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**SAHMs of twins  
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vs.  
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May/June 2007

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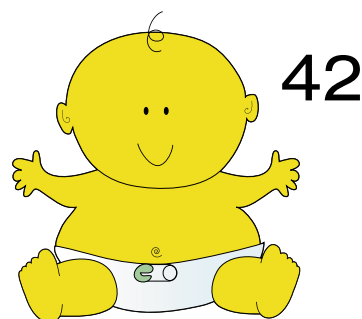
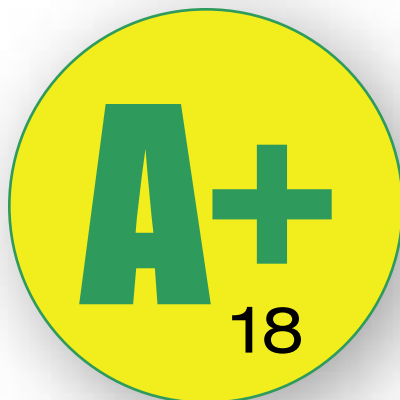
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Cover Photography by Covalli Photography



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## Can you give yourself permission...to slow down?

Oh, Spring! Oh, Summer! Time for long walks, bike rides and satiny air in the mornings and evenings. Take the kids and spend time outdoors!

I don't know what plans your family has for vacation this summer, but ours is heading for a beach on the eastern shore of Lake Michigan, close to where I grew up. I dream of feeling warm, white sugar-sand between my toes, walking out my door a few steps to the shoreline, lying down in warm water and swimming forever. The lake is so clear that even when you're in 30 to 50 feet of water, you can often see the sandy bottom clearly, fish swimming beneath you.

Have you ever taken your twin-kiddos to a rented cottage on a lake for a week or two? Try it sometime. The place need not be fancy. A rundown old shack is fine, for that matter. The more informal, the better. It frees you from feeling that everything has to be straightened up and clean all the time. Time begins to stand still after three or four days; the pace of your days slows. You'll live in a bathing suit and t-shirts. Your kids will play outdoors all day, and take naps under shade trees.

Yes, you'll have to watch the kids because of the lake's appeal—they'll want to be in the water constantly. But, hey, put them in lifejackets full time and you won't worry so much. Meal schedules will disappear and you'll eat cold cuts, veggies and cheese when you're hungry, not when the clock dictates. Ever have fresh sweet corn for breakfast, and a fresh tomato sandwich with mayo for dinner?

Places like this can be relatively inexpensive and you're not driving and moving all the time. Meals are simple, usually eaten on a porch. Hot dogs are your "gourmet" fare. Fresh fruit cobblers are the order of the day, for breakfast as well as desserts.

Best of all, you'll start a summer tradition. When I was growing up, our family never went on trips. I think I was all of 14 before I went any farther from southwestern Michigan than the Wisconsin Dells. What we did do every summer was go to a cottage on a lake. Every single summer. Those memories are incredibly precious, and as clear as if they happened yesterday. Each summer we experienced and learned new things, because we were a year older...we learned to swim, fish, catch crawdads, hunt for worms, catch frogs in the frog pond, catch lake minnows in little nets, row the rowboat, build sand castles that wouldn't collapse overnight, catch fireflies, jump off the dock, swim out and dive off the "big raft" in deep water where the big kids swam, operate the outboard motor on the boat, and water-ski. A really big night out meant driving to town—population 350—with the family to buy a Dairy Queen and watch cabin-cruisers go out the channel to Lake Michigan.

Trips? Who needed trips? Was Disneyland important? No, but staying up late reading a book until it finally turned dark was. And sleeping out on the porch in a makeshift sleeping bag. This was pure heaven, and still is.

No question about it: I'm nostalgic about those simple, summer-magic days. I loved them then, and I love them still. My parents, too, languished in the torpor of those days, napping every afternoon while we discovered bugs on the lawn and playing Crazy Eights, simplified poker and checkers with us at night. Life was hectic enough that they had earned a rest, too.

Nearly every place in the country has lakes not too far away. Even tiny lakes—puddles, we called them—will do. Find one and drive there. Give yourself permission to stop the roller coaster; get off the treadmill. Roast your burgers over an open fire, teach your twins to eat charred marshmallows in the dark. You'll love it and so will your husband and kids.

Enjoy. Savor the summer.



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**All Medela breastpumps are BPA-free**

In light of research potentially linking BPA to health problems, Medela, the world's leading manufacturer of breastpumps, issued a reminder that all of its breast shields and collection containers/bottles are polypropylene, which is completely BPA-free plastic. Existing research indicates polypropylene is completely safe for breast milk collection, storage and feeding products. Products made of polypropylene are easy to identify because BPA-free plastic is slightly cloudier and more flexible. Polycarbonate, which contains BPA, is hard, crystal clear plastic.

**New Hampshire bill to protect twins' rights in school at risk**

Parents of twins are mobilizing relatives and friends across New Hampshire to support NH Bill 78 (aka, the NH Twin Bill) that would allow parents and guardians of multiple-birth children to determine whether their ids are placed in the same or separate classrooms.

It has been common practice in New Hampshire schools to automatically and arbitrarily separate twins as early as pre-K, regardless of the parents' wishes or the children's needs. "Our only wish is to have a say in the classroom placement of our multiples in relation to their siblings," says Trisha Korkosz, New Hampshire twin bill campaign director and mother to 5-year-old twin boys. "We want to put an end to the arbitrary separation (or placement together) of our children based solely on their multiplicity—this is a discriminatory and potentially harmful policy. As parents, we know our children's individual psychological, emotional and social needs and wish to be consulted to help school administrators make the best possible decisions for the children in their care," Korkosz added.

New Hampshire follows the lead of Oklahoma, Minnesota and Illinois, which have laws in place to protect the rights of multiple-birth children. New Hampshire is one of 14 states with draft bills being considered. New Hampshire's Twin Bill 78 was sponsored by Sen. Sheila Roberge (R-Bedford). One of the nine co-sponsors is Sen. Jacalyn Cilley, grandmother of two sets of twins. The law would give parents/guardians of multiple-birth children the primary say in classroom placement.

As of late February, the wording of the bill was still being discussed, and proposed changes in wording threatened to eliminate the right of parents to decide what is best for their twins. Parents of multiples statewide feared decision making power would be placed entirely in the hands of school administrators, with no recourse for parents.

Contact: Trisha Korkosz, tkorkosz@comcast.net or (603)268-0953. Information about twin bill efforts nationwide is available at [www.twinslaw.com](http://www.twinslaw.com).



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**TV producer seeks “fabulously funny family” with twins!**



If your family (with twins or triplets, of course!) is fun, funny, outgoing, and would love to be filmed in your home for a new comedy-reality TV show, check this out! And act quickly!

Endemol USA, producers of ‘Deal or No Deal’ and ‘Extreme Makeover: Home Edition’ is currently casting a new, light-hearted comedy-reality show for TV LAND and seeks a family with great in-laws who will also be part of the show. There must be a mom, dad, twins or triplets...and “hilarious, made-for-tv in-laws.”

Your twins/triplets can be any age—birth to about 12-13 yrs. and don’t need to look alike. They can be boys, girls or some of each. You might have one or more singletons in addition to twins/triplets, too.

The show is all about funny family dynamics so you have to be a “high-functioning” group. Location: You can reside anywhere in the U.S., but the producer would love to find the perfect family in or near Los Angeles (Southern California), if at all possible.

Ask yourself:

- Is your family full of outrageous characters?
- Are your family reunions funnier than a sitcom?
- Are you living a real-life episode of ‘Everybody Loves Raymond’?
- Have you always been told your family should be on tv?

Endemol USA wants to interview families and make a decision by early May. Filming (3 full days, in the family’s home) is expected to occur about mid-May.

The family-with-twins will receive \$5,000 for the honor of being chosen for this show.

Deadline for your response: May 1, 2007.

To be considered, call 310-499-0239 and tell them you’re a “TWINS MAGAZINE family” OR send an email to [castinginlaws@yahoo.com](mailto:castinginlaws@yahoo.com) with “TWINS MAGAZINE family” in your subject line.

**Twin boys starring on The Great White Way**

Bridger and Brecken Palmer, 8, just wrapped up a guest-starring role as the younger versions of Disney’s star twins Zach and Cody in “The Suite Life of Zach and Cody.” These fraternal twins are “On their way!” exclaims their publicist (in a classic display of humility). The LA residents began acting at age 4, says mom Natalie Palmer. They were cast as a the son of Evan Handler in a 2004 pilot filmed for CBS. “Although they’re fraternal twins, with the same haircut and clothing, people are easily fooled,” she told TWINS. At 6, they were cast in “Yours, Mine and Ours” as Dennis Quaid’s squabbling twins, each with his own character.

“For four months, I schlepped the kids about 65 miles from home (east of LA, inland) to Culver City and Valencia to film the movie,” says Natalie. She says show business was the absolute furthest thing from the family’s minds when they moved to California in 1999. Bridger and Brecken were 2. Not long afterwards, the Palmers’ older daughter, Jaelin, was cast in a local theater production of “Annie,” which led Natalie to talk with a manager, who got all four of the Palmer kids signed up with an agent.

“A mom of another girl performing in ‘Annie and I became friends,” recounts Natalie, “and upon seeing Jaelin’s contagious energy and outgoing personality she said ‘You should get her an agent. I don’t know what you’re waiting for.’ Two weeks later, our newly-acquired manager had all four of our kids signed with an agent. It’s been a challenge from our home in San Bernardino County but the pay-off for our drives is that when we’re not in LA, we are home in a nice town with a nice house and yard, luxuries we’d never be able to afford in LA on a school teacher’s salary.”



After four years of having kids who act on tv and in movies, Natalie is still surprised at how tenacious is the myth of bad-children actors and horrid stage-mothers. “I’ve found child actors to be kind, considerate and have manners far better than those of ay kids I could find in our neighborhood or school,” she told TWINS. “The moms are supportive of each other, considerate at auditions and are a great community. It’s unfortunate that we hear about a few child actors gone bad when 99% of child actors grow up to be educated, productive citizens. Something like 95% of child actors who’ve appeared in series go on to Ivy League schools and have great careers either in show business or out.”

Natalie Palmer says what her kids have experienced is “thoughtful, well-mannered children who extend their hand and say, ‘Nice to meet you!’ upon introduction.” Waiters, secretaries, salespeople and friends of the family often remark to Natalie and her husband that they have “the most polite children!” and she credits that directly to acting, where they are always “learning how to deal with adults and other children with respect.”

They’ve also toured children’s cancer hospitals and had a chance, at ages 7 and 8, to see how lucky they are. “They’re participating next month in the Children’s Cancer Research Fund 5k walk/run, and these charity opportunities give me a chance to remind them what a blessing it is to be healthy.”

On the rare occasions the duo are asked to sign autographs, Natalie says, “they do it humbly...they could care less about being famous, and they don’t worry about not ‘booking’ most of the projects they audition for. They’ve learned that rejection is part of

the process and it doesn't affect them because they can only do their best. They are just normal, happy boys who go to public school, ride their bikes in our neighborhood, wrestle, play video games. All of it together, of course!" (For statistics and more information about child actors, go to [www.bizparent.com](http://www.bizparent.com).)

### Out and about with 'Twice the Love'

Mom of twins Lynne Sella and her twin daughters, Sarah (left) and Katherine, held a book-signing at their local independent bookstore, Margie's Book Nook in Susanville, Calif. They had a great time talking about the life of a family with twins and the "Stories of Inspiration" contained in *Twice the Love*, by Susan Heim. Lynne's story is one of the 82 tales-from-the-trenches contained in the recently-published compilation.



### Twins are truly 'two in a million'

My twins Serah and Stephen burst into the world five weeks early at the Medical Center of Plano in Plano, Texas. Stephen arrived weighing 4 lbs. 11 oz., followed by his sister, Serah, two minutes later, at 5 lbs. 10 oz. They were rushed to the NICU at Sheridan Children's Healthcare at Plano Medical, where they stayed for only four days.

Now a year old, Serah's fair complexion and blue-green eyes starkly contrast with her brother Stephen's mocha complexion and dark eyes. As parents, we naturally see our children as precious, but after several friends remarked about their amazing differences, we realized we had truly unique twins.

Stephen more closely resembles his older sister Samantha than his twin. Born 17 weeks prematurely, Samantha, 2, is still quite small and is not much larger than her brother and sister. People are always assuming we have triplets—it's a fun story to tell.

Genetics tell us a person inherits skin color differently from inheritance of eye color. For example, if a dark eye-color gene mixes with a light eye-color gene, the dark eye color will dominate. However, for skin color, the combination of light and dark skin genes usually results in a blended, medium-brown tone. But not for our twins. I'm African-American, dark-complexioned with brown eyes, while my husband, Scott, is Caucasian, fair-complexioned

with blue-green eyes. And our beautiful twins apparently defy the genetic odds.

I've checked it out. The phenomenon of polarized skin tones among twins is very rare. According to the Human Genome Project, every human has 25,000 to 35,000 genes. Only 10 of those play a major role in determining skin color. A leading researcher on the subject, Dr. Lawrence Tenzer told me: "When a white person and black person mate, their child will be an intermediate combination of the all the light-skin color genes of one parent and the all dark-skin color genes of the other parent. Pigment-producing skin color genes may vary in potency, which explains the reason several offspring of a white and black couple may differ slightly in shade from one another."



© 2007 Photography by Melissa Gill

Experts believe the occurrence of twins born with contrasting skin color is about a million-to-one. Dr. Tenzer explained, "On extremely rare occasions, interracial couples have produced sets of twins with different colors. In each instance, one child is light-complexioned and the other is dark-complexioned." Five such cases exist in England, he said—the Smith twins, girls Remee and Kian; the Chamock twins; a set of Dutch boys, Koen and Tuen (conceived in vitro with different fathers); British boys named Richardson; and a sixth case in Australia, girls Alicia and Jasmin.

I was told our twins are the only documented case in the U.S., and are the seventh set of such twins worldwide. Stephen and Serah are the only boy/girl set of the seven.

The extraordinary odds of this occurring were explained in London's Daily Mail when girl/girl twins, Remee and Kian, were born in ??: "Very occasionally, the egg or sperm might contain genes coding for (only) one skin color. If both the egg and sperm contain all white genes, the baby will be white. And if both contain just the versions necessary for black skin, the baby will be black. For a mixed-race couple, the odds of either of these scenarios are around 100 to one. But both scenarios can occur at the same time if the woman conceives non-identical twins, another 100 to one chance. This involves two eggs being fertilized by two sperm at the same time, which also has odds of around 100 to one. If a sperm containing all-white genes fuses with a similar egg and a sperm coding for purely black skin fuses with a similar egg, two babies of dramatically different colors will be born. The odds of this happening are 100 x 100 x 100—a million to one."

Just imagine—we have two in a million!

—Sonya Judd

## Populating schools in Illinois district

I just called TWINS™ and ordered a gift subscription for a school administrator and his wife who had twins in August (a boy and a girl). I thought you'd be interested to know how many administrators in our school district are parents of multiples! Athens CUSD #213 is located in Athens, Ill., 15 miles north of Springfield, the state capitol. With just over 1,000 students in our district, we have five district administrators, four of whom are parents of multiples or are expecting them. The Superintendent has four children, two of whom are twins, a boy/girl set 6 months old. The Junior High Principal for whom I purchased the subscription has b/g twins, 4 months; I'm the Assistant Superintendent and Intermediate School Principal, with three children, including twin boys, 15; our High School Principal just learned his wife is expecting triplets. We are populating our schools!

David Andel, Cantrall Intermediate School  
Athens, Ill.  
Via email

## Panic is an understatement

We have twin girls, 17 months. When my daughters were born, one suffered from a condition called esophageal atresia with tracheoesophageal fistula. We were unfamiliar with this, and as our daughter was whisked away in a LifeFlight helicopter, we were panicked and in shock, unprepared for her to have surgery to repair her esophagus and trachea at 2 days old.

We learned this condition is common, occurring in 1 of every 3,500 to 4,000 births, yet we'd never heard of it. Our daughter came through surgery and was home 10 days later. She is very healthy now.

This condition has nothing to do with our daughter being a twin, but because it is so common, I wanted to let other parents know about it so they would feel more at ease if they are faced with the same situation.

Thank you for your very insightful magazine!  
Tina Showalter, mom of Katelyn & Noelle  
Via email

## Fraternal conceived weeks apart

Where can I find out more info about my twins? They were born the same day but were conceived 4-6 weeks apart! This occurred 36 years ago but, for several reasons, I have never been able to find out anything about this. Now that I finally have a computer I decided to try and find some answers. At the time my twins were born, a woman in Boston gave birth to a white baby and a black baby, but in her case she was married to one man, had an affair with another and got pregnant by both men within a week!

Monika Auger  
Cape Cod, Mass.  
Via email

*Editor's note: Your twins are definitely twins....it is quite common for*

*fraternal (dizygotic) twins to be born following fertilization of their two separate eggs hours, days, or weeks apart. So your story is a fairly common one. It would be interesting to know if their birth weights were quite different. We're assuming from your letter that your babies both have the same father. How did doctors or someone else determine that their two eggs had been fertilized 4-6 weeks apart?*

*There are some excellent books about the twinning process. Visit our website ([www.TwinsMagazine.com](http://www.TwinsMagazine.com)) and click on Twins Bookshelf to see what's available. A columnist for TWINS, who is an MD and PhD, Gary Steinman, has discussed the process of twinning in great depth. You may purchase back issues of TWINS if you would find those useful.*

## Monoamniotic twins

I am a mom of monoamniotic twins born at 27 weeks. They are 14 months now and are doing great. I was wondering if any of your past magazines have featured stories about monoamniotic twinning? Because it is so rare, it is nice to read about others who have also experienced it.

Thank you for such a wonderful resource.  
Jennifer McLincha  
Via e-mail

*Editor's note: We frequently run stories by parents whose children are monozygotic, monoamniotic twins, particularly if they experience twin-to-twin transfusion syndrome. We invite Jennifer, and other parents, to share their experiences with us, and to share information with each other on our website at [www.TwinsMagazine.com](http://www.TwinsMagazine.com), where they can click on Message Board, and sign up to converse with each other in several different forums where the subject comes up quite frequently, including the Twin-To-Twin Transfusion Syndrome Forum.*

## Help for MOMs with disabled kids

Although I am not a TWINS™ subscriber, I read the letter from Christine Flemming in MailBox (Jan./Feb., 2007, ... "Speech disability has Alex's mom very worried") at the suggestion of a member in my local twins club (Laura Stanton). I might be of assistance to Ms. Flemming. I am the Multiples with Special Needs Coordinator for the Richmond (VA) Association of Mothers of Multiples. As the mother of a twin with Down Syndrome, my heart broke to read that this mother feels so alone. If she is willing, I would love to obtain her contact information so that I might offer her my support and the support of other members of our club in similar situations. I have asked myself the same tough questions that she has many times over and understand where she is coming from emotionally. I actually created the Multiples with Special Needs Coordinator position three months after my twins were born, so other moms of multiples with special needs could have easy access to a support network.

I would be happy to offer information or help to you or to other moms of twins, or to other chapters if anyone needs information or assistance, as I am very passionate about the topic. Feel free to run my email address with this letter.

Allison Wixted, MOM to Taylor Shea (Down Syndrome) & Landon Alexander (2/25/05) and Karis Olivia (11/28/06)



## mail box

Richmond, Va.  
phmd2b2000@aol.com  
Via email

*Editor's note: What a wonderful position for every twins club around the country to think about adding! Great effort, Allison. I forwarded Allison's contact information to Christine and hope they'll get together. I've asked Allison to write more about how her program and support efforts work locally, so other clubs can piggyback on this excellent idea. Stay tuned.*

### Twins with twins + twins

We're writing to tell you about our "Twin Story." We are identical



Tanner and Hunter

twins and we each have a set of almost-5-year-old fraternal twin boys, born only seven weeks apart. They are very close friends and love to spend time together, as my sister and I do. We have had the best time with it all, and when we tell the story—whether it is at work or walking in the mall—people just can't believe it.

All four boys attended the same daycare facility until recently, so they were used to seeing each other often. Now we try to get them together every weekend or for an occasional sleepover—always a little hectic, but fun.

We wanted to share our story and photos. Enjoy!

Michelle Hall & Kim McLendon  
Via email



Dustin and Daylan

### When one or both twins have disabilities

My wife and I have enjoyed TWINS™

Magazine since the birth of our identical twins, Peter and Ben. I'm a twin myself, and my twin sister (who is a mom of fraternal twins) gave us a subscription as a gift.

Peter and Ben are now 2 1/2. My wife was diagnosed with TTTS at 26 weeks, and the boys were born just under a month later. Peter, the donor twin, has microcephaly and CP. He is doing great. His brother Ben is normal.

As you are well aware, the incidence of twins, triplets and higher-order multiples is increasing. With multiple pregnancies come increased attendant risks, some of which may cause disabilities. In your recent issue (MailBox, Speech disability, Jan./Feb., 2007, p. 15) there was a letter from a reader that was hard to forget. Christine Flemming wrote of the uncertainty, guilt and worry that comes when a child is diagnosed with a disability.

Why not publish a regular column in your magazine to address these issues, called TWINS (Twins With Increased NeedS)? There are so many things to consider: The initial adjustment to the new reality that comes with such a diagnosis, the ongoing attempts to

sort out what is best for the affected child, and the struggle to give all children in the family as normal a childhood as possible. I like to think that this regular feature could be helpful to parents facing these issues, and instructive to other parents as well. I think it could be uplifting and hopeful.

Just an idea. If you like it (or don't) let me know. I'd be happy to write the feature for you. I have quite a few ideas. I've been thinking about this for quite a while. I am a Family Physician and work in a small town in Northern Minnesota. I feel qualified to write about the medical issues involved, and aware enough to know who to call when I have questions.

Keep up the good work.

John Wood, MD

Via email

*Editor's note: We like the idea a lot. Stay tuned.*

## TWinfo

It's relatively rare to have multiple sets of multiples. Chances of having 2 sets of dizygotic (DZ-fraternal) twins: 1 in 3000. Chances of having 1 set of monozygotic (MZ-identical) twins and 1 set of DZ-fraternals: 1 in 10,000. Chances of having 2 sets of MZ-identical twins: 1 in 70,000. Chance of having 3 sets of twins (any zygosity): about 1 in 500,000.

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## Star-struck

Inadvertently last month's issue of TWINS (Jan./Feb., 2007) got sent to the recycling bin. In the issue, you had a website for twins looking to get into movies, magazines, etc. Would you be able to send me that address? I would greatly appreciate it for my 2-year-old fraternal boy twins. Thanks!

Amye Soboleski  
Via email

*Editor's note: Thanks for being a loyal subscriber, Amye! We put a replacement issue in the mail for you, since there were a couple of stories about getting twinnies into movies, tv and/or modeling. In the meantime, the websites mentioned in a Letter to the Editor were [www.TwinsTalent.tv](http://www.TwinsTalent.tv) and [www.TwinsWorld.com](http://www.TwinsWorld.com).*

## TWINS-R-US?

I would like to know if you have any outlets/stores in South Africa, particularly in the Kwazulu Natal Region, Pietermaritzburg?

Carmel Singh, AMU/Engineering Buyer  
Control Instruments, South Africa  
Via email

*Editor's note: We haven't yet expanded into a worldwide chain of bricks-and-mortar retail stores, but we're so pleased that you're interested. In the meantime, please visit [www.TwinsMagazine.com](http://www.TwinsMagazine.com) and check out our exclusive offerings of baby-necessaries, gifts, books at the Twins Shoppe and Twins Bookshelf. This is by far the best way to locate unique twin-specific products. And we've just put a lot of products on Clearance at unbelievably low prices, to make room for more new merchandise offerings in the fall.*

## ID twins with ID twin-kids

In response to reader Dan Blitz (Mailbox, Jan./Feb., 2007) who read an article stating there are "no records of ID twins ever having had ID twins anywhere in the world," I'm wondering exactly what statistics that article is reflecting, i.e., are they referring to each of the ID twins having ID twins? Or are they stating that no ID twin has ever given birth to ID twins? My very good friend, Jen, is an ID twin and had ID twin boys. You featured Jen and her ID sister, along with Jen's ID twin boys, in your Mailbox column last year. This seems very common, so I was curious as to why this reader, and the article he read, makes it seem like such an impossible thing?

Kimberly Sullivan  
Clearwater, Fla.  
Via email

*Editor's note: This is quite common. In fact, Mr. Blitz was asking about the MZ (identical) twins who had married MZ twins, and one couple has MZ babies. Now that's a rarer occurrence, indeed...as noted in the March/April issue, Craig and Mark married Diane and Darlene and one couple has twin infants. Craig and Mark created [www.twinstuff.com](http://www.twinstuff.com).*

## Zygosity testing

I am a new mother to 4-month-old twin boys who are believed to be identical. I'm also a new subscriber to your magazine. I am

wondering which company you could recommend I use for DNA zygosity testing. I saw that your magazine carries advertising by both Proactive Genetics and Affiliated Genetics. Please let me know if you have had experience or heard testimonials about either company or any others. I am looking for a relatively inexpensive and accurate test. Thank you in advance for your advice.

Julie Reid  
Via email

*Editor's note: I've heard very good things about both Proactive and Affiliated. Equally important, I've never received a single complaint about either company. And believe me, if either company failed to follow through with its customers, I'd hear about it right away! They've both advertised in TWINS for many years and are the two leading companies in this field. Both are relatively inexpensive, are easy to carry out and are a good value. They are equally accurate, from what I understand, and the type of DNA testing they do is considered to be highly reliable. It's a great idea to have the test done now while your twins are infants...a simple swab-sample of the inside of each child's mouth is taken and sent in for results. This will help immensely as you go along in terms of any allergies or other physical/medical conditions that crop up and bear watching. Remember that "nature" is a major—and highly significant—part of the people-puzzle, but it's not the total answer...."nurture" in the form of home dynamics, physical environment, lifestyle factors and other external triggers can influence each individual's physical, psychological, emotional and intellectual development throughout life, too. This has clearly been documented in studies of twins raised apart. You've got two fabulous little individuals. Thanks for subscribing and stay in touch while your kiddos grow.*

## Identical, fraternal or in-between?

Parents of same-sex twins always wonder if they have identical or fraternal twins. Without a DNA test there's no absolute way to tell. Even if each child had its own sac and placenta, they can still be monozygotic (identical)—though it's more common for MZ twins to share a sac.

Now there's a third option: Semi-identical twins. Geneticists have called this condition a kind of mix between identical and fraternal twins. Semi-identical twins occur when one egg is fertilized by two sperm. Both twins have identical DNA from the mother, since they shared the egg, but have different DNA from the father since two separate sperm were involved.

It's thought to be very rare for an egg to be fertilized by two sperm and then separate to form two embryos. For MZ/identical twins, one fertilized egg splits to form two identical embryos. For dizygotic/fraternal twins, two separate eggs are fertilized by one sperm each, forming two embryos.

The concept of semi-identical twins was only a hypothesis until recently. Doctors documented a pair of semi-identical twins who were being treated. One was male; the other had both male and female genitalia.

This semi-identical idea will probably take some time to catch on. If companies make DNA testing available to detect this new

category, parents can know for sure what type of twins they have. As science continues to unravel the genetic mysteries of twins, we parents will continue to unravel the domestic mysteries of twins—such as how exactly do you keep twin toddlers entertained and safe long enough to take a bathroom break?

Laura Munion  
Via email

### Kindergarten lottery forces twin separation

I need help. My twin boys are about to enter kindergarten. Our elementary school has a lottery system for its all-day program. The school's rule is that each of my children has their name in the lottery and BOTH must be chosen to get into the program together.

I find this unfair, since they need to be together. Why not have a family name in the lottery and if that gets chosen they both get in?

The lottery took place and only one of my children's names was chosen. Basically, I need to separate them, or give up our spot. This seems very unfair, especially considering the odds that they both would be chosen when 60 children wanted the all-day program and there are only 40 spots.

My boys are fraternal. We live in El Dorado Hills, Calif., near Sacramento. After I found out what the school's process was for the lottery regarding twins, I tried to contact the principal to discuss the process at length; however, she had someone return my call to let me know that the process was as she had decided, and if the boys both were not chosen for the all-day kindergarten, then the school would make sure both were placed in the a.m. or p.m. program, which puzzled me even more. Why not make the system fair to begin with?

At that point, I was running out of time and the lottery resulted in only one of my children being chosen for the all-day program. I came to find out that another family with twins had only one child chosen as well, and had to relinquish their spot for obvious reasons. I called the school district, which told me this was the only way to make the system fair for families with one child. I have until 4 p.m. today (3/26/07) to accept the one position or let it go. As you can see, time is of the essence.

Basically, as I see it, this system is unfair due to the fact that the parents with multiples do not have the same odds of getting chosen as those families with only one child. As I see it, this system is designed to eliminate the chance that parents of twins can participate in the all-day program, and constitutes discrimination.

Do you have any information on these kinds of practices?

Terry Wilson  
Via email

*Editor's note: This is the first time we've heard of this kind of lottery, and about the seemingly inherent unfairness in requiring that each child's name be drawn in order for them to be together. Is there any appeal process at all? We asked other parents of twins on the TWINS Message Board if they've had experience with a lottery like this and received no replies by press time, so this must be quite rare. We'll keep checking.*

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Setting the record straight on MZ twins

In your March/April issue, there is a story on page 5 headlined, "Family now has 2 sets of identical (MZ) twins; it's rare." The article states that "Identical twins account for 1/6 of all twin-sets." That is fairly accurate based on 1:45 births are twins and about 1:285 are identical. (6 x 45 = 270).

The statement that "Having two sets is relatively rare" is also true—in fact, it is very, very rare—unassisted, that is. But your statement that "the chance of having twins in general is 1 in 320" is not true—it is 1 in 45 overall.

The story states, "The chance of having one set of MZ twins is 1 in 640" is also not true. It is about 1 in 280 overall.

Your statement that "The chance of having two sets of MZ twins in about 1 in 1280" is also not true—it's about 1 in 90,000.

Someone started out okay on the rough percentage of twinning. I think you were on track for MZ twins at the 1:320 mark, which is in the vicinity of the various stated numbers for MZ twins (1:285-320), but it got away from you after that.

The MZ (identical) twinning rate, by the way, is the same over all races and geographies. It is not genetic and apparently cannot be influenced for external factors.

Fraternal (DZ) twinnings rates, however, vary by geography (for example, Boston, MA, has the highest DZ twinning rate in North America, and also has the highest density of fertility clinics); affluence, which affects use of fertility drugs and in vitro; the age of the mother, in that more professional women try to have children later in life, and throw off more eggs due to age or use of fertility drugs or AI; genetics, in that the African tribe has the highest known DZ twinning rate, and DZ twins also tends to run in the family.

We had a set of MZ twins 25 months ago, so I found out about twinning at that time.

Victor Vernon Burns

Via email

*Editor's note: We stand corrected. Definitely an "Oops!" moment. We went to the website we considered most authoritative and used some of their statistics. Thank you so much for setting the record straight. May we call on you in the future when we have questions of this type arise and we need a good mathematician?*

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# SAHM vs. career / work?

## Decision is riddled with far-reaching implications....

Every expectant mom-to-be is faced with the choice of staying at home or returning to work after her babies are born. The decision has huge emotional implications for both Mom and Dad, and financial consequences because of the expense and logistics of day care for two babies.

Babies in day care have more colds and infections, another consideration. But babies born prematurely sometimes can't be exposed to a lot of viruses and bacteria early in life. Even parents of babies who aren't premature groan at the thought of constant sickness and coughs from day care centers.

Most recently, a major study was released in the journal *Child Development* that documented significant behavioral problems, including much more aggression and disobedience, lasting into the pre-teen years among children who spend a lot of time in day-care settings.

For many parents of twins, the decision also is fraught with values-related,

religious and child-education implications. Do you want to be able to impart your family's own personal values to your children as they develop? Are your babies and toddlers going to be taught to respect their elders and peers? Will they be taught decent manners at day care? What about religious views and teachings, if I want my kids to grow up exposed to what I believe?

Parents ask themselves, "What about educational considerations? Do children put into day care fare better or worse than children raised by a parent at home?" Interestingly, the answer there is a bit clearer: Children put into so-called "high quality" day care settings from an early age have better vocabulary, math and reading skills upon entering school than children raised at home or with a primary caregiver. Yet these advanced abilities seldom last beyond early grades.

TWINS™ asked moms to share their stories and received a cross-section of

contributions from around the U.S. From their tales-from-the-trenches, we drew several broad conclusions:

- ✓ Moms of multiples found this one of the most difficult decisions of their lives.
- ✓ These women felt committed to their jobs and careers, regardless of positions, pay, or status, and found it hard to think of giving up fulfilling work to stay home.
- ✓ In each case, the decision process involved consideration of many factors, cost being a very important one.
- ✓ Every stay-at-home mom of twins is pleased with her decision and would do the same thing again.
- ✓ The SAHMs who found part-time work seem happiest of all.

In our July/August issue, we'll introduce you to moms of multiples from around the country who had poignant tales to relate. And some who've revisited their decisions from back then, or are revisiting the choice now that their twins are nearly in school. Stay tuned.

Catherine and Benjamin, 8 months



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# KNOWLEDGE MAKES THE DIFFERENCE: Navigating a NICU stay

By Jennifer Smith, RN, and Bradie Kvinsland, CCLS

**T**he birth of multiples is an emotional experience. If your babies require care in the pediatric or neonatal intensive care units (PICU, NICU), feelings of fear, inadequacy, guilt, grief and isolation are common.

But parents aren't powerless! You're extremely important in caring for your newborns.

First, familiarize yourself with the basics: Learn where you can park long-term, eat, make telephone calls, access computers, shower and sleep. Inquire about the NICU's guidelines for visitors and parents. Ask if the unit has a pager you can carry with you if you need to leave the unit or the hospital.

## Be assertive

Don't be shy—ask until you understand every detail. Your babies need you to be their constant advocate. To accomplish this, you must understand what the health care team is saying to you. You will feel overwhelmed, tired and stressed. Because of this, make an extra effort to retain the information given to you. Take notes constantly, and keep journals for your reference.

Determine who's in charge of your babies' care and when they can talk with you each day about your babies' progress.

## Hierarchies in the hospital

Understand the chain of command with the doctors and nurses. If you are in a teaching hospital, ask about the role of residents, fellows and "attending" so you know who to go to for what. If you have nursing concerns or questions your bedside nurse can't answer or doesn't answer to your satisfaction, ask for the "charge nurse."

Ask another person to join you when you're obtaining information.

## Take good notes

Write down all information being given to you for later reference and continue to ask questions until you understand everything thoroughly. Keep a separate journal for each

baby to document important daily events. If lab tests or procedures are done, find out when the results will be ready and who will communicate them to you.

Ask questions about what all of the tubes, wires and monitors are doing to help your babies. Educate yourself and you will feel empowered and less fearful.

Good notes are helpful in sparking additional questions later. Few parents or patients know enough medical terminology to be able to come up with questions instantly during a conversation. Write your questions down for follow-up.

## When decisions are needed

You may need to ask the health care professional to come back at a later time so you have time to discuss options with your spouse or partner and come up with more questions. This is completely acceptable, and enables your family to make informed decisions. It's usually not necessary for you to make on-the-spot decisions. Take time to think things through and talk them through with family members.

## Constant comfort

Although the doctors and nurses are providing medical care for your newborns, you play an essential role as a constant comforter for your babies. Research has proven what mothers have known instinctively all along—babies respond best to parents who are prepared to lend comforting touch, sounds and smells. The American Academy of Pediatrics, in its article, "Family-Centered Care and the Pediatrician's Role", affirms that family presence during health care procedures decreases anxiety for a child and for the parents. Research indicates that when parents are prepared, they do not prolong or hinder procedures or make providers more anxious. A series of quality improvement studies found that children who underwent surgery with their parents present cried less, were less restless, and required less medication. Parents in this study assisted in pain

assessment and pain management.

Your involvement with your babies enhances their hospital experience. The tips below will give you a jumpstart in learning how to be involved.

## Feeding and massage

Provide your breast milk if you are able. Ask the nursing staff for help with beginning and sustaining milk supply by pumping if your babies can't breastfeed initially.

Ask the nurses when good times of the day would be for you and your spouse to do infant massage. Massaging your newborns enhances bonding, aids growth and development, promotes parent-child communication and improves your babies' sleep. (*Childbirth*. "What is infant massage?" 1998. [www.childbirth.org/articles/baby/infantmassage.html](http://www.childbirth.org/articles/baby/infantmassage.html)) Nurses can help until you're comfortable with the babies' tubes and wires.

Use your hands to "contain" your babies if they must be unwrapped for procedures. You may also hold a pacifier to help your baby soothe himself.

## Procedures, kangaroo-care

Request procedures that must be performed for or with both babies be done at separate times so you may help with each.

Ask your nurses about doing "Kangaroo Care". Your babies love to skin-to-skin contact. You and others can help provide this close contact for your multiples, ensuring each baby receives important skin contact.

Keep close track of each baby's medicines and what each medication is doing for each child. Keep a log of daily events and changes in care for your babies—in other words, keep a separate "chart" for each of them.

You will quickly become the expert for your babies, because you are constantly by their bedsides. You will be amazed at how often you are "called on" by your health care team.

Once you begin learning your babies' likes and dislikes, make signs and hang them

around their room and/or isolettes to remind the care providers of your babies' specific needs.

### Going home – excitement & apprehension

Leaving the hospital with your fragile babies can be just as scary as entering it. You'll leave the security of your medical support system and will be making many decisions on your own. It's normal for you to feel insecure and question your readiness to take your babies home. Being prepared will help alleviate some of these feelings.

Most hospitals offer CPR and first-aid classes. Take advantage of these if you are able and bring along a close friend and family members to learn with you.

Make a "home care" schedule that fits your life at home and incorporates your babies. Have a day or two in the hospital before leaving during which you carry out your trial-and-error process, with you providing the total care for your babies.

Will there be anyone available in your home to help you maintain this schedule and care for your other children? Think about this and set up your support system ahead of time.

Understand treatments that need to be done at home for each baby. Be comfortable and informed about medications. Keep medications in a separate bin labelled clearly for each baby at home, to avoid confusion between your babies (especially at night!).

Have prescriptions filled ahead of time so they are ready before you leave the hospital. If you have frozen breast milk, bring a cooler to transport your milk home with you. Have fresh, clean clothes in which to dress your babies for their trip home.

Practice putting the car seats in and out of the car before you ever take your babies outside. Once your babies are secure you may use receiving blankets around them.

Once home, babies need to adjust to new sounds and smells in their new environment. Help them by giving a tour, keeping one of the blankets from the hospital near each baby containing the smells with which they have become comfortable. Keep your home temperature around 72 degrees Fahrenheit initially.

Avoid comparing your premature babies' development with other infants who were born near their due dates. Your doctor will even apply a "correction factor" to your babies that will base their developmental exam on your due date.

### You're the expert

Despite the health care team's medical knowledge and expertise, you have special attributes and skills that no health care professional can match: Strong love for your babies and a familiarity that your babies find calming. Asking questions, advocating for your babies and becoming involved as much as you can will promote a quicker discharge from the NICU. And in the process, this begins to empower you to take your multiples home. ♥

---

Jennifer Smith is a critical care RN specializing in babies and children. Bradie Kvinsland is a certified child life specialist. Together, they co-authored *One Step at a Time* and *Life's Toughest Moments* ([www.journeytowardhealing.com](http://www.journeytowardhealing.com)), books that help parents navigate the hospital experience with young children.



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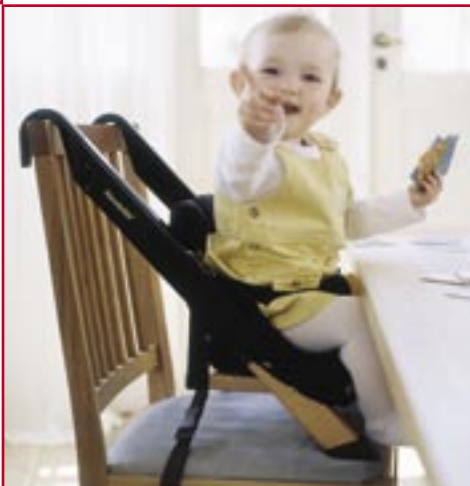
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# Ask the Twins Nanny!

by Michelle LaRowe  
Multiples-Nanny Specialist

## Battle #1: Mealtime Mania...Managing multiples and keeping the peace

**T**oddler tantrums, hunger strikes and flying food surely contribute to why mealtimes are often reported as the No. 1 daily battle for today's busy families. Throw in a set of twins or triplets and the battle quickly escalates into war.

From serving a meal that satisfies everyone to finding time for preparation of what you've finally settled on, navigating a path to the dinner table often seems to require defusing more grenades than the end result justifies. The term IED cropped up when the Iraq War was underway, but parents of twins have long known about improvised explosive devices in the kitchens of their homes.

Before you begin waving your white flag in surrender, consider these tried-and-true tips that will surely assure victory over your next mealtime struggle.

### Mealtime isn't just mealtime

Think back to the first few months your twin infants were introduced to solid foods. You'd settle them in their sparkling new high-chairs, pull them up to the kitchen table, put on their trusty bibs and begin to spoonfeed them their first tiny bites of pureed people-food. You knew their "real nutrition" was not coming from these experiences—or at least you hoped so, since most of the food never made it into their mouths. But you understood the importance of teaching them to eat—this was a time when they tried new things, learned how to interact at the table, mastered new skills and began to share in the family experience of eating together.

Mealtime is a learning experience for toddlers and older children, too. Time spent around the kitchen table eating together as family is an opportunity to socialize, learn acceptable dining etiquette, build family traditions, and learn healthy eating habits. Children who don't eat dinner frequently with their families are 61% more likely to use alcohol, tobacco, or il-

legal drugs, studies have clearly shown. By contrast, children who eat dinner with their families every night of the week are 20% less likely to drink, smoke, or use illegal drugs.

Focusing on the importance of daily family time rather than on preparing a gourmet meal helps you approach mealtimes with a different perspective.

### Be predictable

Transitioning from playtime to dinner-time is usually difficult for kids. Having a predictable daily schedule and routine ensures the transition goes smoothly. Set a time for meals and give a warning a few minutes before playtime needs to end—this goes a long way toward helping kids learn to shift gears and move from playtime to mealtime.

Have a signal that the time has come helps your twins move from one activity to the next. Ringing a dinner bell, for example, sends a clear message that mealtime has arrived.

Establish a mealtime routine, such as using the bathroom and washing hands before heading over to the kitchen table, sitting in the same seats each night, and starting the meal with everyone together by saying a short blessing promotes mealtime unity among family members.

### Have realistic expectations

Remember that "accidents happen" and expect that your young twins will have occasional spills. If you expect things to happen, you'll be unflappable in the face of events when they do happen, and your unflappability goes a long way toward keeping a calm atmosphere during mealtimes.

Determine in advance how long mealtimes will last. This sets you up for success. Kids' attention span and ability to sit still at the table is shorter than yours, so it helps to set a timer for the time you determine "mealtime" will last. Remind your twins

they may ask to be excused only after the timer has gone off. Twenty minutes to a half-hour at the dinner table is realistic for children under 5.

Mealtime is also a great opportunity to get everyone involved. Children need to feel like a needed part of the family team. If you prepare meals right before dinner, rather than at naptime, enlist your children to help. Create a "kitchen duty" chart and assign age-appropriate tasks to your twins—putting placemats in place, carrying plates, setting the table, putting glasses and napkins by each setting. If your twins are still too young to help, consider giving them their own cupboard filled with pans and playthings so they can "cook" beside you. After dinner, even 3-year-olds can learn to load the dishwasher. Find something to do for everyone.

### Plan in advance

Plan your meals in advance. Avoid last-minute trips to the grocery (or last-minute costly calls for take-out). Stock up when you go to the store—always have certain kitchen staples on hand, including pantry basics and ingredients needed for your family's quick-and-easy favorite recipes. (One of my favorites: Pre-made pop-and-go dough for quick and easy homemade pizza, calzones, croutons and chocolate croissants.)

Cooking in bulk is a great time saver. When you make homemade pasta sauce, double up the batch and freeze the second batch (label it clearly!). Defrost your frozen sauce in the fridge the night before you need it and have your tasty homemade meal ready in no time. Soups, sauces, lasagnas and casseroles are great to freeze and serve later.

### Master a meal plan

Put yourself on a weekly meal rotation to conquer meal planning. No need to be creative every day of the month. Serving up



variety is tough. Ensure a varied menu by having theme nights: Monday for Mexican, Tuesday for Italian, Wednesday for Chinese, Thursday for soup, Friday for fish/seafood, etc. Have a make-your-own-English-muffin-pizza night, and a breakfast-for-dinner night.

Allow each family member one night each week or each month when they plan the menu. (This has to be done at least a week ahead of time.) This makes mealtime fun and easy and makes each person feel part of the planning process.

Sometimes success is in what you call it and how you present it. When your twins balk at trying something new, change it up. Call broccoli "green trees" and cut it up to look as such. Or puree it in soup with milk and cheese for "Green Magic Soup." When introducing new foods, offer them in a variety of shapes, textures and colors. Food coloring and food processors make this easy. An older toddler intimidated by a

whole apple will love it peeled, cored and cut into manageable pieces. I he's willing to eat mashed potatoes but not baked, prepare a baked potato and give him a fork to mash it up so he can make the association between the two.

### Got-to-have gadgets

A small-size George Foreman Grill and a Crock Pot are two absolute necessities in homes with twins. Many terrific crockpot recipes are quick, easy and tasty (<http://southernfood.about.com/library/crock/blcpidx.htm>). A quick Internet search of "Foreman" turns up endless pages of "lean and mean" recipes that are simple and time-saving. You most certainly get your money's worth with these countertop appliances.

### Tried, true and tasty

"You get what you get and you don't get upset," is my personal mealtime philoso-

phy. Mothers of twins barely have time to cook one meal, much less become short order cooks for two or more. I believe in offering at least one guaranteed-favorite at each meal (the vegetable, fruit or side dish), so you can rest assured your children will eat something and you can refuse—guilt free—any please to cook something else for the grumblers.

When offering new foods to your twins, having a "guaranteed" winner on the plate goes along way toward getting them to try something new. Using the favorite as leverage is usually enough to persuade them to try at least a bite of the new food. ♡

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Michelle LaRowe lives on the East Coast with the fourth family in which she's helped care for twins. She is author of two *Nanny To the Rescue!* books and was named 2004 Nanny of the Year nationally by her peers.

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# Home businesses give moms of twins “best of all worlds”

By Donald E.L. Johnson, Publisher

Working from home with twins in the house can be a satisfying challenge. Of the 16 respondents to a poll we placed on our TwinsMagazine.com message board, 75% said they love having a business and working at home.

But only 16 TMMB members responded to the poll, which suggests that few SAHMs of twins are trying to work from home or run home-based businesses.

Of those responding to the very unscientific TMMB poll, five work more than 20 hours a week, and eight work six to 20 hours a week from home.

Christa Reed, mom of 8 1/2-year-old twin boys and a 3 1/2-year-old son, started her public relations firm, Publicity Producers, in her Fort Collins, Colo., home. She recently opened an office outside her home.

“When my fraternal twins were 13 months (1999), I left my professional PR position with a photography and motion picture college in Santa Barbara, Calif., and we relocated our entire crew to Colorado,” she posted. “It was important to us that I was with our twins when they were young. After being out of the publicity loop for only two months, the college hired me to continue publicity/PR from my home office in Colorado,” she recalled, adding, “That is when I created my own business, Publicity Producers, and I have been operating ever since! I primarily worked for this client on a monthly basis. This was a wonderful opportunity for me when my twin boys were little. I got to stay with them AND continue working. Luckily my husband had a steady job working with the schools so we made it work. It was the absolute best of both worlds for me. As the boys got older and entered preschool, I would pick and choose the projects and clients I wanted to work on. I also found myself staying active by volunteering to serve in my local twins clubs doing community events and fundraising, and keeping my



media skills current.” (TWINS™ is one of Reed’s clients.)

“CasKatsMom” also was able to bring her job home, thanks to an employer who obviously values her skills and work ethic. “My company offered me a tele-working position, doing the same type of work, but just not the field oversight. They provided me a laptop, scanner/copier/printer, paid for my Internet and cell phone and I work as many hours as I am able from home (usually 2-3 hours per day when the twins are sleeping). I develop and review health and safety plans, review subcontractor safety programs, work on proposals, corporate safety programs—all from home. I have to go to the office every now and then after hours for supplies and things like that.” She plans to increase her hours over time.

Heather Utile makes between \$300 and \$2,000 a month in her eight-year-old home care business. How much she works is her choice.

“It’s nice, I get to stay home, write off a lot of expenses and spend days with my kids,” Hutile said. But the downside is “a lot of isolation. Most days I can’t wait for dh to come home just for adult interaction. (With my kind of business) you have to keep your house very organized, I mean that’s what you’re selling. When parents come in they don’t want to see a messy house and a disorganized person. So there’s a lot of stress.”

Now that she has twins, Hutile said, “I only have one family and two kids (as customers) and it’s just right. You just have to find the right fit.”

“jojnd” is an experienced designer of web sites with a home-based business, and she has promoted her services on TMMB. “While I had to take a hiatus for a while when the girls were smaller, I’m getting back into it, getting new clients. It’s definitely a blessing to be able to work at home. I don’t know what I’d do if I didn’t know how to do this,” “jojnd” wrote on the board.

# Report cards: Fair or foul?

By Lydia Bjornlund

Do grades even matter in the early elementary years? Discussing grades and report cards with your young twins may encourage or magnify the wrong kinds of competition or behavior.

"I just returned from a parent-teacher conference where the teacher just gushed about Olivia. I don't know what to do!"

A friend of mine called with this lament. It's a problem most of us would like to have. . .or would we? My friend said her daughter Olivia had received much higher grades than Katherine, her twin. Despite pretty equal academic abilities, they had an average discrepancy of two grades: Olivia received mostly "Outstanding" marks while Katherine got almost all "Satisfactory". To make matters worse, Katherine had begun to read first and read better than Olivia, but Olivia had a higher mark on her report card.

"What should I do?" my friend asked. "Katherine is going to be devastated. Should I talk to her teacher?"

Many parents of twins experience similar issues in school, especially when twins are in different classrooms. The Clemons family experienced "report-card shock" when their identical twin girls started kindergarten. At the first parent-teacher conference, the Clemonses were impressed with how well their daughter was doing—until they talked to the twin sister's teacher.

"At first glance, it appeared our second daughter was doing much better," says Marijo Clemons. "However, as the meeting progressed, we decided this teacher graded easier. From the work both teachers showed us, the girls were at the same level."

Cheryl Ryan's twin sons have been in separate classrooms since kindergarten. "Every year, one of them has a teacher that grades more harshly than the other," she says. "I think grades given for effort and behavior are completely subjective on the teacher's part. One teacher could feel that if a child gets all his work done he should get

an 'Outstanding'; another could feel that a student has to do extra to earn that grade, so he may only get a 'Satisfactory.'"

Differences in a teacher's style can result in vastly different approaches to the same material—and a different perspective on what work merits an "A" or outstanding grade. But this may not always be easy for children to understand.

An analogy in our own lives occurred



when my children were in kindergarten. My son agonized over the fact that my daughter's teacher let them play on the "big kid" playground, while his teacher confined her class to the smaller kindergarten lot.

The Connors obliged when their twin 6-year-old girls asked to be in separate classrooms in first grade, but were unprepared for the problems that resulted. "The teachers had very different styles," says Zachary Connor. "Both were wonderful and educational, but one gave treats and presents all the time while the other was more academic. Oh, the tears we had over homework—with one having easy homework that could be completed in just two minutes while the other struggled for 20 minutes to complete his homework assignment."

The Connors addressed these differences by downplaying them, but asked that their daughters be together again in second grade.

Parents of twins separated in school try to teach their kids to recognize different teachers differ in approach and why. Sometimes the explanations are heard and understood. Other times they aren't. Teachers' grading styles present an opportunity to teach children life skills for later on.

"Classrooms are like kitchens" says Chris Keenan, mother of identical twin boys. "While the recipe may be the same and the final product of the day is a chocolate cake, every chef (teacher) will mix it up a little differently. Unless you feel you have an incompetent chef—teacher—who will ruin the meal, there is huge value in teaching kids how to learn from all types of chefs! Imagine the food they can make!"

"I've explained to my children each teacher is different in how they grade and what one teacher may think is exceptional work may be interpreted differently by another teacher," says Marlene Shiner, who has 9-year-old b/g twins. "Throughout their lives, they will have bosses or supervisors who may critique differently or have different management styles. Getting straight A's isn't important—it's learning that's important."

Many parents recommend not sharing report-card grades with children in early elementary grades, because in early years grades don't mean much. Placing emphasis on them can encourage or magnify twin competition.

"Who really cares about grades in first grade?" asks Susan Avallon, mother of 9-year-old twin boys. "I didn't even discuss grades with my two when they were in first grade, nor did I show them their report cards. We had a little discussion about some areas where the boys needed improvement, but it seems strange to put any emphasis on grades at such a young age."

Of course, keeping grades a secret, or avoiding emphasis on them, isn't an option as children grow older. "Especially after kindergarten, they know they are getting report cards and interim reports," says Judy Smith,

mother of 10-year-old twin girls. “There are competition issues with my two girls, but I feel they should know how they are doing in school. One of my girls is a straight-A type of student; the other has some academic challenges. With the first, we stress how happy we are for her. But rather than talk about the grade itself with our other daughter, we emphasize any improvements in marks or behavior.”

Parents often think there’s too much emphasis on grades, particularly in early elementary school. Some parents and teachers alike insist academic achievement and learning in elementary school and beyond should not be about competition at all, which grades tend to overemphasize. Report cards, this faction believes, should emphasize positive things a teacher has to say about a child’s achievement and discuss areas for possible improvement. These views stem largely from the philosophy that self-esteem is based not on competency and achievement, but on continuous compliments and encouragement.

The flipside is that throughout life, children and adults are compared in many different ways, and grades provide a way of prepping children for the real world.

### Different expectations

But what of differing expectations of teachers, who assign grades using standards that differ widely? Should parents of twins whose children receive different grades discuss this with the school? Some parents of twins say yes. The school should be informed, if only to encourage dialogue about grades and what they mean in terms of learning. Parents can meet with the teachers involved or with the principal, who can then determine whether there is a problem and handle it.

“If they are similar academically but their reports are different, I’d want to know why,” says Linda Jacobson, who has four children including b/g twins. “I’d talk to the teachers and probably with the principal too. Not confrontationally—they don’t respond well!—but to say, ‘Here is an issue you should be aware of.’ I’d also want the teachers to communicate with one another while preparing the reports. I think it’s

horribly unfair if one twin ends up feeling inferior to the other just because one teacher is harsher.”

“If a parent has any questions about grades, the first thing to do is call the teacher for clarification—not the guidance counselor or vice principal,” says Martie Fiske, a White House Distinguished Teacher. “A parent’s first question should be, ‘What’s going on?’” Fiske suggests parents gather more information from the person most involved—the teacher—before assuming something is wrong with the program or teacher.

While teachers may have different standards for determining grades, they try to be as objective as possible. Although it’s okay to ask a teacher about how grades are determined, parents try to avoid putting the teacher on the defensive or questioning the individual’s integrity.

### Tread carefully with teachers

Meredith Hay, former high school honors-English teacher and mother of twins, suggests treading carefully when discussing grades with teachers. Asking for a grade to be changed is a bad idea. “Asking the teacher to compromise his or her professional integrity gets the relationship between parent and teacher off to a bad start,” Hay says. “Parents who ask for grades changes or exceptions for their children get a bad reputation. It’s a shame when teachers dread having children in their classes just because of their parents.”

Instead, Hay recommends parents who wonder about grades ask for a more detailed explanation of how the teacher determines grades. Is there a rubric? Parents could ask to see examples of the child’s work compared to the same work that received a top grade. This approach helps clarify the issue for parents and provides information parents can use to help their child improve.

Parents should check their assumptions at the door when going to meet their child’s teacher. When questioning a teacher’s evaluation, examine your own expectations. Even if twins appear to exhibit similar academic abilities, one may not respond as well to a school’s structure or adapt to change as easily as the other, particularly during transition from kindergarten to first grade

## “My child was graded too harshly.”

- If you think your child deserved better grades, reassure her that you thought she’d do better, too. Then tell her you’ll call the teacher to find out how you can help her to bring up her grades next time.
- Don’t share any negative feelings about the teacher with your child. Talking in a negative way about the teacher and how unfair she is could set up a conflict between child and teacher that is hard to reverse.
- Ask your child what she thinks of her grades. Get her to tell you how she feels about how well she did.

### NEXT STEPS:

- Call the teacher and request a conference. Let him know that you’re concerned about the grades and that they were a surprise.
- Ask if he could pull work samples from your child’s class- and homework that would help you to see where she’s having trouble.
- At the conference, ask the teacher what’s missing and what needs to be included to gain a higher mark.
- Share what you learn with your child. If she’s old enough, ask her to sit in on the conference, but only if you can be sure that the conference will be constructive. The goal is to help your child feel that the teacher is on her side.
- If you think the grades and the work still don’t match up, you do have recourse to speak with the principal. But it’s always best to try to work things out with the teacher.

—Source: *Family Education*, <http://school.familyeducation.com/report-cards/parents-and-school/38696.html>

or from elementary to middle school.

My friend, whose twins are Katherine and Olivia, met with Katherine’s teacher to learn the reasoning for Katherine’s “satisfactory” marks. “Clearly, this teacher grades

more harshly than Olivia's," she says. "But Katherine does tend to race through things, and that was her teacher's reasoning for some of the lower grades. What concerns me more is if Olivia doesn't think she needs to improve anything."

Lisa Edwards has worked with teachers to address grading issues concerning her twin sons. The Edwardses asked that Tyler and Chad be placed in separate classrooms in elementary school because they were competitive and easily distracted when together. But their school uses two teachers per grade, making separate classrooms unnecessary. In fourth grade, one teacher handles math and science, and the other English and social studies. The two class sections switch when it's time to learn those subjects.

### Same teachers, different grades? Why?

"This made it very easy for all of us because the boys had the same homework, but weren't in the same class," says Edwards. "They weren't competitive with one another except on the days when they received their report cards."

But Edwards started noticing differences in the two boys' grades. They had the same homework, the same teacher teaching them each subject, but different grades. Lisa figured out each boy performed better in subjects his "homeroom" teacher taught. Tyler spent most of the day with the teacher handling math and science and earned great grades in those subjects; Chad had the English and social studies teacher most of each day and earned better grades in those subjects.

"The light bulb suddenly went on," says Edwards. "If the teacher who taught a subject was their regular teacher, she or he would review the child's work or my son had time to ask for help during the day if he didn't completely understand the material. So, each son got extra help from one teacher."

## "My child received all A's."

A lot can be learned from a consistently strong report card, and your reactions are still important.

- Talk about what your child is doing that's working! Reinforce good habits.
- Ask her what her favorite subject is and build on it. Cultivating interests helps in the lifelong process of career awareness for children.
- Ask her to teach you something she has learned.
- Compliment your child and let her know that you're there to help if needed.

### NEXT STEPS:

- If your child's work is significantly above grade level, investigate enrichment programs in and out of school.
- Help your child find Internet sites that could expand on his interests.
- Ask the teacher about leadership opportunities in which your child could participate.

—Source: Family Education, <http://school.familyeducation.com/report-cards/parents-and-school/38696.html>



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At the parent-teacher conference in the fall, Lisa Edwards and her husband noticed the difference and followed up by having a conversation with each teacher.

“The teachers, my husband and I worked

## “My child works very hard, but his grades are low.”

- If you work with your child every night and he’s still not understanding the material, be gentle with him. He’s probably feeling bad and really needs your support.
- Ask your child how he thinks he did.
- As you read the card, watch that your body language and words don’t show disappointment.
- If you know your child has been trying really hard, let him know that you appreciate that: “You really worked hard and this report card doesn’t say that. Maybe we should go in and talk with your teacher about how we can help you.”

### NEXT STEPS:

When homework is a struggle and grades don’t begin to show the time and effort your child puts in, then it’s time for a conference with the teacher.

- Ask the teacher whether assignments can be modified and how much homework time is expected for your child’s grade level.
- Set up a way to let the teacher know your child spends much longer than the allotted time on homework.
- Meet with the teacher and the school counselor to get the most complete picture of your child’s performance at school. If it turns out that ability is the issue, ask about the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 504, and IDEA, which helps ensure that children get the services they need.

—Source: *Family Education*, <http://school.familyeducation.com/report-cards/parents-and-school/38696.html>

together to encourage the boys to speak up when they needed help,” she says. “We also encouraged the boys to help each other out. We had them explain to one another the little tidbits their teachers told them throughout the day. This helped out quite a bit and the grades started becoming even.”

This attitude was reinforced by the school’s approach to grades. “The biggest plus about the school that Tyler and Chad attend is its website that the parents can go to—every week the teachers put in their grades,” explains Lisa Edwards. “If there is a missing assignment or a grade is better or worse than before, we know right away. This enables us to help our children get the assistance they need.”

### Parents, teachers as a team

Checking grades regularly helps the Edwardses work on areas that need improvement, and support the teacher when there is a problem. “We know when assignments are missing because missing work is marked with a red asterisk in that subject’s grade book,” Lisa Edwards explains. “So, my sons can’t say ‘I never received the assignment’ or ‘I didn’t know about the test.’ We also can see what they got on each test. The whole system of seeing what their grades are weekly is a huge help on helping our kids be successful and holding them accountable for their grades.”

This strategy works because the parents see themselves and the teachers as part of the same team. Teachers are more receptive to parents if parents are perceived as part of the solution, rather than the source of the problem. This means forging a positive working relationship with each teacher while advocating on behalf of your children.

Find out how the teacher prefers to communicate—email can be a great way to let a teacher know, in a non-confrontational manner, that your child is having problems. Forging a team that includes the teacher, your child and yourself helps ensure that your twins lives up to their potential—regardless of the grade-level. ♥

## Lessening twin trauma over report cards

- Speak with each child individually in a private space to discuss each child’s report card.
- Ask your child to tell you about the grades before you say anything at all.
- Praise your child for good things—excellent attendance, good behavior, improvement in a certain area. Use phrases like: “Great job,” “You did it,” “I knew you were good at ...” and “I’m proud of you because you ...”.
- Show your child you’re on his or her side. Use phrases like, “I understand,” “I know you were trying,” “I want to help you do better,” “I know you can succeed,” “Let’s work together,” “Even though I may not be happy, I love you.”
- Avoid comparing your child to anybody, especially his or her twin, no matter what.
- Ask the teacher what each grade means so you can explain them to your child.
- Work with the teacher and your child on a plan to help him or her do better.
- Ask the teacher to update you on progress weekly or monthly.
- Consider contacting the guidance counselor or principal to gain additional insights.

—Source: *The Family Project*, Allentown, PA

Lydia Bjornlund has a Master’s in education from Harvard University, and has taught high school English and social studies. She’s an active member of the Northern Virginia Parents of Multiples, and has fraternal twin sons who differ greatly from one another in attitudes and achievement. She’s been a freelance writer for 10 years, has authored more than 24 books and many magazine articles.

# HELPING TWINS WITH DISABILITIES AND DELAYS: Obtaining special services

By Jane Polizzi

Today it's common for children to receive special services—speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, play (psychological) therapy, nutrition services, audiology services and vision services.

In addition, some children attend developmental preschool to help them with cognitive or developmental delays. A vast array of programs and classes are available for school-age children: Resource Room, reading specialists, special education classes, integrated

classes and many more. All are considered special services.

But did you know infants and preschoolers also can be eligible for special services? First, however, you have to be able to identify and document your child's needs. Then you have to know how to find help, and what questions to ask. A good guideline is to start helping them earlier, if possible. The earlier the better, when your twins learn the fastest.

I've been through this process and found it frustrating sometimes, but satisfying at others. And I learned a lot in the process that I'd like to share with you to make your journey easier.

## Know when your twins need help

Your twins' need for help may become apparent very early or several years later, depending on the child and the disability or delay. For your child to receive help, you need to observe—and possibly have confirmed by a professional—a specific disability, syndrome (set of disabilities), or significant developmental delay in one or more areas: physical, cognitive, communication, social, emotional and/or adaptive.

The evaluation process for special services will help you confirm or establish the disability or delay, and quantify it against age-appropriate criteria. The degree of delay or disability can vary widely from child to child.

## Needs identified at birth

Some situations predispose you or your child's pediatrician to look

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for developmental delays. Examples include prematurity and/or very low birth weight, chromosomal disorders, congenital conditions, metabolic syndromes or disorders (e.g., Down syndrome), or early diagnoses of mental or physical delays. These would prompt your pediatrician or a hospital social worker in most instances to refer you to the Early Intervention Program (EIP) for children through from birth to age 2.

**Step 1:** Inquire within your state's department of health (see your state government's website) for guidelines to the EIP in your state. Upon identification of a problem, your child will be referred to an Early Intervention Official (the EIO) designated by the chief elected official in the county or municipality where you reside. The EIO will refer you and your family to an initial service coordinator to set up your Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).

Be patient. This is time-consuming at first, going through this three- or four-step process. This first stage can take anywhere from a week to a month.

### The IFSP serves as foundation for what follows

Using the IFSP that is developed, you will be asked to pick a qualified evaluator from a list that the agency has available for you. The list may well include individual practitioners as well as agencies or organizations. The person or organization you pick will work with your child to conduct the evaluation.

Sometimes a multidisciplinary evaluation and assessment will be needed (including cognitive, emotional, social, and psychological measures). But sometimes only one very specific evaluation is done (such as for speech problems). In other situations, it'll all be needed. The evaluation will show your child's strengths and weaknesses in each area reviewed and whether your child is eligible for EIP.

In addition to evaluation for EIP, your child's pediatrician may also refer your child to another medical professional (outside of EIP), such as a neurologist, developmental pediatrician, audiologist, ophthalmologist, or optometrist. You may find that one evaluation or doctor's visit may lead to another evaluation for a related matter. For example, a physical therapist may recommend a vision test.

The IFSP must be completed within 45 days of referral to EIP (unless you intervene by rescheduling the evaluation, for example). Your child's IFSP will include treatment recommendations (for example, physical therapy, twice a week, 30 minutes per session). Children treated within the EIP are reevaluated every six months and each year.

### Needs identified in preschool

Some cases aren't clear-cut. You, your pediatrician, or your child's preschool teacher may notice one or both twins don't achieve certain milestones or lag behind their peers. Sometimes, a person outside your family notices one twin dramatically lags behind the co-twin in development and calls this to your attention. You may keep an eye on one child's development for several months to see if milestones are met—if they aren't, then a formal evaluation may be warranted.

If the child is under 3 years, you would proceed under EIP. If

## Categories of disability under IDEA

*Autism*  
*Deafness*  
*Deaf-blindness*  
*Hearing impairment*  
*Mental retardation*  
*Multiple disabilities*  
*Orthopedic impairment*  
*Other health impairment*  
*Serious emotional disturbance*  
*Specific learning disability*  
*Speech / language impairment*  
*Traumatic brain injury*  
*Visual impairment, including blindness*

the child is between 3 and 5 (pre-kindergarten), you would contact your local school district.

Each school district typically has a Department for Preschool Special Education Services, or a title similar to that. This department would coordinate your 3+-year-old's initial evaluation.

Some school districts maintain a list of service providers, and you may choose a therapist or agency to do an evaluation. While not recommending any particular provider, the district might be willing to share with you comments of families who have been happy with the treatment or services obtained for their children.

Pediatrician and school guidance of this sort is valuable (or even recommendations from friends), because ultimately, the therapy or help your child receives is only as good as the therapist. The Dept. for Preschool Special Ed. would either substantiate or deny the need for services based on the evaluation of your child.

### Needs of school-age children

Some needs develop or become more apparent as children grow older and are faced with more difficult tasks such as reading and writing. Services for school-age children are handled by your local school district's Department for Special Education. Evaluations of school-age children are very often conducted by school district personnel (school psychologist, speech therapist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, etc.) so you won't have an opportunity to choose the therapist. Sometimes these specialists serve children throughout the school district, not just in your child's particular school.

If your preschool or school-age child is evaluated and qualifies for services, an Individualized Education Plan (IEP)—not to be confused with the EIP, or Early Intervention Program—will be written for your child. It specifically identifies your child's needs, sets learning goals and describes precise services to meet those goals.



## Tips for a smoother process

- Be able to succinctly articulate your child's needs and delays. Have examples in mind. Also consider how those needs can be addressed.
- Tell how your child has developed over time and pull the pieces of the puzzle together for the committee. You have only your child to focus on and can add perspective.
- Respect the committee members. Never raise your voice during the meeting, despite the emotional nature of the subject.
- Bring a supporter with you to the meeting.
- If you become emotional, ask for a break or ask to "table" the discussion and resume it at another date, or to introduce new information.
- Read the IFSP or IEP. Talk to teachers/therapists/evaluators in advance about the goals and timetables to achieve the goals.
- Read all paperwork before you sign anything. Obtain copies of papers to take home and refer to in the future.
- Ask for explanation of all unfamiliar terms or concepts.
- Understand the ramifications of a change in placement or services.
- Share evaluations with your child's doctor(s) and solicit their advice.
- Don't accept a recommendation (for or against) a placement that you don't believe is appropriate. Compare what the therapist, teacher or evaluator is saying to what you see in your child, and discuss your observations. Don't let committee members pressure you into a decision. Take your time (sometimes easier said than done). If the committee has the next family waiting, resume the meeting at another time if needed.
- For classroom placement, observe the proposed environment. Even if your child won't be in that exact class with those particular children, the profile of the class and environment should be appropriate. Ask questions about the nature of the proposed class, what level it teaches, what makes it special and how it can meet your child's needs. If appropriate, the class should not function too far above or below your child's capabilities. • Request a tour before agreeing to placement. Try to anticipate the placement so you can see it during the school year and not cause delay (some classes fill up quickly or have limited availability). Talk to educators and other parents to determine types of classes available.
- Attend SEPTA (Special Education Parent Teacher Association) meetings in your school district to learn about classes and services offered and the professionals involved in the Special Ed. Department. Anyone can attend, even if you have a preschooler and are anticipating the placement at school age. You will meet parents whose children have special needs, and they are a wealth of information.
- Educate yourself. Learn about your child's issues, about the committee process, members and their roles, about the law, about what educators and therapists can do for your child. Learn about age-appropriate developmental and educational norms and curricula, where your child stands and the steps and goals to get your child on track.
- Make all requests in writing. Some simple issues can be handled quickly with a telephone call. But be sure to follow it up in writing. Some requests are best made in writing from the get-go because the law requires the school district to respond within a certain number of days. The letter serves as your paper trail to ensure timely response.
- The letter inviting you to a committee meeting will specify whether it will be a full or partial committee. Full committee is required to approve any increase in services.
- If services are denied, consider another evaluation after a reasonable amount of time. For example, if your child had a speech test and scored at age 35 months, but the test parameter was 24-36 months, putting him/her at the top of the age bracket, a later test that places your child at the low end of the age bracket may demonstrate a delay more markedly. Or your child's progress may occur so slowly that a delay will be more apparent several months later.
- Consider independent evaluations. Your child's therapist may recommend therapy end after the current school year. Yet, you may be uncertain if this is appropriate or may have lingering concerns. You may want to hire a therapist to validate your concerns and provide information that can help articulate your child's needs. Conversely, the independent provider may confirm your child is ready to end therapy and explain why.
- Consider private therapy. If the school district fails to find your child's delay significant enough to qualify for services, consider private therapy. Your medical insurance may cover part or all of the cost. This can be a solution if your school district will not provide summer therapy. You can also consider hiring a private tutor, if appropriate.
- Communicate with teachers and therapists throughout the year. Share goals, accomplishments, setbacks and areas where more work needs to be done. Coordinate their efforts with the work you are doing with your child. Make sure teachers and therapists communicate with each other (i.e., make sure classroom teacher has a copy of the therapist's evaluation, and vice versa).
- Try to understand criteria that would qualify your child for services. Therapists, teachers and evaluators often know the percentile ranges of the test results that would qualify a child (or often multiple areas that would qualify). It helps to know these in advance. Some degree of subjective interpretation (in scoring evaluations and within committees) is always a factor, too. Discussions may reveal where the interpretation is, the magnitude and relevance.

—Jane Polizzi

Your child will be periodically re-evaluated against the written IEP and goals, and the plan is then modified as needed.

If you are suspicious about one or both twins' lagging development, talk to your child's pediatrician. If necessary, start the IEP process or call your local school district to initiate evaluation procedures. Develop an action plan until you are satisfied that you understand the nature of your child's problem and corrective measures that can be taken.

### Common special services

Speech therapy helps with articulation, receptive language or expressive language. Delays could be due to the shape or placement of a child's tongue or palate, or it might result from mental processing of incoming (receptive) language or sounds (what we hear and how we hear). Speech delays and difficulties also result from mental processing that affects the sounds or language your child expresses (what we say and how we say it).

Physical therapy helps with gross motor skills such as movement (locomotion), bodily control and coordination (e.g., sitting up, crawling, walking, hopping, throwing a ball, kicking, jumping and running). Physical therapists analyze body symmetry, skeletal structure, muscle tone, strength, and endurance. They work to identify and correct weakness in a particular area.

Occupational therapy is divided into two areas: Fine motor skills (picking up small objects, manipulating hand-held objects, cutting with scissors, eating with utensils, dressing, self-care, writing) and sensory processing. Children understand their environment through their senses (sight, hearing, touch, smell, taste), process those cues and respond to them. If sensory systems don't process cues efficiently or cause an inappropriate response that interferes with functions of daily living, therapy may be needed.

Schools offer different classes and services based on the size of the district. Larger districts may serve many students requiring a particular service, while a smaller district has only one or two students with those needs. For example, a larger district may have a special handwriting group, where a smaller district either offers occupational therapy or provides in-class attention to address writing delays. Find out what supports your school and school district provides. Most schools don't lay out the menu for you, and usually

don't provide open forums for this information. Discussions with individual educators and other parents can provide the needed information.

### It's the law

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a federal law that gives eligible children with disabilities the right to receive special education and related services. Special education and related services are provided at no cost to parents and may be provided in a school, at home, in a hospital or institution. IDEA covers Early Intervention (Part C of the law) and children ages 3-21 (Part B).

Don't be afraid of the term "disability" or any perceived stigma attached to "special education." The most important thing is for you to seek and obtain any help your child needs, within the parameters of the law.

If one or both of your twins is evaluated and qualifies for services, a plan will be written specifically to identify your child's needs, learning goals and services to be provided to meet those goals (for example, the IFSP or IEP). Your child will be re-evaluated against the plan and goals, and the plan must be modified as needed.

You can request a meeting at any time to address any of the services your child is receiving, or that you think your child needs. It's entirely possible, of course, that the therapies provided help your child and may no longer be needed.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, is a civil rights law to protect people with disabilities by eliminating barriers and allowing full participation in areas such as education. The law protects a "handicapped person" having a mental or physical impairment that limits one or more major life activities (e.g., seeing, hearing, self care, breathing, learning, working). All school-aged children with an IEP are covered by Section 504.

Some children are eligible for Section 504 even if they don't have an IEP. Examples are children with diabetes or asthma who may need help from school staff to manage their disease. Section 504 could also cover temporary disabilities (such as a broken leg), cancer, or other issues such as dyslexia, ADHD, depression and conduct disorders. Some children may cognitively be on target, but receive occupational therapy or physical therapy under Section 504.

Students covered under Section 504 would have a 504 Plan outlining the handicapping condition and necessary accommodations that relate to care or education. However, if a student has an IEP that sufficiently covers his/her issues, a 504 Plan becomes unnecessary and duplicative.

### A complex process

Overall, the law can be very complex. Lawyers who specialize in disability law are available, and professional parent-advocates can be hired to help you obtain services for your child, should there be a dispute about whether your child qualifies and is entitled under the law to specific services.

It's best to try to reach agreement with the committee without resorting to these options. Calm, respectful and knowledgeable

The advertisement is for 'Twins Magazine Custom Covers'. It features a photograph of two young boys, one in a white tank top and the other in a white tank top with a white cap. The text reads: 'They ought to be in pictures! CUSTOM COVERS'. Below this, it says: 'Put your multiples on their own personal Custom Cover from Twins Magazine. Choose from your personal photos prepared to order from Twins Magazine.' The price is listed as 'Just \$22.95' with 'Shipping and handling included'. Contact information includes 'To order call toll free 1-888-558-9467' and 'or download an order form at www.TwinsMagazine.com'. The Twins Magazine logo is also present.

participation by parents in committee meetings can often accomplish this goal. After all, parents and educators generally share the goal of educating each child in the most efficient and effective way. However, the complexities of the laws, competing agendas of committee members, and the communication abilities of all the parties can sometimes hamper agreement. When that happens, I'd advise parents to try to slow down and make sure communication is clear among all the players.

Committee meetings will be scheduled when parents request an evaluation or services for their child, or would like a review or modification in services. Attendees could include the Special Ed Director (committee chairperson), relevant therapists, teachers or representatives dealing with the child (i.e., from the agency doing the evaluation or providing service), a teacher, school psychiatrist or special ed teacher from the local school district, county representative (i.e., representative of the funding source for preschoolers), and most importantly, the child's parents. Sometimes, a parent-advocate (who might be another parent in the school district, volunteering to be of help) attends. If a parent-advocate is not in attendance (sometimes there aren't enough volunteers), you will be asked to sign a waiver.

### Be well-prepared

The invitation you receive to attend a committee meeting, containing the date and time of the meeting, will specify whether the meeting is to be of a full or partial committee. Be forewarned: Any change or upgrade in services requires a full committee I attendance.

Your role is important because you know your child best. Before the meeting, make sure you read all evaluations and discuss results with the person conducting the evaluation so you understand the report and the therapist's recommendation. If the meeting goes well and your child is getting the services you think he/she needs and is entitled to, your input may be minimal. Some committee chairpeople routinely ask parents for any comments or input; others do not. If your child isn't receiving services he/she reasonably requires and should be



# Special Reports

Published by TWINS™ Magazine

### Getting Ready: When You're Expecting Twins

— 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.*

**Feeding Multiple Babies** — Revised Edition. Parents of multiple children can find feeding their babies a complex task. What do you feed the children? When do you start with a cup or solid food? This detailed report provides answers and expert guidance for this important parenting choice. *28 pages.*

**Breastfeeding Twins** — NEW! It's an emotional decision for new mothers of multiple children whether to breastfeed or bottle-feed their babies. When there are two or more appetites to handle, a mother's decision is much more complicated. This detailed report provides answers and expert guidance for this important parenting choice. *28 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.*

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**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.*

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— 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.*

### 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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entitled to, your comments could make a difference.

Be prepared to introduce relevant medical information. Ask your doctor to provide a letter with comments on your child's health relevant to educational needs. Ask the doctor to include any diagnosis, delays or limitations in ability, and medical needs that should be addressed during the school day.

IDEA lists 13 categories of disability that can affect how a child performs in school. Don't let this list deter you; if your child needs help, the committee will know how to classify the disability (i.e., if not readily apparent from the list, perhaps under other health impairment or Section 504).

A Procedural Safeguards Notice will explain your legal rights. It usually arrives with the letter telling the date and time you're to attend a committee meeting and typically includes information about meeting notices, parental consent, access to records, opportunity to present complaints or initiate due process hearings, mediation procedures, appeals, legal fees and services. Try to be familiar with it prior to your meeting. Many aspects of the notice might not apply, but you should know your rights and how the system should work.

Navigating the maze to obtain special services for your child can be time-consuming and difficult. However, early intervention can be most effective when a child is young and malleable. The thought of your twins outgrowing and overcoming some of their challenges is a powerful motivation for persistence. ♥

Jane Polizzi is a freelancer in Northport, NY, with two children, 6 and 7. Her sister is a mom of very busy twins. Jane has an MBA in finance, is a retired banker and a former teacher.

## TWinfo

The number of fraternal (DZ) twins born each year has risen 65% since 1980.

## Resources

- [www.wrightslaw.com](http://www.wrightslaw.com): Accurate, reliable information about special education law, education law, and advocacy for children with disabilities. Articles, cases and resources.
- [www.nichy.org](http://www.nichy.org): National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (800) 695-0285. A great place to start, click on: Our Publications—Alpha by Title—Q—Questions Asked by Parents About Special Education Services.
- [www.idonline.org](http://www.idonline.org): Information and advice on learning disabilities and ADHD. Lots of articles especially for parents.
- [www.schwablearning.org](http://www.schwablearning.org): Schwab Learning is a nonprofit dedicated to providing reliable, parent-friendly info from experts and parents to help kids with learning disabilities.
- [www.504idea.org](http://www.504idea.org): The Council of Educators for Students with Disabilities, Inc. Website is for educators. Resources section includes downloadable 504 and IDEA materials, a Q&A regarding popular 504 questions, links to other websites.
- [www.fape.org](http://www.fape.org): Families and Advocates Partnership for Education. Website links families / advocates to information about IDEA, other laws.
- [www.pacer.org](http://www.pacer.org): Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights. Useful articles, legislative information.
- Diagnostic Criteria from DSM-IV, American Psychiatric Association. Criteria used by doctors to diagnose mental disorders such as ADHD, pervasive developmental disorder (PDD), autism.
- *Understanding Your Child's Temperament* by William B. Carey, MD
- *Quirky Kids: Understanding and Helping Your Child Who Doesn't Fit In—When to Worry and When Not to Worry*, by Perry Klass, MD & Eileen Costello, MD.
- *The Out-Of-Sync Child: Recognizing and Coping with Sensory Processing Disorder*, by Carol Stock Kranowitz.

# Did I get the ultimate 2-for-1 deal?

I'm always on the hunt for a good deal. I clip coupons, browse yard sales, and search eBay before buying anything of significant value.

Like disposable diapers.

Which is why, the day I left the maternity ward with a newborn baby swaddled in each arm, I was certain I had hit the jackpot. I had two babies (count them: one, two). And yet I had endured only one nine-month bout of morning sickness, one set of stretch marks, and one harrowing delivery with nurses yelling, "Don't push!" while they fumbled with broken stirrups on my hospital bed. Eventually, both babies arrived safely, but only after my husband grabbed my feet and said, "Forget the stirrups. Push!"

The delivery room fiasco was quickly forgotten as I stared in wonder at my twins, convinced I had found the best deal in town: Two babies, for the price of one pregnancy.

For the first year, despite sleep deprivation, sore nipples, and numerous failed attempts at putting my boys on the same schedule, I was in baby heaven. I was among the few, the proud, the moms of multiples.

Looking back, when I was pregnant I thought twins were a neonatal version of buy-one-get-one-free. But after Randy and Christopher arrived, reality sank in: Have two, pay double. Sure, there's only one pregnancy, but two babies need . . . two of everything!

As a mom of three singletons prior to having twins, I was accustomed to passing things down from one baby to the next, with little need to buy more. When my twins arrived, I had infant-paraphernalia sticker shock all over again. We needed a second car seat, another crib, two highchairs, a double stroller, a bigger diaper bag, more blankets, extra bibs, and most of all, a second mortgage!

But money isn't everything. For me, having two babies at once was like winning

the lottery, twice. Only, instead of dollars, I have been paid in nose-drool kisses (the best kind), forced relaxation on the couch ("Oops, both babies fell asleep on me; I can't get up!"), and more endearing twin-moments than a Mary Kate-and-Ashley video.

Still, I had lingering doubts about this two-for-one deal. I was having the time of my life, but what about my twins? Were they missing out? Would they begrudge their growing-up years by being forced to share things like clothes, toys, baths, birthdays, my lap, their looks? Was my great bargain their misfortune?

## Cooperate, negotiate

When my twins were 2, I discovered a partial answer. The day began with my twins fighting over their sister's doll stroller. Like most moms of twins, I questioned the sanity of allowing two toddlers within a one-mile radius of each other, much less in the same playroom. The screaming, chasing, and tugging went on for hours. When I finally threatened to put the stroller away, they changed their tactics. I watched proudly as my toddler boys began talking, negotiating, and finally, working together to stack a hundred matchbox cars into the doll stroller, then send it plummeting down the stairs, metal and wheels ricocheting off walls and banisters, landing in the biggest car wreck our staircase has ever seen. Okay,

I was proud and a little bit horrified. But at least my twins were cooperating instead of fighting.

I no longer wonder if my twins are getting a good deal. Now, at age 8, Randy and Christopher play checkers and Uno Attack. They practice baseball and badminton in the backyard. Give them a pile of cardboard and a roll of masking tape, and they'll invent something. Together. Not because they have to, but because when given a choice, they choose each other.

I can still spot a good deal. Two double-scoop, strawberry cheesecake waffle cones: \$6. Two used baseball mitts: \$12. Two sets of flannel Spiderman sheets: \$37. It's true. There are some things money can't buy. And I have two of them. ♥

Jennifer Dahlen is the mother of seven including twin boys born in 1997. She and her husband and their children live in Portland, Oregon.

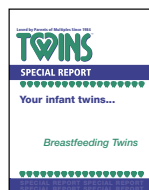
## TWINS Bookshelf Spotlight



**It's Twins:**  
**Parent-to-Parent Advice from Infancy through Adolescence**

By Susan M. Heim, Introduction by Vonetta Flowers  
**\$17.95**

NEW! Navigating the often-turbulent waters of parenthood from birth through highschool, Susan Heim offers a firm hand on the wheel for parents of twins and higher order multiples. Real-life stories from parents provide inspiration and guidance, as does heartfelt advice and reflective suggestions from actual experiences with twin children. Heim provides an entertaining, often humorous guide to raising twins in today's ever-changing world. Paperback, 328 pages.



**Breastfeeding Twins**  
**A TWINS™ Magazine Special Report**

Compiled by the editors of TWINS™ Magazine  
**\$10.95**

NEW! It's an emotional decision for new mothers of multiple children whether to breastfeed or to bottle-feed their babies. When there are two or more appetites to handle, a mother's decision is much more complicated. This detailed report provides answers and expert advice from the pages of TWINS™ Magazine for this important parenting choice. Paperback, 28 pages.

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# 5 GREAT PRODUCTS...

## For moms who breastfeed twins

By Christine Bradley, CLE

One of the many benefits to breastfeeding multiples is the enormous financial savings. Formula, bottles, nipples, and other expenses add up to a very hefty price tag during your babies' first year.

When you breastfeed your multiples, you don't need many products. But a few things are well worth your investment—they won't set you back a fortune and they can make life a lot easier during the hectic first year.

### 1 *Mothering Multiples: Breastfeeding and Caring for Twins or More*, by Karen Kerkhoff Gromada

Cost: Free if you're borrowing from the library, or from about \$39 (used) at amazon.com

There are so many wonderful books and other resources out there for breastfeeding mothers. This one is specifically geared toward nursing multiples. Most breastfeeding books have at least a few pages dedicated to twin-specific challenges, but *Mothering Multiples* really delves with great detail into the practical aspects of breastfeeding twins. It addresses a broad range of breastfeeding topics and arms you with the knowledge you need to get off to a great start.

Unfortunately, this book is out of print. But you can easily find used copies on amazon.com, and most library systems carry at least one copy. If you can't get your hands on one, *The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding* by La Leche League International (\$18) is an excellent resource for looking up answers to your breastfeeding questions. Reading a good book on breastfeeding can make a huge difference in breastfeeding success. Many breastfeeding challenges can be prevented or eased by knowing in advance how to handle the situation.

### 2 *Medela "Pump In Style" Breast Pump*

Cost: \$250-\$350, depending on the model

Yes, it's expensive but it's worth it. Every mother should have some kind of breast pump. Some people can get away with a hand pump, but with twins or more, you're going to be making a lot more milk—it's important to have a high-quality pump.

The Pump In Style is an electric model with adjustable speed and suction control. It pumps both breasts simultaneously—particularly important for moms of twins because stimulating both nipples at the same time increases levels of prolactin, the hormone responsible for increasing milk supply.

If you're planning to return to work, a great breast pump is absolutely essential. Even if you'll be staying home, a pump is a great tool for increasing milk supply, relieving engorgement, and pumping milk efficiently so you can take a much-deserved break. This also gives Dad an opportunity to help with feedings.

If you're planning on breastfeeding for more than 4-5 months, it's worth the money to buy a pump, particularly if you plan on having more children.



### 3 *EZ-2-Nurse Twins Foam Nursing Pillow*

Cost: \$44-\$49 at many online and regular retailers including www.DoubleBlessings.com and others.

This is definitely not a necessity, but if you receive one as a baby shower gift, try it out.

There's also an inflatable version easier to store after your babies are weaned. I actually don't recommend using a nursing pillow right away. When your twins are first born, you'll probably do better nursing them one at a time using regular pillows to prop up your arms in a comfortable position.

When you start to get the hang of positioning and latch-on, and are ready to try both babies at once, the EZ-2-Nurse Pillow can make breastfeeding more comfortable especially when using a double-football hold.

I've seen moms bring this pillow to the hospital only to find they actually do better without it. However, I've had other moms tell me they couldn't have lived without it. If you don't already have one, I recommend waiting a week or two after your babies are born and seeing how everything is going. If you feel you're straining your back and wearing out your arms trying to hold your babies, order one online or send a friend to buy one and see if it helps.

### 4 *Medela Quick Clean Micro-Steam Bags*

Cost: \$4.45-\$4.99 per box of 5 bags; www.medela.com; available from Medela and many retailers including CVS Pharmacy, Target, One Step Ahead, Babies R Us and others.

These reusable bags are a great fast way to sterilize your breast pump parts, bottles, nipples, and pacifiers. They come in a pack of five; you can use each one 20 times. Simple to use: Add 2 oz. of water and microwave on high for three minutes. No boiling water or waiting for a dishwasher load to finish. A huge timesaver!



### 5 Mama Jewels or MilkBands

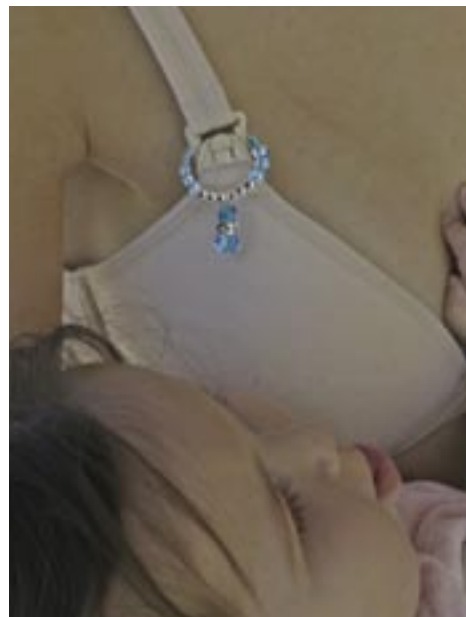
Cost: Mama Jewels \$9.95 ea. @ [www.freshbaby.com](http://www.freshbaby.com); MilkBands \$5.95 ea. @ [www.milkbands.com](http://www.milkbands.com)

I've seen several moms of multiples wearing these cute charms around. Mama Jewels are little round pieces of jewelry with charms, made of Swarovski™ crystals in four different colors. They hook onto your bra strap to remind you which side to nurse which baby on. For example, if you have a boy and a girl, you can get a blue one and a pink one and switch the charms after each feeding to remind you which baby gets which breast. "Mama Jewels" is the specific brand of nursing pin that I've seen moms of multiples use to help keep track of which side each baby is on. The company donates a portion of sales to breast cancer research.

I've seen more and more moms using "Milk Bands" also. This product differs from Mama Jewels. It is a 100% silicone bracelet that comes in five colors. The bracelet gets flipped and switched as a reminder which side each baby started on last time. Moms wearing Milk Bands can also keep track of the length of feedings. Cute and

handy when you have to track more than one baby's feedings.

Important: Not only can twins vary greatly in their sucking efficiency, but your breasts can vary greatly in the amount of milk they produce. It isn't uncommon for a woman's breast on one side to produce twice as much milk as the other. Switching sides is the best way to make sure one baby isn't getting a lot more milk than the other. ♥



Christine Bradley is a certified lactation consultant who has worked with and assisted many moms of twins in her practice in Sandy, Utah.

## Pleasure Reading

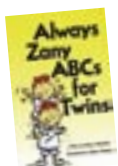
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## PARENTS ALWAYS ASK:

I've noticed one of my twins likes to boss around the other. She seems to be "in charge" whenever they play or decide what to do. I'm wondering if I should intervene. Should I put a stop to it or just wait and see how things pan out?

## JENNIFER'S TAKE:

When you have twins, it's pretty natural for one to become bossier than the other. Sometimes this happens because one twin is an inch taller or 10 pounds bigger than the other, but sometimes it happens simply because one twin has a more easygoing personality and the other naturally dominates. For my sister and me, both factors were applicable: the second we were born, she became the Alpha Twin.

Even as toddlers, we exhibited these characteristics, my Mom reports: My sister had a way of bossing me around. She decided what games we played, when we stopped playing, and what roles we each assumed. For example, she and I often played "Annie" by reenacting the Broadway musical play of that name. Whenever we did so, my sis always had to be Annie while she insisted I play the unflattering role of Daddy Warbucks. Sometimes, in a good mood, she would give me a break, letting me play Miss Hannigan.

She also dominated whenever we engaged in other activities. When we played school with other neighborhood kids, she made sure she was the teacher, acting as if she had an actual degree in education and teaching experience. I challenged her on this only once. At the age of 5, playing in our next door neighbor's basement, I decided that I, in fact, was going to be the teacher. My protest ended in a flash when my sister stood, came over to me and firmly implanted her teeth in my cheek. Experiencing shock and pain, I retaliated in the most mature way I knew—I tattled to my daddy.

Besides always controlling our games and activities, my sister had a way of getting me to agree to other things, even when I really didn't want to concede. She knew if she pushed hard enough, I'd eventually cave. This plan of attack helped her win in all sorts of things: She talked me into giving her the top bunk while I slept below; she talked me into doing chores for her; she talked me into allowing her to watch TV shows of her choosing. The reason she got her way was twofold: First, she was relentless. Second, I grew tired of constant battles. I would rather wave the white flag than continually argue.

Now to the real issue you asked about: My parents never really intervened in my sister's bossing ways; they didn't need to. Not

much time elapsed before I understood that when my sister crossed the line, I would put my foot down...preferably hard, right on her shoe. Whenever this happened, she knew immediately I was fed up, and she'd relinquish the throne, if only briefly.

For parents of one bossy and one easygoing twin, I suggest letting nature take its course. Twins have a way of balancing things out on their own, leveling the playing field. My twin was bossier than me, but it never caused any real damage. Eventually I got over not being able to be the teacher, and I could assert myself nicely in other aspects of my life.

If the bossing goes too far, however, to the point where one twin uses fists or physical force to get his or her way, then by all means intervene. Along these lines, if the easygoing twin seems genuinely bothered (irritable, irritated, acting out, etc.) by constantly being told what to do, then the bossing should be ended. One way to accomplish this: Facilitate activities so each twin takes turns choosing games and roles to play.

My sister has always been a "My way or the highway" person. Part of me retains a faint memory of her bossing me around even while we were in the womb, telling me precisely how to float around in amniotic fluid. In the end, it did little harm. To this day I maintain that she was the bossiest child I have ever known, but it only really mattered—like so many things—during childhood. Now it seems quite unimportant; we both ended up being strong and confident people. I'm just a lot more easygoing and she's on the other end: If America ever does away with being a democratic republic and decides to adopt a dictatorship, she will probably apply for the top job. ♡

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Jennifer, 27, lives in Aurora, Colo., and works as a graphic designer. Her twin, Kimberly, is now nearby, having recently returned to Aurora from Portland, Ore.

## TWinfo

A woman who's given birth to dizygotic (DZ-fraternal) twins has quadruple the chance of having another set. This is because women who conceive fraternal (without fertility drugs) often release more than one egg per cycle.



# The life of a SAHD-Dad-of-twins isn't sad at all! It's just frantic

By Kendra Sibbersen

**K**endra is a very active mom of twins who frequently posts on the TWINS Magazine Message Board. She noticed we seldom have stories about full-time stay-at-home dads of twins, so she interviewed her husband, Michael, about his life as a SAHD-Dad and sent it to us.

## **Kendra: Tell me about your home-based business.**

Michael: I operate a small video production company, primarily, but not exclusively, in the business of producing—taping and editing—promotional video DVDs for a specialized segment of the entertainment industry. My regular clients are magicians, mentalists, comedians, and hypnotists. Besides the video production work, I edit a monthly newsletter for a professional organization to which I belong, I do creative consulting for magicians and mentalists, and I am an entertainer myself (a mentalist), a job that takes me all over the country and the world.

## **K: So, for those readers who may not know, what does...**

M:...a mentalist do? I knew you were going to ask that. A mentalist is an entertainer who performs theatrical displays of psychic phenomenon; a sort of "magician of the mind." During my program, I read minds, bend silverware, predict the future, etc. Fortunately for me, mentalism has become very popular in the last few years for corporate entertainment.

## **K: So, you're a mind reader. That means you should be able to tell when your wife wants you to help clean the house.**

M: Oh, I can tell!

## **K: What is the best part of having a home-based business?**

M: Being able to set my own hours, work from the comfort of the couch via wireless Internet connection, and be home with my twin boys.

## **K: What is the best part of being a stay-at-home Dad?**

M: There is nothing more valuable to me than the time I spend with Matt and Luke; watching them learn, grow, and being a direct part of that development.

## **K: What is the most challenging part of working out of the home?**

M: Two things come to mind. The first is having a deadline that requires my undivided attention. Unfortunately, with two small boys, that's just impossible. I can only do my best. The second is trying to make professional business calls while there is crying, screaming, and the TV playing "SpongeBob Square Pants" in the background. Luckily, for my personal performances, I have an agent to handle my bookings.

## **K: How is taking care of 4-year-olds different from taking care of 4-month-olds?**

M: I get more sleep. Actually, it seems that just about every six months, the boys seem to exhibit some new developmental challenge. Right now we are dealing with "boundary pushing" when it comes to bedtime. Before you know it, it will be driving cars and dating.

## **K: How do you handle scheduling conflicts?**

M: My folks. Thank goodness for them. During the rare occasion that Kendra and I are



Lucas and Matt Sibbersen, 4 years

unable to work around a particular scheduling conflict on our own, my parents are usually able to watch the boys.

**Kendra added her own take** on the SAHD arrangement she and Michael have: If we had to pay for full-time daycare for two boys, it would be a huge expense. Michael's never been a 9-to-5 kind of guy and I have a job I love with good benefits and a decent salary. It was always a no-brainer that he would stay at home with the kids. This allows him the freedom to do only projects that interest him, and since I choose not to teach summer classes, it gives us the opportunity to be together as a family and travel several months of the year. I think we're incredibly fortunate. ♡

---

Kendra Sibbersen teaches physics and astronomy at Metropolitan Community College in Omaha, Neb. Michael Sibbersen performs under the stage name Michael Starr ([www.mikestarr.net](http://www.mikestarr.net)). Their MZ twins, Matthew and Lucas, are 4.

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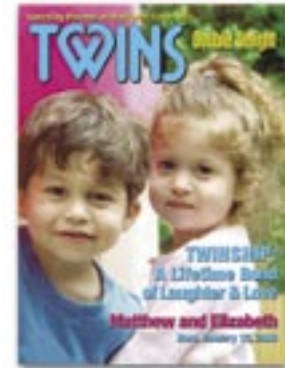
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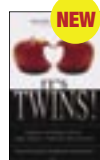
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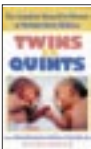
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In this useful resource, healthy doses of humor team up with practical advice collected from multiple birth parents across the country to demystify the multiple birth adventure. This survival guide speaks volumes for families with childrearing demands that are instantly doubled or tripled. It includes lists of valuable resources. *Hardcover, 240 pages.*



### Twice the Love: Stories of Inspiration for Parents of Twins and Multiples

**Susan M. Heim & TWINS™ Magazine Cartoons by John M. Byrne** **\$13.95**  
NEW! True tales that will have you laughing, crying, always identifying with these families' trials and triumphs. Crazy days with twins, unique challenges faced and overcome, celebrating life's gifts. Endlessly heart-warming and encouraging. A great gift for parents of twintants, or for grandparents and relatives. *Paperback, 214 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 Stacy, 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.*



### Discipline Without Shouting or Spanking

**Jerry Wyckoff, Ph.D.; Barbara C. Unell** **\$9.00**  
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 b/g 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

**The Editors of 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, discipline, creativity and much more. A perfect gift. *Paperback, 198 pages.*



### Raising Twins After the First Year: Everything You Need to Know About Bringing Up Twins – From Toddlers to Preteens

**Karen Gottesman** **\$15.95**  
From managing potty training to understanding sibling rivalry and mood swings, Gottesman provides useful and comforting information, often from her own experience as a mother. *Paperback, 288 pages.*



### Nanny to the Rescue! Straight Talk and Super Tips for Parenting in the Early Years

**Michelle LaRowe** **\$15.99**  
LaRowe's book "Nanny to the Rescue!" provides parents with proven solutions to common childcare situations. A TWINS™ Magazine contributor, LaRowe has a no-nonsense approach for parents who want to raise happy, healthy children. With parents today busy with work and with other demands, an experienced nanny can provide insightful solutions and smart practices in childcare. *Paperback, 288 pages.*



### Ready or Not...There We Go! The REAL Expert's Guide to the Toddler Years With Twins

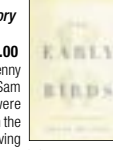
**Elizabeth Lyons** **\$16.00**  
Mother of twins Elizabeth Lyons and her "multiples sorority" tackle the challenges of parenting toddler twins in this highly entertaining and witty sequel to her first book, "Ready or Not... Here We Come!" Lyons reports on her own personal experiences with her twins Henry and Jack, and details confident solutions to common parenting situations from managing twin temper tantrums in aisle 9 to maintaining her marriage. *Paperback, 260 pages.*



## PREGNANCY/EXPECTING

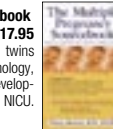
### The Early Birds: A Mother's Story for Our Times

**Jennifer Minton** **\$23.00**  
At 31 weeks into her pregnancy, Jenny Minton delivered her twin boys Sam and Gus. The premature boys were immediately placed on life support in the neonatal intensive care unit. A moving and powerful narrative about the triumph of life that all parents will appreciate and understand. *Hardcover, 272 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.*



### 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.*



## PREGNANCY/EXPECTING

### 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.*



### Your Pregnancy Packet

**Twins Magazine \$15.00**  
Two practical pocket guides by Dr. Glade B. Curtis and Judith Schuler provide detailed information on specific pregnancy and postpartum concerns. First-time mothers find these quick guides particularly useful. *Paperbacks, 442 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.*



## PREMATURITY

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

**Frank P. Manginello, M.D.; Theresa Foy DiGeronimo, 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 your infant. 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 \$13.95**  
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. *Paperback, 356 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.*



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[www.TwinsMagazine.com](http://www.TwinsMagazine.com)

## TWIN PSYCHOLOGY

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

**Nancy J. Sipes, Ph.D. and Janna S. Sipes, J.D. \$16.95**  
The title of this book refers to twinship 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 twinship, 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.*



### 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.*



### 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.*



### 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 twinship. *Paperback, 188 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 PHOTO COLLECTIONS

### Twins

**Mary Ellen Mark \$35.00**  
Mark is one of America's leading 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

**Anne Geddes \$19.95**  
Anne Geddes captures the magic of twins, triplets and singleton babies sleeping in the petals of roses, popping out of tulip, nestled among feathers and cradled in a father's hands. Beautiful photography and inspiring quotes fill this gorgeous keepsake. *Hardcover, 110 pages.*



# TWINS™ Children's Bookshelf



### My Personal Story in ABCs

**\$7.95**  
Your child will learn the letters A to Z with pictures and words. There are more than 20 places for you to write 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

**\$7.95**  
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.*



Two for \$15.90

### Buddies

**A Story About Twins \$5.95**  
*Michelle Donaldson, Illustrations by Robert Peltz*  
Brother and sister buddies discover how differences can create a special bond for twins. For ages 2-5. *Paperback, 16 pages.*



### Grandpa's Twins

**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

**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.*



### The Bobbsey Twins: Freddie and Flossie and the Train Ride

**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.*



### The Bobbsey Twins: Freddie and Flossie

**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

**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

**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 at the Beach

**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.*



### Sketches From a Spy Tree

**Tracie Vaughn Zimmer, Illustrated by Andrew Glass \$16.00**  
Anne Marie is an artist who 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 and illustrator Andrew Glass are both twins who bring a vivid portrait of a year in the life of a twin. Ages 8-12. *Hardcover, 64 pages.*



### The Twins Take Turns

**Nickole Shyne-White \$16.00**  
Dennis and Derek are twin brothers. They look alike, but 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.*



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## Two Times the Fun

**Beverly Cleary \$11.99**  
Award-winning author and mother of twins Beverly Cleary, provides delightfully entertaining stories featuring 4-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.*



## Sweet Jasmine, Nice Jackson

**Robie H. Harris \$16.95**  
Jasmine and Jackson are two-year-old twins and are out to explore the world. A delightful and entertaining story for young toddler-aged twins that also includes informative short sidebars with information for parents about twins. *Hardcover, 40 pages.*



## My Best Friend

**Margie Fincher \$5.95**  
Book of rhyme teases readers with the question, "Can you guess who my friend can be? I'll give you hints and you will see." *Paperback, 16 pages.*



## Simon Says

**Diana Hamilton Geller \$5.95**  
Firstborn Simon flaunts his seniority over Max, who finds a new way to handle the issue. *Paperback, 16 pages.*



## One Was Not Enough

**Lori Menning \$5.95**  
Mama tells her 5-year-old twins she had two babies because "one was not enough." *Paperback, 16 pages.*



## You Can't Trick Me

**Yvonne Field-Bagwell \$5.95**  
Identical twins playfully trick friends, teachers, and even Grammy about who's who—but can never trick Mom. *Paperback, 16 pages.*



## Wishing on a Star

**Dori J. DeGennaro \$5.95**  
As 5-year-old dizygotic twins gaze at the stars, Mom tells them of her wish every night when she saw the first bright star. *Paperback, 16 pages.*



## Michael's Brothers

**Crystal Forsberg \$5.95**  
Older sibling is jealous of the constant attention the twins receive, but learns to get over it. *Paperback, 16 pages.*



## Twenty Wiggly Toes

**Cynthia Johnson \$5.95**  
Twins wiggle 20 toes, race with four feet, clap their four hands, use 20 busy fingers and two big bedtime yawns. *Paperback, 16 pages.*



## One to Three

**Nancy Griffin \$5.95**  
Older sibling learns to accept twin babies. It's confusing and hard, but with time, love grows. *Paperback, 16 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 \$2.98**  
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.*



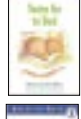
## Twins Go to Bed

**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.*



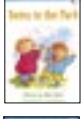
## Twins in the Park

**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.*



## By My Brother's Side

**Tiki and Ronde Barber \$16.95**  
One special day, while riding bikes in a summer 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 play for the brothers to use in their big game against the toughest team in their league. *Hardcover, 32 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.*



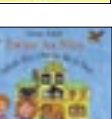
## Twin to Twin

**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.*



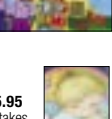
## Twice as Nice: What It's Like to Be a Twin

**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, who 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 3rd 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.*



## Two is for Twins

**Wendy Chettye Lewison, Illustrations, Hiroe Nakata \$16.99**  
Twins are two as two can be. Each one has someone else to share, to help, and to play a game. They are two times the hugs, two times the fun. Wendy Chettye Lewison's rhyming book is a celebration of the joys of twins. With colorful watercolor illustrations by Brooklyn artist Hiroe Nakata, this is a book that toddler twins will find irresistible and fun to read. *Hardcover, 40 pages.*



## Hello Twins

**Charlotte Voake \$15.99**  
Twins Simon and Charlotte don't look much alike nor do they like doing the same activities. Charlotte likes to build things, while Simon likes to make things fall down. Both love books, but while Simon looks at the pictures, Charlotte likes to put her own pictures in the books. They're two of a kind. *Hardcover, 32 pages.*



## The Chairs Where Pam & Sam Sit

**Cynthia Grannell \$5.95**  
In the style of "This is the house that Jack built," the milk lands on the floor, the cat licks the milk, the cookie falls on the cat and so on. *Paperback, 16 pages.*



## Tiny Tired Twins

**Elizabeth DeArmond \$5.95**  
Bedtime story filled with illustrations of twin animal babies, book delivers a peaceful sleepy message. *Paperback, 16 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. *Hardcover, 24 pages.*



## I Love You the Purplest

**Barbara M. Joesse \$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.*



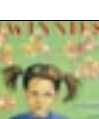
## Twinnies

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



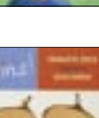
## Twins!

**Charlotte Doyle \$10.98**  
In this simple to read book for babies and toddlers, twins need double in the bottles and twice the swing pushes, but they also give twice as many kisses. *Hardback, 32 pages.*



## Guess Who Needs Glasses?

**Bumpy and Boo Visit the Eye Doctor \$15.95**  
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**Twice the Love: Stories of Inspiration for Families...with Twins, Multiples and Singletons**

Compiled and Edited by Susan M. Heim

Cartoon artistry by John M. Byrne

**\$13.95**



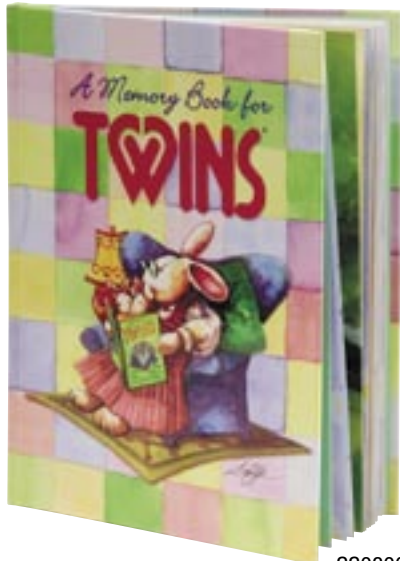
"Twice the Love: Stories of Inspiration for Families ... with Twins, Multiples, and Singletons," published in conjunction with TWINS™ Magazine, is a compilation of 82 inspiring stories written by parents and other family members about the joys and challenges of raising multiples. These true tales reflect a variety of topics, such as the special bond between multiples, typical crazy days in the life of a family with twins, challenges encountered in pregnancy or childhood, humorous situations created by multiples, adopting twins, and much more. If you're the parent of twins or triplets, you'll love these heart-warming and encouraging stories. This book also makes a great gift for those who are expecting or raising multiples! *Paperback, 222 pages.*

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SS03003 \$31.95 for a set of 2 books

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- 6 large overlapping pockets.
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Set of 2 \$35.00 a set

## Twin Hearts

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.



Unframed Art

5" x 7" Card

### 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.

## "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





## 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"Hx15"W.

- A. Fingers - SF90035 \$39.99 each
- B. Toes - SF90036 \$39.99 each



A. 12"-x-15"



B. 12"-x-15"

## Twin Blessing Photo Frame

Show off your darling twins with this charming photo frame from Laura Leiden Calligraphy. The rich mahogany-colored frame includes an oval opening in a moss-colored mat for your favorite photograph of your twins, plus a thoughtful verse that celebrates the differences in your children. Their arrival is a true blessing in your life! A wonderful gift to celebrate the birth of your twins for yourself. 10" x 12" frame holds one 6" x 4" photograph.

SF06004 \$24.99 each



*Melissa and Doug*

## Noah's Ark and Circus Train Photo Frames

Popular children's toys and accessories manufacturer Melissa & Doug has created these colorful hand-painted Noah's Ark and Circus Train solid-wood table-top frames. These beautifully crafted frames will compliment any nursery or home. (Overall size of Noah's Ark is 11" x 9 1/2". Circus Train is 14" x 10 1/2") They each hold three, 2 1/8" x 2 1/8" photographs.

SF05001 Noah's Ark \$19.99 each

SF05002 Circus Train \$19.99 each



## "Discover Wildlife, Raise Twins" Ceramic Wall 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

## Twice as Nice Photo Frame

This unique ceramic frame from Russ Baby will look fabulous on your dresser, bookcase, shelf or fireplace mantle. The frame has glass insert and is flocked back, providing an unique opportunity to show off your twins. A 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 Photo Frame is 4 1/2" x 6" and holds two 1 3/4" x 2 3/4" photographs.

SF04002 Stars and Hearts \$12.99 each



## "Two Peas in a Pod" Personalized 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.

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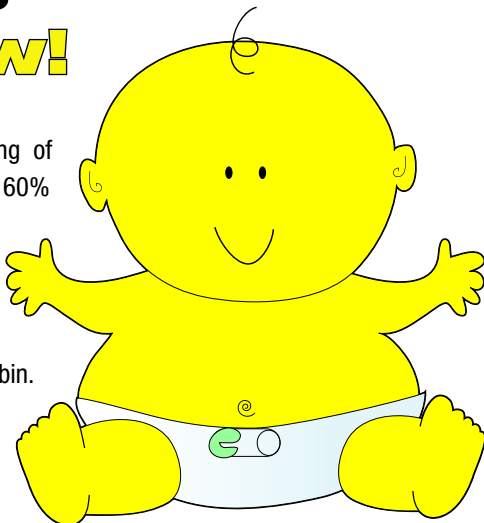
## Help! My baby looks yellow!

Jaundice, or yellowing of the skin, occurs in 60% of newborns. After birth, some of your twin's red blood cells break down from producing bilirubin.

A baby's liver is often too immature to clear bilirubin from the body fast enough, causing yellow skin. Typically this

happens within a few days of birth. For most babies, frequent feedings help clear the bilirubin through urination, usually causing the yellow hue to disappear without problems by 1-2 weeks of age. Depending on your twin's bilirubin level, your pediatrician may do frequent checks during the first week after delivery to be certain levels aren't rising too high. In some cases, babies need phototherapy treatment. BUT, when jaundice occurs during the first 24 hours of life, it may mean mom's and baby's blood types were incompatible. This scenario requires immediate medical attention. Untreated serious jaundice can cause major disabilities.

Send your Growing Stages questions to mom of twins Kelly Woods at [kwoods@lightblast.net](mailto:kwoods@lightblast.net). Kelly is a pediatric and family nurse practitioner. In each issue, she addresses topics of interest to MOMs. Kelly has identical boys, Aidan and Bailey, 2. Kelly and her husband, Matt, live in central Minnesota.



## BABY SIGN LANGUAGE



Teaching your twins to use "baby signs" while they're very young can be rewarding. Babies can communicate their wants and needs using signs long before they have any vocabulary. This helps reduce frustration and anxiety for parents and twins. Teaching tiny twin infants sign language so they "talk" is quite simple. You can use traditional sign language or make up your own signs. Stick to the basics, such as "more", "milk", "hungry", "wet", and "hurt"—and begin early. Always speak the word you are signing. As they grow, they'll learn many more signs quickly—keep a list for yourself so you remember which signs mean what. Don't rely solely on signs for communication—by 18 months, if your twin infants know 50 baby signs but only three words, verbal development may be delayed. If your twin-toddlers use fewer words than their playmates, evaluate how often you use signs to communicate with them.

## Screaming meemies...

### 10 universal facts about colic

1. Colicky crying usually starts @ 2 weeks, peaks @ 6 weeks, ends by 3-4 months.
2. Preemies are no more likely to have colic than full-term babies.
3. Colicky babies have twisted faces and piercing wails, like a person in pain. Often, their cries come in waves and stop abruptly.
4. Colicky screams frequently begin during or just after a feeding.
5. Colicky babies often double up, grunt, strain, and seem relieved by passing gas or pooping.
6. Colic is often much worse in the evening.
7. Colic is as likely to occur with a couple's 5th baby as with their first.
8. Colicky crying often improves with rocking, holding, shhhh'ing, and gentle abdominal pressure.
9. Babies are healthy and happy between colicky crying bouts.
10. In many cultures around the world, babies never get colic.

—Source: Dr. Harvey Karp, *The Happiest Baby on the Block*.

## Finicky eaters

Worried about your twins' nutrition? Mealtimes always a challenge? Here are some (sneaky) tricks for ensuring your twinnies get essential nutrients.

- Use a cast-iron skillet to cook meals. By doing so, you add important iron to your twins' food. Use a little lemon juice in the food and you boost the iron that's absorbed.
- Use a recipe for zucchini bread and instead of zucchini, use pureed broccoli and double the amount. Delicious.
- Make yam chips for snacks—bake or broil sliced yams in an oven with a little salt and butter.
- Grind carrots (or yams!), put them in pancakes, serve them with syrup.
- Squeeze a little lemon juice over iron-rich foods to increase your twins' iron absorption and add zest.
- Mix skim milk powder into your twinnies' favorite dishes—soups, cereal—you can double their calcium intake this way.
- Cut veggies into french-fry size strips, blanch, then marinate overnight in pickle juice or Italian dressing.

—Source: Dr. Harvey Karp, *The Happiest Toddler on the Block*.



Lauren & Lindsey, 15 months

## Are they ready for potty training yet?



Jaymee and Katelyn, 26 months

If you're like most parents of twins, you're eager to end diaper-duty and you've already calculated the money you'll save when diaper-days are past. Don't throw away your DiaperDekor too quickly! You may be ready to move out of diapers and into Pull-Ups, but your twins may have something else in mind. Studies have shown that toddlers forced into toilet-training too early

have more accidents, take longer to shed the Pull-Ups and may rebel and completely resist using the toilet. Watch for signs of toilet-training readiness: Your twins wake up dry from naps and nighttime; each child begins to prefer clean and dry diapers most of the time; they show signs of recognizing the feeling of having a full bladder or the urge to have a bowel movement; and they take an interest in the potty chair or toilet. When you see the signs, your window of opportunity has opened!

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sample of 2-page spread

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writer and mother of twins and some of the world's top musicians, singers, and songwriters. Featuring fun tunes like, "Twins are In," "Unidentical," "Built-in Best Friend," "Double Double Fun Fun" and lullabies like "Wish Come Two." Twins of all ages will laugh, cry, relate. *Twin Spin* is the one gift to buy when you're buying for two. Only **\$15.98**.

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this thing??



# Double Takes

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?

**1::** Brayden and Brooke  
24 months  
Acton, MA



**2::** Jessica and Brianna  
9 months  
Aurora, CO



**3::** Alexa and Julissa  
14 months  
Montebello, CA



**4::** August and Crystal  
3 years  
Huntington Beach, CA



**5::** Peyton and Parker  
3½ years  
Benton, IL



**6::** Carley and Madison  
22 months  
Glassboro, NJ



**7::** Caroline and Heidi  
12 months  
Suwanee, GA



**8::** Landon, Ella, Garrett and Carson  
3 years and 6 months  
Morganfield, KY



**9::** Jack and Elliot  
5 days  
Port Monmouth, NJ



**10::** Meghan and MacKenzie  
10 months  
Rhineland, WI



**11::** Kaden and Trey  
5 months  
Orem, UT



**12::** McKenzie and Colton  
3 years  
Starr, SC



**13::** Lennea and Lauren  
2½ years  
Morro Bay, CA



**14::** Kaylee, Taylor, Lane and Chase  
3 years, 3 months  
Camanche, IA



**15::** Aaron and JohnJoseph  
17 months  
Medway, MA



**16::** Lydia and Rylee  
6 months  
Gilford, NH



**17::** Allison and Emily  
1 year  
Eatontown, NJ



**18::** Brandon and Brian  
10 months  
Bixby, OK



**19::** Cadence and Quinn  
7 months  
Overland Park, KS



**20::** Hannah and Aiden  
1½ years  
Holmdel, NJ

## Photo Tips

*What we are looking for:*

- Sharp focus
- Crisp, clean, vivid color (no red, blue or yellow cast)
- Good, attractive lighting (no high shadow contrasts, no "red eye")
- Uncluttered backgrounds
- Happy children interacting with each other

We select photos for an upcoming issue three months prior to its distribution. Because of the volume of photos received, we are unable to respond individually. If your photo is selected and you have not included a release form with it you will be contacted to sign a photo release. **See Release Form on page 39 of this issue.**

### Please be sure to:

- Place your address label on the back of the photo (or write softly with permanent ink pen) along with a phone number.
- Include the names of the children, their age in the photo and their twin type (dizygotic, monozygotic or unknown).

### Send your twins' photograph to:

TWINS Double Takes  
Attn. Art Director  
11211 E. Arapahoe Road, Suite 101  
Centennial, CO 80112-3851

*NOTE: We are unable to use any professional photographs. Photos will not be returned. All photos become the property of TWINS.*

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DZ - 19	14 - MZ	9 - DZ	4 - DZ
DZ - 18	13 - DZ	8 - DZ	3 - MZ
17 - MZ	12 - DZ	7 - MZ	2 - DZ
16 - DZ	11 - MZ	6 - MZ	1 - MZ

Based on parental reports:

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# Declare Independence: Let yourself go

By Julie Blair Riekse



This Fourth of July, I am declaring my independence—from myself.

You see, before I had kids, I was a high-maintenance girl. I wore obscenely high heels. I religiously reapplied fire-engine-red lipstick after lunch. I changed out my bag daily to complement my outfits. I even purchased trendy workout clothes for the gym.

You'd think the birth of twins would alter my routine, especially given that my new responsibilities were significantly cutting into my ironing time.

Oh, no.

I went into overdrive after the kiddos arrived. Now that I was a stay-at-home mom, I determined never to "let myself go." I didn't want to be one of those dumpy-

looking ladies pushing screaming kids in the grocery store who looks ready to jump off a bridge. No, I would be cute—and thus in control of my life—at all costs.

Only days after my C-section, I wobbled off to the NICU with a fresh blowout and face full of new MAC products camouflaging gigantic black circles under my eyes. I distinctly remember what I was wearing: A springy madras button-down, satin cropped capris, and pink patent leather loafers. Of course, my bag matched my shoes. I was completely Lilly Pulitzer-ized.

I worked at the upkeep until the babies became mobile, at which point I traded my cute mules for cute trainers. I mean, there is just no way to effectively run to catch a falling vase when your shoes are flopping behind you.

But then we were in the sandbox. And the baby pool. And we had moved to Texas where temperatures shot to the 90s every day by 10 a.m. I was sandy and damp.

So I lopped off eight inches of hair. I kicked off my shoes. I traded my Ralph Lauren Polos for cheap, white, wife-beater tees.

Ah. Much better. Now I was suited for

sand cakes and finger paint and sticky kisses.

My kids are 2 now. We roll in the leaves. We use sticks to push sludge around in the creek. We have blue play-dough squished under our nails.

We are downright stinky. We are having a ball.

Yesterday I went to the grocery store looking dumpy, hair crammed under my husband's baseball cap. The twins sat in the cart screeching over a box of Wheat Thins.

A girl in stilettos and fire-engine-red lipstick walked by. She looked hobbled. And self-conscious. Like she was trying to impress the world instead of allowing life to impress her. She needed, I thought to myself, to let herself go. If she did, she just might find pleasure in jumping off a bridge. ♡

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Freelancer Julie Blair Riekse recently acquired two pairs of Crocs, which she reports make good boats if you forget to pack pool toys. She lives in Flower Mound, Tex., along with her subjects, husband Jim and 3-year-old twins William and Elizabeth.

## Twins say the cutest things:

### Product placement opportunity

Anyone remember the old Disney movie "Old Yeller"? My twins were watching it tonight. After the part where the dog saves Travis's life by fighting off the wild hogs, Yeller is lying down, hurt.

Molly said, "Aww, poor Yeller. He needs Aquaphor."

—From Beth, on the TMMB, Mom to Freddie, 7/86; Janelle, 2/88; Gregory, 10/90; and twins Molly and Anthony, 3/04.

### One of their favorite things...

...is something they call "buffoon," aka "balloon."

My twins' "Thomas and the big, big bridge" book has balloons on 3 or 4 pages, so it takes a VERY long time to read if I actually try to read the story...

We turn a page, they point out every train they know (ALL of

them). They point out ALL the numbers they know, ALL the colors they know, and if there are balloons on the page, ALL the balloons that can be identified by color.

"That a red buffoon..."

—From BusyMNMom, on the TMMB

### Happy Joes all 'round

Last night I made Sloppy Joes for dinner. When I told the boys it was time to eat Sloppy Joes, Matthew said "I want a Happy Joe." Then Josh said, "I want a Happy Joe too!"

Too cute to correct!

—From Nikki, on the TMMB, Mother of Larkyn Elizabeth, 6; Matthew Charles and Joshua Clark, 3.

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