She took her cue from Wendy Haavisto in Minnesota and decided to begin campaigning for such a law in New York. Her efforts since early January 2006 have snowballed beyond anyone's expectations.

"I want to allow parents of twins and higher-order multiples to have a primary voice in the placement decisions of their children (either separate or together) within the classroom," Dolan said.

This activist mom sent her first e-mail to a list of possible participants on Jan. 28, requesting that people sign her petition calling for introduction of a New York bill in the legislature. Dolan sent a copy of the request to TWINS™ Magazine. TWINS™ cheered her on and endorsed her efforts enthusiastically. We suggested she post a new "thread" on the TWINS™ Magazine Message Board (TMMB) to solicit nationwide support. (Anyone can sign the petition, no matter where you live. To lend support and sign her petition, go to www.twinslegislation.com, and/or <http://www.petitiononline.com/ryannick/>)

Within the first 24 hours of posting her notice on Twins Message

Board more than 100 people signed Dolan's petition. By early February, Dolan had become determined to take this issue to the federal level and try to get a "parents' choice" bill introduced in Congress. She had contacted Nancy Segal, Ph.D., noted academic, researcher and author of books about twins and their development, in California, who agreed to join forces with Dolan.

Using Dolan's step-by-step instructions and piggybacking on her success, mothers of twins around the country began launching their own petition drives for laws similar to that in Minnesota, with volunteers in 11 states soon embarking on petition drives of their own. Meanwhile, Dolan pushed ahead full steam, enlisting a media rep who approached Oprah Winfrey to do a show on the subject of discrimination against twins in school by setting unfounded rules forcing them to separate. CBS also expressed interest in doing a show on the subject.

Thousands of people around the U.S. signed petitions being circulated everywhere, and Dolan's petition has achieved major success. In mid-March, along came Inna Fershteyn, J.D., a Russian immigrant and lawyer in New York City, also a mom of twins. Fershteyn had read the stories in TWINS™ Magazine, and had seen Dolan's post on the TMMB, online. She contacted Dolan by e-mail, offering her services and support, with a copy to TWINS™. (See related stories, pages 38-39.)

Fershteyn believes this issue has all the makings of a possible class action lawsuit at the federal level charging discrimination against multiples on the basis of their birth. She and Dolan are now talking with lawyers who could potentially handle the case.

"Presently, individual school principals usually determine whether or not multiples will remain together or separate within the classroom. Decisions are not usually made on a case-by-case basis. The practice is 'across the board,' separating all multiples or keeping all multiples together depending on which practice the principal 'feels' is best for all. I however, believe that twinship and 'multiplicity' is a birthright. What is good for one set of multiples is not good for all. Arbitrary separation (or keeping children together) of twins and higher-order multiples based solely upon their multiplicity and past practices of individual principals is discriminatory and unacceptable," stated Dolan in her early e-mail contacts.

Dolan has received "the blessing" of Minnesota state Sen. Frederickson, who sponsored the bill there, and has been in regular contact with his assistant, Wendy Haavisto, whose twins were forcibly separated against her wishes and had a very difficult time adjusting to school. Haavisto launched the campaign in Minnesota on behalf of her twins.

Dolan wants to believe that some day, because of her efforts, "perhaps the bond that my independent 6-year-old boys share will finally be looked upon as something to be treasured and marveled at, instead of being labeled as 'co-dependent' by school administra-

tors who do not know any better."

As of late March, Dolan said she expects New York's draft bill to be completed and introduced long before the end of the year, as a result of the widespread support she has received.

Angela Drinkwater, Dolan's national media expert, had booked segments on FOX 5 News in NYC and the on the network CBS 'Early Show'. Expectations were high for a twins-in-school segment on CNN and 'Good Morning America' as well. Dr. Phil and Oprah had been approached.

Gary Braken, father of triplets and a consultant who works with the federal government, signed on with Dolan to work on the federal campaign as well as the NY state legislature.

Ray Romano, actor and father of twins, is being approached to act as a national spokesman and advocate for this campaign.

Pam Eichner, mom of two sets of twins who is a freelance writer and contributor to TWINS™ Magazine, is pitching the discrimination-against-twins-in-school story to Family Circle magazine and others, including a half-dozen TV shows that she has (at one time or another) been involved with.

Hundreds of parents nationwide have offered their stories and support in the legislative process. (Many can be viewed at Dolan's website under 'Stories' link.)

Parents in two states have begun letter-writing campaigns to state legislators, with plans to launch petition drives:

Texas: Albert and Becky Zavala (abzavala@houston.rr.com; www.petitiononline.com/josoro/petition.html)

Conn.: Heidi Hayes-Pandey (luxmi@pkidz.com)

Petition drives to push for the introduction of bills are underway in 23 other states as a result of Dolan's enormous energy: Alabama, Arkansas, California (www.petitiononline.com/twinlaw/petition.html), Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Louisiana, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Dakota, Maine, Massachusetts (www.petitiononline.com/twinslaw/petition.html), Michigan, Nebraska, Nevada, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

Dolan's website explains exactly how to launch a petition drive in a state.

Dolan received support letters and research materials from across the globe. Check out her site under 'Support' and read the letters from The International Society of Twin Studies, Dr. John Mascazine, NOMOTC and many more.

Rachel Franklin, M.D., noted author and regular contributor to TWINS™ Magazine and the TMMB (Ask Dr. Rachel), has also lent her support as a physician and a mother of twins. She noted that Oklahoma, where she lives, is one of only two states that allows parental choice in the matter of keeping twins together or separating them in school. ♥

A Twin Advises Parents: Keep Your Twins Together in School

By Richelle Richards Selleck



Two identical girls smiled. Tiny fingers gripped the counter edge. Four huge, blue eyes stared as their mother enrolled her twin daughters in kindergarten.

The principal smiled at each twin. She looked directly at the mother and said, "It's our policy to separate twins, so they develop their own personalities. We don't compare.. We see them as individuals."

Freeze. Wait a minute. This isn't right. Why would you separate something—people—who bonded before birth? What's wrong with this picture?

I'll tell you what's wrong. Everything! It's wrong to separate twins. I know, I speak from experience. I'm one of the twins who gripped that counter; the other twin was my sister, Robin. We were separated in school, beginning with kindergarten and ending in seventh grade.

Let's rewind and return to the first statement made by the school's principal: "Separate twins so they develop their own personality." Give me a break. Every child develops a personality before age five. I already had my own distinct personality, as did Robin. Robin was the tomboy; I loved to play dress-up and "pretend." Even though we liked different things, we were the best of friends. Sadly, we did not

remain the best of friends, because we were separated.

Throughout grade school, I was placed in a class with children from our neighborhood. (Our neighborhood was packed with children from school.) I always had someone to play with. Neighborhood children came to the house and asked, "Can I play with the twin in my class?"

Robin was in a class where nearly all the children were from outside our neighborhood. They were bussed to the school. Consequently, she never felt close to all the kids in our own neighborhood. Mom always arranged "play dates" for Robin, driving three or more miles to pick up Robin's friends.

I became the "groupie," with many friends and comfortable in groups. Robin became the "loner," usually with only a best friend and comfortable being by herself or with one good friend.

Let's take a look at the principal's second statement: "We don't compare twins." Right! It's human nature to compare twins. Why? Because people want to know how to tell them apart. When twins are compared, people see similarities and differences. They figure out which twin twirls her hair, or dips her head when smiling. During our elementary years, because Robin and I were

never together, people never identified our similarities or differences. Consequently, all during elementary school we were known as "the twins," not as Robin and Richelle.

In the spring of seventh grade, we moved from a large city in a metropolitan area to a small town. It was a new state and we looked forward to a new school, home, and hopefully, friends.

Two identical teenagers frowned. Each stood beside her dad. One twisted a ring on her middle finger. The other twisted her hair behind her right ear. Four blue eyes stared as their father enrolled his twin daughters in seventh grade.

The principal looked directly at our father and said, "Your daughters have the same classes. We don't put twins together. It's our policy to separate twins."

Dad looked directly at the principal and said, "I'm a taxpayer and this is a public school. correct? My wife and I have a policy regarding our twin daughters. Our twins will stay together. They will be in the same classes."

Yes! We were finally together and that is what saved us. You see, our father and mother knew that in this rural town and small school, kids already knew one another; they already had a sense of belonging. In this small school, there were only

"I am a twin and I also have 8-year-old twins. My mother separated my twin brother and me from first grade, and it did me more harm than good. I remember even at that young age of constantly wondering his well-being. I was always a mess worrying about him, and could not ever concentrate on my own studies.

"I think this whole thing about twins 'finding their own identity' by separating them is just an easy solution for folks who are not familiar with twins. Separating them makes it easier to handle things.

"With my own twins, I homeschooled them until the this year (third grade—age 8). Fortunately the principal of the school they went into was a twin too, and honored my wishes to keep them together—not because they 'can't do without each other,' but because they're better together. "The example that comes to mind is when you go to your husband's company Christmas party and you don't know a single person there—you don't have to have him right under your armpit in order to relax and have a good time, but it is more comfortable if you can look across the room and see he is there in the same room—it brings you comfort and makes you less anxious.

"Anyway, I think that a mother knows her twins best and should be the one to make that decision. If you are a mother of twins and unsure about whether your twins should be kept together or separated, then see if the school will work with you—if you think you should separate them, do it for a few days and see how it works. If it doesn't seem to 'fit' for them, then put them together in the same classroom."

Judy Anderson
 North Carolina
 Via e-mail

two ways to "get in" and "belong." Either you had to have been born in the town, or be known as a "partier" who drank or smoked pot. We were neither.

Our first day in seventh grade, kids threw rocks at us. They called us "Richie Bitchies" because we lived near the golf course. We had no one but each other to turn to, and we quickly became best friends. We were social outcasts, but there were two of us so we were essentially our own group.

Eventually our little clique of two grew to six, then 12, then into the teens over a three-year span. Our group accepted "outsiders" who hadn't been born in town and who didn't smoke pot or drink.

Most surprising, within our group the kids didn't call us "the twins." They called us Robin and Richelle. All our friends could tell us apart. They saw our similarities and differences. They compared us, and because they compared us, they knew us as individuals.

Now fast forward 30 years. My twin sister and I are elementary teachers in two different schools, in two different

cities, in two different states. We have our own policy that we passionately express to principals and parents: "Keep twins together so people CAN compare them and learn to see them as individuals."

In our classrooms we teach our pupils that comparing students makes for a fantastic math lesson. Collect data from your class, sort and place the data in symbolic graphs, and compare the information. Compare hair and eye color, height, favorite foods, activities, etc. When you compare students, the individual characteristics of each student (especially twins) is clearly seen.

Here's my message to all parents with twins: "Keep twins together in school. Celebrate their unique and special bond. Become an advocate for your twin sons or daughters. Schools will often try to automatically separate twins without asking the parent's preference."

My twin sister and I have become advocates for keeping twins together. Because of our personal experiences, we have a different point of view. ♥

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TWIN TAKES

from the horse's mouth

■ by Jennifer Jordan



PARENTS ALWAYS ASK: Did you attend preschool and school together, and were you in the same classroom, or were you separated? Which is better? Are there some aspects of being in the same classroom with your twin that are just fine, or even better than being apart? What are they? Are there some aspects of always being together that are difficult, or worse than if you were apart? Was there a point when the two of you just naturally began wanting to be in separate classrooms and to be apart more often?

JENNIFER'S TAKE: Growing up, my twin sister and I went to a year-round elementary school. Instead of having three months off in the summer, our “summer” vacations were divided throughout the school year. The actual dates of our vacations were determined by one factor: what track we were on. This year-round school system also meant that, because parents typically want their twins to have the same vacation dates, we were almost always on the same track and, thus, in the same class from kindergarten through sixth grade.

At our year-round school, the concept was simple: Students had one teacher for all academic courses and one teacher for art, one teacher for music, and one teacher for gym. Our main teacher was always very good at telling us apart and giving us individual grades. However, the teachers that we saw only every few days (art, music, and gym alternated on a three-day schedule) had a harder time telling us apart. In these classes, though our skill levels were different, we nearly always received identical grades, as if our teachers gave us the same grades because they weren't quite sure who was who.

We seldom cared when these identical grades were A's, but when they were anything other than A's we found it frustrating and unfair. We then blamed each other for our anything-but-stellar rating.

Another issue was having the same friends for our entire elementary experience. Students usually treated “their track” as if it was superior to all others. For example, students in C track naturally assumed that “C track ruled” while “A, B, and D tracks drooled.” This attitude meant we seldom befriended students in other tracks. My sister and I—proud members of C track—were left to befriend the same 25 kids every year of elementary school. Ultimately, we had the exact same friends for seven years.

Having the same friends meant my sister and I had no separation from each other. We were together at school and every single social function. Our friends were never allowed to invite one twin

over without the other, and we weren't allowed to invite friends over unless we both agreed on the invitee.

Having the same friends caused a certain division to exist between us. Whenever friends wanted to alienate one twin—and alienation is typically a favorite past-time of elementary school children—they would often automatically alienate the other twin as well. It was as if the ability to be ostracized by peers was based solely on genetics. I can't recall how many times our friends would become angry with both of us for something that only one of us (ahem, most likely my sister!) did.

While it was difficult wondering if our teachers could tell us apart and having the exact same social calendar, the hardest things for me about being in the same class with my sister were small things. For instance, whenever something exciting happened at school—a retired NFL kicker came to sign autographs, or the winner of the art contest was announced, or a former teacher gave birth to a baby—my sister and I would have to compete to see who would get to tell our parents. When you're in elementary school, everything is exciting and everything is the world's biggest deal. Elementary school kids always want to tell their parents what happened that day. While most kids could leisurely explain the daily occurrences, my sister and I fought to see who would get to our parents first.

My sister and I always knew if the other twin got into trouble. We never had the luxury of not having someone know about our misbehavior. If a singleton is caught talking during class or running in the halls, the trouble is minor enough that the kid figures

her parents don't need to know about it. My sister and I, however, would tattle on each other or blackmail each other. If my sister was caught talking in class, I would tell my parents on her or give her the opportunity to "buy my silence" by agreeing to do my chores for a week. When I was a miscreant, she would do the same to me. Never a moment's peace.

In middle school and high school we attended the same schools (no longer year-round), but never had another class together. Nonetheless, we were still compared to each other, and many peers still thought we should be exactly alike. We still dealt with everyone knowing we were twins, but we were never treated as a single entity like we had been in elementary school. We had a few of the same teachers, and a few of the same friends, but the majority of teachers and the majority of friends—for the first time in our lives—were either "my teachers" and "my friends", or "her teachers" and "her friends". The days of "our teachers" and "our friends" came to a welcome end.

College, for the first time, allowed us to be separate individuals. Because we went to different universities, no one knew we were a twin unless we told them. Our colleges were only about an hour apart. Periodically, I would have people come up to me and tell me that while they were visiting the school up north, they saw or met my sister. Likewise, I would encounter people on my own campus who somehow knew my sister. They would come up to me and say, "I know your sister", and I would have to restrain myself from saying, "Oh my gosh, so do I!"

Ultimately, the advantages to putting twins in separate classrooms, in my opinion, far outweigh the advantages of being together. When kids are very young (preschool or the early elementary years) I believe it is good to keep twins together when that is what they are comfortable with. And, in a time where life is full of change, they will take comfort in having each other. However, the older twins get (for us it started in 3rd or 4th grade), the more separation they will likely want from one another and from the whole "twin" concept.

What parents need to keep in mind is that putting twins in the same class year after year doesn't just mean they will be in the same class. It also means they will very likely have the same friends, the same social life and rarely any opportunity to stop "being a twin." Without separation, individuality—which twins are continually fighting to develop—has a hard time emerging and flourishing.

As my school recollections attest, I grew up with both experiences. I shared a classroom with my sister for the first seven years of school and didn't share one with her for the other 10 years. The first seven years were definitely harder: Being a twin frustrated me and made me feel as though my label was simply "twin." In the latter years, however, I decided being a twin wasn't so bad. By the time I got to college, I began to think it was even kind of cool. I began to realize that having a twin sister is something unique, something special, and will come in very handy if I ever need a kidney. ♡

Jennifer is 27 and lives in Aurora, Colo.

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Double Strollers: What Do You Really Need?

By Anik Giguère-Biollo



Photo courtesy of Inglesina

Are you expecting or have you recently delivered twins? Then you definitely need a double stroller.

Before you begin your search among the countless models available, determine your stroller needs for your particular lifestyle. For example, it doesn't make sense to purchase the same double stroller your best friend raves about if you're an avid jogger and her favorite hobby is shopping. To help you narrow the possibilities, answer the eight following questions.

1 | What activities do you need a double stroller for?

Do you do most of your shopping in malls? Do you like to jog or take long walks around the neighborhood in all types of weather? Are you a frequent traveler? Your most frequent activities will determine what type of double stroller you should choose, whether it be a regular double mall stroller, a lightweight (e.g., umbrella-style) double stroller, a double jogging stroller or a double all-terrain stroller.

2 | Which seating design best suits your needs?

Double strollers come in two seating designs: tandem (one seat in front of the other) or side-by-side. Both designs offer advantages and disadvantages, so think carefully about what your lifestyle will be like with twins—although this is not easy to do before actually living through it!

3 | What are the ages and temperaments of your children?

Your double stroller needs will be different if you're the parents of twins than if you have a baby and an older child. Some double strollers are true twin strollers, meaning they have features that are meant to accommodate two children of the same age, such as the ability to clip in two infant car seats. There are also double strollers designed so a toddler can sit in the front seat where he can have a better view and more legroom while baby brother or sister sleeps comfortably in the fully reclining rear seat.

Many parents find that side-by-side double strollers help keep the peace between children because they prevent arguments about who gets to sit in front. On the other hand, being side-by-side can also create other problems with the two children sitting in such close proximity.

4 | How often are you going to use the double stroller?

If you're planning on using a stroller only for quick errands to the mall a couple times a week, you don't need a heavy-duty, high-end double stroller with all the bells and whistles. However, if you like going for daily walks or runs, or if you go out with your children often and for long periods of time, consider getting something comfortable and durable, since double strollers take twice the abuse of single strollers.

5 | Who will be using the stroller?

Keep in mind the height and stride of the person or persons

TWINS Bookshelf Spotlight

NEW!



Heart to Heart: Words of Wisdom from the real Experts: Seven Mothers of Twins on Raising Twins the First Year

by Lisa Blau, Julie Diamond Bobbitt, Shelley deMontesquiou, Nicole Davis, Stacy R. Carter, Heidi Mark, Lisa Rojany Buccieri, Connie A. Gilbert **\$21.95**

Written by seven experienced mothers of twins, *Heart Two Heart* gives new mothers of multiples the straight talk about day-to-day life with their twins. How do you feed two infants? Where do you buy gear for twins? What changes might happen to a mother during her pregnancy and beyond? What about the father and his role? How can a family manage? These and other questions for which new moms want simple answers are covered in this informative and entertaining book. *Paperback, 308 pages.*

NEW!



Twinspiration: Real-Life Advice from Pregnancy Through the First Year

by Cheryl Lage **\$16.95**

Mother of twins Darren and Sarah, Cheryl Lage uses humor, personal anecdotes and a friendly, conversational tone in her helpful book. The host of the popular online twins website *twinsights.com* and a contributor to *Twins™ Magazine*, Lage provides insightful, honest advice and practical information for new and expecting parents of multiples. *Twinspiration* offers parents valuable insight into a pregnancy with twins and their first year of life. Fathers will find the continuing "Double Daddy Perspective" notes throughout the book particularly helpful. *Paperback, 320 pages.*

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who will be using the double stroller the most, as well as their physical strength. It's no fun pushing a stroller with a handle that is too low or too high for comfort. Neither is folding and picking up one that's cumbersome. It's true that double strollers are heavier and bulkier than single strollers, but some models are easier to handle than others.

6 | What features are you looking for?

Do you want a simple, no frills double stroller, or something with lots of comfort, durability and storage space? This brings us back to the types of activities you do most often. It's very disappointing to purchase a stroller and then realize that its features don't meet your needs as well as they could have.

7 | How much space do you have for transporting and storing it?

With a few exceptions, double strollers take up a lot of room. The size of your vehicle may be a big deciding factor when choosing a double model. Make sure it fits! Also, take into account where you will store the stroller at home.

8 | What can you afford?

This is probably the most important question of all. Think carefully of your present and future stroller needs with your two children. What is the minimum you are willing to live with? Can you afford to pay for a higher quality double stroller that will make your life easier in the long run, or are you willing to take your chances with a budget stroller that may break down before you're done using it? For twins, a double universal car seat carrier (stroller frame) is an inexpensive alternative to buying an actual stroller during the infant stage if you're not sure what you'll need later on.

Once you've determined what you really need, begin researching the various brands and models on the market. You will be able to quickly eliminate double strollers that don't fit your criteria, making the whole process a lot easier and less time-consuming. ♥

Anik Giguère-Biollo is the mother of a 3-year-old girl and 1-year-old twin boys, she has owned a total of eight baby strollers of different types. She offers a great deal of detailed information about choosing and purchasing double strollers and twin strollers as well as all other types of strollers, on her website. You can visit her site by going to <http://www.Stroller-Advisor.com>.

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How to determine twin zygosity

By Gary Steinman, M.D., Ph.D.

Monozygotic twins, Kevin and Corey, 26 months.

Although the terms identical and fraternal are commonly used when referring to twins, they don't accurately describe these children.

The distinction must be made by determining their zygosity. If a pair of twins are produced from one fertilized egg (e.g., zygote), they are monozygotic (MZ). If the conception involved two separate eggs, the resulting twins are dizygotic (DZ).

In the case of DZ twins, the factor making each member of the set different from the other is that two eggs were each fertilized by separate sperm cells and two babies resulted. On the other hand, with MZ sets, one egg was fertilized and later the developing embryo split, resulting in two carbon-copy babies.

Since eggs and sperm before fertilization process are genetically different from each other, DZ twins are distinct from each other. Some DZ twins who are same-sex look very much alike, however.

In MZ twins, the chromosomes are the same in both embryos (assuming no defects in the growth process); hence, the two babies are the same. Small differences can occur during subsequent development—this is why the term “identical” is inappropriate.

Other than curiosity, there is really only one medical situation where it is important to know if a particular set of twins is monozygotic or dizygotic. Practically all of each baby's distinguishing characteristics are determined by the messages stored in the genetic code of the nuclear chromosomes.

If there are no external factors such as disease or malnutrition that bring about mutation of the genes or changes in the embryos, the genes make blue eyes blue and a tall person tall, for example. Therefore, if twins originated from the same egg and sperm, and bear the same genetic code, they will appear identical, or nearly so.

DZ twins that originate from separate eggs will have different genetic codes and will generally have uniquely distinguishable appearances. Other than their possible physical and circula-

tory interactions in the womb, these fetuses are essentially two independent individuals before birth.

Such a genetic differentiation is important if an organ transplant is contemplated. MZ twins can exchange organs in most cases without fear of rejection. Also, a genetic defect identified in one of these twins is likely, but not always, found in the second.

Many tests can be applied to a particular set of twins to find out if they are monozygotic or dizygotic. Most of these tests were originally used to diagnose paternity, since trait similarities are important in such cases as well.

Except for an uncommon genetic mutation, monozygotic twins in a given pair are always the same sex. Thus, if a set is composed of a boy and a girl, they are assumed to be dizygotic. This is because each egg was fertilized by a different sperm cell, one of which was destined to produce a boy (Y-sex chromosome) and the other a girl (X-sex chromosome).

Ways to tell MZ vs. DZ

If both members of the set appear very much alike, studies have shown that this may be as much as 90% reliable in identifying a monozygotic set. Yet this is not enough for medical purposes; it is adequate in most cases for normal reasons.

There are other ways, as well, to tell whether twins are MZ or DZ. While the newborns are still in the hospital during the postpartum period, a quick test of exclusion is their blood types. Since the genetics of both members of an MZ set are the same, the blood types should also be the same. In DZ twins the blood type may be the same or different. While still in the uterus, a twin set is typically covered by two membranes, the inner amnion and the outer chorion. In DZ gestations, both membranes cover each fetus. In MZ gestations, the same may happen, but there are several additional variations. The one combination that is unique to monozygotic sets is an amnion around each fetus and a single outer chorion

surrounding the entire gestation. It is sometimes possible to make this diagnosis by antepartum ultrasound (ultrasound administered during the pregnancy, before birth).

The healthcare provider attending delivery can examine the expelled membranes for this combination. Otherwise, the placenta can be sent to the pathology lab for analysis. In some instances, however, the fused placentas of a DZ gestation can appear like a single placenta of an MZ gestation, and won't correctly indicate zygosity.

So, can we use fingerprints to determine if twins are MZ or DZ? Not always. Fingerprints develop in utero during the second trimester of prenatal life. The basic structure of a fingerprint is determined genetically, but can be modified by pressure against the developing pads at the tips of each finger. In the general population, the fingerprint concordance (coincidence) in pairs of subjects at random is 40% to 60%. No two people have the same fingerprint sets in all aspects, and this is, interestingly enough, also true of twins in MZ sets. The fingerprint concordance in MZ twins is 88%, whereas in MZ quintuplets it is 71%. This is apparently due to local variations within the womb that can modify expression of genetic patterns before delivery (nature vs. nurture). This indicates that there would be more differences that develop in multiples while they are in the intrauterine environment when there are more babies present.

DNA test is now the gold standard

Various biochemical tests have been devised to measure the similarity of two individuals. Among these are examinations of the relative abundance of similarly-structured enzymes. Although not used much these days, such tests have been practical in the past.

When organ transplants between two people are considered, evaluation of the HLA antigens, an assortment of related tissue proteins specific to each individual, is commonly used. Six types of antigens are routinely measured, three of which come from the patient's mother and three from the father. The more alike this array of antigens is between a potential donor and a potential recipient, the more likely a bone marrow or kidney transplant will be to succeed and avoid organ rejection. When such tests are performed on MZ twins, the results should be nearly identical between the two.

The gold standard for zygosity determination in the laboratory now is examining the similarity of particular DNA sequences of the nuclear chromosomes. The basic test is performed by first collecting and reproducing samples of DNA from each person being examined. The DNA is then fragmented into shorter strands by selective enzymes.

Radioactively-labeled reactive factors with known DNA sequence specificity are then applied to the partially-degraded nuclear material. Finally, the targeted fragments are separated in an electrical field (electrophoresis). The position of each identified fragment in the field is compared between the two test cases. If the two individuals are in fact genetically alike, the labeled fragments will yield the same pattern in both.

The likelihood of spontaneous twinning worldwide is roughly estimated as 1 in every 89 births. The frequency of dizygotic twinning in particular varies in different social/ethnic groupings by heredity, maternal age, and how many children the mother has had.

The likelihood of spontaneous twinning worldwide is roughly estimated as 1 in every 89 births. The frequency of dizygotic twinning in particular varies in different social/ethnic groupings by heredity, maternal age, and how many children the mother has had.

Artificial methods for enhancing fertility in recent years has markedly increased the twinning rate. Whereas the multiple-birth rate in the United States in 1975 was about 1.9 in every 1000 births, by 2002 it had reached 3.1 per 1000. This is largely due to assisted reproductive technologies introduced in the last quarter of the previous century. Thus, to predict that any given mother of twins will have another set is affected by many factors, making the calculation complicated and imprecise.

It's becoming much more difficult in this day and age to define exactly what a twin is. Envision, for example, a situation in which a woman undergoes in vitro fertilization (IVF), during which several inseminated eggs are saved. Let us assume for the sake of this scenario that one embryo is implanted and she has a baby. Next year she decides she wants another child and another embryo is defrosted and implanted. If this pregnancy is successful, are the two children twins?

In another scenario, even though two babies are born at the same time, it does not necessarily mean they had the same father. Cases have been reported where the distinguishing characteristics observed could only be explained if two separate fertilizations occurred within a short interval, where the sperm cells were in fact provided by two different men. This phenomenon is known as superfetation. (The HLA tests we discussed can be used to determine this.)

In yet another scenario, there have been cases of early premature delivery of one baby in a twin set, with delayed delivery of the second baby for as long as several weeks. Medical advances may make it possible for this to happen more in the future to ensure that a smaller second baby is more fully developed. Upon delivery of the second baby, with a very different birthday from the first, are they still twins in the classical sense?

Although uncommon, such events do affect the statistics of twinning. In summary, defining zygosity of twins with certainty is essential in certain medical situations. Methodology for such a determination is now well established and routine. And a DNA test is the only test that is really definitive. ❤

Dr. Steinman is an OB/gyn in Astoria, NY. If you have specific questions for him about zygosity, e-mail him at DAV4601@aol.com. He may be able to provide answers and discussion in upcoming issues of TWINS™.

CAMPING WITH TWINS

By Amanda Webber



The Webber family walking on Columbia Fields Glacier, Alberta, Canada. Amanda holding Ramsey and Ian carrying Tucker

Early in my professional career, I worked with a gentleman named Brian, who had a 19-month old son. While working together, he and his wife became pregnant with triplets. I watched him work long hours, his wife coming in for visits, her belly growing larger than I ever thought possible. Both of them were nervous and anxious for what was yet to come.

At 32 weeks, their triplets were born: two boys and a girl. The following summer, when their oldest son was 2 and their triplets were only 4 months old, they took a road trip from New York to Virginia to visit another family with multiples. At the time, I thought they were insane. Now, with twin babies of my own, I realize they were living the life.

This past summer, I thought about my former co-worker Brian and smiled as my girlfriends told me how crazy I was for planning a long vacation with my family. Their statements ranged from, “Better you than me,” to “Why would you want to do such a thing?” and “You are one brave woman!” Thank goodness I ignored their warnings.

My husband, brother-in-law, fraternal 9-month-old twin boys, two 160-lb. dogs and I packed ourselves into one truck and drove 2,800 miles in 11 days across Montana and the Canadian Rockies to experience Alberta and British Columbia.

We camped, we hiked, we visited friends, and we had a great time. Was it hard work? You bet. And the best part about it? We would do it again in a heartbeat.

Now, don’t get me wrong—camping with or without children can be hard work. Ian, my husband, and I are campers since childhood. Camping is ingrained in our bones—we’ve camped in rain and snow, night and day. We will meet you at the trailhead, climb the mountain, camp below the peak, enjoy Mother Nature and do it with a smile on our faces.

When there were only the two of us—two packs for us, two packs for the dogs—we were good to go at a moment’s notice. Now with two children to take along, things are different. It takes lots of preparation, planning, communication, great packing, forethought and, of course, the desire and will to do it.

Over the years, we have learned some

tricks of the trade, from storing food, packing supplies, things to do before you leave and what not to bring. It is all here.

Camping with Twins—Equipment

My mom always says, “When going on vacation, bring half the clothes and twice the money.” In essence, she is right. Something is bound to come up while on vacation that will require a little more cash and no one will really notice on the trail if you have breast milk and s’mores marshmallow smeared on your shirt from last night. Some items are essential for camping with kids and others really are not. The key is to keep the kids comfortable while making life a little easier for you along the way.

For example, we brought our twins’ favorite books and toys—ones that I didn’t mind getting dirty and abused a little. A few days before we left I took these toys and books away so they were fresh and exciting on the trip. The double stroller and the tent are used as playpens during the day.

We could easily bring in a bag of toys, dump them on the floor in the tent and keep the kids zippered in. They enjoyed

the freedom to roam and play and we knew they were safe. We did this each time we set up and tore down camp. On occasion, a sleeping bag on the ground with some toys would keep them contained. Tip: Always check the area for trees with thorns, poison ivy or berries, etc., before laying down a blanket.

Many items you can simply go without. Skip the playpen, high chairs, jolly jumpers, large musical toys, gate systems and other contraptions that require assembly. When camping you have enough to assemble that you don't need any more for your child's enjoyment or expectation.

I can't keep socks or blankets on my kids even if I try. So on cold nights, I put them in their winter suits. If it got cold at night I knew they would be warm and could easily put another blanket on them. If it got too hot, I could always unzip the snowsuit and let out some of the heat.

Because I am still nursing, I would keep a diaper bag and flashlight with me at night for midnight feedings and diaper changes. (A strap-on headlamp, if you have one, works even better than a flashlight.) One plastic bag left outside the tent held dirty diapers and was easy to remove the following morning.

When tearing down and setting up camp, make sure you pack things in the order you will need to use them and keep like items together. Our kitchen was always

Don't leave home without it: **Essential camping gear**

Tent and stakes

Ground cloth/tarp/shower curtain

Flashlight and lantern

Sleeping bags

Cookstove and fuel

Kindling and bag of paper

Dishes and cooking supplies

First aid kit

Bug repellent, sunscreen and

Benadryl

Toilet paper and toiletries

Laundry bag

Camera

in the truck, the bedding and one dirty laundry bag for everyone up in a ski rack, our coolers near the sliding window, etc. This way everyone knew where to go for what was needed. The less rearranging you have, the more time you have to enjoy yourselves.

Camping with your vehicle allows you to pack lots—remember to keep it light

or you will be doing more packing and unpacking than necessary. Bring plenty of baby wipes. I REPEAT, BRING BABY WIPES! Use them as washcloths, tissues, for diaper changes and more. We spilled a drink in the truck and used baby wipes to clean up. I used them to clean the dashboard. Got an ugly bug on the windshield? No problem! I used them everywhere. Even when I fed the boys pureed peas in the truck—I used them for mid-wipes to keep things under control.

Driving and Entertaining

Twin baby boys require attention! So get on it! No really, traveling with them can be lots of fun. If you are lucky, your infants will sleep in the vehicle, so use that time wisely. We planned around their scheduled naps and made sure we maximized our driving times then. You will need to take a break every couple of hours—for diaper changes and letting the kiddos climb around a little. A change of scenery is an amazing thing!

I would play with them if they were getting fussy. Sometimes they simply enjoyed the rhythm of the vehicle and looking out the window. Other times, well...there are plenty of things you can do with your kids. Reading, singing, playing peek-a-boo—the ideas are endless. Need some? Check out the following website for more tricks and ideas: <http://www.momsmivan.com>

I rigged up a toy system for them while in

Before you leave on vacation ✓

- 1. Stop mail delivery at Post Office
- 2. Pay neighborhood kid to feed your pet(s) and put out garbage
- 3. Put a timer on inside lights
- 4. Turn off hot water heater
- 5. Set furnace/air conditioner low or off (if safe)
- 6. Stop newspaper delivery
- 7. Turn on email auto-responder
- 8. Put indoor plants in bathtub
- 9. Give family member or personal friend itinerary, copies of documentation in your wallet, pediatrician numbers
- 10. Fill prescriptions + extra for travel
- 11. Service vehicle: oil change, tranny flush, plugs/wires if needed, etc.
- 12. Visit vet w/ animals traveling with you; take pet health certificates. Keep their documentation with yours.
- 13. Cook meals and freeze to reheat while traveling

Twin infant camping supplies

Weekend camping trip—
Friday night to Sunday
afternoon = 2 nights & 2 days

- 4 Zip-up pajamas w/ feet
- 4 Pairs of socks
- 2 Jackets with hoods
- 2 Tie-on hats
- 2 Snowsuits or buntings
- Diapers/wipes (soft refill)-
enough for 1 extra day
- 2 Towels
- 3 Blankets
- 3 Pacifiers (if needed)
- 4 Plastic grocery bags for soiled
diapers/clothes
- 1 Small medicine kit:
 - Benadryl
 - Tylenol
 - Gas juice
 - Teething tablets
 - Thermometer
 - Nail clippers
 - Comb/Brush
 - Diaper cream (sample-
size)
- 2 Bottles filled and chilled (keep
in cooler if possible)
- 2 Empty bottles
- 2 Bowls
- 2 Spoons
- 2 Bibs
- 1 Box of cereal/formula
- 1 Bag of toys/books (bring
lullaby music from mobile)
- 2 Ziploc bags for changing
station on hike
- Frozen foods or store-bought,
put in 2-day supply bags in
cooler

the truck. It saved me from having to pick up the same toy for the 200th time. I tied rope from one side of the vehicle to the other at the foot end of their car seats. (In my truck I attached each end of the rope to a seat belt harness attached to the door). Next, tie a shorter hanging rope for each child to that suspended one and attach a ring to the end of each short dangling line for toys. My boys enjoyed fabric books, rattles, music makers, etc. on these lines. It was easy to move this contraption out of their way when they were sleeping or fussy. For even more fun and interest, I would switch the toys out and give them each different ones to enjoy throughout the trip.

Practice camping—

Not everyone is expert at camping. Sometimes it takes practice. Before you venture out on a long trip, make sure you understand what is expected of you, what equipment works well for your family lifestyle and what your children can withstand and endure. If you've never taken a road trip for more than a half-hour to the mall, I highly recommend a two-hour road trip for a picnic, to test the waters. A dry run.

We practiced camping in our own backyard—setting up our tent, letting the boys get the feel of it, trying it out during the day for a nap and again at night. Once we achieved success in our own backyard, we then graduated to our friend's backyard overnight. This meant packing the car with all the gear and not using our friend's facilities for running water and bathrooms, etc.

We made sure to get the boys comfortable with the idea of camping in a big yellow tent, listening to the sounds of the great outdoors, adjusting to the temperature changes as the sun went down and getting into a routine so it wasn't a shock when we left for the big trip. This was also a great way to learn what equipment to bring and leave home, what ways you can feed the kids, get them to sleep, what we should and should not do in the truck, etc. If all else failed, we could still go inside or home.

Teamwork & Communication

A trip to the in-laws' house can be stressful enough; the last thing you need on a camping trip is stressed-out adults. We all know that if parents are happy, there is a good chance the kids will be happy, too. I have learned the hard way that if I don't have my act together, my kids can fall apart emotionally. Vacation itself can be trying and difficult when your kids have an off day. Adults have off days too; so, no one needs to hear your picky argument over where the rice is in the truck.

To keep the peace, use one notebook with pockets for the entire trip—from planning and reservations to making to-do lists and packing, for directions, numbers to remember and messages to each other. This is a great way to keep track of everything. Rip out articles of interest, schedules of events, etc. needed in different locations. If your road trip has several different destinations, make a section for each destination and incorporate all the items in one area. This ensures you'll have ready access to the information you need and will have instant memories from your travels. Everyone knows to keep this notebook front and center. I like to journal my days in it and eventually make a scrapbook from it.

Minimize stressful times by communicating with each other more than you think necessary. Have realistic expectations. Plan ahead. Set goals for each person's chores, and for your group adventures and personal experiences.

Ian, his brother Sean, and I have traveled most of the U.S. together over the past 10 years. Each new trip presents its own challenges and requires all of us to make an effort for the greater good.

Tag-team the duties. Identify tasks that need to be done within the next few hours, assign owners and decide when to each task needs to be done. For instance, cooking dinner, campfire started with wood cut, boys fed and dogs walked before 7 pm.

You'll be surprised what you can get done when you work together. We always found that when we didn't do this, the boys

would get to bed too late, and we would be eating dinner at 10 p.m. when we did the right planning and assigning, each of us had enough personal time while we were on the road to do what we wanted. I had the opportunity to paint at sunset in Androskoggin; Ian and Sean went mountainbiking in Jasper.

Camping and food

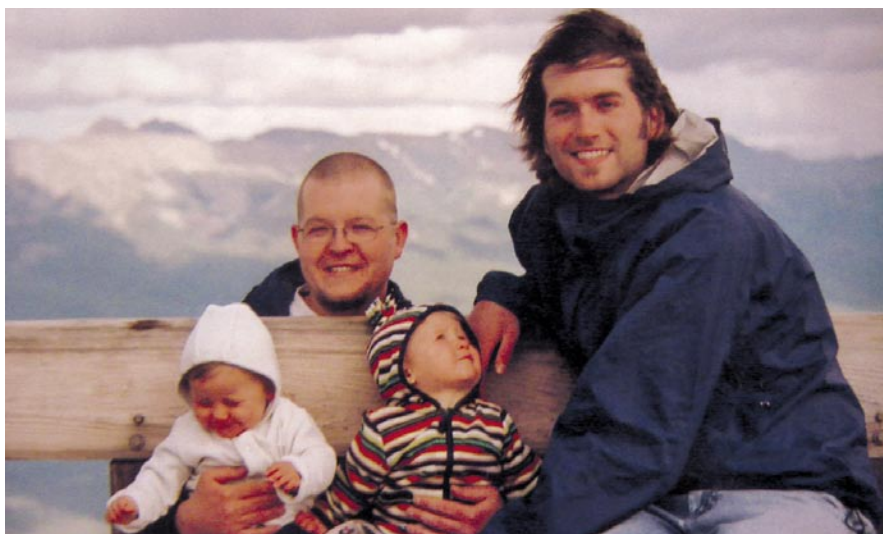
When we embark on vacation, food is mine to plan hop, and my husband's to cook. In general, we eat uncooked meals for breakfast and lunch and we cook using the propane stove for dinner. Preparation and planning is key to keeping the load light, the meals healthy and the taste delicious."Lipsmackin' Backpackin' " by Tim and Christine Conners is one of my favorite books for camping on the trail. They have collected recipes from backpackers and campers all across the country who have tested and experimented with their favorite meals, treats and drinks.

For this trip, we calculated the days we needed to cook (to figure out what we could freeze), how often we would need to find a grocery store, and what the menu would be. By keeping our food area down to four containers, two coolers and two plastic containers, items were sealed and secure from animals and travel wear-and-tear.

Keep frozen items in one cooler; staples and dinner for that night goes in another. Buy a block of dry ice for your frozen items. Wrap the dry ice in many layers of newspaper (like a present) and tape each layer shut. Place it in the center of your cooler with your frozen items all around it. It will last 4-6 days. And the great thing about it? No water mess!

Open this cooler only when necessary, to ensure your items stay frozen. Make a second grocery run for frozen goods and staples mid-vacation and restock with dry ice. You shouldn't need to do it again.

In one plastic storage container, pack pots, dishes, cooking utensils, silverware, a dish towel, and a Ziploc bag for dish soap and sponge. Use a second plastic storage container for all dry goods and snacks.



From left to right- Ramsey Webber, Ian Webber, Tucker Webber, Sean Webber taking a family picture after riding the tram up Grouse Mountain in Jasper, Alberta, British Columbia.

Take all dry food items out of boxes and put into plastic bags to conserve space (rubber band instructions for cooking to the bag). Take stock of how much oil, eggs, butter, salt and sugar you will need for your meals; be sure to carry enough. Use Ziploc bags for anything you don't want to leak or spill.

Infant feeding and nursing

I make my own baby food and found freezing a two-day supply of food in Ziploc bags to be best. Stack the bags in your freezer so they freeze in the correct shape to best fit in your cooler. I had tried to freeze them in canning jars—and let's just say it was a mess!

Feeding the boys in their car seats was easiest. Whether in the car, on the picnic table or on the ground—car seats kept them contained and minimized the mess. Additionally, I kept plenty of baby wipes on hand and thicken up their foods with cereal. If your child has never had peas in toothpaste consistency, I would recommend trying it at home the week before you leave.

It is so easy to breastfeed your kids when camping. Thank goodness I am not shy. I have no problems relaxing and feeding my kids anywhere we go. I nurse my boys at the same time using a cradle and football hold. This generally provides me with the most privacy and I can easily do this sitting Indian style on the ground or in a lawn chair. Sometimes, I will put a towel or jacket

under my boy in the football hold for his and my comfort. It is great because I don't have to make food, clean up or worry about preparation time before they get fussy. For adults, camping with non-mobile, nursing children is the easiest. Their needs are limited, and they can't get into too much trouble.

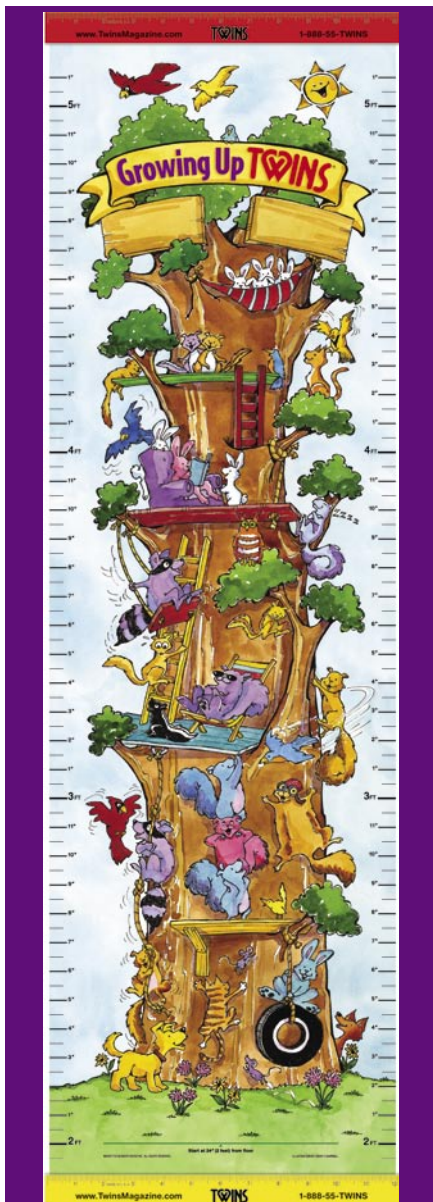
Recommended advice

Treat yourself in the middle of your trip. Go out to dinner instead of cooking, stay at a cabin with running water and a toilet. Give yourselves a break one way or another. The ability to sit back and relax will help everyone unwind.

The realities of camping: Things are going to be less sterile. You won't be boiling bottles or nipples, using dish detergent for spoons and bowls. If this is uncomfortable for you, use disposable dishware and utensils, and bottles with disposable bags. Bring a dozen nipples and boil once or twice while on your trip if you must.



Glacier National Park view from Going-to-the-Sun Road.



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On the trail

Cart plenty of water and snacks for you and the kids when on the trail. We keep a pack filled with drinking water, snacks and a Ziploc bag for the changing station. It includes three diapers, enough wipes to get you by, diaper cream (only if essential) and another Ziploc bag for dirty diapers. Also in that pack is a first aid kit, camera, binoculars and identification. I like to have zwieback toast and juice for the boys; trail mix, jerky and granola bars for us.

While hiking, we have two packs in which we carry the boys: a front carrier and a backpack. Our kids prefer their freedom and would rather be on your shoulders than in a pack, so we know any hike needs to be less than 1.5 hours to keep them happy on the trail. Consider your kids' attention spans, your endurance level and where you will be before you venture on a hike.

While on vacation, we hiked Columbia Fields Glacier in Alberta. It was about a one-hour hike from the parking lot to the glacier and was cold enough to require winter clothing. It is still freezing standing on ice! When hiking in the mountains be sure to watch closely for symptoms of high-altitude sickness. Anyone can get it including your children. Young children can show signs of headaches and symptoms similar to the flu. Stay in tune with your children's dispositions and breathing and get them to drink lots of fluids. Try to climb slower than normal at altitude with children and if you notice any symptoms, simply return to lower ground.

Camping is the perfect time to gain perspective, get down to the simple things

in life, learn what you really need to survive, remove personal barriers and become true to one's self and each other. It offers the opportunity to breath fresh air; contemplate life and dream within the peaceful silence of Mother Nature.

I especially love coming home after a camping trip and reveling in the conveniences of modern life. Washing machines, dishwashers, running water—we take it all for granted day-to-day. But after camping and hiking, I no longer complain about little things and can see clearly what is before me. This makes me a better mom, wife and human being.

One thing is for sure: Now that I've done this, I know I can take my boys anywhere. I learned so much about my kids on this adventure and they learned so much about us. We are a better team.

Maybe I am insane to have gone on this trip with my kids the way we did. But Brian, my old co-worker, told me, "You still need to live your life. It shouldn't make a difference if you have twins or quintuplets. Life will still go on."

Each day is sure to bring me new challenges and opportunities. Who can say if it will get any easier with my babies in another year or two? For now, I am determined to enjoy life no matter how many children I have. That's one of the examples I can set for my children. ♡

Amanda Webber lives in Hoosick Falls, N.Y., and is a SAHM, freelance writer and painter. She previously worked as a graphic designer and scientific illustrator. She and her husband Ian are avid outdoors-people. Her twins Tucker and Ramsey are now 18 months old.

Managing family finances when you have twins

Families with twins have a tough time making their money go far enough, parents told TWINS™ in their responses to a TWINS™ poll posted several places on the TWINS™ Magazine Message Board (TMMB) (www.TwinsMagazine.com), drawing more than 100 responses.

Two of every five families (43%) "barely make ends meet month-to-month." The next largest group, 25%, said they meet normal monthly expenses, but have "cut way back" since their twins were born. One family in eight (12%) is able to "meet normal monthly expenses fairly easily, with a bit left over." The remaining two groups consisted of 10% each, and they were at opposite ends of the spectrum. One group of families told us they are "overwhelmed" and "going further into debt every month." At the other end are the families (210%) able to "meet expenses and save/invest some money each month for the future."

Watch for a series of article in TWINS™ in upcoming issues about real-life families with twins about how they are managing their money, with suggestions for improving their allocations of funds, and their savings plans, by David Powell, a financial advisor who is a father of twins. ♡

First Sniffles

Nobody could believe the twins had gone more than 10 months without colds. We'd been so careful. Everyone who held them washed their hands first. As most new moms are told by their experienced sisters and aunts, when a pacifier falls on the floor, with the first child you boil it, the second child you rinse it and the third child you blow on it. We were constantly boiling our pacifiers and bottle nipples.

Before taking the babies to their first play group, I called the friend who was hosting to find out whether any of the kids had colds.

"The other mothers are usually good about not bringing sick children, but I don't know any kids who don't have snot dripping from their nose," she said. I realized then that I couldn't shelter Adrienne and Julian from runny noses forever, and we all survived the get-together.

After that I got cocky and enrolled them in a class called Motion Commotion, which included about a dozen infants, most of whom were able to crawl on mats, bounce on a baby trampoline, climb up stairs, gnaw on Hoola-Hoops, and watch an Israeli instructor sing songs and blow bubbles. Adrienne enjoyed seeing all the feisty, mobile children and bright primary colors. She couldn't crawl yet, but enjoyed sitting on the mats and smiling at other kids.

Julian seemed unnerved by all the commotion. He loved crawling on the splintered wooden floors of our old apartment building much more than moving about on all the smooth, cushiony mats available to him during class. He preferred not to get close to any of the other babies, and maybe, with regard to contagious viruses, that worked to our advantage. Somehow, our children got through several of these classes without catching any bugs.



ILLUSTRATION BY CHUCK GALEY

Adrienne and Julian didn't catch their first colds until we left them with my parents and departed for a wedding in New York City. I don't mean to suggest any correlation between my parents' care and the kids' first viral illness; it was just a coincidence. But I know my mother felt horrible about the timing—it happened on her watch when the babies were almost 11 months old.

My mother was afraid to tell me by phone that they had any health problems, but by the time we picked them up the night we returned, it was clear. You would've thought, from our heightened level of concern and my mother's reluctance to 'fess up, that Adrienne had just contracted typhoid fever.

As any seasoned parent knows, one of the worst parts of dealing with babies' colds is that it's very difficult for them to get to sleep because they're unable to blow their noses. It's also tough getting a healthy child to sleep while the sick child is crying and sniffing all night, especially when they're in the same room. We'd started to make some sleeping-through-the-night progress when the children were nine months old, but now

we were back to hourly wake-up calls. Soon both children were red-nosed and miserable.

We spent the next several days using nasal syringes to extract mucous from their tiny noses—not what I'd call their favorite activity. We also tried using decongestants. Although the companies that make these drugs attempt to use flavorings usually kids like, you'd think we had bought the liver-and-onion-flavored batch. Adrienne and Julian wouldn't touch the stuff when we approached with droppers. Daytimes were messy and moist, nighttimes were brutal. Decongestants seemed completely

ineffective.

After about a week, their noses became crusty and they regained their energy, but Alex and I began sneezing. That tradition has continued in our household as it does in so many homes full of toddlers and infants. Tummy bugs are particularly picturesque. One day all four of us woke up vomiting. Pedialyte, Coca Cola, beef broth, and Saltines got us through that yucky week.

Our record number of pediatrician visits, so far, occurred the year the twins turned 2 and attended preschool two mornings a week. Between September and June, we logged 22 office visits, contributing generously to the college savings funds of our pediatrician's children. Come to think of it, with 10 strep-throat-related visits last year, we might now be putting his partners' children through school. But as my father, a retired internist, keeps telling me—we're building our immunities. ♥

Lauren Kafka reflects on the first year with her twins, now 7, from her home in Bethesda, Md.

The Early Birds: A Mother's Story for Our Times

By Jenny Minton (Knopf, April 2006, 255 pgs., \$23)

(Available at TWINS™ Bookshelf, www.TwinsMagazine.com)

This documentary reads like a novel, and it's a cliffhanger. The title gives a clue to the book's ending, but Jennifer Minton Quigley's talented storytelling engages the reader in her personal quest for a baby. We are quickly immersed in her mixture of hope, anxiety, and fear as she recounts what thousands of infertile couples endure when they turn to in vitro fertilization (IVF) for help conceiving.

With compassion and self-deprecating humor, Jenny (as we come to know her) shares the facts, the process, and her feelings as she and her husband, Dan, journey down the rocky path to what they—and their readers—hope will be a happy ending for their two tiny preemies.

Jenny laces details of their trips to and from infertility treatments with flashbacks to their realization that she and Dan would need help conceiving. As they searched for assistance, the couple learned that IVF elevates both the possibility of premature birth and the chances they would conceive multiples. They learned, too, that multiples all on their own, apart from the influence of IVF, have a heightened risk of prematurity. Jenny and Dan decide to take their chances and move forward.

Jenny explains quite matter-of-factly how they adjust to the ordeals involved. In a scenario that has become almost commonplace, the Quigleys are surprised, delighted and worried when their IVF results in a twin conception.

Their dizygotic (fraternal) twin sons, Sam and Gus, are born by C-section at 31 weeks in New York City. The Quigleys cross the 59th Street bridge many times a day to visit them in Neonatal Intensive Care. We witness Jenny's and Dan's struggle to make informed decisions in the unfamiliar world of medicine. In the midst of unremitting stress, sleep deprivation, and Jenny's fog of pain medication, they forge connections

with their helpless newborns. Dan paces. Jenny hovers.

When tiny Sam suffers a collapsed lung and nears death, Jenny doubts the judgments of their infertility specialists, obstetrical and pediatric personnel. She regrets how readily she and Dan have followed their advice. And she takes personal responsibility for her babies' prematurity.

Jenny avoids directly accusing her doctor of treating the pregnancy too lightly, but tells her she wishes she'd stayed in bed. The inference is clear: Jenny thinks the doctor should have put her on strict bedrest early on. The doctor replies that bedrest wouldn't have done any good. "There was nothing that could be done to prevent the premature births," she says. Still, like most mothers of preemies, Jenny wonders.

Jenny consoles herself with fleeting thoughts of hope. Perhaps in the New Year, she tells herself, the boys' entire experience in the NICU will gradually disappear, until a pale, almost imperceptible imprint is all that remains. She vents her frustrations when staff seem unresponsive.

Jenny rails that "no one will ever take responsibility" in the NICU. "No wonder everybody hates this place," she tells her friend Megan in a voice loud enough that the nurses could hear. Then she feels awful.

Jenny and Dan organize their lives around their NICU vigil. As Jenny describes her routines in the NICU, she weaves into her own story those of other NICU families who are undergoing the same ordeals, putting a human face on the varieties of suffering in that small department filled with fragile families.

As Sam's and Gus's health improves, Jenny makes a point of holding each baby for the same amount of time each day. She begins to understand their personalities.

As the boys prepare to go home on their due date, Jenny realizes that she and Dan

have begun calling the shots in the NICU for their boys. She rejoices that they already know Sam and Gus the best.

Shortly after the boys come home, Dan begins a long commute that leaves Jenny on her own much of the time, with two babies on apnea monitors. She is nervous but before long settles into a routine she describes as "a kind of non-stop meditation."

Then Dan stays away overnight. On day one, Jenny is proud of her competence. On day two, she comes down with a cold. On day three, she develops the shakes from drinking too much caffeine, and her breastmilk decreases. On day four, she hires a nanny out of desperation, ignoring Dan's pleas that she wait until he gets home so he can be part of the interview.

Fast forward. Sam and Gus are now 9 months old, and happy. Jenny celebrates the end of her three-hour daily ritual of pumping breastmilk. The boys appear to be thriving, but their prematurity still casts a shadow. Gus sits up. Sam doesn't. Jenny worries whether this delay is part of normal development.

And, like many parents of twins, she wonders if their excitement about Gus's achievements "will always be undermined by our wanting his brother to catch up, and vice versa." Is she stigmatizing Sam for life? Jenny tries to rein in her emotions. "I try to stop panicking by focusing on Sam and Gus."

Jenny's epilogue expresses relief and gratitude that the boys at 2½ are fully engaged with other children the same age, and they have a healthy baby brother, Leo. ♡

Patricia M. Malmstrom, M.A., is director of Twin Services Consulting, www.twinservices.org, and co-author of *The Art of Parenting Twins*, (Ballantine, NY, 1999). You may e-mail her at twinservices@juno.com.

GENERAL PARENTING

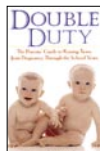
Ready or Not... Here We Come!

Elizabeth Lyons **\$16.00**
This author and mom of twins recognized that raising twins wouldn't be easy. In her multiples birthing class, she met a group of women who weathered their pregnancies together and became close friends. Lyons and her "multiple sorority" survive the hardships and humor of their first year with twins. *Paperback, 165 pages.*



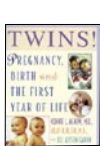
Double Duty: The parents' guide to raising twins, from pregnancy through school years

Christina Baglivi Tinglo **\$14.95**
Real-life solutions, parent-tested suggestions and expert advice on everything from pregnancy-related weight gain to whether or not to put the children in the same class in school. Each chapter has a "top 5" list of tips. *Paperback, 201 pages.*



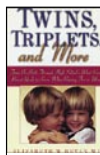
TWINS! Pregnancy, birth, and the first year of life

Connie Agnew, M.D., Alan Klein, M.D.; Jill Alison Ganon **\$13.95**
Read about physical, medical, emotional and psychological issues, with an emphasis on twin-specific issues and a month-to-month guide for the first year. *Paperback, 320 pages.*



Twins, Triplets and More

Elizabeth Bryan, M.D. **\$6.95**
Dr. Elizabeth Bryan explains the biology of twinning, multiple pregnancies, nurturing newborns, handling the first year, starting school, the adolescent years and more. *Paperback, 138 pages.*



Mothering Twins:

Advice and support from five moms who've been there and lived to tell the tale

\$14.00
Five moms of twins offer many worked-for-me solutions to myriad situations unique to caring for twins. Insightful moms speak from the heart in terms you'll understand. *Paperback, 414 pages.*



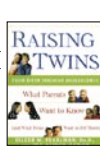
Ever Since I Had My Baby

Roger Goldberg, M.D. **\$16.00**
Pregnancy and childbirth do have lasting effects on a mother's body, particularly after the birth of multiples. A practicing surgeon, Dr. Goldberg provides candid, knowledgeable advice for mothers of newborns. Using an easy-to-read style, Dr. Goldberg reassures mothers who are feeling helpless and alone. There are solutions and treatment for many common postpartum conditions. *Paperback, 378 pages.*



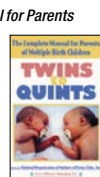
Raising Twins: What parents want to know (and what twins want to tell them)

Eileen M. Pearlman, Ph.D.; Jill Alison Ganon **\$18.95**
From a leading expert in twin development, this book blends guidance, interviews and illustrative cases about physical, emotional and cognitive development in twins, birth through adolescence. *Paperback, 267 pages.*



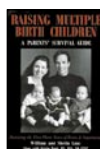
Twins to Quints: The Complete Manual for Parents of Multiple Birth Children

Rebecca E. Moskwiniski, M.D., ed. **\$18.00**
Compiled by National Organization of Mothers of Twins Clubs, edited by Education Vice President Rebecca E. Moskwiniski, M.D., packed with research, expert advice and practical "been there, done that" tips from moms of multiples. *Paperback, 298 pages.*



Raising Multiple Birth Children: A parents' survival guide

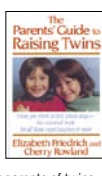
William & Sheila Laut **\$19.95**
Practical, well-thought-out guide loaded with great lists, tips from dozens of parents of multiples, plenty of "Why-didn't-I-think-of-that?", insights and loads of humor. *Hardcover, 240 pages.*



The Parents' Guide to Raising Twins:

From pre-birth to first school days—the essential book for those expecting two or more

Elizabeth Friedrich; Cherry Rowland **\$13.95**
Authors are mothers of twins, deliver a bounty of useful guidance. Readers tap into a wealth of practical tips and advice from doctors, nurses and dozens of other parents of twins. *Paperback, 304 pages.*



Keys to Parenting a Child with Attention Deficit Disorders

Barry E. McNamara, Ed.D.; Francine J. McNamara, MSW, CSW **\$7.95**
The McNamaras, TWINS Magazine advisory board members, suggest ways to work with your child's school, effectively manage behavior, provide emotional support and act as advocate for your child. *Paperback, 216 pages.*



Your Baby's First Year

Glade B. Curtis, M.D. and Judith Schuler, M.S. **\$16.00**
Full of helpful information, this book's weekly format allows the parents of newborn children to follow their development over a 52-week period. While every child is unique, the data contained in the book provides guidelines to the development of children. *Paperback, 544 pages.*



I Sleep at Red Lights

Bruce Stockler **\$13.95**
Every parent of multiples will identify with Bruce Stockler's hilarious adventures with his triplet babies. Bruce is the primary parent for his four kids, who include a slightly older singleton son. Bruce is a former stand-up comic who worked as a joke writer for Jay Leno. He is laugh-out-loud funny, and tends to see the funny and positive side to absolutely any horrific situation. As you know, with twins or triplets, there are a good many of those! *Paperback, 336 pages.*



Two at a Time

Jane Seymour; Pamela Patrick Novotny **\$14.00**
Reading this is like talking across a table over coffee with award-winning actress Seymour about pregnancy, birth, life at home. Lists, answers to common questions. *Paperback, 205 pages.*



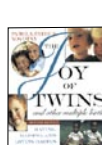
The Art of Parenting Twins

Patricia Malmstrom, M.A.; Janet Poland **\$14.00**
Pat Malmstrom, founder of Twin Services, Inc., has adult twins and holds degrees in early childhood education and special ed. Highly readable. Covers organizing your home, breastfeeding, "twinshock," developmental delays, identity issues. *Paperback, 333 pages.*



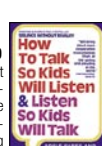
The Joy of Twins: Having, raising, and loving babies who arrive in groups

Pamela Patrick Novotny **\$16.00**
This handbook covers everything from the scientific facts to practical parent-to-parent hints about raising two babies at once. An outstanding book. Highly readable! *Paperback, 326 pages.*



How to Talk So Kids Will Listen & Listen So Kids Will Talk

Adele Faber; Elaine Mazlish **\$12.50**
Contemporary classic that every parent needs to read, about parent/child communications. Supportive, friendly, and, above all, effective. Elicits cooperation from children better than all the yelling and pleading in the world. *Paperback, 286 pages.*



Keys to Parenting Multiples

Karen Kerhoff Gromada; Mary C. Hurburt **\$7.95**
Practical help for nurturing multiples from birth through childhood. Covers breastfeeding, individuality, combined energy, toilet learning, school, development. *Paperback, 216 pages.*



Heart Two Heart: Words of Wisdom from the Real Experts: Seven Mothers of Twins on Raising Twins the First Year

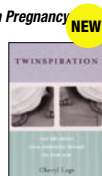
Lisa Blau, Julie Diamond Bobbitt, Shelley deMontesquiou, Nicole Davis, Stacy R. Carter, Heidi Mark, Lisa Rojany Buccieri, Connie A. Gilbert **\$21.95**



Written by seven experienced mothers of Twins, *Heart Two Heart* gives new mothers of multiples the straight talk about day-to-day life with their twins. How do you feed two infants? Where do you buy gear for twins? What changes might happen to a mother during her pregnancy and beyond? How can a family manage? These and other questions for which new moms want simple answers. *Paperback, 308 pages.*

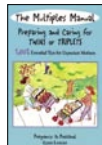
Twinspiration: Real life advice from Pregnancy Through the First Year

Cheryl Lage **\$16.95**
Mother of twins Darren and Sarah, Cheryl Lage uses humor, personal anecdotes and a friendly, conversational tone in her helpful book, *Twinspiration*. The host of the popular online twins website twinsights.com, and a contributor to *Twins™ Magazine*, Lage provides insightful, honest advice and practical information for new and expecting parents of multiples. Part guidebook and personal diary, *Twinspiration* offers parents valuable insight into a pregnancy with twins and their first year of life. Includes a "Frequently Asked Questions" section for mothers. *Paperback, 320 pages.*



The Multiples Manual: Preparing and Caring for Twins or Triplets

Lynn Lorenz **\$13.95**
Written by an identical twin who is the mother of triplets, *The Multiples Manual* is a compendium of over 1,000 indispensable tips and ideas for new parents of multiples. Covering topics ranging from crying to feeding to bathing to safety and more. Parents will find they don't need to read from cover to cover but instead can skip and jump to topics of greatest interest. With assistance and information from several parents of multiples organizations, *The Multiples Manual* entertains as well as informs. *Paperback, 270 pages.*



Discipline Without Shouting or Spanking

Jerry Wyckoff, Ph.D.; Barbara C. Unell **\$8.00**
Every parent of 1- to 5-year-olds knows children often whine, refuse to eat, throw tantrums. Unell, founder of TWINS Magazine and a parent of big twins, teamed with Wyckoff to help parents discipline children without damaging self-esteem or natural curiosity. Revised and expanded. *Paperback, 160 pages.*



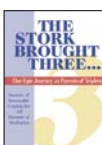
Imperfect Harmony: How to Stay Married for the Sake of Your Children and Still Be Happy

Joshua Coleman **\$23.95**
In his upbeat manner, Josh Coleman, TWINS Magazine columnist and father of twin boys, offers down-to-earth advice that really works for parents who do not want to end their marriage. He will help you tame out-of-control conflict and let go of fairy-tale ideas of marriage popular today. *Hardcover, 224 pages.*



The Stork Brought Three: Secrets of successful coping for parents of multiples

Jean P. Hall **\$12.00**
Even if you have twins instead of triplets, you'll enjoy this touching, humorous first-hand account. Inspiring tale emphasizes two essential ingredients for raising multiples—patience and a sense of humor. Learn from the practical steps this mom took to make life manageable. *Paperback, 82 pages.*



The Twinship Sourcebook 2: Toddler Twins

TWINS Magazine **\$14.95**
Everyday questions are addressed in this practical guidebook. Twins and triplets who are moving beyond their babyhood—and, oh boy, can they move!—make every day a challenge and lots of fun! Insights from experts and other parents. Topics include: biting and fighting, eating, potty training, identity, discipline, growing stages, physical development, language development, emotional development, playtime, creativity, and more. A perfect gift. *Paperback, 198 pages.*



Twice as funny ... TWINS:

A book of cartoons **\$10.95**
David Lochner
This cartoon collection is sure to tickle your ribs. A GREAT GIFT. *Paperback, 104 pages.*



The Father's Survival Guide to Raising Twins

Anthony J. Valtos **\$13.95**
The father of twin girls Chloe and Grace, Anthony Valtos is a Chicago advertising executive encouraged by his wife, a labor and delivery nurse at a Chicago hospital, to write this book for other new fathers of multiples. *Paperback, 126 pages.*



PREGNANCY/EXPECTING

Pregnancy Week-by-Week

Dr. Jane MacDougall **\$8.95**
An innovative, spiral-bound guide to the development of children during pregnancy, Dr. MacDougall provides tips and suggestions of prenatal care for expecting mothers. Week-by-week, it presents useful information on topics of concern to mothers, from nutrition to medical issues and yoga exercise. *Paperback, 96 pages.*



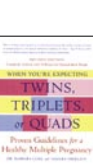
The Multiple Pregnancy Sourcebook

Nancy Bowers, RN, BSN **\$17.95**
A perinatal nurse and mother of twins writes on pregnancy, infertility technology, prenatal testing, nutrition and development, preterm labor, birth and the NICU. *Paperback, 420 pages.*



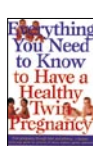
When You're Expecting Twins, Triplets, or Quads Revised Ed.

Barbara Luke, Sc.D., M.P.H., R.D. and Tamara Eberlein **\$19.95**
Newly revised and updated, Dr. Barbara Luke of the University of Miami School of Medicine and mother of twins Tamara Eberlein provide specific, empowering information for parents of multiples about health care providers, diet, activity and rest restrictions, preterm labor, and post-pregnancy feeding and care. Also included are 50 nutritious recipes for optimal birth weight of the multiple children, and numerous charts, graphs and illustrations. Appendices include helpful resources for new parents of multiples and a detailed glossary. *Paperback, 420 pages.*



Everything You Need to Know to Have a Healthy Twin Pregnancy

Gila Leiter, M.D.; Rachel Kranz **\$15.95**
Dr. Leiter is a mother of twins and an OB/Gyn herself. Offers practical information, and detailed resources when expecting twins. *Paperback, 330 pages.*



The Pregnancy Bed Rest Book: A Survival Guide for Expectant Mothers and Their Families

Amy E. Tracy **\$14.00**
Information on everything from notifying your employer and working with your health insurer to proper nutrition and calisthenics. Guide helps you adjust to horizontal living and get back on your feet. Extensive resources list. *Paperback, 229 pages.*



Having Twins And More: A parent's guide to multiple pregnancy, birth, and early childhood

Elizabeth Noble **\$18.95**
Revised third edition bursts with details about multiple pregnancy, birthing experience, postpartum, and caring for twins at home. Chapters on prenatal psychology, premature delivery, twin bonding. *Paperback, 562 pages.*



Expecting Twins, Triplets And More:

Rachel McClintock Franklin, MD **\$14.95**
Oklahoma family physician Rachel McClintock Franklin is the mother of twins born in 2001. A frequent media contributor, Dr. Franklin provides the "girlfriend's guide to twin pregnancies" in this informative and often humorous book. Includes information on nutrition and exercise and helpful reference guides. A reassuring book about twin pregnancies from someone who has been through the experience. *Paperback, 208 pages.*



TWINS Parents' Bookshelf

Your Pregnancy Packet

Twins Magazine

\$15.00

Two new practical pocket guides by Dr. Glade B. Curtis and Judith Schuler provide new mothers of multiples detailed information on specific pregnancy and postpartum concerns. First-time mothers will find these quick guides particularly interesting. *Paperbacks, 442 pages.*



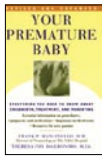
PREMATURITY

Your Premature Baby: Everything you need to know about birth, treatment, and parenting of premature infants

Frank P. Manginello, M.D.,
Theresa Foy DiGerónimo, M.Ed.

\$17.95

Guide to facing the challenging and often costly ordeal of giving birth to and caring for premature babies. Revised edition. *Paperback, 336 pages.*



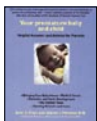
Your Premature Baby & Child

Amy E. Tracy;

Diane I. Maroney, R.N.

\$17.95

Written by experienced preemie parents and medical professionals, this book answers your questions about the NICU, homecoming, bonding, medical, developmental, school years and more. *Paperback, 327 pages.*

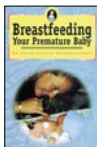


Breastfeeding Your Premature Baby

Gwen Gotsch

\$5.95

La Leche League International reinforces its message that breastfeeding is possible in seemingly impossible circumstances. *Paperback, 60 pages.*



SLEEP

The No-Cry Sleep Solution:

Gentle Ways to Help Your Baby Sleep Through the Night

Elizabeth Pantley

\$14.95

This sensible book offers a 10-step program that leads you, one day at a time, to your goal of a good night's sleep for everyone. Full of tips and suggestions, not formulas. *Paperback, 256 pages.*



Nighttime Parenting: How to Get Your Baby and Child to Sleep

William Sears, M.D.

\$9.95

Vigorous opponent of letting babies cry it out, Sears offers dozens of tips to help you get your babies (and toddlers) to sleep and stay asleep. Revised. *Paperback, 204 pages.*



Solve Your Child's Sleep Problems

Richard Ferber, M.D.

\$14.00

Does your child have difficulty falling asleep? Wake in the middle of the night? Suffer from night fears? Packed with sample problems and solution. *Paperback, 251 pages.*



Good Night, Sleep Tight

Kim West and Joanne Kenen

\$22.95

Maryland social worker Kim West is affectionately known as The Sleep Lady® to her satisfied clients. With co-author Joanne Kenen, a journalist and social worker herself, West offers easy to learn skills and techniques to help children sleep and stay asleep for longer periods. Sleepless parents of twins will find this book indispensable. *Hardcover, 384 pages.*



The No-Cry Sleep Solution for Toddlers and Preschoolers: Gentle Ways to Stop Bedtime Battles and Improve Your Child's Sleep

Elizabeth Pantley

\$15.95

Targeted especially for parents of children age 1 to 6, parenting expert Elizabeth Pantley provides positive approaches to help children go to bed and sleep soundly through the night. Without resorting to negative punishments to encourage children to sleep, this child-friendly book provides effective, loving solutions to common problems ranging from evening melt-downs, nightmares, night walking, and nighttime visits to a parent's bed. *Paperback, 400 pages.*



Facing the loss of a multiple

Coming to Term: A Father's Story of Birth, Loss and Survival

William H. Woodwell Jr.

\$25.00

By sharing the very early birth of twin daughters, Woodwell looks at the heartache and miracles of NICU, the death of a twin, and survival. *Hardcover, 216 pages*



A Different Kind of Mother Surviving the Loss of My Twins

Christine Howser

\$13.95

Howser lost both of her twin boys shortly after their birth and offers a story of love, loss and the choices that made healing possible. *Paperback, 120 pages.*



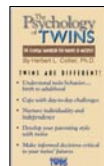
TWIN PSYCHOLOGY

The Psychology of Twins: A practical handbook for parents of multiples.

Herbert L. Collier, Ph.D.

\$13.95

Twins differ from singletons and, just as importantly, from each other, whether monozygotic (identical) or dizygotic (fraternal). Dr. Collier, a psychologist and father of twins, draws experience from rearing his twins who are now well-adjusted adults and also from counseling hundreds of families with multiples. Offers compassionate wisdom seasoned with patience. Practical and down-to-earth, a must-have book for parents who want to understand and value each child as an individual. *Paperback, 120 pages.*



Ask about Club Discounts!

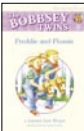
TWINS Children's Bookshelf

The Bobbsey Twins: Freddie and Flossie

by Laura Lee Hope

\$3.99

The Bobbsey Twins have long entertained children with their wide-ranging adventures. There's now a new line of early reader books for young children featuring twins Freddie and Flossie. Though they look alike, Freddie and Flossie are similar, but are also different; one is loud, one is not. Freddie likes to play fireman, Flossie likes to play store. *Paperback, 32 pages.*

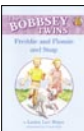


The Bobbsey Twins: Freddie and Flossie and Snap

by Laura Lee Hope

\$3.99

The Bobbsey Twins have long entertained children with their wide-ranging adventures. There's now a new line of early reader books for young children featuring twins Freddie and Flossie, who have a dog named Snap. The three like to play catch, until Snap decides to play chase. *Paperback, 32 pages.*

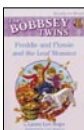


The Bobbsey Twins: Freddie and Flossie and the Leaf Monster

by Laura Lee Hope

\$3.99

The Bobbsey Twins have long entertained children with their wide-ranging adventures. There's now a new line of early reader books for young children featuring twins Freddie and Flossie. While raking leaves one fine autumn day, Freddie and Flossie notice that their huge pile of leaves is shaking! Looking closely, they see eyes and a tail. Is it a monster? *Paperback, 32 pages.*

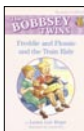


The Bobbsey Twins: Freddie and Flossie and the Train Ride

by Laura Lee Hope

\$3.99

The Bobbsey Twins have long entertained children with their wide-ranging adventures. There's now a new line of early reader books for young children featuring twins Freddie and Flossie. While taking the train to Grandma's house, Freddie lets their kitten Snoop out of his box. Where's Snoop? Let the fun begin! *Paperback, 32 pages.*



Indivisible by Two

Nancy L. Segal, PhD

\$24.95

A fraternal twin herself, Dr. Nancy Segal is a professor of Psychology at California State University. The author of *Entwined Lives: Twins and What They Tell Us About Human Behavior*, Dr. Segal brings us the stories of the lives of twelve sets of multiples. *Hardcover, 280 pages.*



Twin Stories: Their Mysterious and Unique Bond

Susan Kohl

\$13.95

A mother of twin boys talks to twins of all ages and writes with insight, warmth and humor, what it's actually like to be a twin. These stories provide a fresh look into twinning. *Paperback, 188 pages.*

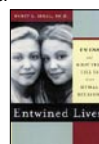


Entwined Lives: Twins and What They Tell Us About Human Behavior

Nancy L. Segal, Ph.D.

\$18.50

Leading twin researcher and fraternal twin, Segal sheds light on nature vs. nurture debate, shows how twins hold the keys to understanding physical and intellectual capabilities. Excellent resource for parents of twins. *Paperback, 396 pages.*

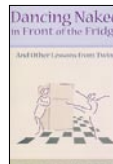


Dancing Naked in Front of the Fridge... And Other Lessons from Twins

Nancy J. Sipes, Ph.D.

\$16.95

The title of this book refers to twinning being like a dance in front of a mirror—each twin constantly reflects the other. These marvelously accomplished identical twins take a look inside their twinning, and help a reader take a fresh look at their own personal relationships. Gain new and valuable insights into your twins and yourself. *Paperback, 244 pages.*



TWIN PHOTO COLLECTIONS

Twins

Mary Ellen Mark

\$35.00

Mark is one of America's leading portrait photographers. Her work has been in *New Yorker*, *Rolling Stone*, *Vanity Fair*, *Vogue* and *Life*. She attended the popular "Twins Days" festival in Twinsburg, Ohio, for 2 years photographing twins with her large-format camera, producing this amazing book of 80 stunning images that depict the bond between twins and captures their unique individuality. *Hardcover, 96 pages.*



Little Thoughts of Love

by Anne Geddes

\$19.95

Anne Geddes captures the magic of twins, triplets and singleton babies sleeping in the petals of roses, popping out of tuliped, nestled among feathers and cradled in a father's hands. Beautiful photography and inspiring quotes fill this gorgeous keepsake. *Hardcover, 110 pages.*



My Personal Story in ABCs

\$11.95

Your child will learn the letters A to Z with pictures and words. There are more than 20 places for you to fill in personalized information about your child. Illustrated by Jerianne Van Dijk, the same artist for our popular *TWINS Lifetime Memory Book*. *Paperback, 32 pages.*



A Very Special Twin Story

\$11.95

Your child will be delighted with the chance to play the major role in telling his or her own personal story. Illustrated by artist Jenny Campbell, this book allows your child to include important information about their lives. *Paperback, 32 pages.*



The Bobbsey Twins: Freddie and Flossie at the Beach

by Laura Lee Hope

\$3.99

The Bobbsey Twins have long entertained children with their wide-ranging adventures. There's now a new line of early reader books for young children featuring twins Freddie and Flossie. One day, they have fun at the beach with their dog Snap, splashing in the water, building sandcastles and playing tag. *Paperback, 32 pages.*



Buddies A Story About Twins

by Michelle Donaldson,

illustrations by Robert Peltz

\$5.95

Brother and sister buddies discover how differences can create a special bond for twins. For ages 2-5. *Paperback, 16 pages.*



Grandpa's Twins

by Vanessa Welsh,

illustrations by Mary Peterson

\$5.95

Grandpa shows his twin grandsons a farm that is full of animals that come in pairs too! Ages 2-5. *Paperback, 16 pages.*



The Twin Team

by Sandi S. McLaughlin, illustrations

by Jerianne VanDijk

\$5.95

The boys of the Twin Team fight together to battle bedtime fears. Ages 2-5. *Paperback, 16 pages.*



Sketches From a Spy Tree

by Tracie Vaughn Zimmer,

illustrated by Andrew Glass

\$16.00

Anne Marie is an artist. Hiding in the branches of Jamie Hamlin's maple tree, she draws pictures of people, places and things on her street and in her neighborhood. She also writes her story as a series of linked poems providing details about herself and her family, including twin sister Mary Anne. Author Tracie Vaughn Zimmer is a twin, as is illustrator Andrew Glass. Together, they provide a vivid portrait of a year in the life of a twin. Ages 8-12. *Hardcover, 64 pages.*

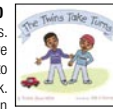


The Twins Take Turns

by Nickole Shyne-White

\$16.00

Dennis and Derek are twin brothers. Though they look alike, they have different interests. Dennis likes to draw, while Derek likes to talk. Sometimes, these interests can lead to conflict over who gets to spend more time with their mother. Mommy has a solution to their problem, however—they should take turns as she has plenty of time and love for each. For ages 2 to 4. *Paperback, 32 pages.*



TWINS!

by Elaine Scott, photographs

by Margaret Miller

\$17.95

A warm and colorful look at the lives of some young twins. The large photos and simple text show multiples —infants through preschool-age children—enjoying their special relationships with each other, siblings and parents. For ages 2 to 5. *Hardcover, 40 pages.*



Two Times the Fun

by Beverly Cleary, illustrations
by Carol Thompson **\$11.99**

Award-winning author and mother of twins Beverly Cleary, and her delightfully entertaining stories featuring four-year-old twins Janet and Jimmy. Janet and Jimmy don't always act alike or even like the same things. Janet likes to use her imagination in playing, while Jimmy is more practical and enjoys digging holes. Janet has a collection of "thingamajigs" but they each have a dog biscuit to give to neighborhood dogs. For ages 4 to 8 or for reading to younger children. *Hardcover, 96 pages.*



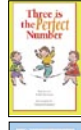
The Twins & the Birthday Party

Marcia Murphy **\$5.95**
Lucy is invited to a party, but her twin isn't. Boo hoo. Then he has a special day alone with Mom. *Paperback, 16 pages.*



Three is the Perfect Number

Kimberly Carey **\$5.95**
Triplets jump rope, play restaurant, sneak cookies and give parents a big bear hug. Stimulates imagination, self-directed play. *Paperback, 16 pages.*



One Baby, Two Baby, Three Baby, Four

Christi Rober **\$5.95**
All multiples will giggle when they see quads crawling, visiting a zoo, crying, taking a bath and, finally, falling asleep. *Paperback, 16 pages.*



Always Zany ABCs for Twins

Dawn Mitchell **\$5.95**
Romps through the alphabet with playful rhymes. Great for teaching twins the ABCs. *Paperback, 16 pages.*



Twinship is in Your Heart

Stacy Dye **\$5.95**
On a day at the park, mom poses a riddle: Can twins find other twins? Dispels twin stereotypes and teaches individuality. *Paperback, 16 pages.*



Kevin and Ben

Gail S. Coleman **\$5.95**
Identical twins see differences emerge as they get older... yet feel so lucky to have a twin. *Paperback, 16 pages.*



Family Reunion

Lynn Burgess **\$5.95**
Twins dislike having their heads patted by relatives who can't tell them apart and who always ask who is older, who is smarter. Story helps twins learn to handle adult silliness. *Paperback, 16 pages.*



My, You Have Your Hands Full!

Amber Lappin **\$5.95**
Simple rhymes tell how full life is with multiples, and what is most full is Mommy's heart. *Paperback, 16 pages.*



It Takes Two

Tammie Blackburn **\$5.95**
Twins complement each other: One draws pictures, the other writes words, but to get the whole job done, it takes two. *Paperback, 16 pages.*



The Little Green House

Beth Covino **\$5.95**
Twins introduce "our two beds, two blankets, two pillows for resting our heads." But some things differ... one likes to read, the other loves music. *Paperback, 16 pages.*



Where Are the Twins?

Maegann M. Struble **\$5.95**
The twins are playing hide-and-seek. Daddy and Mommy find their older sister, the dog, the bird and the cat, but where are the twins? *Paperback, 16 pages.*



His Sister, Her Brother

Wendy Black Mancarella **\$5.95**
Boy/girl twins have dissimilar personalities, like different foods and activities, but figure out how much they love each other. *Paperback, 16 pages.*



Imagination Collaboration

Doris Goldstein **\$5.95**
Twins turn the couch into an airplane and imagine forks and spoons having a party. *Paperback, 16 pages.*



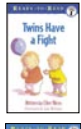
Twins Go to Bed

Ellen Weiss **\$3.99**
Twins get ready for bedtime by brushing their teeth, getting into their pajamas and settling down for the evening. Illustrated by Sam Williams. *Paperback, 24 pages.*



Twins Have a Fight

Ellen Weiss **\$3.99**
There are new toys for the twins, but both want to play with the same one! British illustrator Sam Williams helps bring this story to life. *Paperback, 24 pages.*



Twins in the Park

Ellen Weiss **\$3.99**
Story of twins on an afternoon trip to the city park. Charming images by British illustrator Sam Williams, story tells of fun, games and discoveries. *Paperback, 24 pages.*



Twins Take a Bath

Ellen Weiss **\$3.99**
Kids splash and splash, get clean and ready for bed. Features images by British illustrator Sam Williams. *Paperback, 24 pages.*



T is for Twins: An ABC Book

Mary Bond **\$15.95**
Rhyming book pairs each letter with a photograph of twins or triplets engaged in activities from tree climbing to napping. Space to insert own photo on last page. *Hardcover, 32 pages.*



Twin to Twin

Margaret O'Hair **\$15.95**
Rhymes and playful illustrations depict an exciting day with rambunctious twins, who play and learn to walk. *Hardcover, 36 pages.*



Twice as Nice: What It's Like to Be a Twin

Nicole Rubel **\$16.50**
What's it like to be a twin? Nicole knows because she is a twin. A potpourri of facts, witty little riddles and history, the book will appeal to all families with multiples. *Hardcover, 32 pages.*



Jan and Ann are Twins

Barbara Sherwood **\$5.95**
Look-alike twins switch places. Mom takes Jan to Ann's favorite place, and Dad takes Ann to Jan's favorite. Oops! *Paperback, 20 pages.*



Jan and Ann and the Pet Rabbit

Barbara Sherwood **\$5.95**
Dad gives Jan and Ann sprinkling cans to water the garden, but they give Fluffy, the pet rabbit, a shower instead. *Paperback, 20 pages.*



Never Mind! A Twin Novel

Avi and Rachel Vail **\$15.99**
An entertaining novel about twins Meg and Edward, Meg and Edward clearly don't see eye to eye. In fact they are as different as night and day, polar opposites who constantly rub each other the wrong way. An easy novel for twins in the third grade or older...children of this age will identify with the characters and the situations. *Paperback, 208 pages.*



Twin Tales

Donna Jackson **\$10.95**
Including both scientific research and interesting personal stories, this well-illustrated energetic discussion of twins will appeal to inquisitive younger readers. Donna Jackson's book explores twins and their similarities, as well as their differences. *Hardcover, 48 pages.*



My Twin My Friend

Lynne Crump **\$16.95**
The joy of being a twin is explored in this entertaining, rhyming story. Twins have a special friend who is both alike and different in their own way. Together they make a great pair. *Hardcover, 32 pages.*



Boing! No Bouncing on the Bed

Jane Seymour, James Keach **\$12.99**
Big Jim Cat becomes agitated when twins bounce on the bed, the chairs, the sofa, the bed again. *Hardcover, 30 pages.*



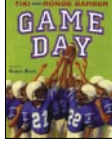
By My Brother's Side

Tiki and Ronde Barber **\$16.95**
One summer day, while riding bikes in a special secret place, one brother falls and badly hurts his knee. Although the doctor warns he may never play sports again, the support and comfort from his twin brother and his mother helps him recover from his accident in time for the first football game of the fall. *Hardcover, 32 pages.*



Game Day

Tiki and Ronde Barber **\$16.95**
Twins Tiki and Ronde play together on their Pee Wee League team. Ronde blocks, and Tiki runs for the big scores. Coach Mike introduces a special game for the brothers to use in their big game against the toughest team in their league. *Hardcover, 32 pages.*



Splat! The Tale of a Colorful Cat

Jane Seymour, James Keach **\$5.99**
Big Jim gives twins permission to paint him while he naps, if they don't get paint on themselves or the floor. And that's what they do—paint dad! *Paperback, 30 pages.*



Yum! The Tale of Two Cookies

Jane Seymour, James Keach **\$12.99**
Twins can't resist the smells coming from a basket of cookies mom has made for their hungry dad, whose fishing isn't going well. Everyone's in for a surprise! *Hardcover, 30 pages.*



I Love You the Purplest

Barbara M. Joosse **\$15.95**
"Who do you love the best?" asks one of mama's children "I love you the reddest," she answers. "I love you the bluest," she says to another. Story about the unique love a mother has for each of her children. Perfect for parents with twins! *Hardcover, 24 pages.*



Just Like Me

Barbara J. Neasi **\$4.95**
Simple story written by a mother of twins, describes how twins are alike and yet different. Vocabulary list helps children learn new words. *Paperback, 32 pages.*



Twinnies

Eve Bunting **\$6.00**
Older sister says life with "twinnie's" isn't always easy. Sometimes the older child is ignored and frustrated, but being a big sister has its special rewards. *Paperback, 30 pages.*



A Day of Fun

The Editors of Twins Magazine **\$5.95**
This darling book is full of color photographs of multiple children enjoying the day, from the time they awaken until bedtime. Their big smiles remind us of the special ways twins share with each other. Easy-to-read text accompanies the photos. *Paperbound, 16 pages.*



The Great Pony Hassle

Nancy Springer **\$2.50**
Two sets of very different 10-year-old twin girls come together when their parents marry. All four girls love ponies, but only one girl gets a pony. This wonderful tale teaches lessons of sharing, individuality and acceptance. For ages 8 and up. *Paperback, 76 pages.*



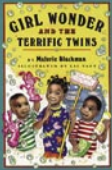
Donny, David & Darren

Virginia Totonica Aldape **\$6.00**
This imaginative and engaging book about identical triplets is illustrated with color photographs of three darling mischief makers in all kinds of neat settings. It's about the fun and occasional frustrations of being a part of a set of multiples. For multiple children ages 3 and up. *Paperback, 76 pages.*



Girl Wonder and the Terrific Twins

Malorie Blackman **\$7.50**
Being a superhero isn't easy. Just ask Maxine. But when the police in the neighborhood need help, Girl Wonder and her twin brothers are there to lend a hand. They find loads of trouble...and lots of laughter. For ages 9 to 13. *Paperback, 72 pages.*



It's not over 'til it's over!

I was told that I would not be able to have any more children because I was in serious need of a hysterectomy at the age of 25. This was very upsetting to us, to say the least. My husband and I had three children but wanted one more. So we adopted a little girl a year later.

In October, 2003, the doctor said I needed the Hysterectomy soon, and he gave me a few months to physically prepare myself. Surgery was scheduled for December. Shortly before the day of surgery, I went to have the necessary blood work done, and to my surprise I was told, "Sorry, I can't perform the surgery. You're pregnant!"

Shock doesn't begin to describe the feelings that came over me. They were magnified the next month when I went for my first OB checkup. My OB/Gyn said that perhaps that my dates were wrong, because I was much larger than a 5-week pregnancy would indicate I should be.

I was scheduled for a sonogram, which took place at nine weeks. The tech was very quiet. For some unknown reason I asked, "There's only one, right?"

She replied, "Why? Were you expecting more than one?"

I answered emphatically, "NO!"

She muttered, "Well, actually...."

And that's when I began to cry uncon-

trollably. Or was it laughter?? Or maybe denial!

The car ride home was the quietest ever. My husband did not speak a single word for three days. I'm not really sure what got his tongue. I would try to bring up the new subject and all that came out of him was noises like "Ahh, ahh...." Or "Yaw, uuaaa." I think he was in shock.

As the months passed, we learned we were expecting twin boys. The doctor said they shared the same sac and he was going to monitor me very carefully. At five months I began my bed rest, and took it easy. I had gestational diabetes and became insulin-dependent. Nobody ever told me I was going to be so big that I would not be able to walk. My church family took turns bringing dinner to us, because I could barely stand.

My husband works nights so he wasn't there to take care of the kids. I had four children running wild in the house. YIKES!

At 36 weeks, I was 54 inches from top to bottom of my belly. I begged the doctor to please deliver these babies. He agreed. C-section was my only option, unless I wanted to wait for labor. No way!

At 36 weeks on Aug. 13, 2004, I delivered identical twin boys who were holding hands for dear life. Weighing in at 6.5 lbs. and 6.6 lbs, Joshua and Josiah were each 20 inches long.

When you're told that you can't, will never, no way, no how, have babies, just remember that it isn't over until God says its over!

Our boys appear to be mirror-image twins. One uses his left hand, the other his right. Their hair parts differently—one on the right, the other's on the left. One twin's dimples are on the right; the other's on the left. I'm not sure how this happens

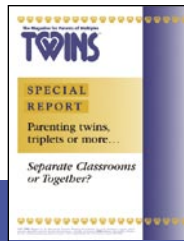


Sam Ansah and his wife, Esther Tetteh, New York City, had healthy quadruplets (two boys and two girls) Jan. 13 in NY Presbyterian Hospital. Esther carried more than 11 pounds of babies inside her. Born at 31 weeks, Samuel and Nora

each weighed 2lbs. 9 oz. at birth; Simon and Naomi were 3 pounds each. All are fraternal (DZ) twins and these are Sam and Esther's first children. Sam says they're "a lot of work and I can't wait to see them sleep through the night."

special reports

Published by TWINS™ Magazine



Dara Readus, Fishers, Ind., was given copies of TWINS™ Magazine as a gift after she learned she was having twins. Now she's subscribing. Her daughters, Katrell and Kindell, are Special Miracles, indeed. Born at 28 weeks, Katrell (left) was only 1 lb. 10 oz. and Kindell was 2 lbs. 13 oz. Now 15 weeks old in the picture above, each weighs about 8.5 lbs. The girls (and Mom!) spent their first two months in the NICU, where the medical staff and especially the nurses worked unceasingly to help the K2^s grow up to be vibrant, healthy infants.

but I do know that at 20 weeks, their amniotic sacs finally split. The doctor could not explain why or how they did that so late.

My miracle babies are now almost 16 months old. Boy oh boy, we are busy! I have changed our family greeting to "The Montez litter."

We went from three children to six in a matter of a year. May God bless all of you who have twins. Because he surely has blessed us in every way possible. Just ask him for strength and it's yours.

Thank you, TWINS™ Magazine, for all the stories and laughter. ♥

Shelley manages the chaos in Riverbank, Cal.

Feeding Multiple Babies —The simple questions—whether to breastfeed or bottle feed, weaning, handling colic, and many more—become more complicated when you have two or more babies. Full of useful insights from mothers who have been there! *40 pages.*

Tips and Tools for New Parents of Twins and Triplets —When "twinshock" hits new parents, it hits hard. This report is a blessing for new parents of twins. It provides practical, encouraging advice about coping with day-to-day challenges in the midst of chaos and sleeplessness. *52 pages.*

Health & Safety for Infant Multiples —From choosing a pediatrician to childproofing for twins, to dealing with ear infections and diaper rash, all parents of multiples need simple, essential advice. *40 pages.*

Premature Twins and Triplets —Helps overwhelmed parents deal with big and little traumas they face as their small, prematurely born multiples enter life with extra health problems. *44 pages.*

NICU —Helps parents deal with their fears of the hospital NICU, challenges of nurturing their preemies, and bringing their tiny babies home. *54 pages.*

Higher Order Multiples —For parents of triplets and quadruplets who face the same concerns of parents of twins—only multiplied. Topics include sleeping, feeding, bathing, dressing, car seats, school, relationships among multiples, and growing up as multiples. *88 pages.*

Multiples 7 to 12: The Middle Years —Twins really grow up quickly. Report sheds light on parenting challenges during the twins' elementary school years—competition, discipline, sexuality, safety, self-confidence, identity and more. *85 pages.*

Multiples During the Adolescent Years —Parenting teen twins is confusing and stressful, times two. Straightforward advice on multiples' adolescent development during raging hormone periods, behavior, health and education, and typical parenting woes. *87 pages.*

Discipline Without Raising Your Voice —Dealing with twins is doubly tricky. Report on discipline and behavioral issues will enhance your parental coping skills, ease tensions and help you through difficult times. Your children will benefit enormously. *54 pages.*

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A Guide for Parents Who Want Their Twins to Share a Classroom —Report helps you persuade school officials to allow your twins to remain in the same classroom. Gives crucial information to parents, also provides educators' perspectives. *25 pages.*

Separate Classrooms or Together? —Multiples face unique schooling challenges and questions. To separate or not? What to do when one succeeds, the other doesn't? Report helps light the way down the difficult educational path. *58 pages.*

Preschool and Kindergarten – A Guide For Parents of Twins —Preschool and kindergarten are exciting times in the lives of young multiple children, and for their parents, too. From gathering supplies for school, to coaxing nervous twins out of the car on their very first day, to supporting the growth of children as they learn and increase their knowledge, this collection of articles by parenting experts can help all parents of school-age twins. Read how twins learn in school and how parents can help teachers and other students identify each twin. *36 pages.*

Getting Ready: When You're Expecting Twins —NEW! This report covers everything from understanding twin zygosity to fostering a healthy pregnancy to a primer on the NICU to synchronizing schedules and hiring a nanny or parttime helper. This report offers solid advice and knowledgeable information that new parents of multiple children absolutely need to know. The report also provides help for everything from bed rest, and expecting the unexpected, to critical concerns for preemie babies to the stress a family may experience when twins arrive. *72 pages.*

Immigrant: Russia leaves twins together, while U.S. forces them apart

Inna Fershteyn had significant problems keeping her 5½-year-old twins Ari and Peri Ayzidor together in school. "It took letters from our pediatrician and psychologists to have my twins in the same classroom this year. School district rules mandated separation of twins from kindergarten onward," she said, complaining that "these rules are not grounded in any clinical or medical evidence at all."

No one other than parents of twins seems to have recognized how harmful separating twins is, Fershteyn, a Brooklyn, NY, lawyer who emigrated from Russia, told TWINS™ Magazine. "I was outraged when I first found out that it's not up to me for my kids to be together. Total strangers who don't even know my kids are making a decision because of stupid rules. I put together a seven-page letter citing different studies and had it signed by our pediatrician. It took a lot of pushing to get my children into the same classroom. I don't want to go through this again next year."

This is what motivated Fershteyn to join forces with Kathy Dolan in her campaign to get a bill introduced in New York that gives parents of twins a voice, and requires a flexible school policy. (See In the News, pages 16-17)

Worried about the future

"I am worried about future years," Fershteyn said. "For my children, being apart was not an option. Not only did they need each other for support, they were being separated from their parents for the first time. Moreover, they were just learning to speak English (they are bilingual Russian/English). In Russia, separating twins was unheard of. If one twin was not able to serve in the Russian army, the other one was automatically excluded. And that's Russia, where literally everyone is drafted into the army!"

Fershteyn does a weekly radio talk show in NYC and she told TWINS™ her phones were swamped after she discussed the problem of forced separation of twins in school, and the legislative push. "Everyone is calling regarding the twins issue! My phone lines at work are clogged. I already learned that three families of twins, all working at the radio station, even had to go all the way up to Mayor (Michael) Bloomberg to have



Inna with her twins, Ari (l.) and Peri (r.) and their sister, Gabriella.

their kids in the same classroom. Guess what? They were still separated."

Inna Fershteyn's website is www.advanced-legal.com. She can be contacted at (718)333-2394 or innafershteyn@advanced-legal.com

A lot of frustrated parents—their stories

During March, Kathy Dolan began asking for specific "stories" from parents who had encountered resistance from schools. What she (and we) learned is there are a lot of angry parents out there who are frustrated and annoyed at the intransigence and arrogance of the school districts and individual principals.

For example:

I was allowed to keep my twins together in kindergarten only because one twin was not able to make it to school. She was having chemo for Hodgkin's lymphoma. I fought (with the school) and with the (help of the) hospital social worker was able to keep them together in first grade. Second grade again was a battle, but they allowed the twins to be together. Then in third grade they refused and made them separate. School policy is that multiples are separated, that is IT! One of the twins is medically fragile and the separation hurt her horribly. So now as we get to the end of third I am fighting to put them back together. I have the NY Times article on my side as well as the fact that the separation has hurt (and) not helped the girls, both educationally and socially.

Heather, Mom of Sarina (Hodgkin's survivor, CP, spina bifida occulta, scoliosis, ASD, Reynaud's) & Elizabeth

My fraternal twin daughters are now in third grade. I knew while they were still toddlers I wanted them to be together in

Kathy Dolan lives in Bayside, N.Y., located in Queens, about 12 miles from Manhattan. She is a registered nurse, a musician, a songwriter, and a performer on stage most weekends. She has 7-year-old twin boys, Ryan and Nicholas, and also takes care of her aging mother who has Alzheimer's. Ryan and Nicholas are together this year in school, separated on different sides on the same classroom. Nicholas was recently voted Student of the Month by his teacher.

Kathy and her husband Victor Caracciola write music together—blues, country, rock, dance and heavy metal. (Free download of their 9/11 song at <http://www.onesetoffootprints.com>) Kathy plays the accordion, tin whistle, mandolin, violin, guitar, keyboards, bass and...

We asked her: Does she ever sleep? She yawned and said, "Yes, but I could use a nap!" And does she still work as an RN? "No, but I run a hospital full-time in my home!" Yes, she has a sense of humor.

If you have ideas for how to advance her legislative effort in any state, or at the federal level, contact Kathy at kathydolan@nyc.rr.com.

kindergarten. Before I went into this fight I did a lot of research, but what it came down to was knowing my girls and what I knew deep down was right for them. My girls are very independent and very much individuals. They are polar opposites. Their preschool teacher once said (out of earshot of them) that together they made one person—meaning one was left-brain and one was right. They never clung to each other and have always thought for themselves. In fact, in mommy-and-me classes they didn't even choose to sit together. The reason I wanted them together for kindergarten was that I felt it was a big change. They were in preschool five mornings a week for two years with the same adults and (mostly) the same dozen kids. I felt you couldn't now put them in a class with new adults and twice the number of kids (all new) for a full day and separate them from each other.

One of the girls doesn't like change and I think the adjustment would have been very

rough. I started the fight the April before kindergarten. In our school district the decision is made by the principal of each school. But you get the line that it is policy. Many parents don't realize this is unwritten and take "No" for an answer and so their kids are separated. I gave the principal a pile of research supporting all sides of the issue, but he wouldn't budge. We went back and forth for three months. I wanted a trial period of (having) them together but he wanted (the trial period) to be with (them in) separate (classrooms).

Finally we came to an agreement. We have a program called Kindergarten Prep, which I had signed my girls up for. It is held five mornings in each school in August and is staffed by kindergarten teachers. It gives kids a chance to become used to the school and teachers. The main teacher was one that one of my girls was assigned (to) and if they were together the other would be moved into that class. (The principal) reluctantly agreed to use this as the test period. If the teacher could find no reason they had to be separated then he would leave them together. I knew I was home free; I knew my girls well enough to know they could find no reason they needed to be separated. The only thing the teacher could say was that if one was upset the other would comfort her. They were together in kindergarten and the year went well.

When we did separate them in first it was a tough adjustment for the one who doesn't like change but she was okay after a few weeks. If we had forced the separation the year before, the adjustment would have been much harder on her. It made me feel even stronger that I made the right decision and the fight was worth it. Four years later I still resent the fact that I had to fight so hard for something that I should have had a major say in. I feel really strongly that no one knows my child like her parents. Certainly not school personnel who in most cases have never even met the child.

Cindy

I have 6-year-old triplet boys who are currently being educated in the same kindergarten class. All three boys have their own strengths and weaknesses. The school was very hesitant to educate them together in the same classroom. Their excuse was that they would be treated more as individuals if they were separated. I explained to them that having (the boys) educated in the same classroom would force people to actually recognize them as three different individuals because they would have to

get to know (each one).

School officials also feared that teachers may compare them. My response to that is they might as well get used to it because people are always going to compare them; that is part of being a multiple. I also explained to them that forcing their separation was discriminatory because they were prejudging them before actually working with them.

I agreed that if having them in the same classroom was disruptive for any reason, I would agree to separate them. The boys have been extremely successful. Each boy has his own "best" friend. The teacher recognizes each one's strengths and weaknesses (I must admit their strengths outweigh their weaknesses). They are independent of one another. Most importantly, when I made this decision, I asked each one of them if they wanted to be together or separated. All three wanted to be together.

I am a high school teacher. I have observed older multiple siblings. There is a special bond and love for each other in 99% of the cases. There is comfort in knowing the other is around or near, even if there is no face-to-face communication. How can one who is not a multiple even begin to judge the socialization and educational process of multiples? The decision should be made by multiples themselves, not the educational system.

Sherri

Calling all moms

...who fought **un**successfully with school officials or district officials to keep their twins or triplets together in the same classroom. If and when a class action lawsuit is filed alleging discrimination against twins in school, Kathy Dolan and the lawyers are going to need as many real-life stories of families as possible who fought the battles for "twins together" and LOST. **Send detailed accounts to twins.editor@businessword.com**. All stories will be forwarded to the proper address. Include your family's full names, address, twins' names and ages (at the time, and now), and the details of your experience(s). Act quickly, please. Spread the word among members of your twins clubs and any to parents of multiples you know whose kids are now older and who suffered because of forced separation in school.



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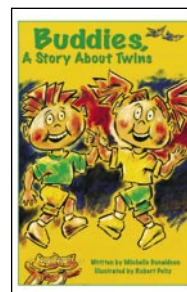
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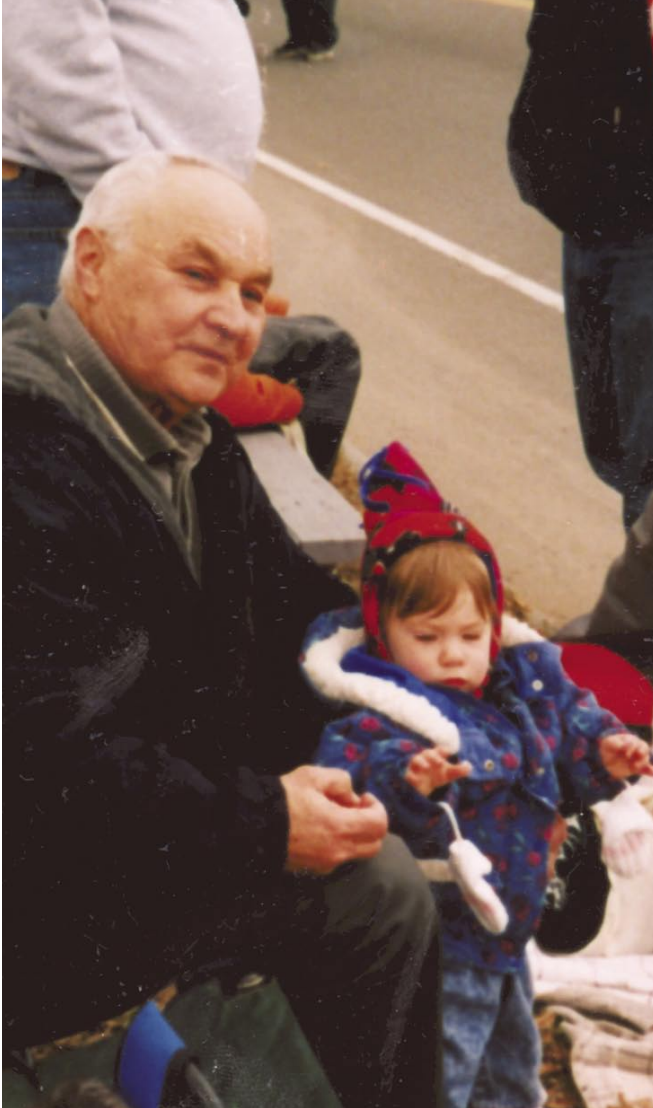


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Uncle John and Gina at a parade.

Senior support solutions

By Camille St. Onge Magin

You never know until you get your twins home from the hospital how busy you're going to be. It is overwhelming to try to love and attend to twins while sleep-deprived.

I recalled wanting to hold and cuddle my single-born child five and a half years before having our twins. That one-on-one time was so special.

I held and cherished each twin while nursing them, but it was such a challenge to hold either one gently while trying to bustle around the house, if there wasn't someone else there to help. And if I held one baby, I felt guilty that the other was alone in a car carrier.

I crashed and burned four weeks into our babies' lives. I needed help, and fast! I've always been independent and believe I could handle any problem that came my way. But after I got home with the twins, that belief turned to dust. I swallowed my pride and decided to find help, but we couldn't afford to hire the help I really needed. What to do?

I had no mothers to turn to—my and my husband's mothers were deceased. My sister gave up her life and stayed with us for two weeks, and that was so helpful. She helped figure out how to

get the babies to sleep in their cribs instead of the car seats, how to feed them at night, who got which bottle, and other details we couldn't begin to fathom in our exhausted state.

When she flew home I wanted to go with her—I considered taking the babies and my then 5-year-old daughter to live with her for a month or two. But could I deprive my husband of our company for that long? No, I decided that wasn't the answer.

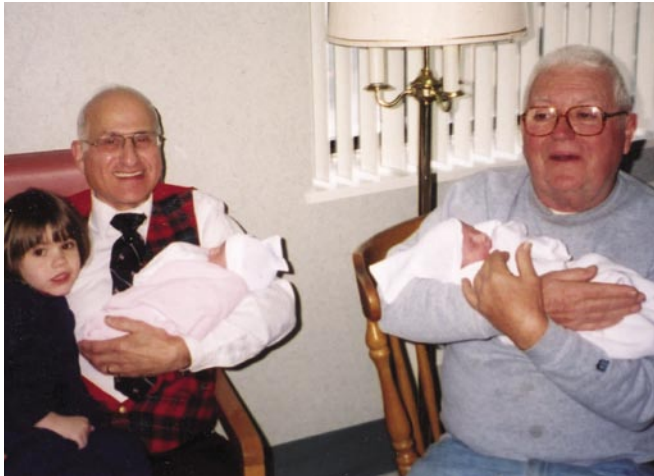
Suddenly, the light bulbs in my brain blinked. I had a resource I'd never thought of using. My father and my husband's father were alive and well, lived nearby, were retired from their jobs, and had offered to help. So I sought help from a place society doesn't always acknowledge.

While I was pregnant, my father and father-in-law had jumped at the chance to attend a Grandparent's Class offered at our local hospital. They were the only grandparents who showed up!

My support network for the five days a week that my husband was at work turned out to be three men over 70—my father, my father-in-law and my uncle. Each one relished his role as caregiver. These fellows hadn't had the chance to be primary parents when their own children were young. They were busy working. Now, at last, they had a chance to cuddle and love these infants without the pressures of going to work, sleep deprivation and society's scorn for men who did too much taking care of babies.

My Senior Support Network was phenomenal. I had an extra pair of hands throughout each day. Both babies had a chance to

Moms of twins should ask their older relatives, or ask at church, or approach local senior citizen centers and ask if there are people who could help out a day or two a week, either on a volunteer or paid basis.



(l to r) Big sister Amber is in Grandpa David's lap. He is holding Gina and Grampa Red is holding Joey.

be held and cuddled and talked to at the same time. I was relieved, and began to relax because I knew my babies were getting the attention they needed. I was able to get some sleep even if one baby remained awake.

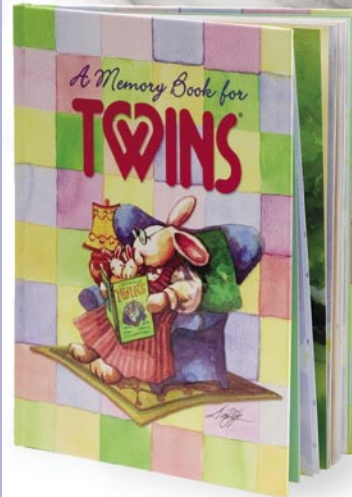
Grandpa David, Grandpa Red and Uncle John loved being involved in these babies' lives, and they enjoyed being able to give extra attention to our older daughter, Amber.

After we'd had the babies at home three months, I felt I could handle being alone for a few hours at a time, and slowly became independent again. With the babies' routines established, more sleep for all of us, and developmental milestones being met nicely, life grew easier. But these three wonderful men have remained very involved in our lives and they share wonderful relationships with our three children.

Looking back, I realized how helpful it would have been if I'd thought earlier of asking for the senior support that was available for me. Moms of twins should ask their older relatives, or ask at church, or approach local senior citizen centers and ask if there are people who could help out a day or two a week, either on a volunteer or paid basis. This is a chance to produce wonderful experiences, lasting memories and fond relationships with some of our society's most forgotten people. ♡

Camille St. Onge Magin and her husband Randy live in Greenfield, Mass. Their twins are now 4 years old.

Brad and Jake, 3 days old



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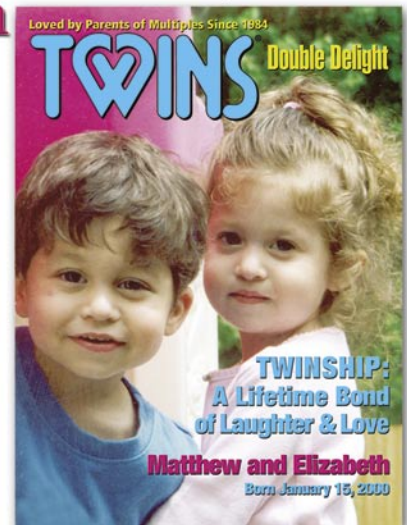
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Life as a Twin

The articles on these two pages represent polar-opposite views on “individual identity” within the twin relationship. Both authors are exceptionally thoughtful young people who’ve ruminated a great deal on the subject of their twinship. Their provocative insights

will help parents of multiples understand that one size doesn’t fit all when it comes to their twin children. Some twins love being two halves of a single whole person, while others struggle to be seen as individuals completely separate from their co-twins.

Who am I?

By Scott Lee

Who am I? This question has haunted me for as long as I can remember.

The struggle to form my own personal identity was certainly nothing new to me as I entered my adolescence. I’m an identical twin and my entire life has been spent either being compared to my brother, Jim, or spent as half of an entity—the twins.

It is eternally frustrating to be called by someone else’s name, especially by people you’ve known your entire life. It’s even more frustrating that you can’t be mad at them, because in the end if you were in their shoes you’d probably do the same. But it’s frustrating not to be differentiated even by your looks.

As a twin you also have to fight off stereotypes and constant comparisons. In the end, I don’t think my brother and I are that similar. Sure, we share some of the same likes and dislikes, personality traits, and views of the world that any two brothers would share. However, we also have our own tastes, dreams and aspirations, strengths and weaknesses. We are certainly not each one-half of a whole—we’re two unique individuals who happen to look very, very similar.

I strongly believe my brother and I cultivated our own unique identities because our different likes and dislikes were fostered by our parents even as small children.

Being a twin—or parents of twins—is very challenging but also rewarding. The relationship between the parents of twins and their children, and between the twins themselves, is very fluid. Gail McCarthy recognized this in her thesis about twin relationships: “The problem of identity for oneself is a difficult for many twins. Identical twins may feel that nothing is

personal or their own; even their mothers may sometimes not know who they are.” (McCarthy, University of Massachusetts-Amherst, *Affiliation and Sibling Rivalry in Adolescent Twins*, 1972.)

My experience bears this out. I have been called by my brother’s name more times than I can count, by close friends and even by my own mother.

Because twins are the same age, they naturally compete and this begets “the jealousy factor,” as McCarthy puts it. The friction arises when one twin “learns to do something the other is trying to learn himself.”

I can think of several cases when this was true for my brother and me. We attended school together, and had many of the same friends. The problem, I think, becomes magnified when twins feel too much alike.

This is why it’s so important to foster each child’s own personal strengths and treat each twin as the unique individual that he is. If twins are forced to participate in the same activities all the time, competition is inevitable and will hurt their relationship.

McCarthy believes that because the focus on twins is typically based on their similarities, competition becomes the basis for twins’ relationship. Hence, parents should recognize similarities but nurture the differences in their twins. My parents recognized this and took care when raising my brother and me, especially after we started school.

Jim and I were very different as students. Jim tended to slack off and neglect his work. I was a bit on the lazy side, but always managed to complete what needed to be done. I made my way to more advanced

classes while Jim remained in the normal levels. My parents didn’t urge me to remain in Jim’s classes, nor did they try to push Jim to move up. We made new friends and developed our own realms of social interaction.

Our differences were evident athletically, too. I enjoyed football and baseball, while Jim was never interested in sports. We both played Little League, but Jim wanted to quit and my parents allowed him to do so.

Socially, Jim was always more outgoing than I was; he found it much easier to meet new people. My parents never forced me to go out with Jim. They respected our differences. I was given more time to become comfortable in new social surroundings, which did occur.

Jim liked computer games while I enjoyed reading, writing, and cooking. My parents were eager to help develop my abilities.

Even among people who are genetically identical there are differences. I have attempted my entire life to become an individual. What I realized was I always have been an individual.

Parents help their twin children, I think, if they celebrate the differences and the individual talents each twin has. I have searched inside myself to discover what makes me the person I am, and hope every parent takes the same time to encourage their twins to appreciate their own individuality. ♡

Scott Lee is 18 and lives in Amesbury, Mass. He’s a student at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst. His twin brother, Jim, also attends Umass-Amherst, although they live on separate sides of campus.

Me, Myself & Us

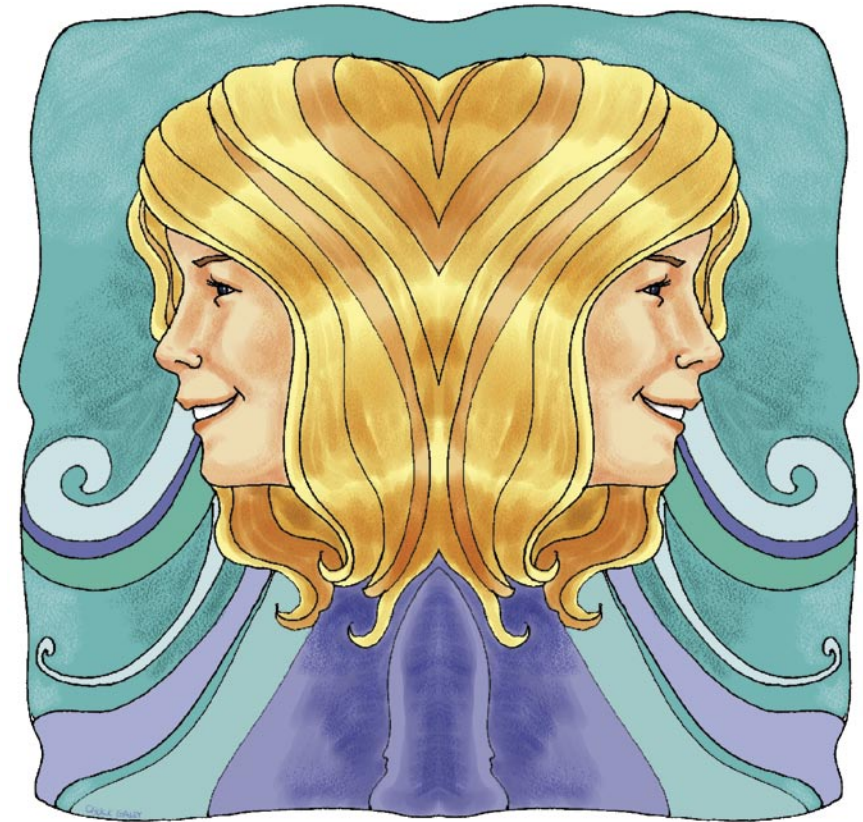
By Connelly Hardaway

I'm not really a twin. Twin is an overrated word; it leads to generalities and assumptions. My sister and I are more than twins. We are two individuals who prefer to be seen as one.

Alone, I stand strong and tall; but joined to my other half, I am invincible. Without her, I lack a sense of humor, a sense of security, even a best friend. With her, I exceed expectations, defy obstacles, occasionally conquer the world. Yes, we are every metaphor alluding to strength and loyalty. The world is rampant with lonely, unfortunate singletons. We smile on those who move about solo, while savoring our oneness. We aren't really twins.

I'm not really an individual. When people hear the word twin, they immediately scan the crowd for identical faces. Found. They compare and scrutinize: One is prettier, yes. One is louder, yes. One "stands out" more. These non-twins often decide which one is smarter, faster, funnier, better. If I were an individual, I would always score less than my sister on biology tests. And if my sister possessed true individualism, she would never be able to smile on cue, an area in which her sister excels. As one, we ace every test, dazzle every photographer. Sometimes we do stand out. As singles, each can be proud, but only for so long. We quickly melt back into our mold. We are not really separate people.

I am my sister. Yes, we look the same, but to actually "be" another individual you must act, think, and feel the same ways. This is easy for us. We don't let others find differences; to them we are "twin". We often blurt out words simultaneously, but to us this isn't amazing at all. The ways we interact—the same thought traveling through



our brains, the same emotions surging through us—this is amazing!

This is why we are one person, why we fight to protect our twinship from the ever-prying tentacles of an insensitive world. I do not like it when our ideas contradict each other, when we look at each other as if the world could collapse if we didn't agree. We need each other, but slowly we realize we can break apart—if only for the shortest time—and pursue something different.

My sister makes me laugh more than anyone else can; yet no one else thinks we are funny. She also makes me angrier than anyone; we often fight for no reason at all. I am my own best friend, my own worst enemy. My sister is me.

Twin—being one is my best trait. No one can ever say I lack something in life. I will never be empty. People tell me to become more independent, to take time away from my twin. This is a futile suggestion. I was not born alone. I will go through life as two.

One day my mind and body will lose their strength, but my twinship will never

wane. When I grow older I will laugh at those who tried to separate us. I will sit back and grin. I'll look at myself and she will grin too, sharing our lifelong joke. ♡

Connelly Hardaway, a high school freshman, wrote this for her honors English class. Connelly lives in southeastern Virginia along the Chesapeake Bay with her parents, twin sister and younger brother, three cats and two dogs. She and her MZ twin, Mary Scott, have been in the gifted students' program since second grade, and take honors classes together in high school. They've been in the same classroom in school, and prefer being together rather than apart. Their mom says they are remarkably similar emotionally, and in their talents as well as abilities. They look so identical that Connelly had her big toe painted red for three months after being born so her mom could identify her. The twins weighed exactly the same amount at birth and arrived two minutes apart. Both play field hockey and run track, and plan to join the school newspaper staff next year, a possible prelude to dual careers in journalism.

How to teach your twins to speak clearly

Your twins' speech and language skills will have a significant impact on their overall educational experience. Children who are good listeners and speakers often become strong readers and writers.

It's well documented that twins often learn to speak later, and develop more speech and language difficulties, than single-born children. But just because your children are twins doesn't mean they're doomed to have difficulties. It does mean parents of twins should keep a close eye out for speech problems in their children, and act quickly if something seems "not quite right."

Parents of twins sometimes tend to use shorter and more direct phrases when talking to their children, and have slightly less time for "real" verbal exchanges with each child individually. Also, since there is more competition between twins for mom's and dad's attention, twins tend to speak more quickly in order to get all the information out at once. As a result, their faster speech is sometimes not as clear and can be difficult to understand.

Here's the good news: Speech and language development isn't something you need to set aside large blocks of time for in your busy schedule. You can take advantage of the hundreds of opportunities that exist each day to stimulate your children's skills as you go about your daily life activities.

Talk, talk, talk

One of the best ways to help your children learn to talk is to speak to them, a lot. The more words a child hears from birth, the more quickly they learn to talk, and the greater their vocabulary and their IQ. Daily exposure to words helps strengthen and shape brain pathways that foster thinking and learning.

A researcher from Chicago found that 2-year-old children of talkative mothers said twice as many words as the children of

mothers who silently cared for their children.

Only "live language," not television, helps children develop language skills. Experts believe this is because children need to hear language in relation to what is happening around them—in other words, they need "context" for language to mean anything—or it is little more than noise. Words must be delivered by an engaged human being to have any meaning and to be interesting to a child, and the child must focus on the speaker and the environment.

Expose your twins to a large variety and number of words. Talk to them about what you are seeing, doing, feeling, and touching as you cook dinner, vacuum the carpet, set the table, or sort and fold the laundry. Describe your actions as you make the bed, bake cookies, or simply pour drinks for lunch. To your young twins, the whole world is new and even the most routine activities are an exciting learning experience.

Speak clearly and slowly to your twins about what is happening around you. By doing so, you make it easier for them to learn how to say individual sounds and words. Use short phrases and sentences, so your children can grasp the rules of grammar easily. However, don't abandon complex sentences. Research also shows children exposed to longer sentences containing words like "because" and "which" learn to express these words earlier than children whose parents seldom use them.

Altering the way you speak to your children can make a large difference in their vocabulary development. Instead of saying, "I will cut the sandwich for you," try saying, "I will cut the sandwich in half for you." Instead of, "We will be there soon," try saying, "We will be there in two hours."

Using daily routines to learn

If you silently plan your day while driving the car, try this instead:

Say each child's name in turn or say an attention-getting word such as "Look!" and name an object. Talk about the variety of sights and sounds you see and hear as you drive. "Look at the blue house." or "Listen to the siren."

Ask your preschool twins to locate and name things that are red, round, or square. Find numbers or letters on signs and billboards. Recite nursery rhymes, count out loud, or sing a favorite song together. Talk to your children about an upcoming or favorite family event.

Instead of preparing dinner silently, try out Dolly's method when her twins Ryan and Andrew (now 11) were little:

8 Ways to Help Your Twins Speak Clearly

- Be a good model.
- Tune in and follow their lead.
- Read and recite nursery rhymes to your twins daily.
- Gain your child's attention before you begin to speak.
- Be a good listener—give each child time to finish talking.
- Have fun with nursery rhymes and songs.
- Comment on sounds around you: "Hear the airplane overhead?"
- Create learning opportunities—make conversation part of everything you do together.

5 Essential Language-learning Methods

- **Naming** — Teach word labels (nouns).
- **Describing** — Teach qualities of objects and events, such as colors, sizes, sounds (adjectives and adverbs).
- **Explaining** — Teach about time, logical order, action words, and things that go together (concepts, sequences, verbs, pairs).
- **Direction-giving** — Teach about spatial concepts.
- **Comparing** — Talk about how objects, events, and people are the same or different.

“When my children were very young, I would put them in their high chairs, roll them close to the counter so they could see my actions, and I’d talk and sing to them as I prepared dinner.”

Your twins will learn about the logical order of events when you tell them about what you will do first and what you will do after that. “First, I will put the butter in the bowl; next, I’ll stir the batter.”

Explaining what you are doing helps build your child’s knowledge of action words. “I am opening the oven door.”

Tell your twins “how many” and “how much” of everything you’re using. That way they’ll learn about quantity. “Two eggs” go into the mix, or “One box of raisins.” Read a recipe aloud and let your toddler twins help you follow the directions.

When bathing and dressing your twins, talk about body parts, kinds of clothes, and where they go: “Shoes go on your feet, after your socks.” Talk about how clothing feels: “Such a soft sweater” or “rough jeans.”

Give simple directions to help your children learn about spatial concepts. “Tilt your head back.” or “Put your head through the neck hole of your new sweater.”

Be a good model

To a twin, language is a way to bring closeness and intimacy with each other, and is very rewarding. Even before twins are able to say real-sounding words, they communicate making sounds that have a special meaning to their sibling.

“When my twins were younger, I loved to listen to their private conversations of grunts and sounds as they lulled themselves to sleep with the sound of each other’s voices.” (Kristen, mother of Zach and Sean, 2)

In some cases, when twins begin to use real words, they talk together using words and sentences that only the two of them can understand. Recent research has shown this twin language, known as idioglossia, is not a private invented language at all, as experts previously thought, but a persistent use of immature or incorrect speech patterns.

Most children, whether twins or not, create some words of their own, or use incorrect vocabulary, grammar and syntax when they are learning to talk. Since twins usually spend a lot of time together and have a strong desire to communicate with each other, they listen to each other saying words incorrectly and copy each other’s poor syntax and mispronunciations. These troublesome words grow more distorted and, as a result, only the twins can understand them.

Twin language is not a cause of language delay, but is most often seen in twins with immature or delayed language. “Twinspeak” may indicate they’ll have a difficult time learning to talk. A British study showed that about half of all twins with speech and language difficulties use twin language. Only 11% of

twins who develop language on schedule use twin language.

If your twins use “twin language” with each other, watch closely to see they are also developing communication skills necessary to communicate effectively with others. Your twins should learn and express new words at least every few weeks, and should use these words to communicate with others.

Some parents think their twins’ mispronunciation of words is cute and, will repeat incorrect pronunciations or grammatical errors. Instead, give your child many opportunities to hear words pronounced correctly. If your child says a word incorrectly, don’t ask her to “say it again.” Instead, say the correct pronunciation, emphasizing the word or sound with which she had difficulty.

For example, if your child says, “Me do to pool,” try saying, “I g-go to the pool.” Emphasize the “I” by saying it louder and emphasize the “g” sound in “go” by stretching it.

Encouraging twins to talk

Being a busy parent of twins often means being able to translate your child’s attempts to communicate without using words. Your young child walks to the refrigerator. You say, “Oh, do you want some milk?” You pour the milk and say, “Here is your milk, honey.” Your young child has his needs met and hasn’t had to utter a single word.

When you always respond to head nods, grunts, or gestures, you deny your children the practice they need to learn to say words and sentences. If your children don’t ask questions or express themselves in complete sentences, help them by expanding words or short phrases into full sentences.

Repeat what your child says and add one or two words. Don’t change your child’s meaning, but, instead, make her remarks slightly longer. For example:

Child: “Hat.”

Adult: “Yes, blue hat.”

Asking your children questions is a great way to develop their ability to learn, think, and explain, while practicing talking. Ask questions to each child individually. Try to ask questions that require more than a one-word answer or a yes-no response. Instead of asking, “Did you have fun in school today?” try, “What did you do in art class today?” Before you begin to speak, say his

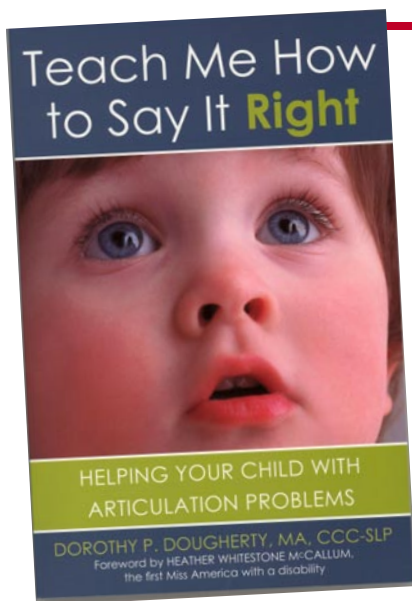
or her name, or use another attention getter, such as a tap on the shoulder. Make eye contact. When your child responds, praise him or her individually.

Speech and language development

Twins acquire language just as single-born children do; however, sometimes they develop it at a somewhat slower pace. Researchers in Australia and the United States found that 3- to 5-year-old twins are typically about six months behind single-born children in their language skills. This may be due to the higher rate of prematurity among twins, or it may be related to twins' ability

to communicate so effectively with each other non-verbally. The good news is that by age five, most twins are developing language normally and differ very little from their single-born peers in use of language. ♥

Dorothy P. Dougherty, MA, CCC-SLP, a resident of Linwood, N.J., has worked with children and adults in school, private and clinical settings for more than 28 years. She is a certified member of the American Speech-Language Hearing Assn. and author of "Teach Me How to Say it Right: Helping Your Child with Articulation Problems" and "How to Talk to Your Baby." For more information go to www.1speechproblems.com.



Dorothy P. Dougherty, MA, CCC-SLP, is a speech and language pathologist who has worked with children in schools, clinical and private settings. She is also the author of "How to Talk to Your Baby." She writes:

"For some children, saying words clearly and correctly is easy. Others need a lot of practice before they can say all of the sounds of their language correctly. It's important to understand speech-sound disorders.

...A child with a speech problem may understand words and phrases and use them to talk. However, people may have a hard time understanding his message because he has difficulty with the following areas:

- Articulation refers to the ability to produce speech sounds that make up syllables, words and sentences.
- Phonological processes means mastering the sound patterns of a language.
- Fluency means the flow or rhythm of a

person's speech. Problems with fluency are often referred to as "stuttering."

• Voice refers to how the speech sounds... too loud, too soft, too hoarse, too harsh, or just right for the person's age. The quality of a child's voice may interfere with normal, everyday activities or make the child's speech difficult to understand.

A child with an articulation disorder does not pronounce words clearly and precisely because he uses the wrong sounds when speaking, or because he omits sounds in words. Articulation disorders are the most prevalent communication disorder. It has been estimated that three out of five (60%) of all speech and language disorders are related to articulation problems.

...Play the same games and sing the same song over and over again. Your child will soon learn to anticipate your words and gestures. At around 6 months, your child may acquire a favorite book. Although reading the same book four times in one morning (at your child's request) may be tiring for you, the repetition will reinforce her learning. Reading the same words over and over will help her learn to make connections between the words she hears and the pictures she sees. A child must hear a word many times and understand its meaning before she will express it.

...Learning to read and write begins with your child's development of articulation and language skills. ... The age at which a child learns the alphabet, or even the methods by which he is taught to read in school, are not as important as the skills he gains from pre-reading activities in early life.

The suggested activities may give your

child the tools and motivation he needs to read when he is developmentally ready. A child in a literacy-rich environment has many opportunities to:

- listen to books read aloud
- engage in one-on-one conversations with caring adults
- talk about books, discussing the characters, actions, and plot
- engage in pretend play
- be exposed to may different reading and writing materials.

The size of your child's vocabulary is a strong predictor of reading success. One reason children do not become proficient readers is because they don't have a functional vocabulary that enables them to understand the words they read.

...One- and 2-year-olds are usually able to answer simple yes-or-no questions and respond appropriately to "What's this?"

2- and 3-year-olds may enjoy answering simple questions: who, what, why, and what do you do with a _____? Fill in the blank and keep changing it.

3- and 4-year-olds can answer questions that have more than one answer. These questions often begin with "how" and "what if" and require a child to think for himself. For example, "How do you know it is going to rain?" or "What would happen if the ball hit the car?" Most children at this age are also learning to answer how many, how much, and which questions. For example, "How many boxes do you have?" or "Which one is bigger?"

(*Teach Me How to Say It Right*, 157 pgs., New Harbinger Publications, \$13.95.)

Chips and crackers— **FIT OR FAT?**



We all get cravings for crunchies, but too often you toss chips or crackers at your young twins as a quick snack or to shut them up, thinking you're not doing them too much damage. Think again. You may be contributing to the obesity of your minors. Bagel chips and pita chips each have about 130 cal./oz. Baked chips, at around 110-120 cal./oz., are your best bet. Potato chips fall in the 150-160 cal./oz. range. So says Charles Stuart Platkin, author and nutrition/public health advocate who writes the "Diet Detective" column in newspapers nationwide.

While "baked" or "veggie" is usually code for healthier, check the actual nutrition information. You don't earn a "health halo" when you buy a bag of Baked Lays, baked pita or veggie chips (such as Terra Chips at about 11 calories per chip)—and then eat them or dole them out as if your twins have calorie immunity. They have almost the same calories as their fried counterparts, and you're not getting any notable health benefits.

Platkin's Fit Tip: Try a 1-oz. bag of chips. Prepackaged portions mean you can't eat more than one serving, and you'll learn to recognize how small those serving sizes really are. Or try other types of chips, such as Stacy's Soy Thin Crisps, with 6.5 g. of protein at 110 cal./oz.

Make your own whole-wheat pita chips (about 140 calories for a 2 oz. pita). Spray pita with margarine spray, add garlic powder and salt, cut it into multiple chips and toast in the oven for a few minutes. Double the chips, half the calories.

Crackers can be really tricky. Hardly health food! Triscuits at 20 calories per cracker could be your best bet—they're 100% whole grain—plus your twins will fill up faster because of all that fiber. Ritz crackers have about 16 calories each, whereas saltines have 12 calories apiece. Wheat Thins come in at a bit more than 9 calories/cracker. Yet, gram for gram, they all contain roughly the same number of calories, Platkin says.

Fit Tip: Choose whole-grain crackers. Even if you don't save calories, at the very least you'll be getting benefits of whole grains.

Healthy snacks they aren't!

Not all snacking is bad for your twins—some snacking is important and good for them—but be careful what you hand your kids when they have the munchies. Kids can become obese if they form a habit of snacking too frequently. You're doing a disservice to your little ones if you hand them cookies as snacks. Here's the good, the bad and the ugly on cookies as snacks: There's no difference between an oatmeal cookie and a chocolate chip cookie, calorie-wise. A Chips Ahoy Chunky Chocolate Chip cookie (about 2/3 oz.) = 80 calories. A Keebler Country Style Oatmeal cookie (about 1/2 oz.) = 60 calories.

If you have to choose, go with an oatmeal cookie, since the fiber from oats (a whole grain) will fill kids up more so they feel more satisfied, says renowned author, public health advocate and nationally-syndicated columnist Charles Stuart Platkin, "The Diet Detective."

Animal and graham crackers, rumored to be "healthy" choices, aren't. Animal crackers = 130 calories/oz. vs. graham crackers at about 120 calories/oz. But Fig Newtons are lower in calories and make a better choice—yet, at 55 calories per cookie (1/2 oz.) they're surely no health food!

Best bet: 100-calorie snack packs—they really help control portions. Or make your own 100-calorie packs using Ziplocs. Cut the cookies in quarters; otherwise you'll only have one or two in each bag.

Beware giant cookies. One Pepperidge Farm Soft Baked Dark Chocolate Chunk Nantucket cookie (just over 1 oz.) = 150 calories. Just one Double Stuffed Oreo or Milano cookie = 70 calories.

Choose whole-grain cookies if you can. Whole Grain Fig Newtons contain 55 calories per cookie (same as regular Fig Newtons), but the first ingredient is whole-grain flour, which is better than refined flour. Even Chips Ahoy makes a 100% whole-grain cookie (still an alarming 150 calories per 33 grams!). Whole grains help you feel full longer and have fiber and nutrients—B vitamins, vitamin E, magnesium and selenium.

FIT Tip: Bake your own! Prepare delicious Oatmeal-raisin cookies using egg whites, skim milk, reduced-calorie margarine and Baking Splenda sweetener.

Preventing food allergies



Concerned about food allergies developing in your twin infants? Unsure which advice is correct when it comes to introducing new foods to your toddlers? The American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology provides parents with a few guidelines for introducing new foods to their children:

- Wait until your twins are at least 6 months old before offering any solids, including rice cereal.
- Dairy foods—milk, cheese, yogurt, ice cream—should be withheld until the age of 1 year.

- Toddlers shouldn't eat any eggs until after their 2nd birthday.
- Peanuts, tree nuts (walnuts, almonds, filberts) and fish should be kept out of your twins' diet until they are at least 3.

An increasing number of children are being diagnosed with severe food allergies, despite family allergy histories. Although these rules may sound extreme, abiding by them is your best defense against having your kids develop a serious food allergy.

Quick & easy: Car seat safety

- *Newborn twins must be in rear-facing seats.*
- *Toddler twins older than 1 year AND weighing at least 20 lbs. can be in a forward-facing seat.*
- *Twins older than 4 years AND weighing at least 40 lbs. can use a booster seat.*
- *Twins older than 8 years AND more than 57" tall AND weighing at least 80 lbs. can use adult safety belts.*
- *ALL children under 13 years old should always ride in the back seat.*
- *Minimize the bulk between your twins and the belt restraints by avoiding fluffy jackets and clothing. Always strap your twins into their seats and then add blankets and layers over the belts for warmth.*

All 50 states have laws regarding buckling up a child, but the laws concerning car safety seats are up to each individual state and can vary.

Poison response

Life as you know it changes the moment your twin infants become toddlers and your home is their playground! Your plants and the toilet are suddenly more interesting than toys and soon they wreak havoc everywhere. To keep them safe, toddler-proof your home from the ground up. Use baby gates to block stairs, relocate all household cleaners, plug all outlets, lock every cabinet and hide all poisonous items. Post emergency numbers alongside the phone. And have your bottle of Ipecac ready to go, right? Wrong. Do you really know what Ipecac is or what to do if your child eats a bunch of pills? If you catch your child drinking window cleaner, should you induce vomiting with Ipecac? Or will that do more harm than good? The American Academy of Pediatrics changed its recommendations in 2003 on the use of Ipecac in the home. Parents are now discouraged from having or using Ipecac to induce vomiting. Instead, call the universal poison control center at 1-800-222-1222 immediately in the event of any potentially poisonous ingestion. Put this # with your other emergency numbers by your phones. Program it into your cell phone, too.

I've been a foster parent for the past three years. My age group is newborn-to-5-years. I've had over 20 kids in and out of my house, so I've had my share of diaper rashes! A recent conversation with a nurse elicited a "recipe" for diaper rash ointment that she guaranteed would work. I've used the recipe and the results are so amazing I think everybody should be using it. Here's the concoction:

Have a small bowl and a spoon handy. The five ingredients are: ABX Ointment; 100% lanolin; A&D Ointment; zinc oxide; Pond's cold crème. Mix equal parts of each ingredient. Put into a jar or sealable container and store.

Sandy Austin
Woodbridge, Va.

Twins and sharing

Robbie and Ryan, 2 years



As a mommy or daddy of twins, you are witness to the incredible bond of twinhood. Your twins communicate with each other without words, exchanging a simple look or breaking out in laughter. They have a built-in playmate and an automatic best friend. Twins naturally share a common space in the family and more than likely play with the same toys and dress from the same wardrobe. Teach them the value of sharing at a very young age: Label some toys or clothes with each child's name to provide personal ownership of a few items. Teach your twins to be respectful of one another's things and praise them for sharing with each other. Even toddlers understand the basic principles of ownership and sharing. If started at an early age, the values you teach your twins will carry over into playgroups, daycare and preschool.

Preventing "pacifier-habit"



Elise and Leo, 8 months

Babies are born with a natural sucking reflex, their instinct to eat and survive. As your twins develop they learn to use sucking to self-calm and relax. This "therapeutic sucking" is normal infant development. After 4 months of age the need to suck decreases and a habit-forming behavior begins to develop. While many babies rely on sucking for self-comfort until they are about 2, parents can prevent dependency by following some simple suggestions:

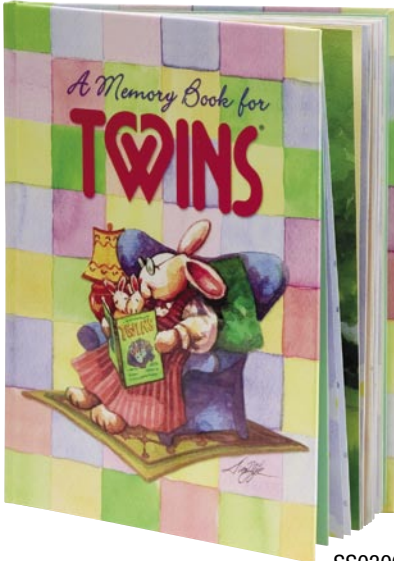
- When one twin is stressed and upset, attempt to cuddle and comfort him before offering the pacifier.
- After 6 months of age, keep the pacifier in your twin's crib (and car seat if she uses it while traveling) and remove it from her mouth once asleep.
- Prevent pacifier use while your twins are playing and content—offer a stuffed animal for security instead. If pacifier use is restricted, many toddlers will actually lose interest in it before the age of 2.

Send your Growing Stages questions to mom of twins Kelly Woods at kwoods@lightblast.net. Kelly is a pediatric and family nurse practitioner who works in a pediatrician's office doing primary care. In each issue, she'll address topics of most interest to you. She has identical boys, Aidan and Bailey, 16 months. Kelly and her husband, Matt, live in Albertville, Minn., 25 miles northwest of the Twin Cities.

Special Gifts for Families with Multiples

TWINS | Shoppe

TWINS Lifetime Memory Book



TWINS Exclusive! This remarkable new book captures the special moments in your life and the lives of your twins! Every one of the 56 full-color pages is filled with the gorgeous watercolor illustrations of renowned California artist Jerianne Van Dijk. They await your thoughts, family facts, and photos. Special pages for info from when Mom and Dad were growing up, your babies' wonderful "firsts", and your family trees. You'll love the luscious sherbet colors in this volume. Hard cover, 8.5" x 11" on heavy, durable paper stock. We sell a set of two at a special price so each of your twins will have one.

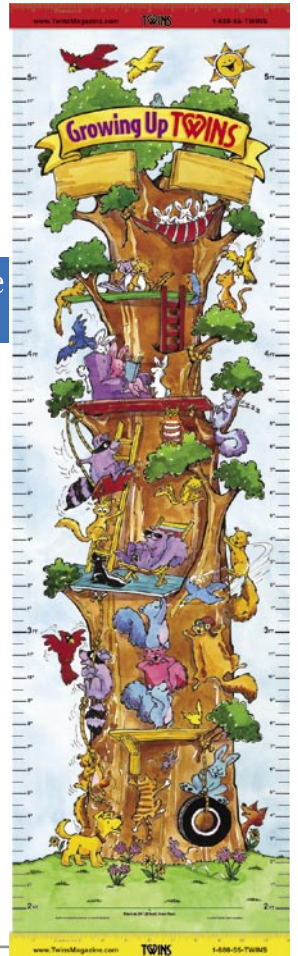
SS03003 \$31.95 for a set of 2 books

Dozens more products available at www.TwinsMagazine.com

Growing up Twins Growth Chart

TWINS Exclusive! Created especially for families with twins. Vibrant colors and adorable critters adorn this chart designed to hang on the wall. A unique accent piece for your children's room. Celebrate your children's growth milestones during their early years. Your family will enjoy this lifelong keepsake. Printed in full color and laminated for long-lasting durability. Use a permanent marker to write each child's name in the banners at the top, and then note your darlings' heights at important moments in their young lives. Ribbon hanger and adhesive hook-and-loop tabs included. When your children outgrow the chart, each one gets to keep a brightly enameled customized wooden ruler to use with school projects. 40" H x 12" W

SS03001 \$25.95 each



Twin Hearts

NEW! Brush away your tears after reading this heartfelt poem by Teri Harrison, a mother of four. Twin Hearts tells of the gift of twinship and the promises and encouragement a mother gives to her children in return. Available with blue, pink or yellow border, with matching ribbon. 11" x 14" matte print comes with a gift envelope to save a special letter for each twin. Also available: SS05003 5" x 7" card for \$3.25. Available in three colors: blue, pink and yellow.

TWIN HEARTS

Awed to be expecting twins,
A mother's journey now begins
Blessed with heaven's gift of two,
I fell in love with both of you.

As days passed and months moved on,
I prayed for two, born safe and strong.
Thrilled by the promise of the joys to-be,
Like two voices joined in ABC's.
Shared sweet kisses on cheeks and lips,
Two toddlers riding atop two hips.
I promise to see you each as one,
Two connected, yet free lives begun.
Both loved completely, for all they are,
Following their own bright star.

I promise to encourage your treasured bond,
from babies to children and beyond.
Partners, soul mates and best friends,
The love of each of you will depend.

At last I stroke each newborn face,
I knew my heart was touched by grace.
My hands now full-as most will say,
Yet my life never richer than today.

Awed to hold my little ones,
Our lives together have begun.
Blessed with heaven's gift of two,
I forever love the both of you.



Unframed Art

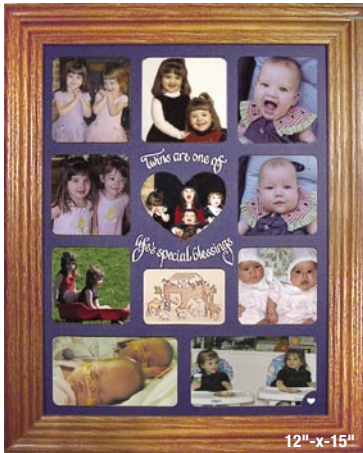


Gift Cards

Be sure to include your color choice on the order form or when you order by phone.

SS05002 Unframed Art \$16.99 each

SS05003 Cards \$ 3.25 each



12"-x-15"



10"-x-12"

Photo Frames

Exclusive to us! Collect your twins' special pictures in these keepsake frames. Designed especially for families with twins. Choose from a 12"x15" frame with 10 openings in the matching mat, or a 10"x12" blue-painted frame with four openings in the matching mat. Both frames are beautifully lettered to say, "Twins are one of life's special blessings." Adorable Noah's Ark two-by-two illustration appears in one opening of each photo frame.

SF90031 12" x 15" \$23.99 each

SF90032 10" x 12" \$19.99 each

"The Twins Room" Door Hanger

Everything is ducky with this cute framed print to hang on your twins' doorknob. The 3½" x 5", white, framed print comes with a green double satin ribbon to hang it from a doorknob, door or wall. Packaged in a white toile coordinated gift bag.

SS05001 \$13.95 each



To place an order, call (888) 55-TWINS, go online or use the order form in this issue.

Tiny Fingers and Tiny Toes

Celebrate twins and create a lasting keepsake!

Do-it-yourself kit comes with non-toxic ink pad and an extra verse-and-hand/footprint page in case you goof. Designed exclusively for us. Perfect gift for grandparents. Openings for twin photo alongside each unique "print". Frame is white painted wood. Overall size 12"H x 15"W.

A. Fingers - SF90035 \$39.99 each

B. Toes - SF90036 \$39.99 each



A. 12"-x-15"



B. 12"-x-15"



A. 11"-x-14"

"Discover Wildlife, Raise Twins" Ceramic Plaque

A sentiment every parent of twins can relate to! This handcrafted ceramic plaque will tickle your funny bone and keep your sense of humor charged when you most need it. Leather hanger. 5 3/4"H x 7 1/4"W.

SF90092 \$17.99 each



"To a Mother of Twins"

A. Creamy parchment mat, pale gold liner; 11"x14" overall.

SW00022 \$31.99 each

"Pardon Our Mess... Twins Live Here"

B. Creamy parchment mat, pale gold liner; 11"x14" overall.

SW00021 \$31.99 each



B. 11"-x-14"

Twice as Nice Photo Frames

These two ceramic frames from Russ Baby will look fabulous on your dresser, bookcase, shelf or fireplace mantle. The frames have glass inserts and flocked backing, each frame provides a unique opportunity to show off your twins. The Stars and Hearts frame includes spaces for two photographs to show your twins separately. The Bears and Balloons frame has room for one big photograph to show your twins together. These are beautiful, wonderful gifts to celebrate the birth of your twins for a close family member or even for yourself. Frames are individually boxed. Twice as Nice Stars and Hearts Frame is 4 1/2" x 6" and holds two 1 3/4" x 2 3/4" photographs. Twice as Nice Bears and Balloons Frame is 8 3/4" x 6 3/4" and holds one 4" x 6" photograph.

A. SF04002 Stars and Hearts \$12.99 each

B. SF04003 Bears and Balloons \$14.99 each



A.



B.



Personalized Twin Afghan

Clever original design created by an artist with twins and exclusive to us. Woven throw in a large size is personalized with your twins' names and their birth date in green embroidery. 100% cotton, washable. 46" x 67". Shipped directly from manufacturer.

Allow 3 to 4 weeks for delivery. No express delivery.

SF90112 \$49.99 each

Be sure to include personalization information on the order form or when you order by phone.

To place an order, call (888) 55-TWINS, go online or use the order form in this issue.



It's all a hoax!

But “urban myth” of plastics and dioxins lives on....

By Susan J. Alt

Are plastic baby bottles (and bags) unsafe for storing/freezing/reheating breastmilk or formula—or lots of other foods, for that matter? Are plastic bottles unsafe when put into the freezer overnight? Are we causing cancer in our babies and children by using the ever-present plastic containers in our daily lives?

Quick answers—you need not worry. Plastics are considered fairly safe. But read on...this is an interesting tale.

We've received countless e-mail messages in recent months warning us of carcinogenic dioxins in plastics. The Internet chain-letter actually started in December, 2004, and has been traveling the world by e-mail ever since.

We're told dioxins leach from the plastic containers into foods and water that are cooked in them, stored in them, or frozen in them, increasing our risk of cancer. Allegedly even using plastic wrap covers on our foods when heated in the microwave is dangerous to our health. Needless to say, many people have been concerned that babies and children would be hurt even more by these, if the stories were true.

But they aren't. It's apparently hogwash.

Scary stories, these. If they were conceivably true, why haven't we read more about this in the general press, and why isn't the entire world up in arms? We researched the topic, and dug up extensive facts. The most credible response to this growing “urban myth” chain letter came from Johns Hopkins University's Bloomberg School of Public Health. Rolf Halden, Ph.D., P.E., an assistant professor in the Department of Environmental Health Sciences and the Center for Water and Health, set the record straight about this Internet hoax.

“Plastics typically do not contain dioxins,” Dr. Halden stated. Plastics do contain phthalates and a couple of other chemical plasticizers that are not totally inert, however, which means that when foods come in contact with them “there is a chance of chemical transfer and contamination. The concern is that if you heat up

If you want to be super-safe...

The plasticizer chemicals used in plastics to make them soft and flexible (less brittle) can be released in minute amounts into foods when they are heated. The “absorption rate” of these chemicals into the food(s) being heated will depend on the temperature, duration of heating, type of plastic, and the food heated. Fatty foods absorb more chemicals from plastic containers.

And follow these rules:

- Never use the same plastic packaging twice for storage or reheating (such as packages/trays/bowls purchased containing frozen foods).
- Use inert containers to heat food—heat-resistant glass and ceramics that are microwave- and oven-safe; and stainless steel on stove tops.

plastic food containers, utensils or plastic wrap, some chemicals would be released into the food or beverage.”

You’re not going to ingest dioxins if you drink water from plastic water bottles, or if you freeze water in plastic bottles and then thaw it and drink it.

Edward Fujimoto, Ph.D., of Castle Hospital in Hawaii was originally quoted in the fearsome chain letter warning of the dangers of dioxins in plastics. He was named as “Dr. Fujimoto” leading readers to believe he was a medical doctor, which he is not. When contacted for comment, Dr. Fujimoto admitted readily that dioxin levels released by plastics when foods are heated in them “are insignificant.”

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) said it “has seen no evidence that plastic containers or (plastic) films contain dioxins and knows of no reason why they would.” Way back in 1998, the FDA stated that “the levels of (DEHA) plasticizer that might be consumed as a result of plastic film use (on food when reheated) are well below the levels showing no toxic effect in animal studies.”

S.C. Johnson, maker of Saran Wrap™ and Ziploc™ bags, has affirmed numerous times that their products are completely dioxin-free and do not release dioxins when used to heat food.

The FDA has stated emphatically that “generally, microwave-safe plastic wraps, wax paper, cooking bags, parchment paper and white microwave-safe paper towels are safe to use.” The agency

offered some tips for those who remain concerned about substances being transferred to their food from plastics:

- ▶ Use any plastic container only for its intended purpose and in accordance with (the manufacture’s) directions.
- ▶ Carry-out containers from restaurants, margarine tubs and other cold-food containers should not be used in the microwave, as they may melt or warp.
- ▶ Discard containers that hold prepared microwave meals after you use them, as they are meant for one-time use.
- ▶ Place microwave-safe plastic wrap loosely over food so that steam can escape and do not let it directly touch your food.
- ▶ Never use plastic storage bags or grocery bags in the microwave.

To read Dr. Halden’s entire statement, go to www.TwinsMagazine.com and click on Message Board, go to the “Buzz” Forum. ♥

Resources:

- http://www.jhsph.edu/publichealthnews/articles/halden_dioxins.html
- <http://www.phthalates.org>
- www.plasticsmythbuster.org/dioxins.asp
- www.truthorfiction.com/rumors/d/dioxins.htm
- www.breakthechain.org/exclusives/dioxins.html
- www.urbanlegends.about.com/library/bl-microwave-dioxin.htm
- www.hoax-slayer.com/plastic-cancer-link-hoax.html

POLL RESULTS POLL RESULTS POLL RESULTS POLL RESULTS

Glass is out—plastic is in for everything

Plastic bottles—with and without plastic liner bags—clearly have taken over for feeding babies and storing/freezing/reheating breastmilk. Glass has disappeared entirely, judging from results of our TWINS™ poll online in which we attempted to ascertain whether fears or doubts about the safety of plastics was affecting the practices of twin moms.

We received 50 responses very rapidly after questions were posted on TWINS™ Message Board. All but two moms use plastic bottles. Those two were adamant they switched back to glass from plastic after they read stories about the possible hazards of chemicals used in plastics.

At least a half-dozen moms of twins commented they believe plastic bottles (and bags) are safer to use for breastmilk or formula than glass.

Plastic bottles and bags are widely used

for storing both breastmilk and formula, with only one mom of twins emphatically stating that she only stores breastmilk or formula in glass bottles.

But glass is a thing of the past. One mom said she didn’t even know glass bottles were still manufactured!

Moms of twins were more evenly divided on whether they ever freeze breastmilk in plastic bottles or bags. Most of the 17 who said they never do this noted they simply don’t breastfeed. Of the 21 who said they do freeze breastmilk in plastic containers, about 10 said they use Medela freezer bags made for freezing breastmilk.

Thirty-five moms of twins (70% of respondents) have no worries about heating stored breastmilk or fresh formula in plastic bottles (or bottle liners) that they use to feed their babies. Most of those who don’t heat anything in plastic baby bottles

are formula-feeders who make fresh formula each time they feed their babies, using lukewarm water so the formula doesn’t need any additional heating.

Moms of twins pay close attention to the instructions they get when their babies are born about methods they should use to heat breastmilk and formula. Three-fourths of the moms use warm-water bottle-warmers, or simply put the bottles in warm water to heat them before feedings. The few moms who said they use the microwave oven to heat breastmilk were careful to note that they only do so for a few seconds; others were emphatic that they’d been taught microwave oven heating destroys the nutrients in breastmilk, so they never use it for breastmilk.

Most of the 15 moms who said they use

continued on page 54

the microwave noted they use it for formula only, and then only very briefly. They shake the formula to ensure the heat is distributed evenly, and always test the warmth on their inner arms. (See related story quoting Rachel Silber, below.)

Three moms remarked they only reheat breastmilk or formula in a Pyrex container. Transferring it after it is heated to the baby bottles.

Many moms of twins sent excellent commentary along with their poll responses. Kristen, in Fredericksburg, Va., raves about Avent's plastic bottles. "They are the best. I solely breastfed my singleton and when the twins arrived it was best to have options: Breastfeed directly or bottle-feed with breastmilk so if I had (outside) help I could (accept) help. Avent bottles worked great for the continuity...the babies went back and forth from breast to bottle well. Avent bottles also seemed best for their little bellies... not as gassy."

Kristen used plastic Medela bottles and sealing caps to store fresh breastmilk in the refrigerator—"not for more than 24 hours, though I think you can leave breastmilk in the fridge for up to five days and it is still considered fresh...we just went through it faster with the dynamic duo."

Kristen noted she never froze breastmilk in plastic bottles—Gerber's Seal-n-Go bags "were incredibly convenient to use! The only disadvantage is they sometimes slipped (when fresh) through the slats in the freezer shelves...so I stored them on top of a plastic cutting board in the freezer to avoid that problem."

Heating the baby food was sometimes determined by urgent need, Kristen said. "If the breastmilk came from the fridge and

Plastic bottles and bags are widely used for storing both breastmilk and formula, with only one mom of twins emphatically stating that she only stores breastmilk or formula in glass bottles.

time (or frantically hungry babies) did not allow for a warm-up with warm tap water, then the microwave was used cautiously. We used plastic Avent bottles, which do very well in the microwave. You run the risk of hot spots in the breastmilk, of course, and using the microwave can kill some of the gentle nutrients in breast milk...but survival is important, too. Compromise! When using breastmilk from the freezer, thawing them in warm water in the Seal-n-Go bags is the only way to go. If the milk is thawed, warm water is the preferable method and it warms really quickly in the plastic bags but again...survival is important and we sometimes did put thawed milk into a plastic bottle and then into the microwave for a few seconds to get the chill off and quiet two hungry tummies!"

Karen, who calls herself a "TWINS™ Mag fan," offered these comments: "When our now 2-year-old boys were drinking from bottles we used plastic ones. We warmed them by setting them in bowls of hot water, never the microwave. Breastmilk we stored in plastic containers and formula we mixed right before they drank it in their bottle. Within the last year I have been reading about certain plastics that may be unsafe for babies. Had I done the same reading beforehand I would have used glass bottles."

Patty in Michigan, who feeds formula to her babes, represented the purely practical moms: "Just add some lukewarm water to prepare formula...just regular water from the kitchen tap is fine. Heating the water for formula is an old-fashion tradition people used to do... now you just make sure the water is clean and prepare the formula. My twins drink it so nicely... temperature doesn't matter much... temperatures are below zero in Michigan right now anyway. The twins are 3 months old and they've never been sick yet—at least not because of the water!"

Heather, mom of three boys, has found her favorite products: "I breastfed my first son, and now am breastfeeding my 3-month-old boys. I pump and feed once daily using breastmilk bottles. I use the Medela Pump in Style that I used with my older son. I love their bottles (I buy the storage sets), but now with the twins I have to sometimes use two bottles on each side because they are only 5 oz. bottles. This is why I have started pumping right into the bag. I use the latex Nuk nipples, but had to try six other kinds before I found one both boys would take. Once something works, do it frequently (daily if you can). My firstborn took bottles so well at first that we went a couple of weeks without feeding him from the bottle, then he would not take it again. We had to start all over just two weeks before my return to work! Eek!"

Microwave ovens: No-nos!

Rachel Silber, (CCE,CD, CD-DONA, CLE, CPD, CPDT, perinatal educator, doula, lactation educator, and postpartum doula trainer), warns TWINS™ readers that "Breastmilk and formula should **NEVER, EVER** be heated in the microwave oven." She believes we were remiss in asking our survey question about reheating the way we did, because "asking such a question legitimizes a very dangerous behavior. Aside from destroying live properties of breastmilk, and breaking down nutritional values (of breastmilk and of formula)... using the microwave can create hot pockets which can burn a baby's mouth!"

Rachel adds: "I would like to add that I work in a hospital setting. I have seen a baby who had major burns in her little mouth from a bottle that had been heated in the microwave. It truly hurt my heart to see a little one suffering from such an accident. Every bottle manufacturer, every formula company, every doctor's organization, etc. recommends that this never be done. It is a true safety concern!"

Thank you for the extra emphasis on this point, Rachel!

“So far I have 16 5-oz. bottles and 16 nipples. I have never supplemented with formula; luckily I’ve never had to. Because my boys are great eaters it is easier for me to just breastfeed.

“I love the Lansinoh line of products! Their storage bags are the best I’ve found for ease of use and I love the double seal. I can attach these to my pump by closing the zipper seal around the pump. This really is easier than moving the milk from a bottle to a bag. I also love their diaper wipes for breastfed babies. One of my boys had a rash we couldn’t shake even with plain water until we used these. Also, their breastpads are the only ones I’ll use. They control all of my leakage (it can be bad) and they don’t show under my clothes.”

We got an angry reaction from a perinatal professional in a hospital setting who said she was “very disappointed by the wording”

of our survey questions about use of plastic or glass bottles. She misread our intent—to determine if people were at all concerned about plastics for feeding their babies—and thought our questions displayed a bias against breastfeeding. Rachel Silber (CCE, CD, CD-DONA, CLE, CPD, CPDT, perinatal educator, doula, lactation educator, and postpartum doula trainer) disagreed with our “assumption that mothers of twins may not be exclusively breastfeeding directly from the breast. For an expectant mother of twins, this very question may discourage her and cause doubt in her ability to breastfeed.”

We certainly hope we weren’t discouraging anyone. We always encourage moms of twins to breastfeed their babies, early and often, and for as long as they possibly can. But we recognize this isn’t always possible for every mom of twins. ♡

Tales from the trenches: Bottles and pumps

I breastfed my twin boys for 16 months, and had a very challenging start. I volunteer for my community public health department as a “breastfeeding companion.” I provide over-the-phone emotional support to breastfeeding mothers of twins. I am not a breastfeeding professional, but I have been trained and am supported by lactation consultants at the public health department.

Unfortunately, there is very little support for moms who are breastfeeding twins, I am so thankful that you have a category at the TWINS™ Magazine Message Board (TMMB) for those of us who have chosen to breastfeed.

I used formula and expressed breastmilk (EBM) when my milk came in. I needed to supplement because one twin was a terrible latcher and refused to suck. I tube-fed him (tube of EBM or formula from my nipple) and also bottle-fed to supplement.

Medela (breastpumps) and Avent (bottles) were recommended highly by the lactation consultants (LCs) at the hospital. Any double-electric hospital pump will do—it’s best to rent rather than buy. I used a Hollinger breast pump. I borrowed it from my sister-in-law. Medela has a wonderful reputation, but any double-electric hospital-grade pump will do.

Do not get a single electric, or hand pump... pumping is not necessarily for stock when you go out, but to establish milk supply and supplementation at the beginning.

You absolutely need a breastfeeding pillow big enough to handle twins. There are a number of different ones available.

I purchased six bottles before I had my twins and then breastfed exclusively. I didn’t use bottles much once things were well established.

Avent’s storage bottles have the best reputation and I was happy with them. I also bought a bottle warmer, but found it wasn’t necessary.

Christine Guerra
Via e-mail

The Medela Lactina breast pump was recommended by the lactation consultants in the hospital and was the one I used while there. It is very powerful and I can pump much more quickly with a greater result. I also use a hand pump when I am going to be out of the house without the kids for more than three hours.

Our favorite bottles are Dr. Brown’s by Handicraft. They help reduce gas and symptoms of reflux. We tried Playtex and Tri-flow and found Dr. Brown’s to be the best.

We bought brand and didn’t pay much attention to price when shopping for bottles and related equipment. We picked things up piecemeal rather than buying full sets of things.

We use bottles to feed our twins 85% of the time now. I pump and feed them breastmilk. We also have to supplement with formula on occasion. We use Similac Advance ready feed.

Within my family and circle of friends, we all use different brands to feed our babies depending on how their bellies responded. I did receive many coupons for Similac, more so than some of the other brands. Also, the hospital chose the formula we started with at the beginning when we needed to supplement our daughter. I probably would’ve started with a different brand had I thought about it because I had several samples of Nestle’s Good Start from a friend at home. Fortunately, my twins both respond well to the Similac and we don’t have to try any other. Breastmilk is the best thing for them though—they usually have no negative results from it.

Jennifer Soos
Orlando, Fla.
Via e-mail



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1:: Gabriel and Joshua
6 weeks
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Boy/girl twins are (almost) always dizygotic (DZ, "fraternal"). Can you guess whether the same-sex multiples pictured on these pages are monozygotic (MZ, "identical") or dizygotic?



2:: Courtney and Callie
3 years
Springfield, Illinois



3:: Madison and Morgan
3 years
Clinton Township, Michigan



4:: Alexis and Courtney
10 months
Halifax, Massachusetts



5:: Lara and Sofia
1 year
Woodbridge, Virginia



6:: Ty and Caroline
7½ months
Denison, Texas



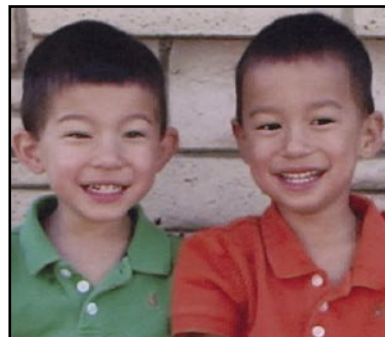
7:: Parker and Peyton
2 years
Benton, Illinois



8:: Dara and Darina
3 years
Fall River, Massachusetts



9:: Gabrielle and Elly
6 months
Peru, New York



10:: Kyle and Noah
34 months
Campbell, California



11:: Megan and Melanie
3 years
Tipp City, Ohio



12:: Drew and Steven
9½ months
Killingworth, Connecticut



13:: Nicole, Taylor and Jenna
13 months
Dakdale, Pennsylvania



14:: Paige and Piper
2 years
Aurora, Colorado



15:: Sophia and Melany
4 months
Long Beach, Georgia



16:: Casey, Sam, Jack and Riley
(Casey/Riley, 2 years; Sam/Jack, 3 years)
St. Louis Park, Minnesota



17:: Seth and Beau
14 months
Bessemer City, North Carolina



18:: Austin and Kate
4 years
Phoenix, Arizona



19:: Matthew and Allison
10 months
Garrett Park, Maryland



20:: Julio and Alex
7 years
Sterling, Virginia

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Please be sure to:

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8 - DZ	7 - MZ	6 - DZ	5 - DZ
4 - DZ	3 - DZ	2 - DZ	1 - DZ

Based on parental reports

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HAPPY endings

As my son was preparing for sleep last night, I heard him counting. Lucas: "Fifty-eight... Fifty-nine..."

Me: "What are you counting?"

Lucas: "I'm counting numbers." Duh, mommy.

—Kendra / stargazer
Nebraska

Mom to Matthew and Lucas
On the TMMB

The other night at dinner (jambalaya for us and chicken and rice, etc., for the girls) Jimmy and I were discussing our plans for the next day. I asked him if he'd want a ham steak in the morning because I had one in the freezer that I would pull. Abby asked if she could have some with her breakfast, too. I was surprised since she doesn't really like ham, but of course agreed.

Abby: "Thanks mommy. I want to have exactly what daddy is having for breakfast tomorrow."

Daddy: "Oh good. That's great Abby."

After a very brief pause, Abby pointed her fork in the direction of Jimmy's dinner plate and asked, "Excuse me, Daddy? Are you having any of what's on your plate now for breakfast tomorrow?"

—supposedlysusan
Texas

On the TMMB

My 3-year-old girls love to look at baby pictures of themselves and love to hear me tell them stories about when they were babies. I tell them they grew in my tummy—Ivy was

here and Jazmine was over here (pointing to my stomach). Well, Ivy wanted to bring her twin dolls with us to the mall yesterday and she was holding them in her carseat. She says out of the blue, "I had these babies in my tummy for three weeks. One was here and one was over here." as she pointed to two places on her tummy.

—lvjazyzy
Superior, Wis.
On the TMMB

I often add a 'y' on the end of everything when speaking to my twins, Ava and Gabrielle. I refer to the shirt-y, blank-y, brush-y...etc. I think I've totally confused them with this one! In the morning I always have a coffee and they've learned to say "hot." They always point to my cup and say "hot." The other day, I replied, "Yes, it's hot coffee." They both start coughing...because last week when they had colds, we kept saying "Oh, that's a bad cough-y."

—Charene
Southern Ontario, Canada
On the TMMB

All four of us were getting ready for dinner tonight. I said our usual grace, then "Amen." Amanda overlapped her hands like she was copying me and said "ELMO" in this soft voice and was so happy.

—Leanne, mom of Amanda and Ashley, 22 months
Delaware
On the TMMB

On Sunday after church, we were gathering the girls' things from their class and I turned around to observe Emma Jean asking a classmate's daddy, with a great deal of skepticism in her voice, "Are you a father?"

He answered, "Why, yes. Are you a daughter?"

She replied, "Uh, well, perhaps. We are really just a couple of kids." She shrugged, gesturing to Abby.

—supposedlysusan
Texas
On the TMMB

Mommy to Luke: "Oh, my, you have a lot of gas today!"

Luke to Mommy: "No, Mommy, peoples do not have gas, cars have gas!"

—2Gifts, mommy to ID boys
On the TMMB

This has been a most bizarre winter for us here in Ontario—mild, rain, and not much snow. On New Year's Day, my husband and I rushed outside after a fresh snow with our 2-year-olds, Kiara and Kalyna, and quickly made a snowman. By the end of that day it was tilting backwards and by morning most of it was melted!

We recently got a pretty big dump of snow and when the girls saw the snow outside, they both said, at the same time, "Where is the snowman?" fully expecting to see a snowman arrive with the new snow!

—Kelly Anne / 2blessed
Ontario, Canada
On the TMMB

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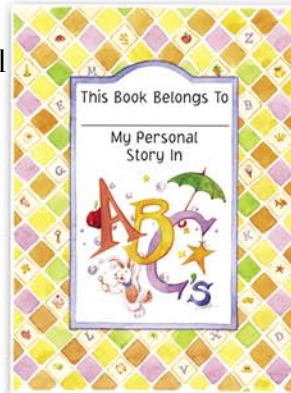
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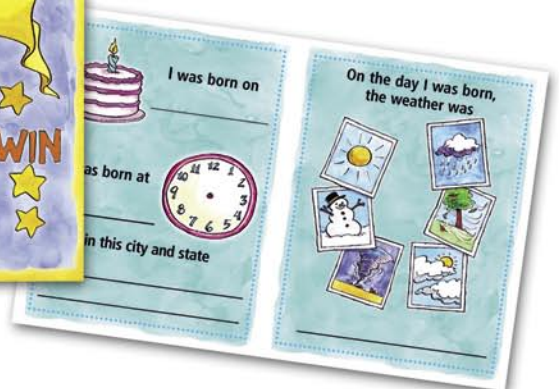
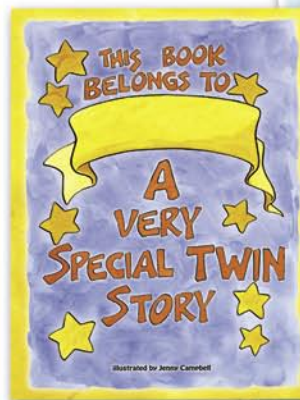
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Emily and Madison, 10 months



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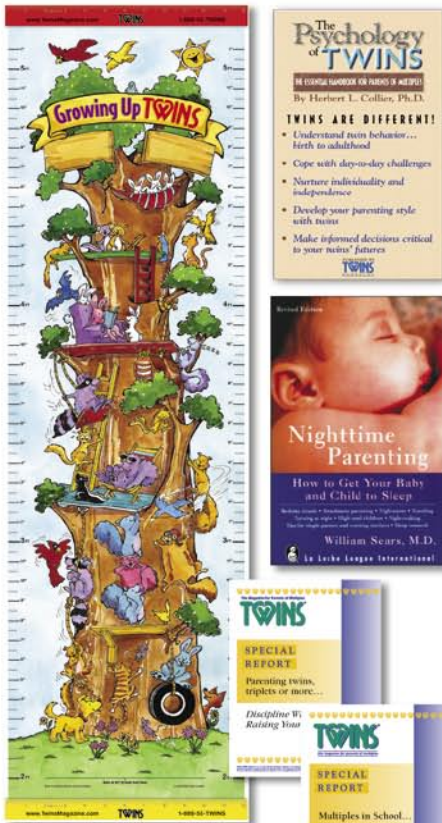
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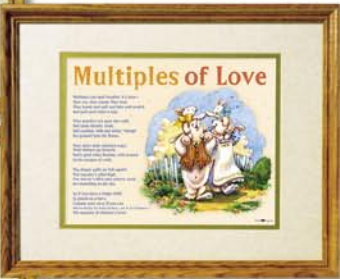
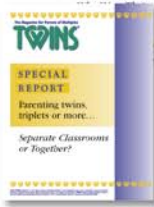
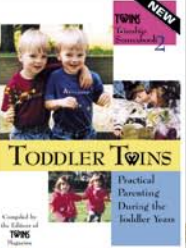


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