

The Magazine for Multiples Since 1984

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**Spring 2010 Digital Edition**



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## On the Cover:

Fraternal boy/girl twins, Noah and Emily, age 20-months (at the time of this photo.) These adorable cuties live in Denver, Colorado with their parents Jennifer and William.

Cover photo taken by Betsy Strafach from Portraits by Betsy, [www.portraitsbybetsy.com](http://www.portraitsbybetsy.com).

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# EDITOR'S MESSAGE

## "Kids, you'll Move Mountains"

March 2nd is a VERY special day in our home. This is the day that we were forever blessed by the arrival of our wonderful and amazing fraternal twin boys, James and Nicholas. This is also the day that one of our most favorite authors of all time was born, Dr. Seuss. When my boys were little (*and even still today at the ripe age of 12*) we celebrate this month by reading all the great and colorful stories that line our bookshelf at home. One of our most favorite stories and the one that really means the most to us is, "Oh! The Places you'll Go!" because it is not only inspiring and uplifting but also a wonderful lesson to teach your children and one that I have read



Nick and James—Age 1

over and over to all four of my boys. The message in this story is incredibly positive and teaches us to keep going no matter where life takes you, or what obstacle gets in your way—even when things get scary or dark (which it will) the message is to keep plugging along... "Kid, you'll move mountains!" So, in honor of Dr. Seuss' 106th Birthday this week – March 2nd—and our twin boys!) we would like to share our favorite Dr. Seuss story with all of you so you can read it out loud to your kids and share with them the wonderful imagination of this great author while also teaching them important life lessons! [Click here to view "Oh! The Places you'll Go!" by Dr. Seuss.](#)



Nick and James—12th Birthday

With all the high tech gadgets and devices they are using these days, it's our responsibility as parents to instill a love for reading and for books and the very best way we can do that is to take the time to read together and open up an entire new world for them...

We hope you enjoy this Spring Digital Edition filled with great articles and information covering many topics like infant massage to sooth and calm them; using praise as a motivation; tips when the babysitter arrives; and a self-confidence check up for your school-age/tweens. We also explore topics in this issue like: "When Twins Learn to Talk," "Two Twins, Two Different Grades," "We're Not Laughing at You we're laughing with you... Using Humor to Keep the Balance!" and Joshua Coleman takes a look at "Communicating with your Twins". We have also included our regular columns and features, along with many other articles of interest to you. Remember, your next print edition is our spring 2010 issue and will be coming out in early April. We hope you enjoy the start of spring and all the beauty and wonder it can bring! "Kids, You'll Move Mountains!"



Sincerely,

*Christa D Reed*

Christa D. Reed, Publisher/Editor-in-Chief



# TWINNS™

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## Mom with Two Sets of Twins Creates the Baby Dipper-to make life easier when feeding twins!

Barbara Schantz has a little experience having and raising twins. This mom of two sets of twins (5 year-old girls and 19 month-old boys) has developed a brand new invention that is particularly helpful to parents of multiples. When her 6-month-old twin daughters were first starting to eat solid foods, she tried many different kinds of bowls and was really disappointed when there were none that truly enabled her to feed



them using only one hand. She then decided to design her own bowl and try to get it to other parents to help them have a free hand while feeding their twin babies. This great

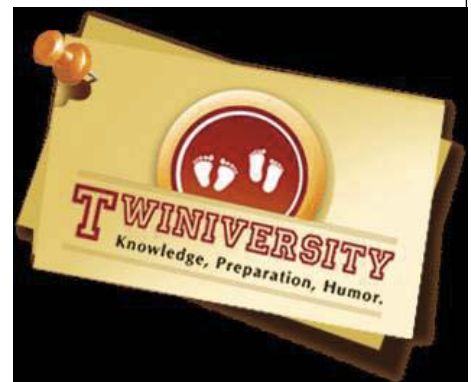
new product is called the Baby Dipper and can be purchased at [www.babydipper.com](http://www.babydipper.com).

The patented triangular-shaped Baby Dipper bowl allows one-handed feeding of infants and makes self-feeding easy for toddlers. The non-slip base, contoured interior, spoon-shaped lower corner, and colorful transparent sides combine to make mealtime a fun and clean experience for all. Parents can use their free hand to clean or entertain their baby, or to keep baby's hands out of the bowl. Toddlers can concentrate on getting their food onto their spoons and into their mouths, and avoid the frustrations of chasing the food around the bowl and the bowl around the table. The Baby Dipper bowl is BPA-free, phthalate-free, lead-free, and PVC-free.



## New Nonprofit "Twiniversity" Forms to Help New Parents of Multiples!

Have you heard about Twiniversity—a brand new nonprofit organization that has recently formed to help expectant and new parents with multiples? Creator, Natalie Diaz, mother to five-year-old fraternal twins launched this brand new organization to help connect parents of multiples throughout the United States. "We want moms and dads to come here to learn, get inspired, motivated and gain friendship, on this hectic journey of raising our twins." Visit <http://www.twiniversity.com> to learn more and also see our article featuring Twiniversity in our upcoming Spring 2010 printed edition out in early April.



*We want to hear from you!*



Send us your comments, suggestions, questions about raising multiples or if you need advice on a pressing subject or any other information you want to share with us and your letter/email may be included in an upcoming issue of TWINS™ Magazine. You can also send along a photo of you and your twins/multiples with your email.

Contact Christa D. Reed,  
Editor-in-Chief at  
[twinseditor@twinsmagazine.com](mailto:twinseditor@twinsmagazine.com).

## Kidjot.com launches new service to archive and share family memories

(Charlotte, NC) Tomorrow, will you care what you ate for lunch today? Today's social networks have one great flaw: they are built for only today. Kidjot.com is built on the single concept that family memories are for tomorrow, not only today. But KidJot is more than a new take on social networking but is a combination

of what you get when you combine the connectedness of Facebook, the stores of blogging, the images of photo sharing and the history of a scrapbook. And it's all created for the most important people in your life: your kids! With Kidjot, you can easily post stories about your children, your spouse and yourself using the Jot editor. You can quickly upload photos, scanned report cards and newspaper clippings with the simple Clipping uploader. Best of all,



you can automatically share them all with your family and close friends without sharing them with the entire world. For more information about Kidjot.com go to their website: <http://www.Kidjot.com> or send an email to: [support@kidjot.com](mailto:support@kidjot.com).

## Couple Gives Birth to Rare Twins, Again!

### Mixed Race Couple Has 2nd Set of Black and White Twin Girls...

(CBS.com) a British couple has defied the odds again by giving birth to a second set of black and white twin girls. "I was as blown away as the rest of them, you know, there is no easy way to explain it all. I feel like I'm still in shock myself even though the first ones were seven years ago. It's amazing, but we just love them the same," says Dean Durrant, the father. As CBS News correspondent Elizabeth Palmer reported, Alison Spooner and Durrant welcomed daughters Lauren and Hayleigh into the world seven years ago. Lauren takes after her white mother, while Hayleigh, takes after her father. When the couple announced earlier this year that they were having another set of twins, they didn't think lightning would strike twice.

"I honestly didn't think that it would happen again. I thought that we'd have two of the same. Well I didn't think that we'd have twins again for a start," Spooner says. This time, baby Miya has her father's dark skin, while Leah looks like her mother. Doctors say the phenomenon is so rare, that there are no statistics to illustrate the probability of it happening. "Even non-identical twins aren't that common and non-identical twins from mixed parents, of different races, less common still. To have two eggs fertilized and come out two different colors, is even rarer still. So, to have it happen twice must be one in millions," explains Dr. Sarah Jarvis. Their second set of twins were born premature in December 2008 and breathing problems kept them in a special care unit for a few weeks before they were finally able to join their family at home. The twins are now 1-years-old.



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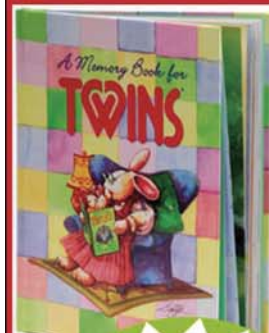
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# Huberty Twins Both



# SCORE in FINAL GAME

by Pat Hrdlicka

It was the last game of the football season for Fox Valley Lutheran High School. Mike Huberty, a running back for the team, and his identical twin brother, Nick, a fullback, are both seniors this year at the Appleton, Wisconsin area high school. The pair had transferred from Kimberly High School mid-way through their sophomore year and had to sit out the football season in their junior years due to a WIAA transfer rule. They had missed the game and Mike says, "We were extremely excited to come back our senior years to play football again because we both love the sport so much."

As it turned out, Fox Valley Lutheran would win their season ending game against Freedom with a final score of 51-20 and a record of 4-5. What made the game special, however, was when Mike scored only a few minutes into the game on a 45-yard run. Some-time during the second quarter, Nick caught an 8-yard touchdown pass. Nick said, "I was so focused on the game and didn't realize that Mike had scored until after the game was over." Both scoring in the same football game was a feat they had been accomplished only one other time, during the last game of the season in their freshman year.

Being identical twins, mix-ups are inevitable and, "There were some people that thought I scored both touchdowns because I play on offense so much. Also, the next day in the newspaper, it said that I scored both touchdowns," says Mike. Mom, Gail Huberty, says, "They handle the mix-up with a quiet frustration. I believe it's the main reason for the competition that exists between the two. It has happened to the advantage and disadvantage of both Mike and Nick." Mom explains that, "When they were young and being a little rough on the playground, one may have gotten the blame when it was actually the other."

The pair also both play baseball and Mike says, "If Nick hits a home run, I feel like I need to hit two. In football, I'm always trying to get more yards than him or make more tackles. But of course, I'm happy for him when he makes good plays, too." Sometimes, says Nick, "It would be nice to be on a separate team because the coaches would look at me as an individual instead of two people. Although being on the same team motivates me to get better and work harder."

The only time the pair has competed against each other was in wrestling during their middle school years. "Because we both weighed about the same, we ended up in the same bracket so we had to wrestle each other. We had both gone undefeated for a couple years and neither of us wanted to lose. Our competitiveness between each other was way too high, so Nick agreed to let me win as long as I'd let him win if we were ever put in the same situation again. Other than that, we've

always worked together on the same team to win."

At this point, Mike and Nick have plans to attend different colleges and major in different things. Both are contemplating playing sports in college and have been contacted by some schools about the possibility.

The separation during their college years will prove interesting. "When they were about 10-years-old, a bedroom opened up in our home and they separated," says Mom. "That lasted about a week, and they were back together. Now they have separate rooms though, and are very content with that. For seventeen years, they have been together through nearly everything.

Mom Gail says, "The guys are similar in many ways but also have God given gifts that make them quite unique." ❤️



**Pat Hrdlicka** is the mother of three girls, twins and a singleton, now in their teen/tween years. She is 12-year member of the Green Bay Area Mothers of Multiples club, has worked with the Wisconsin Twin Project and has attended the annual Twins Festival in Twinsburg, Ohio. She has been a freelance writer for years, contributing feature articles to the De Pere Journal and has written about business topics for Marketplace Magazine.

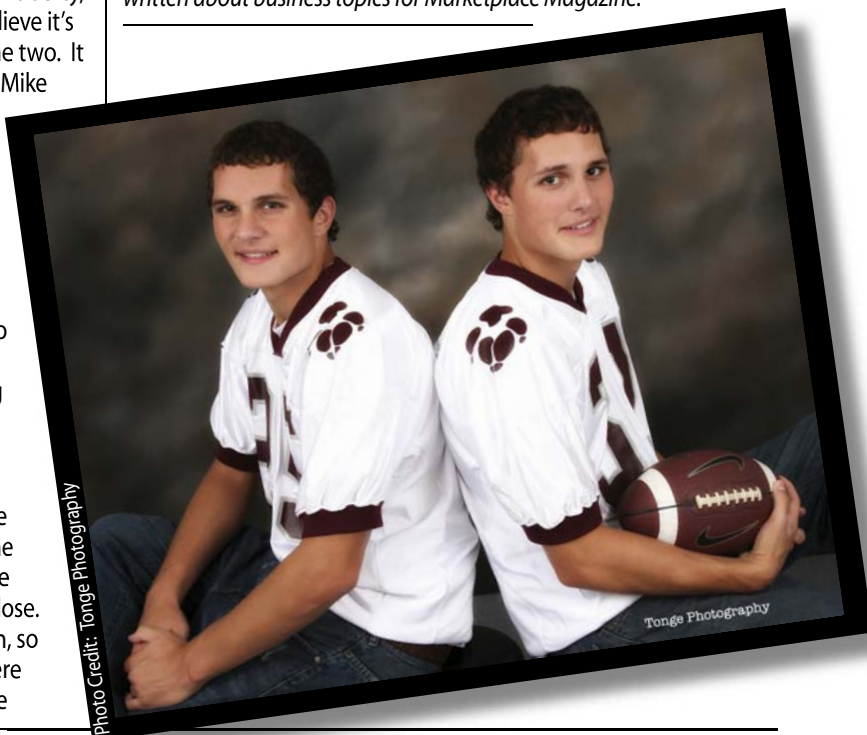


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Dear Twins Editor:

I had a question for you. I would like to know with all your articles you did on twins did you ever had a story of a family who had 3 generation of twins with 4 sets of twins? My grandmother had twin girls (my mother and aunt) my mother had twin girls (myself and my twin) and both of us had twins (myself had twin boys) and my twin had twin girls. In 2006 we were featured in the Guinness Book of World Records and we wanted to know if there are more twins having twins? Can't wait to hear from you.

Diane Mageau  
Via Email

**(Editor's Note: Diane, funny you sent this in since our next letter is asking the same type of question so I am thinking YES! There are twins having twins read the letter we received from Brandee Hall)**

Dear TWINS Magazine:

Hi I'm just wondering if you could give me an answer...my sister and I are twins and we were born on our twin Father and Uncle's birthday.....Do you know what are the odds of twins being born on a set of twins birthday? Our birthday is Dec 27th. This picture was taken on our last birthday Dec 27, 2009. We all currently live



Nation and Chinese.Thanks for any help!  
Brandee Hall  
Via Email

in Chilliwack, B.C. Canada. My Dad's parents are Chinese and First Nation. My Grandmother is full Chinese and was born and raised in Jamaica. My Grandfather is from here, Chilliwack and is First

**(Editor's Note: If any readers out there have similar experiences or have statistics on both of these questions—we would love to hear from you!)**

Dear TWINS Magazine:

We love your magazine! We wanted to share with you a photo of my little angels Anthony & Aiden enjoying the sunset and



waves! We look forward to the warm weather to return! I love our little angels more than anything in this world! We had a tough pregnancy but I would do it all over again! I went on bed rest at 19 weeks due to a incompetent cervix, was hospitalized for 39 days, with coli stasis, gestational diabetes and the onset of preeclampsia... Our twins were born at 29 weeks, 2 days. Anthony weighing 2 lbs 15 oz and was 15 inches long, Aiden weighed 2 lbs 14 oz and was

14 3/4 inches long! They were in the NICU for 59 days then were discharged! They are now doing wonderfully without any major complications! Thank GOD for that! They are currently 15 months old and weigh 23 lbs each, and are doing GREAT! I wanted to write to you to thank you for your fantastic, helpful, informative magazine. Your magazine has answered soooo many questions that most singleton parents were not able to understand or answer. I look forward to your magazine over any other that we receive! Keep up the great work,

Sincerely,  
Lynn, Anthony & Aiden Raines aka: Lynnikins and the twinikins  
Via email

**(Editor's Note: Thanks Lynn, we really appreciate hearing feedback from our readers and also loved hearing your story! It's amazing to hear how blessed we all are to be able to raise twins (& more)! It truly is a wonderful and fun experience.)**



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# Join the Conversation on acebook with TWINS™ Magazine!

Recently, we asked fans on the TWINS Magazine Facebook page to share their story about when they first found out they were expecting multiples and the response we received was overwhelming! Thanks to everyone who shared their story with us—there were so many great responses we wish we could print them all but we just don't have the space! Read some of our favorites here and if you haven't joined the conversation with TWINS Magazine yet—then log on today!

**Becca Dever Barstow**  
I went in for a nuchal translucency scan around 12 weeks. I had brought my sister-in-law with me as she'd never been to an ultrasound before. The tech puts the wand to my uterus and asked me what I saw. My response was "I'm guessing that must be 2 heads because they don't seem to be connected". My SIL was speechless.

**Lisa Pensavalle-Row**  
I was laughing and crying at the same time. When the ultrasound technician said I was having identical twins boys. All I could think about was being a mom of 4 boys and what a wild ride it was going to be!

**Dana Horton Harrell**  
My dad and my husband kept saying I was going to have twins and when I went for my first doctor appointment at 12 weeks and said we need a sonogram ASAP and when the tech said yep there are 2 babies in there I just about fell off the table and just turned freezing cold (and it was mid July in TX) was in total shock!! We are glad to have our fraternal twin boys that are now 3-years-old!! We love this magazine that was given to me at hospital breastfeeding center!!

**Danna Dueck**  
It was actually our 3rd Ultrasound. We went to get the genetic testing and the technician asked if we had already had a scan and we said "yes". She proceeded to tell us that "Okay good then you are aware you are having twins." WHAT? I said "yeah right" and my husband didn't say a single word for about 10 minutes. Previous ultrasounds told us that the "baby" was fine. :-)

**Angela Scheick Gray**  
I was almost 18 weeks. We wanted to find out the sex of our baby. We had a girl and wanted another girl. I'm an identical twin myself. My mom and husband kept joking I was having twins due to my belly size. The doc kept saying no. As soon as the ultrasound tech put the probe on my belly I asked "IS THAT TWO HEADS?" She didn't say anything, so I asked again. She said yep I was just making sure there were two bodies...lol. Everyone in the room screamed (my husband, twin sis, mom & daughter) She wrote "we are boys" on the picture. Showing the picture is how we told the rest of our family.

**Adam Warmuth**  
My mom predicted we would have a girl first then boy/girl twins when we first got married. Eight years later; my wife commented to the OB/GYN that her mother in law had predicted twins and sure enough she was right! I was on the road with some coworker when my wife called with the news, from my shocked and quizzed expression, they excused themselves because, they thought my wife had lost the pregnancy. Once it fully registered with me, I was over the moon!!

**Veronica Wiltz Canty**  
I laughed for two weeks, then cried for the next five months

**Liz Ludtke Howe**  
the best response was from my mother in law. My husband told her that there were two heart beats and she said "What? The baby has two hearts?"

 Find us on Facebook



# 10

TOP

## Part 2

by Ruby Coats-Mosher

**Ruby Coats-Mosher, DVM** resides in Emporia, Kansas, is a veterinarian and the mother of fraternal twin girls.

In our last issue (*Winter 2010*) we shared with you the first **5 Top Adjustments** and we are continuing with numbers 6 through 10:

### 6. KEEP MOVING!

While vigorous exercise is generally not indicated during a multiple gestation, a gentle exercise program is usually beneficial and encouraged. Even women confined to bed rest can perform special isometric exercises to help maintain muscle tone.

Sources of pregnancy exercise routines, usually designed for expectant mothers of singletons, include books, videos and childbirth classes. Of course, the ultimate source of exercise information and caveats is a woman's doctor; his or her advice about altering these to fit her multiple pregnancy, combined with a woman's exercise habits before pregnancy and history of complications, will tailor the individual exercise regimen.\*

### 7. THE "WORKING OUTSIDE THE HOME" LIFESTYLE

If a woman plans to continue working outside her home during her pregnancy with multiples, she should discuss her plans with her doctor early. She should be honest about her job activities, hours and work environment. Her medical practitioner may be able to detect certain job hazards of which the mother-to-be is unaware.

Once the physician has given the okay to continue working outside her home, a woman should ask for a list of specific "do's" and "don'ts" for each stage of her multiple pregnancy.

Unless special circumstances exist, much of a woman's normal activity will probably be relatively unrestricted during the first two trimesters of her pregnancy. The last trimester is usually more confining. A woman might expect recommendations such as elevating her feet often or limiting lifting to a certain number of pounds.

# Adjustments to a Multiple Pregnancy

### 8. "I'M GLAD IT'S ME, TOO!"

Once a woman announces her multiple pregnancy, or has grown to larger proportions than expected, she may feel like a human magnet for attention, questions and advice from the general public. Most of the questions and comments simply stem from curiosity about the miracle of a multiple birth. Recognizing the harmless intent of such questions can enable a woman to maintain her composure and self-esteem.

Common questions people ask include, "Wow, you're really big! Just how much weight have you gained?" or "Are you sure you're having twins? You're not big enough." Personal questions such as these can make a woman feel insecure or disappointed with her body image. But if she is working closely with her doctor and is eating right, she can be confident that she is the appropriate size for her own very special pregnancy. She can also answer those weighty questions with "My doctor says I've gained just the right amount and shouldn't be any bigger (or smaller)."

Sometimes the insecurities or jealousies of others give rise to comments such as "Twins! I'm glad it's you and not me!" These statements can stir up a range of emotions within the expectant mother, depending upon her own feelings about her pregnancy. But a woman needn't allow others to invade her private emotions, whatever they may be. By becoming informed about her pregnancy and child rearing challenges ahead, assurance and self-confidence can overcome the self-doubt she may experience. In addition, this knowledge may reinforce advice given to her by others which she may find doubly useful!

### 9. GOOD NEWS...BAD NEWS

All pregnant women, whether expecting a singleton or multiples, experience mixed emotions about their changing family to some degree. Those carrying multiples, however, have unique anxieties along with the added joys, simply due to the myths surrounding a multiple birth.



In short, seeing her first sonogram showing two or more fetuses may create an emotional upheaval inside a mother of multiples that feels quite similar to a roller coaster ride!

A woman may be exhilarated by the news, yet may feel overwhelmed by the prospect of carrying, delivering and raising multiples. She may feel she has suddenly lost control of her pregnancy when she hears her doctor use terms like 'high-risk' and 'special monitoring'.

It can be helpful for a woman to know that ambivalent feelings are natural and that she is not less of a mother because of them. What is even more helpful is for her to know that she needn't and shouldn't keep her fears to herself. She should voice her medical concerns directly to her doctor, who can either treat a problem or defuse an unfounded fear. Her spouse, friends, family and other parents of multiples can offer emotional support and practical information.

When a woman becomes informed about her condition and gathers a support network, it helps her regain a sense of control and self-confidence, increasing her appreciation of the miracle of her very special pregnancy.

## 10. "HELP! I NEED SOMEBODY.... NOT JUST ANYBODY!"

The prospect of carrying and raising multiples can be daunting. "Where do I begin to get help?" an expectant mother may wonder.

She may even find it hard to get the specialized information and support she needs to cope with her pregnancy without some research effort on her part.

Asking for support can be difficult for those who are used to doing everything for themselves. But a woman shouldn't see it as a sign of weakness; rather, it is a sign of growing more confident in knowing what she needs, and not being afraid to ask for it. The more in touch with her pregnancy and body a mother is, so much the better for herself and her babies.

To start gaining knowledge, search the internet or visit your local library to find books, resources. Special multiple-birth classes may be available from hospitals or large medical clinics. TWINS™ Magazine is designed to be a clearinghouse of multiple-birth information, including helpful articles and a listing of books, as well as support organizations to contact. A local Mothers of Twins Club is also good place for a woman to meet others who have been in her shoes.

Experienced mothers of multiples will agree that physical help is, of course, necessary while on complete bed rest and invaluable when the babies arrive. As early as possible in the pregnancy, a mother-to-be may need to take advantage of the kindness of friends and family to be part of her healthy pregnancy team! Creating a positive, supportive network of friends, family members and medical practitioners completes the 'team' roster for a successful, healthy multiple pregnancy 'season'. ♡

*\*Please check with your physician before beginning any exercise program.*

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# Loving Touch

Using massage to soothe, calm and nurture your infants

by Vera Caccioppoli



Babies love to be touched. And most parents find the desire to touch and cuddle their newborns instinctual. As Dr. Elaine Fogel Schnelder, author and massage therapist says,

“Being touched and caressed—being massaged—is food for the infant, food as necessary as minerals, vitamins, and proteins.”

Massage is a ritualized technique that combines tactile, sense of touch and kinesthetic motion and stimulations in a formalized yet relaxed setting. Massage incorporates skin-to-skin

interaction, eye contact, soothing sounds, the aroma of the oil and intimacy. The beauty of a brief massage is the ritual and routine that develops between parent and child. Because the child knows what to expect, he relaxes.

Ideally, it is easiest to begin massage sometime during the babies' first nine months. It is more difficult to get a child between one and three-years-old who hasn't been massaged from infancy to sit still.

## MASSAGING PREMATURE MULTIPLES

There have been a number of striking studies documenting the benefits of massage on preterm infants. Dr. Tiffany Field at the Miami Medical School found that incredible gains were made by preterm infants who were massaged on a regular basis. Her study determined that regularly massaged preterm infants gained 47% more weight, and 72% of them performed better on developmental tasks than the premature infants who weren't regularly massaged.

Massage helps to increase the development of muscle and nerve tissue by increasing circulation of nutrients and decreasing stress hormones. This is vital because it's stressful for infants to be separated from their mother and isolated in an incubator. Many neonatal units understand the importance of touch, but some are still resistant. If you face opposition, be a strong advocate for your child. Meet with your doctor and nurses and see if a compromise can be reached.

## HOW TO BEGIN

There is no time like the present. Check out *Infant Massage: a Handbook for Loving Parents* by Vilmala Schneider McClure, which provides excellent step-by-step guidelines and is a valuable resource among professional infant massage therapists.

Select a warm spot where your child won't become chilled and use a non-petroleum based oil, such as vegetable or almond. Specialty shops sell infant massage oil with varieties of lovely aroma therapeutic properties. Take a moment to relax your own muscles and mind. Shake off tension and take several deep cleansing breaths. To make them feel secure, ask permission from your children before beginning a massage. Give them non-verbal clues that the massage is about to begin: Rub the oil between your hands – the swish-swish sounds becomes a lovely cue that you are ready to start. Always make eye contact with your child.

Because babies and children can easily see their lower extremities, it's a good introduction and less threatening to begin massaging their feet. Your touch should be firm. Feathery touches can agitate a child. While massaging, talk softly, hum or sing to your baby.

**Vera Caccioppoli** of Falls Church, Virginia, is a freelance writer and the mother of triplet boys.



The first sessions should be brief, advises Katie Jones, infant massage therapist and instructor. "Listen to your baby," Jones says. "Start off with shorter sessions – even just five minutes – and as the two of you become more comfortable, you can increase the time."

## MASSAGING MULTIPLES

Some couples find it gratifying to give massages at the same time in the same location. Other parents of multiples pick a comfortable but secure area and massage one child, then the next.

While group massaging can be pleasant for many, some prefer to have isolated time with each individual child.

Many mothers of multiples may feel torn between children. They find that a designated time one on one with each infant is invaluable. Jones advises, "Even if you can squeeze in only a half an hour once every week, or even once a month, for each baby, it's worth pursuing."

More important than the amount of time, is the atmosphere of the experience. "An occasional soft, loving massage will do more good than a more regular, rushed one," she says. "It's important to remember that our emotions are readily transmitted through our touch. If the mom is tense and agitated, the little one will pick up on all of those negative emotions."

"Infants really communicate through their bodies," Schnelder says. "When you engage an infant in a massage, you begin to listen to the infant and understand her better." This provides a tremendous boost to parents' confidence as well as enhances parent and baby bond. ♥

## MASSAGE TECHNIQUES

Strokes should be slow and rhythmic, with just enough pressure to be comfortable but stimulating. Do not use vigorous kneading—as in adult massages. Be sure to apply firm pressure.

### FOOT MASSAGE

There are 72,000 nerve endings in each foot. No wonder foot massages feel so great and have so many benefits. "The many theories on how foot massage works agree that points on the feet connect with other body areas," McClure says. Thus, a foot massage may help reduce ear infections, colds, flu and other disturbances.

To begin, hold one foot in the palm of your hand and with your other hand; push the bottom of the foot from heel to toe with your thumbs, one after another. Gently squeeze each toe. Next, push the toes toward the sole of the foot, then toward the knee. Press in with your thumbs all over the bottom of the foot. Pull back gently on the ball of the foot. Make small circles all around the ankle with your thumbs.

### THE STOMACH

Strokes for the stomach will tone baby's intestinal system and help relieve gas, constipation and perhaps colic. Always stroke from the ribcage down, and use a clockwise motion for circular strokes.

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TODDLERS

# Using Praise as Motivation

by Janet Gonzalez-Mena

My husband has never been one to praise people. When I give him a compliment, he often says in a joking way, "What do you want from me?" His attitude used to irritate me; until I began to look more closely at the manipulative aspects of the way I give compliments and use praise. Often I do want something when I used my honeyed words.

**Janet Gonzalez-Mena** of Napa, California, teaches early childhood education at Napa Valley College. She is co-author of the book *Infants, Toddlers and Caregivers*, and the mother of five children.

I'm not blaming myself. I'm a product of all the hype about positive reinforcement. I learned in some parent education class, "You catch more flies with honey than with vinegar." The problem is, the purpose of parent education is to help people raise human beings; it has nothing to do with catching flies.

I began to be suspicious of the effectiveness of praise quite a while back. I remember the day my daughter spent several minutes drawing a complex picture with crayons. She brought the paper to me with great pride. Instead of acknowledging her feelings, I gushed over her and her picture.

## THE GAME BEGINS

She went back to her crayons, and I went back to reading my magazine. A few minutes later, she was poking a new picture in my face. She stopped expectantly while I examined it. I didn't like this one nearly as much as the first—she obviously had put less time into it, but she was waiting for praise, so I delivered. She looked dissatisfied, but didn't say anything.

Off she whisked to produce another picture. She was back in about a minute and a half. She held up a rumpled paper with a quick swirl of color across it and waited for her praise. I got the impression of a starving person who kept coming back for real food, but all she got was cotton candy. She wanted more and more of the stuff, but it was bound to make her sick long before it fills her stomach.

By now I recognized that we were engaged in some kind of game. I was getting tired of playing it, so this time I was honest. I told her I thought she was just drawing so I would say something nice about her picture. She burst into tears and said I didn't think she was a good artist. We had an unfortu-



nate argument in which she accused me of not loving her. It ended in her tearing up all the pictures, including the first one, which I really did like.

## A PREDICTABLE PATTERN

What I know now was that my response created what is a fairly predictable pattern. When I praise, I replace the inner feelings with outside rewards. My daughter's drawing quickly became something she did for me rather than what she did for herself.

I could have responded in other ways:

- I could have reflected her feelings she was having. "I see how excited you are about your picture."
- I could have made an observation about the process. "You really worked on that picture for a long time."
- I could have discussed some aspect of the picture in a non-judgmental fashion. "I see how you made the red go in circles and the blue is all wiggly lines. And here you blended them together to make purple."
- I could have asked her if she wanted to tell me about the picture, and let it go if she said no.

Any number of possible positive responses would have had a better effect than all that gushing praise. As I put this story on paper, I hear my husband's voice in my head saying that praise is manipulative. Was I really manipulating my daughter? I have to admit I did want something from her. I wanted her to feel good about herself as an artist. Noble goal; too bad it didn't work.



But what I wanted even more was for her to leave me alone so I could finish reading my magazine. I wanted her to keep drawing those intricate, complicated pictures that took 20 minutes each. The problem was that praise had the opposite effect.

## IS PRAISE EFFECTIVE?

Praise seldom works, according to Alfie Kohn in the book, *Punished by Rewards*. It doesn't motivate; in fact, it does just the opposite. I had second-hand experience with some of the research Kohn discussed in his eye-opening book.

One of my community college early-childhood students used to hang around Stanford University in her spare time. One day she arrived in my class excited from talking to a professor there about his research in motivation. Here's what she reported happened at Bing Nursery School, the lab school for the Stanford Psychology

## WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ENCOURAGEMENT & PRAISE?

To answer that question, you have to first look at your motivation. It's a good idea to examine your control issues, too.

Ask yourself these questions: Are you using children's hunger for approval to control them without regard to their individual needs? Are they hooked on your approval, tending to look to you for a judgment on everything they do? Are you being honest, or are you using empty words for the purpose of manipulating behavior? I was surprised when I thought back about my real reason for the extravagant praise of my daughter's drawing.

Encouragement is different from controlling and manipulative praise. It comes in the form of supportive feedback and honest, caring concern without strings attached. Encouragement comes in a variety of forms such as:

- Calling attention to legitimate successes without buttering children up;
- Remark on children's feelings of excitement, satisfaction, accomplishment or pride;
- Paying attention to something children care about without unduly distracting them with superlatives and exaggerated feelings;
- Making comments about the positive effects on you of something they've done, without using judgment words like good, great, outstanding, etc.;
- Giving honest feedback

Sometimes encouragement can be delivered without words. I remember times in my life when just having someone stand by while I was doing something challenging was all the encouragement I needed.



Department: Felt pens and blank paper were made available to the children as a free-play activity. This was long ago, when felt pens were a brand new concept and cost a fortune. Most children had never used them before, so once they discovered them, they flocked to the felt-pen table at every opportunity.

Then, over a period of weeks, some of the children were taken into the little "booths" that the psychology department used for experiments. The selected children were systematically given rewards for using the felt pens. There were a variety of rewards, including praise. When felt pens were again a free-play choice in the nursery school room, most of the children continued to flock to the table. But those who had been rewarded (including those who were merely praised) were far less interested. They turned away once they learned there were no rewards for using the pens.

## WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

Their own satisfaction was no longer enough to motivate them. It's as if they asked themselves, "What's in this for me?" and when their own good feeling was the only answer they could come up with, they had no use for felt pens.

Praise is better than punishment as a motivator, but both are manipulative devices that often backfire. Parenting doesn't have to be about manipulating children. We can find honest and forthright ways of encouraging and protecting children and guiding their behavior, without using manipulation of either rewards or punishments. We can stop using praise like bribes and discover alternative ways to encourage positive behaviors. ♥

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PRESCHOOL



**Patricia Edmister, Ph.D.**, of Sherman Oaks, California was the director of developmental psychology at the California Family Study and mother of fraternal twins.

# Oh, Boy! A Babysitter!

by Patricia Edmister, Ph.D.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could all find Mary Poppins to care for our children? No worries about discipline, who is the one in charge, the children's safety, cleanliness and health? Unfortunately, caregivers like Mary are few and far between. But leaving young youngsters in the care of others, whether it is full-time or just an occasional evening out doesn't have to be a nightmare, either.

Regardless of the amount of time the sitter will be watching your children, you can be more relaxed when you're out and

about if you are sure of the sitter's qualifications, clear about your expectations in terms of house rules and how consequences should be applied, and thorough in your preparation of safety information (emergency numbers, cell phone numbers, a nearby neighbor that can help) and health products (first-aid kit, etc.)

In addition, you need to be sensitive to both the sitter's and your children's needs. For the sitter's benefit, you need to be clear on what the job entails. What will be the hours? What is



the rate of pay? Is transportation provided or expected as part of the job? What are the children's schedules? How closely should the sitter enforce them? What should the sitter do if the children don't behave?

One of the best ways to train both the sitter and the children—and to evaluate whether or not a certain person is the one you want to have caring for your multiples—is to hold a trial run, giving the sitter a few hours or half a day with your children while you are in the house. You can show her the ropes, see how the children respond to her, model your discipline style for her (noting any modifications you make for each child), and have a chance to troubleshoot any problems that seem likely to arise.

For the trial run, make it clear to the sitter as well as the children that you expect the sitter to ask you questions regarding how to handle situations, that you expect him or her to tell you if there are problems with misbehavior, and that you expect the children to obey the sitter or to expect the normal consequences for ignoring instructions.

Again, it is critical that all concerned know what the house rules are, for although the sitter is in charge, your expectation is that he or she will manage things the way you want them managed. This does not mean that you cannot give them all some leeway in rules and scheduling. Many parents have established that having a sitter over for the evening is a special treat for the children—a time when they can stay up a little later, or have an extra story, or watch a special DVD, thus creating a positive reaction to those rights, as opposed to a feeling of abandonment, when parents take time for themselves. Parents should go over these expectations; however, with the sitter in the children's presence, so all parties understand them.

## WHEN YOUR MOM'S THE SITTER

Sometimes a family member, often a grandparent, may be the sitter. This can present its own special benefits, but also its own special problems. The expectation, of course, is that this is a person who really cares about the children, and that is wonderful! However, sometimes Grandma has her own opinions of what to do and how to do it, and her parenting style might not agree with yours. This situation requires

the same type of discussion regarding child-rearing guidelines and house rules as required with any sitter, even if she is your own mother.

One mom who was concerned about offending her mother with rules that differed from those enforced when she was a child, made up a chart of the house rules, which she posted on the refrigerator and went over with her mother and the children, just as she did with any other babysitter. This showed her mother that the children knew the rules and were accustomed to doing things a certain way.

It also gave her a chance to explain to her mother what the rationale was behind the rules, which was helpful, for some of them

were quite different from the rules in place when she had been growing up.

Do keep in mind, however, that some grandparents have very definite ideas about how things should be done. If their ways are significantly different from yours and not likely to change, you need to be realistic, deciding for yourself how comfortable you are with their ignoring the rules for an entire evening, or, for that matter, being too strict. If you are not comfortable with the possibility that they might just do their own thing, you may want to confine their visits to times when you are there, and use someone less connected to the family as your sitter. ♥

## WHEN THEY DON'T MIND THE SITTER...

With multiples, as with all other siblings, you may find that one child may be better-behaved than another with a particular sitter. This can be due to many reasons. The child may have a pattern of provocative behavior with authority figures, perhaps even you; so you may need to take that information, along with information about how you handle such behavior, to the sitter in preparation for the event. Another occurrence may be due to personality differences. We often find that some children respond better to one individual than do others.



In this case, it is important to listen to the children's feelings as well as the sitter's explanation. Discuss what occurred, how it was handled, and what should happen next time, if there is one. Occasionally, you may find that a sitter plays favorites between or among the children, and that can provoke misbehavior on the part of one or more. The key here is to try to get accurate information so that it doesn't happen again.

If you hear from the children or a neighbor, or your own suspicions suggest that something is not right, investigate, or go with your intuition and find a different sitter. Your children's health, safety and happiness are too important to risk taking chances.

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# A Self Confidence Check Up

by Judith O. Hooper

In today's world, there's probably nothing you can give each of your middle-years multiples that has greater value than self-confidence. A self-confident child is comfortable, secure and happy with herself and her world. She is not always right, sometimes makes mistakes and faces various difficulties, but, overall, she is OK and she knows it.

It seems like such a simple concept – being OK and knowing it. Yet this simple concept is really the core of the successful child and, ultimately, the successful adult. No external measure of success for adults or children, be it fame, fortune, good grades or musical talent, for example, is as accurate as that internal sense of "I'm OK." In addition, no external appearances of success can convince the unconfident person that she is OK.

**Judith O. Hooper** is a marriage and family therapist who has written extensively on children and families for the Cooperative Extension Service.

As you think about the self-confidence of your middle-years multiples, it's important to distinguish between an insecure or unconfident child and one with a retiring personality. It's easy to confuse these two things because of our cultural definition of a confident person. Most people would say that a person who has confidence is, for example, one who *stands up for herself, speaks up and says what is on her*

*mind, exhibits leadership qualities, is talkative and vivacious, has numerous friends, and is involved in many activities.* In fact, though, these are descriptions of personality traits rather than confidence. It is quite possible for a confident person to be reticent, quiet and calm; be involved in few activities; and have only a few close friends.

## EVALUATING YOUR CHILDREN'S SELF-CONFIDENCE

What can you look for when you are trying to assess your children's self-confidence? Begin by considering each of your children's general attitudes about themselves. You can usually do this by watching for three specific behavior patterns:

- How she 'walks through her world'
- What she says about herself
- How she interacts with others

**How she 'walks through her world'** — As a therapist, I learn a great deal about a child's self-confidence by watching her enter the play therapy room, or 'walk through her world.' Of course, if it's her first visit, she will be somewhat cautious as she enters, which is appropriate. Even the most self-confident people need to be cautious when they enter new situations; they need to be prepared to protect themselves if necessary.

However, despite her caution, the self-confident child walks directly into the room rather than lingering in the hall, peeking in or resisting being brought in. She looks around her to see where she is and to find out what is in the room. If she sees something that she finds interesting, she moves nearer to it to view it more closely. She also stands straight rather than hunched in on herself. She makes no attempt to hide behind or under furniture, though she may stay fairly close to the wall or immediately sit in a chair. She walks, looks and behaves like someone who feels OK about herself.

**What she says about herself** — A younger unconfident child is often quite straightforward about describing how she feels about herself. She is likely to say things such as, "Oh! I'm always flubbing things up," "I'm such a dummy because I only got 75% on my spelling test" or "They won't want me to go. I can't swim very well, and they know it."

By the middle years, though, especially the later middle years, the unconfident child may have stopped saying these things out loud, even though she still feels them inside. A middle-years child is more likely to say, "Everyone always accuses me of flubbing up," "Spelling tests are stupid; no one





needs to know all those words anyway" or "I hate swimming, so I don't want to go."

**How she interacts with others** — A self-confident child can play happily with other children at least some of the time. She can, most of the time, resist pressure to do things she knows are wrong, and she can often defend herself and others against bullying. Her relationships are not necessarily always happy; she can get angry and fight when she feels put upon.

Even if her personality is more retiring and she tends to follow rather than lead, she will not usually follow others into trouble or be led to be "bad". She may enjoy solitary activities, but she will have close friends and enjoy spending time with them. She does not act upset if left out of an activity, though she may need some help in restoring relationships every now and then.

## THE EBB AND FLOW OF SELF-CONFIDENCE

It is important to remember that just as your own level of self-confidence may

## WATCHWORDS TO GROW BY

What contributes to the development of each twin's healthy sexual identity? The following guidelines are offered by Gary Best, PH.D., a professor of education at California State University, Los Angeles, and a certified sex educator of the American Association of Sex Educators, Counselor and Therapists:

- Each twin needs the opportunity to be his or her own person and to express his or her individual identity
- Each twin needs the opportunity to express his or her own characteristics of sexual identity without comparisons being made to his or her co-twin.
- Parents should respond to the sexual identity of their twins in the same way that they respond to the sexual identity of their singletons.

## GET EDUCATED...

There are many books and resources about sexuality on the internet and in the library and on bookstore shelves. It's wise to read sections of books before making purchases so as to ensure a degree of appreciation for the author's approach and the particular book's relevance to your twins' age and developmental stages.

vary depending upon your mood and the situation, so will each of your children's. A child who shows every sign of feeling OK about her own self this week may suddenly withdraw, talk down about herself and walk around looking unhappy next week.

Your careful and supportive questioning of your child can often help you discover if there is a real problem that your child feels is too difficult for her to handle; in many cases, that feeling may be undermining her self-confidence. In addition, a bully, an unexpected low grade on a test, a teacher whose standards are unrealistic for a child or a parent who is tense and irritable because of problems at work can temporarily affect a child's self-confidence. When assessing each of your children's level of self-confidence, consider whether your child displays self-confidence more often than not.

## THE TWIN FACTOR

As you consider the self-confidence of your middle-years twins, you may discover that one of them displays more self-confidence than the other. As you may have observed, it is not uncommon for one child to assume the leadership role in a twinship. For the most part, this kind of difference between co-twins seems to reflect personality differences more than it reflects their levels of self-confidence.

However, it is possible for one twin to have developed more self-confidence than her co-twin, perhaps because of her leadership ability. When one twin always leads, it is possible for her co-twin to think to herself, "I can't do that. It's a good thing she can."

If you notice that your twins' natural leader/follower roles are affecting their self-confidence, it is important to try to make some changes. For example, you may need to create ways for the follower to have more opportunities to lead or to have some successes on her own so that they can't be ascribed to her co-twin.

You may also notice that your twins have different ways in which they express their self-confidence. Your child who gets things accomplished quietly and steadily may be just as confident as her co-twin who accomplishes tasks in a loud and somewhat cocky manner. In fact, it's quite possible that a child's display of cockiness may actually be a cover-up for his lack of confidence. ♥

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# A Lesson

Last Saturday my wife left me alone with our three kids for a few hours while she went to get her nails done. I'm always happy to take the kids on and to give her a break for a few hours. She takes care of them all week long and by the time the weekend rolls around her nerves are frayed. I'm not sure that if the roles were reversed that I would handle it half as well as her.

With my wife out of the house I took the opportunity to put some of my own child-rearing techniques to use. First, I put our 17-month old in her crib for her afternoon nap. Then, I told the twins (3 ½ years old, in case you're wondering) that they should take a nap as well. Easy. I was really getting the hang of this. I

went downstairs and stretched out on the sofa, read about half an article from the NY Times and promptly fell asleep.

Then - it was either five minutes or 40 minutes later - I heard screaming from upstairs. I was annoyed. Didn't the kids know that I was napping? I reluctantly got up from the sofa and marched upstairs to the kid's room. When I opened the door the first thing I saw was the whites of my children's eyes staring back at me as if they'd seen a ghost. It was the look of guilt. And looking at the wall behind them I suddenly realized the reason for their dumbstruck looks. The walls were covered in purple Magic Marker. Scribbles and loops covered an area the size of their



# Learned

pronoun. This is what happens when the kid's commit their most egregious acts. Rather than explode I somehow experience the moment like a movie, like I'm watching someone else's life, and it all seems, if not exactly humorous, unbelievable. Watching them watching me with those bug eyes I was torn between a need to reprimand and a desire to just scoop them up and hug them. I chose the former.

by Jesse Sommer

"Who told you that you could do this?" I asked rhetorically, realizing too late that rhetorical subtlety would surely be lost on them. "Nana," my son answered. "Nana," – this is what my son calls his sister, Elina. "Was this your idea?" "No," she answered simply. The kid's had a way of dragging me into these semantic acrobatics. I walked closer to the wall to inspect the damage, knowing full well that their eyes were trained on me. I rubbed the ink to see if it would smear, indicating that the markers were water soluble. No smear. I sighed, again, for effect. I felt exhausted. This is what my wife must feel like all week long.

When my wife finally walked in about an hour later the three of us (the baby was still sleeping) were watching a video. She looked happy and relaxed. I knew that if I told her right then about what the kids had done that she might lose her composure and wipe out two hours of nail treatment bliss in mere seconds. I also knew that she would want to know why I was rewarding the kids with a video after what they had done. So, I did what came most naturally. I stared at her with big bug eyes and blurted, "The kids did it." ♥

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*Jesse Sommer works at an insurance company by day. He enjoys reading, golfing, running, and writing – all things he hopes to return to one day when his three kids (all under 4) – have graduated from college. In the meantime, he and his wife, Yael, are learning the joys of heavy wine consumption.*

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two bodies combined. They'd even managed to scribble on the window sill and, for good measure, on part of the turquoise curtain we'd purchased at Bed, Bath & Beyond. I stood there and just stared at what they'd done. I assumed that my silent reaction alone would convey the level of my anger, which, at that moment, was all I was interested in conveying. There was no lesson I wished to teach, no punishment I wished to mete. I just wanted them to know how angry I was and to figure out from that everything that they needed to know about what they'd done wrong (wishful thinking...)

"Nana and I drew on the wall," my son, Dylan, said. Thanks for the update, I thought, noting, as well, his proper use of the personal



# Two Twins

# Two Different Grades

## What Do You Do When Only One Twin Struggles



by Christina Baglivi Tinglof

Each year parents of twins grapple with the question of whether they should separate their kindergarten-bound twins or keep the pair together. As hard as that decision is for some, just imagine if that question suddenly became, "Should we hold just one child back for another year?"

If one twin is struggling academically or socially in preschool (or even kindergarten) while his co-twin is right on target, the decision of what to do can be agonizing. It's a predicament that Melissa Schroeder of Ft. Lauderdale, Florida knows firsthand. Five-year-old son Michael lags socially behind his twin sister Madison and still struggles with speech. "Madison's very interested in learning but Michael gets more frustrated," Schroeder says. "He's very intelligent but his skills are scattered." Yet Schroeder and her husband never

considered holding Michael back in preschool while promoting Madison to kindergarten. "It's one thing to separate your children by classroom but it's quite another to separate twins by grade. It would be an irreversible trauma."

But is it fair or prudent to push a struggling preschool twin ahead just for the sake of preserving the twin bond? "Psychologically, if you separate twins into two different grades, there's no way that one's not going to feel smarter than the other one," says Melissa Mullin, Ph.D. and an educational psychologist and director of the K & M Center in Santa Monica, California, an institute that diagnoses and remediates learning disabilities. "There's no way around that." Although Dr. Mullin believes that parents should do everything they can to keep their twins in the same grade, even if



that means holding both back in preschool or kindergarten, she cautions that parents first need to understand the type and the degree of the problem that the struggling twin faces.

## DIAGNOSING THE LEARNING PROBLEM

The first order of business for parents is to get their child tested and assessed to find out if the trouble is a developmental delay or a learning disability. The difference between the two, Dr. Mullin explains, is significant when deciding what to do. “The problem is determining if this is a long-term difficulty or a catch-up process,” she says.

On the one hand, a developmental delay is a lifelong difference in learning capacity and learning ease. This is a child who would benefit from a special class or a special school specifically for children with learning issues. Furthermore, if a twin has a developmental delay, it is clear that his learning needs will be different than that of his co-twin. If a child is temporarily lagging behind, however, that is not called a developmental delay. For instance, if a twin is delayed in language but his speech is developing in the right sequence just at a slower than normal pace, more than likely it’s not a developmental delay. With proper and timely therapy, most twins with delayed speech will catch up.

On the other hand, if a twin has a learning disability and his IQ is in the average or above-average range, you’re talking about only a slight difference in ability. This is when parents need to consider the emotional impact of holding one child back. “The studies on children with learning disabilities show that holding a child back is not the answer, intervention is,” Dr. Mullin says. “Once the learning issue is addressed and with the correct intervention, the child should be able to function in the classroom without being held back.”

A correct diagnosis and subsequent remediation made all the difference for Sonia Fox’s twin son John. When teachers told the Falcon, Colorado mom that she should consider holding her then first grader back a year because he struggled with reading, Fox looked into her son’s learning issue on her own. “John couldn’t control his eye movements. I watched him as we would try to read and noticed he couldn’t keep his eyes on the page,” she says. “He’d get lost and then frustrated and didn’t want to continue reading.” John was finally diagnosed in second grade with a tracking and convergence deficiency and started intense visual therapy. Today in third grade, he’s reading just a few months behind grade level. “It’s been a hard slog to get to this point,” says Fox, “My son is a very sensitive and I feel the damage to his self esteem of repeating would have been great.”

## STAYING TOGETHER WHILE BEING APART

Since most kindergarten classes are more developmentally challenging these days, another alternative is to look at two different schools rather than two different grades. “Some schools are easier, and some are harder,” Dr. Mullin explains. For a twin with delays, for example, choose a school that’s more developmentally progressive, one that will be a bit gentler in its approach to teaching and one that will let your twin develop at his own rate. For the twin who is on par for her grade level, the local elementary school may be a good fit. “Since you have two different types of learners, match each child with the right school.”

That’s the approach that Lori Lynch of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania took with her six-year-old fraternal twin boys, Joey and Johnny. When April of their kindergarten year rolled around, it was recommended that Joey repeat while co-twin Johnny was ready to advance to first grade. Although it didn’t come as a shock, the Lynchs were nonetheless disappointed. “Separating them meant one would be able to join Cub Scouts a year earlier, one could make their religious sacraments a year earlier, and one would be college hunting a year earlier,” Lynch says.

They told the school district that splitting the boys was not an option. Instead, both boys would repeat kindergarten but in different schools and in different classroom settings—Joey in a more nurturing pre-K program and Johnny in a more challenging one. “After much debate and many meetings, both will be starting first grade together next year,” she adds.

For Dee Whisnant’s boy-girl twins, five-and-a-half-year-old Scarlet and Perry, the separate-but-together track began back in preschool. Both had delays in speech, explains the Salisbury, North Carolina mom, but Perry’s was more challenging. After attending different preschool classes, the Whisnant twins are now in different kindergarten environments as well—Scarlet is in a traditional class but Perry attends a school that promotes academics through communication and social skills. “Until and if he is able to be mainstreamed, he will be different than his sister,” she says. “He’s come a long way since starting this year but has a long way to go, too.”

## THE GIFT OF TIME

If parents recognize now that one or both of their twins is struggling in preschool, simply give them the gift of time by holding both twins back for one more year. This is especially helpful for twins with a late summer or fall birthday, and even more important for preemie twins whose true age should be based on their due date, not their birthday. “Most twins who are developmentally behind will always be behind—they’ll be late talkers, late walkers. So those children would probably benefit from being held back because you are giving them more developmental time to catch up,” Dr. Mullin explains. If your twins are not five by September 1st, hold them back in preschool.

But what if twins differ? What if one’s on target while her co-twin is not? Is that fair to the developmentally ready twin? “How is it unfair to give your child the advantage of being the strongest academically, the most developed in the classroom?” she asks. “Sure, she may be done with her work quicker, but she can pull out a book and read while she’s waiting. Compare that to being the youngest in the class, always stressed out, always a step behind, and the last to develop especially when it comes to motor skills.”

By the time middle schools rolls around, age doesn’t matter. What’s more important is if a child is self-confident and can get along well with others. “I’ve never heard any parents say they were sorry that they held their children back in preschool or kindergarten,” says Dr. Mullin, “but I’ve often heard parents with children going into middle school wishing they had held them back earlier so that their kids could have had that extra developmental time.” ♥

**Christina Baglivi Tinglof** lives in Southern California and is the mother of three sons, including 13-year-old fraternal boys and an 11-year-old singleton. She’s also the author of *Double Duty: The Parents’ Guide to Raising Twins*, and *Parenting School-Age Twins and Multiples*. Her website is [www.talk-about-twins.com](http://www.talk-about-twins.com).

by Pat Fasanella



# When Twins Learn to Talk

Listening to your twins...  
and applying these  
practical procedures can  
prevent, detect, and  
treat their language  
development problems.



Multiple birth organizations have long reported that language development is one of the most frequent concerns of parents of young twins. Statistics vary widely, however, on just how common it is for twins to have problems in this area. They frequently report being contacted numerous times from parents about language development. Most, they have found, have their kids in some sort of speech therapy and it is very common for parents to contact them about this particular matter.

Australia's LaTrobe Twin Study, a research project back in the mid-1980's, found language development the most common parental concern they addressed. Their conclusions showed that it was not unusual for twins to be at least one month behind singletons in saying their first words. Between the ages of three and six years of age, they report twins are, on the average, six months behind their singleton peers.

Past research done in the United States showed that twins tended to use fewer words per sentence than singletons — five-year-old twins and three-year-old singletons are at the same level in their sentence lengths.

## CAUSES OF DELAY

At the age when singleton children are learning to speak by imitating their mother, father or older siblings, twins often spend much of their time talking to each other. Since they are learning many of the same words at the same time, they tend to reinforce each others' immature speech patterns and mispronunciations.

In addition, parents often have little time left from taking care of their twins' physical needs for the verbal stimulation that is basic to early speech development. Many parents also report that their twins have little contact with other children during their toddler years. Again, they end up talking with each other and delaying the need to develop the language skills to communicate with others.

Twins sometimes develop special names for each other that seem to be a unique expression of the twin relationship. One identical boy who was constantly being confused with his brother said matter-of-factly one day, "I'm Chris, but my whole name is Tony/Chris." A set of twin girls could not pronounce one of their names, so they called each other Phaedra and "not Phaedra."

New evidence suggests that some twins may be more advanced with language than single children, and other research has found that some twins change standard language (such as using 'me' for the two of them together) which may seem to be the difficulties with language, but which is really very appropriate expressions of the twin experience.

Let's look at a special condition, idioglossia, often called twin talk, twin speak or twin language, because this rare development of a language or communication is known only to the two people who use it and is found most often in twins.

Consider the following example: When identical twin boys, Scott and Todd, were adopted at 3 years of age, they spoke only to each other, only in their own private language. "Not one word they used

was like the English language," said Norma Klein, their adoptive mother. "I could not teach them to talk English. As long as they understood each other, they didn't care to learn. It wasn't like pig Latin or a word turned around; it just wasn't like anything."

If the twins wanted something, they would pull on their mother and point or show her what it was. At first, the Kleins found this secret language amusing. As Scott and Todd grew older and still could not be understood though, it became a serious problem.

For two frustrating and baffling years, Klein tried to teach her sons. Still, they entered Kindergarten with no language other than their own. By the end of that year, no progress had been made, and the Kleins were becoming frantic.

A decision was made to switch the boys to a different school for first grade. According to Klein, "A special little nun made up her mind she was going to make them talk." With her help and two years of speech therapy, Scott and Todd finally broke through their communication barrier and idioglossia.

Idioglossia cases as severe as the Kleins' are extremely rare, usually involving twins who have grown up relatively isolated. These twins usually have an especially close relationship with each other and spend most of their time together without the benefit of regular contact with other children.

Past studies on intelligence and language in twins by the French researcher, Zazzo, stated that nearly all identical and up to half of fraternal twins developed some degree of special communication in their early years. Studies done by multiple birth organizations in Canada, Australia, and the United States also showed that twins may be prone to other speech and language difficulties, as well.

Not all twins, of course, have speech and language difficulties. The Australian study showed a number of factors that helped pinpoint those who may be at risk. Boys were more likely than girls to have speech problems in the singleton and twin population. Identical twins outnumbered fraternal twins in needing speech



therapy. Also at risk were premature, low birth weight, and undiagnosed twins. Finally, twins who were part of a large family, where parents had little individual time to spend with them, were often prone to speech and language problems.

There is an encouraging highlight to these studies however. By the age of six, most twins have completely “caught up” with singletons in speech and language proficiency.

Researchers have yet to explain this occurrence. They surmise though, that starting school may force twins to expand their communication skills. They now have a definite need to be understood by playmates and others beyond their immediate family. Also, twins who experienced premature or complicated births have caught up physically with the rest of their age group by this time.

Researchers with the Latrobe Study stated that they spent much more time reassuring parents that any language delays in their twins were not going to have profound consequences on their children’s lives, than they did with the less fortunate families with really severe problems.

Parents do need to be alert to their twins’ speech development, though. Many outgrow minor problems, but some do not. A deficit in language development can and often will lead to a poor self-concept and academic failures. Understanding oral language is also basic to learning reading and math. Researchers are now beginning to link early language problems with later learning difficulties.

Much can be done by parents to help stimulate language development in their children. The following parenting techniques were previously suggested by speech pathologists & language therapists; and twin-specific studies that were done by Parents of Multiple Birth Association (POMBA) of Canada, Australia’s Latrobe Twin Study and the National Organization of Mothers of Twins Clubs (NOMOTC) in the United States:

- Continually talk to your children. Instead of just pouring milk quietly, say, “Mommy’s pouring milk into the cup.” Everyday life is filled with language experiences. Don’t just do something. Talk about what you are doing and why you are doing it.
- Reading to children is important. Don’t only read the story, but talk about the story, using different vocabulary and sentence structure. Ask questions about the story to see if the child understands it.
- Encourage children to talk and give them a lot of praise for doing so. Don’t allow pointing and grunting. Any attempt at verbalization should be reinforced.
- Listen attentively to each child’s speech and show an interest in what each has to say.
- Help young twins be members of the family group and to interact with each other and the group.
- Do things separately with each twin as often as possible. Take advantage of this time to enjoy each other’s company and carry on uninterrupted conversations.
- Provide opportunities for twins to play and communicate with other children separately and together before they reach school age.
- Take a walk or ride to the gas station, grocery store, library, Grandma’s house, or around the block. Talk to each child individually about the trip. Stop and examine things. Encourage questions and answer them. Take time to listen.
- Avoid using baby talk or special words the twins have “invented.” If a child says a word incorrectly, repeat it in a short sentence saying

## GUIDELINES TO DETERMINE COMMUNICATION DISORDERS

Following are 20 rough guidelines as outlined in the Pediatrician’s *Handbook of Communication Disorders* to aid in determining if the child has a referable problem. If any of the following conditions exist, the child should be referred to a speech professional:

1. If the child is not talking at all by age two
2. If speech is largely unintelligible after age three
3. If there are many omissions of initial consonants after age three
4. If there are no sentences by age three
5. If sounds are more than a year late in appearing according to development sequence
6. If there is an excessive amount of indiscriminate, irrelevant verbalizing after 18-months
7. If there is consistent and frequent omission of initial consonants
8. If there are many substitutions of easy sounds for difficult ones after age five
9. If the amount of vocalizing decreases rather than steadily increases at any period up to age seven
10. If the child uses mostly vowel sounds in the speech at any age after one year
11. If word endings are consistently dropped after age five
12. If sentence structure is consistently faulty after age five
13. If the child is embarrassed and disturbed by his speech at any age
14. If the child is noticeably non-fluent (stuttering) after age five
15. If the child is distorting, omitting, or substituting any sounds after age seven
16. If the voice is a monotone, extremely loud, largely inaudible, or of poor quality
17. If the pitch is not appropriate to the child’s age and sex
18. If there is noticeable hyper nasality or lack of nasal resonance
19. If there are unusual confusions, reversals, or telescoping in connected speech
20. If there is abnormal rhythm, rate, and inflection after age five



it correctly. (If the child says, "I want cookie," you say, "You want a cookie.") Don't force the child to repeat your example.

- Don't expect perfect speech. Accept and praise each child for his efforts
- Try making any sounds your child is having difficulty with while you both watch your face in a mirror.
- If there is concern about a child's speech, language, or hearing ability, check with a professional immediately. A certified speech and language pathologist is the expert in this area and should be consulted.
- One can usually be found through a local pediatrician, school district, hospital, university, or telephone directory.

Speech professionals feel that all children who are experiencing difficulties in language acquisition or the understanding of lan-

guage should be evaluated. Parents should consider their children for testing if they are more than six months behind the norm according to the developmental charts included with this article.

Early evaluation and therapy are two of the most important resources available to children with speech and language problems. Parental awareness is the third. Knowing what to expect of children at each age and stage of development can reassure many Parents of those with minor language delays and alert those who have serious problems. ♥

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## INFANT & TODDLER LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Ages 0-1 child should be able to:



- Repeat sound made by others
- Combine two different syllables in vocal play
- Vocalize in response to speech
- Repeat same syllable two to three times

(ma, ma, ma)

- Use single word meaningfully to label object or person

Ages 1-2 child should be able to:



- Say five different words
- Say own name on request
- Answer yes/no questions
- Point to three to five pictures in a book when named

- Ask for "more"
- Combine use of words and gestures to make wants known
- Ask for some common food items by name when shown (milk, cookie)

Ages 2-3 child should be able to:



- Combine two-word phrases
- Hold up fingers to tell age
- Give more than one object when asked using plural form (blocks)
- Use no or not in speech

- Asks question, "What's this/that?"
- Says I, me, mine rather than own name

Ages 3-4 child should be able to:



- Imitate sounds M and N
- Understand meaning of backwards
- Understand basic weight concept
- Identify three geometric forms

- Interpret pictures
- Identify sex when asked
- Use plurals
- Count to three
- Match primary colors
- Give his name in full
- Name objects from memory
- Repeat nursery rhymes
- Name colors

Ages 4-5 child should be able to:



- Sing simple songs
- Understand between, beside, behind, above, toward
- Tell what familiar animals do
- Communicate thoughts and feelings

- Color a circle and stay inside the lines
- Categorize
- Differentiate night and day
- Compare textures
- Tell stories
- Know opposites
- Count to 10
- Name coins
- Rhyme words
- Identify objects by use
- Imitate drawing a triangle
- Understand concept of many, some, more
- Grasp concept of length

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# COMMUNICATING by Joshua Coleman *with your* TWINS



*Ok,* I'm not always proud of my behavior with my 8-year-old twin boys. Some days, I walk away thinking, "Well, that was straight out of the *'How to Decrease Self-Esteem in Your Kids with Bad Communication' handbook.*"

I have, on occasion, done every single thing I'm about to encourage you not to do. Why listen to me you wonder? Because I'm a parent of twins and we have to stick together. Also, I have a Ph.D. That means I have spent a great portion of my life listening to people who are a lot smarter than I am so I can pass their wisdom on to you.

## NOW WITH FEELING

Kids of all ages appreciate adults who help them express and label their emotions. Feelings can be either scary or burdensome or become roads to self-understanding. Twins can mirror and amplify each other's positive and negative feelings and the result can be overwhelming to any parent. When we try to understand our twins' feelings, their feelings gradually become more under their control,

to their and our benefit. In addition, we develop children who are in touch with what they need and know how to get it.

For example, I have observed that my guys start acting like they're on caffeine and steroids when I tell them to get ready for bed. It's as if they decide to start cramming in all the fighting and teasing they didn't get to earlier in the day, once bedtime is announced. This can be a problem, because bedtime is not my finest hour. I have to struggle not to become the drill sergeant in Stanley Kubrick's *Full Metal Jacket*. "You wanna know what's gonna happen if you aren't in that bunk in five minutes? Move it! Move it! Move it!"

Bedtime goes better when I take a deep breath and empathize with their desire to stay up. This version goes something like: "I know it's really hard to get ready for bed. You guys still really want to play and it's not fun going to sleep. If you're both in bed in ten minutes, I'll read for an extra ten minutes." Staying empathic, while keeping them on track of the goal, makes things go more smoothly. Also, I like myself better, afterwards.



## ARE THEY LISTENING?

Half of the time we want our twins to do things they don't want to do. Get dressed, remove the pencil from your brother's ear, come inside, or take the cat food out of your mouth. Twins of all ages can be difficult when we want them to stop having fun and shift to something less rewarding. Russell A. Barkley, director of Psychology and professor of Psychiatry and Neurology at the



University of Massachusetts Medical Center is the author of *Taking Charge of ADHD*. He recommends that parents use the following steps to elicit cooperation:

a) Eliminate distractions

- Help them express and label feelings
- Empathize with the feelings
- Eliminate distractions when communicating
- Set time limits
- Monitor activities
- Offer praise
- Ignore normal bickering
- Avoid burnout

- b) Offer incentives
- c) Set time limits
- d) Monitor the activity and
- e) Offer praise

## LET'S LOOK AT THESE MORE CLOSELY.

**Eliminate distraction.** Frequently, this is the other twin. When I want Max to get his shoes on while Daniel is telling him a fascinating story of how their pet rat ate a snail, I need to get Daniel occupied away from Max. Young twins should be given a separate activity like playing with a toy, drawing a picture, or something to occupy them in the other room.

**Offer an incentive** if it's done within a certain time frame. Young twins are like puppies, motivated by something yummy to eat. As they grow older and can defer gratification, motivate them by offering points towards some larger goal (like getting to tie dad to the time out chair for 30 minutes).

**Set a time limit** for each task. "I'd like you to pick up the toys that you played with today in the next 10 minutes. Thank you."

**Stay in the room** to monitor the activity. We often need to observe the tasks we want our twins to do or they'll become distracted by each other or some other temptation.

**Praise, praise, praise...** When your twins do things that you like, be sure to tell them. Your words of praise are like gold to them. "I really like how you started doing that right away without my reminding you." Or, "Look at what a great job you're doing cleaning up your blocks. I didn't know you could do that so fast." (Then pray you get at least 30 minutes before the blocks are back out and scattered across the floor!)

## LIVING IN THE LAND OF NEGATIVITY

I don't think there's anything as overwhelming as my twins when they're joining forces in a combined tantrum, complaining, or crying jag. Exploring our twins' negative feelings isn't always easy. Sometimes it can feel like their feelings will go away more quickly if we deny or minimize them. And at those times, we really want those feelings to go away quickly! Faber and Mazlish, authors of *How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk* say that minimizing,

advice giving or criticizing children's negative feelings usually makes matters worse. "The more you try to push a child's unhappy feelings away, the more he becomes stuck in them. The more comfortably you accept the bad feelings, the easier it is for kids to let go of them."

Recently, a farther complained to me that he can't get his twins to stop fighting. "They fight all of the time. I feel like I've got the toddler version of the World Wrestling Federation playing in my living room every day." Rivalry and fighting between the kids can sometimes dominate the twin household. Unless somebody's being hurt or is about to be hurt, it's good to ignore day-to-day normal bickering. Examples of normal bickering are low-key disagreements regarding toys, games, etc., or whose turn it is to pet the dog. In general, normal bickering teaches twins to negotiate and manage conflict.

If however, somebody's name-calling or getting hurt, the parent needs to intervene quickly and firmly. Twins should be separated at those times and a time out may be necessary for children who are not able to stay in control. Parenting experts recommend that Time-outs last one to two minutes per age of child. Thus a 2-year-old would get two to three minutes, a 4-year-old, four to five minutes, etc.

## WATCH OUT FOR BURNOUT

We're the most likely to say something dumb to our kids when we're exhausted or stressed out. So many of us burn out with the belief that taking time away from our twins is selfish. Our kids, however, can't monitor whether we're taking adequate care of ourselves. Their job is to extract as much as they possibly can from us. As one parent put it, "I guess it's like when the stewardess tells you to put the oxygen mask over your mouth first, then your kids' after that. You have to be sure you have enough air so you help yourself and them." So make sure you're getting enough down time as a couple and as an individual. Parenting twins takes a lot of oxygen! ❤️

**Joshua Coleman, Ph. D.,** is the father of 7-year-old twin boys and lives in San Francisco. A writer and psychologist, he specializes in twins and parenting.



# We're not LAUGHING at you, we're LAUGHING with you

Using Humor  
to Keep the  
Balance!

By Diane Williams

**If you find your life full of humor and good cheer, congratulations! Writers Diane B. Williams, Janet Bailey and humor experts around the country share why “don’t worry, be laugh-y” is the best prescription for today’s families.**

It is 6:30 pm, time for my second full-time job of mother-home-maker. My 3 ½ -year-old twin girls, Kimmie and Katie and I have just come home from my office and their day care. My day at work was exhausting, the traffic tedious. Kimmie is now fussy, Katie whiney. As I try to sort mail, Katie and Kimmie begin repetitive loud requests. They want what they want...now! My fifth-grade daughter, Jennifer, needs help with her homework...now! Dinner needs to be started...now! I need to go to the bathroom...now!

Amid the competing demands for attention, I find myself wanting to scream. My reasonable request, uttered in a normal tone of

- voice, to go to the bathroom and change my clothes will not be heard.
- If I scream, I will be heard, I know, but screaming never yields the desired result – a few moments of quiet and space. Screaming only upsets everyone and makes me feel guilty. Then I often want to cry.
- Crying will achieve even less than screaming, I also know. It, too, upsets everyone and makes me feel unequal to the task of coping with cranky children. My solution to this end-of-the-day confusion is that, like me, so many parents experience—Laughing—inwardly or, if the situation permits, outwardly. Recognizing how ridiculous my coming-home routine is restores my sense of humor.
- Much has been written about the positive effects of laughter. Raymond A. Moody, Jr., M.D., author of *Laugh after Laugh: the Healing Power of Humor* suggests, “Perhaps ultimately and in the deepest sense, humor works by rallying and by being a manifestation of the will to live.”



In fact, health professionals have long viewed humor as an essential element in maintaining physical and psychological well-being. In his 1028 paper, *Humor*, Sigmund Freud described a sense of humor as "a rare and precious gift" in keeping emotional equilibrium.

Currently, many therapists view the element of humor as an integral means of coping with life's larger and smaller adversities. In their *Handbook of Humor and Psychotherapy* authors William F. Fry, Jr., and Waleed A. Salameh include articles by mental health professionals who use humor in their work. Many therapists share Salameh's "respect for the potency of humor in reconciling opposites, soothing wounds, helping individuals adjust in healthy ways and inspiring refreshing solutions to stagnant problems."

For me, having a sense of humor provides the necessary distance I need to position myself from the immediate situation in order for me to effectively respond to my children's needs. John Morreall notes in his examination of laughter, *Taking Laughter Seriously* "humor is liberating and valuable in giving us distance and perspective."

In his book, *In Man's Search for Himself*, author Rollo May suggests that humor functions as a "healthy way of feeling a 'distance' between one's self and the problem, a way of standing off and looking at one's problem with perspective."

Laughter can also be an unspoken bond of communication. As every parent of twins/multiples knows, conversations between spouses are virtually impossible if those spouse's children are around. Since our children are night owls, my husband, Jim, and I occasionally make a valiant try for a brief exchange of thoughts before bedtime.

Our frustrated attempts at conversation can be irritating, but they are so predictable that they are hilarious as well. When we laugh at the absurdity of it all, we are sharing an intimacy without the need for words.

Another benefit of laughter is its stress-reduction capabilities. In *Humor and Life Stress*, H.L. Lefcourt concludes that there is "considerable support for the hypothesis that humor reduces the impact of stress."

The growing awareness of the subtle benefits of humor is evident in the varied explorations of laughter's uses:

- As Fry has noted, the physical act of laughter ventilates the lungs and leaves the muscles relaxed.

- The applications of laughter and play in health, education and lifestyles are annually explored by the Institute for the Advancement of Human Behavior.
- The benefits of laughter and play in the workplace are being publicized by "humor consultants" Matt Weinstein and Ritch Davidson and "humorologist" C. W. Metcalf who believe humor helps break down barriers, reduce tension and increase teamwork.
- In *Jokes of Oppression: Soviet Jewish Humor*, co-authors David A. Harris and Izrail Rabinovich present jokes from Soviet Jews noting that humor was a prized mechanism in coping.
- I have found that unexpected laughter can put everyone in my family in a better mood. Of course, laughing out right is not always the preferred means of restoring one's own sense of humor. Dr. Moody points out that "in order to be integrated as a healthy response, mirth must occur within the context of a network of mutually understanding, loving and supportive human relationships." It is 'within the context of this network of human relationships that the distinction between *laughing with* and *laughing at* acquires it's meaning..."

Another danger of laughing at the wrong time is inadvertent reinforcement of an undesirable behavior. Besides being a positive response which a child may strive to reproduce by continuing inappropriate behavior, laughter may reinforce learning.

Harold Greenwald, a clinical psychologist and author of *The Happy Person*, believes that experiences attached to humor are better remembered. Thus, consideration of the learning aspects of laughter may teach parents when it is appropriate to laugh at a child's unacceptable actions.

While it is not always possible or even desirable to immediately laugh when caught between conflicting demands, it is possible to take a minute before screaming or crying. When laughter does seem to be the only way to survive your double delights' antics, go ahead! It feels much better than screaming or crying, takes much less energy and might just be the antidote you need for a long, happy life. ♥

**Diane Williams** of Atlanta, Georgia, is a senior labor management specialist, a freelance writer and photographer, and the mother of three girls, including fraternal twins.

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# 10 TIPS for LAUGHING at life

By Janet Bailey

...in the name of good health

Laughter lifts our spirits, puts our problems in perspective, connects us to others and probably improves our health. In his best-selling book *Anatomy of an Illness*, author Norman Cousins told how he rid himself of a serious illness with a treatment that included doses of Candid Camera and old Marx Brothers movies. Some researchers believe a hearty laugh may release endorphins, the brain's own pain-killing chemicals, and that it helps to strengthen the immune system.

Laughter provides a physical workout, too. William Fry, M.D., associate clinical professor of psychiatry at Stanford University Medical School, compares laughter to jogging in terms of its effect on heart rate and muscle condition, although it would take a very funny series of events to keep you laughing as long and hard as the average jogger jogs.

Still, we don't need science to tell us that laughing feels good, and most of us know we don't laugh nearly enough. Although it's hard to see the humor in everything, we can learn to take ourselves and our problems less seriously and maybe lengthen our lives at the same time. Here are some suggestions from the experts:

**1. Remember that everyone can have a sense of humor.** Maybe you can't remember a joke or tell it well if you recall it, but that doesn't mean you can't be amusing with friends. "We're all born with the potential for developing a sense of humor," says Dr. Fry. "It's part of our genetic makeup. Even if most of your playful spirit has been hammered out of you by the time you've reached adulthood, it can be revived."

"When you talk to people about humor, they usually think of jokes and comedy," says C. W. Metcalf, president of a company in Fort Collins Colorado that trains business people in how to use humor. "But less than two

percent of us are capable of remembering and telling jokes. Humor is much broader than that. It's a set of skills that anyone can learn to develop. It's a sense of perspective, of being able to look at things in an offbeat way; it's a sense of joy in being alive."

**2. Don't just sit there – participate.** "Everybody is exposed to humor," says Harvey Mindess, Ph.D., director of the graduate psychology program at Antioch University in Marina del Rey, California, "but we usually just sit back and enjoy it without thinking of how to make others laugh. Don't settle for letting Robin Williams make all the jokes. Imagine yourself in the role of amusing other people. If I'm watching an old episode of *Everybody Loves Raymond* or even the *Simpsons*, I might consider how that episode has played itself out in my family."

Think about how you could turn an awkward incident into an entertaining story. If some minor disaster comes along, like a car breakdown on a rainy night, think of it as a situation comedy. You'll be amazed at how quickly that puts things in perspective. And it may well make a funny story later.

**3. Recognize what makes you laugh and put more of it in your life.** Does your taste turn to Comedy Network or Funny movies? Which TV sitcoms do you like? Which writers make your laugh? Once you've figured out what amuses you most, Dr. Fry suggests, start a humor library. Collect your favorite books, cartoons, DVDs, films and just funny gadgets. Then, when you're having trouble seeing the bright side, head for your stash for a quick pick-me-up.

**4. Practice injecting laughter into 'serious' situations.** "We're happy because we laugh, not the other way around," says Annette Goodheart, Ph.D., a psychotherapist in Santa Barbara, California. "The usual way of describing the process is that you have a sense of humor, so you laugh, and that changes your attitude. I start by laughing, which changes my attitude immediately. It's easy to fake laughter – your diaphragm doesn't distinguish between that and the real thing. It's like starting a car engine. The physical motion triggers real laughter."

If you're having trouble seeing the humor in a situation, Goodheart says, describe it in a deliberately light way: "The IRS is auditing me, tee-hee." The ridiculousness of that sentence tickles the funny bone, helping you to change the way you look at it. You might try adopting the paradoxical approach. When you can't seem to laugh about a problem, try the opposite. Tell yourself this: is no laughing matter and nothing can make you laugh about it.





Usually the harder we try not to laugh, the more irresistible the urge becomes.

Another technique is to carry your anxiety to its most ludicrous extreme; until the situation you imagine seems so ridiculous you can't help but find it funny. Let's say you're agonizing over a mistake you make at work. Picture the entire company going bankrupt, with you and the chairman reduced to selling apples on the street corner, all because of your error. Chances are things aren't really that bad, and the imaginary scene puts things in perspective.

"Humorists do this all the time – take upsetting events and talk about them with enough exaggeration that people find them funny," says Hope Mihalap, a humorist and professional speaker from Norfolk, Virginia. "This morning, as I was going over my bills, it was clear that we had more bills than money to pay them. I began to get nervous and upset. So when my college-age daughter came in, I told her the problem and said 'Next week when we start taking in washing, maybe you could get the laundry basket and go with me from door to door.' She started to laugh, and I did too. Then I was able to sit down with the checkbook and know that I'd find a way to work this out."

### 5. Avoid self-criticism by poking fun at your flaws.

"When you get down on yourself," explains Ray DiGiuseppe, director of training and research at New York's Institute for Rational-Emotive Therapy, "you become more depressed – and the more depressed you are, the harder it is to do something about your problem. But if you can laugh about your troubles, you're more likely to think of a way to deal with them."

DiGiuseppe and his wife have made a joke out of his tendency to work long hours. "When she wants to sit down and have a talk, I kid her that she'll have to call my secretary to make an appointment. Making fun of my work holism reminds us I'm aware of the problem.

### 6. Use humor to lighten up your relationships.

By easing tension, laughter can pave the way for better communication in almost any relationship, from home to the workplace. When Goodheart's married clients face an angry impasse, for instance, she asks them to bring up a key word or phrase they've agreed upon beforehand about the situation that made them laugh.

"One couple remembered the day they made love outdoors – and the lawn chair folded up on them! They chose the words 'lawn chair' and agreed that whenever either one of them evoked that phrase, their argument would stop," Goodheart says "It

- always made them laugh and broke the tension and helped them resolve the problem."
- Mihalap's family adopts a foreign accent when touchy subjects arise. "My husband is Russian, my father is Greek, and I'm a Southerner," she says. "So ever since our kids were small, we've found a lot of humor in the way people speak. If they are getting on each other's nerves, they'll start talking in a heavy Russian accent. Even if one of them knows there's a reprimand there, it's easier to take when it's said in a funny way."
- Joking with someone around whom you're usually serious can add a new dimension to the relationship. "This is an assignment I give my students," says Mindess. "I tell them to think about it beforehand, because it isn't always appropriate. But the ones who try it report remarkable results. You can really break through to a new level of intimacy, openness and relaxation with another person this way."

**7. Rediscover silliness; rediscover toys.** We can learn from children, who haven't yet begun to censor their mirth. "I'm a firm believer in props – toys, posters, anything that makes us laugh," says Allen Klein, a professional speaker on humor in San Francisco. "Everyone in my workshops gets a clown nose, and I tell them to keep props handy. When I'm in a traffic jam, I take out the jar of bubble soap I keep in the car, open the window and blow bubbles. Then I look around and see smiling faces, so I know I'm relieving other people's stress, too."

**8. When you really can't laugh, don't force it.** Sometimes nothing can help you see the bright side of a situation. When that happens, you may simply need to ride it out. You may have to get out your grief or your anger first, before you can begin to think about looking for the funny side. Laughter can help – but not all the time.

**9. Don't confuse humor with ridicule.** It's one thing to get people laughing; it's another to laugh at them. Teasing uses laughter to control others, to disguise critical remarks and avoid responsibility for your true feelings. "Can't you take a joke?" May be one of the most destructive questions in the language. "Often people who tease others have little insight into what they're really doing," says Quinton Wilkes, PH.D., a psychotherapist in New York City. "If you feel demeaned or under attack, tell the other person how you feel." Anyone can laugh at another's expense, but a true sense of humor is the ability to laugh at your own self.

**10. Don't think you have to be serious to be responsible.** "Many people feel that being a responsible adult doesn't go along with laughing at their self," says Mindess. "They assume that to be funny degrades their dignity." Laughing is risky – but it opens up new ways of looking at a world that's full of fear and cynicism. And that openness and creativity are what we need most of all. "We're facing an environment that's changing between the time we go to bed and the time we get up in the morning," says Metcalf. "The only way to cope with that is to pay attention to the things that make it worth being here. It's easy to figure out what's not working, but the problems of the world are going to be solved by the people who love it here." And what feeds that love better than laughter? ♥

*Janet Bailey of Brooklyn, New York, is a freelance writer on health and human behavior.*



# When One Twin Lags Behind

by Barbara Klein, Ph.D., Ed.D.

Rearing twins is a challenge for parents when both twins are healthy. Parents have to work individually and with the pair while twins progress through normal developmental milestones, developing a sense of themselves. Trying to treat twins equally is not always appropriate as twins naturally need different kinds of attention and nurturing. Yet dealing with differences between your twin pair is tricky. Responding to, rather than creating, differences develops optimal individuality as well as healthy bonding experiences.

When one twin is born with an emotional, physical or medical disability, the challenge of parenting becomes even more difficult, time-consuming and exceedingly stressful. "Doing the right thing" for each of your twins becomes crucial to each individual in the pair as well as to the identity of the pair. Early medical and

parental intervention is paramount to the health, well being and self-esteem of each twin and to their future development.

**Barbara Klein, Ph.D., Ed.D.,** is a private practice-psychologist in Los Angeles and the author of *Not All Twins are Alike* (Praeger, 1999) and *Psychological Profiles of Twinship* (Praeger, 2003). She has a twin sister. Visit her website at [www.drbarbaraklein.com](http://www.drbarbaraklein.com)

## THE CHALLENGES

When one twin is diagnosed with an impairment such as autistic spectrum disorder, cerebral palsy or a physical challenge, to name just a few possibilities, parents must pay special attention to this problem. First and foremost, parents must mobilize themselves to get the best treatment, support and appropriate interventions for the challenged twin.

Out of necessity, the stronger twin is faced

with the burden of always being second in line behind his or her challenged twin. Oftentimes, the stronger and healthier twin is used as a support for the weaker twin, and in turn, the family. The healthy twin will get less attention when medical problems with his or her twin are at a serious crossroad. This need for differential treatment creates problems for both twins and their parents.

## WHEN UNEQUAL TREATMENT IS BEST

When there is not enough intervention, problems escalate. Let's look at an example in which the co-twin of a twin with autistic spectrum disorder developed emotional problems.

Nicholas and Claire are fraternal twins. Nicholas, a very difficult baby, has incredible tantrums, uses his language in a minimal way and avoids making eye contact. The developmental pediatrician diagnoses him with autistic spectrum disorder when he is one and a half years old.

Unlike her twin, Claire, who is talking and connecting well with her parents and gets a clean bill of health from the developmental pediatrician. Mom, Dad and Claire, however, are overwhelmed by Nick's physical and emotional needs. For far too many months, even years, Claire watches and listens to her brother's rages and out-of-control behavior, which frightens and traumatizes her.

Although the house is in continual turmoil, Mom and Dad do not realize the negative effect that Nick's illness is having on

Claire until she starts preschool at the age of three and a half. Very immature, Claire has not learned how to behave in group situations. She can be aggressive – biting, hitting or screaming – when she feels pressured by other children. Sometimes, for no apparent reason, Claire becomes regressed and cries uncontrollably in the corner.

On the other hand, Nick has improved significantly by the age of three and a half. Nick's treatment team believes that he will outgrow his problematic behavior in elementary school. He is speaking in clear sentences. He attends a special school where he is as a behavioral therapist who works with him on socialization.

Although she is better socialized at five than she was at three and a half, Claire remains a concern for her parents, the preschool and the psychologist who work with the family. High strung and something of a 'wild child,' she has a hard time making and keeping friends because she has a bad temper. She does not like school and misses her twin brother who is at a different school. School officials phone mom and dad frequently because Claire will not follow the rules. She still bites and screams inappropriately if she gets angry. She cannot explain her feelings except to say that she knows she is 'different'. Getting her to take responsibility for her actions and feelings is very time-consuming for parents and teachers. Unfortunately, Nick and Claire's story has

many common themes with other twin stories in which one twin has special challenges.

Clearly, both twins are affected in different ways.

In another home, the family worked out the balance of care. Mary and Monica, five-year-old fraternal twins, are safely fastened in their car





seats. After a long day at her office, mom has just picked up both children from different schools and is driving them to afterschool activities. Mary is partially blind and goes to a school for the visually impaired. Monica is an active, healthy child who goes to the neighborhood school.

The girls are happy to see each other, and they share their afterschool snacks with each other. Monica helps Mary open her bag of cookies and explains to her sister that she will be at her eye doctor in five minutes. Monica knows how long it takes on the freeway to get to her sister's doctor because she is learning to read street signs. Monica tells Mary about the gymnastics class she is going to attend. Monica explains to her sister that they will be playing on floor mats and acting like animals. Mary laughs; her interest in her sister's activities is apparent.

Pleased that her twins are getting along, mom praises both of them separately and as a pair. She remembers how much talking about feelings and play therapy has gone on in order to get the children to accept their circumstances. Mary has had several surgeries. Because of her visual limitation, she has had special help and a great deal of extra love and attention and concern from her parents, doctors, teachers and her sister.

Monica, who has had to play caregiver and seeing-eye-dog for her sister, has been angry and frustrated with her place in the family. Monica realizes that her sister has serious physical limitations, but she is very young to explain her shame and guilt in words. Mom, sensitive to Monica's feelings, and looks for ways to help her daughter express herself. And, she helps Mary live a full life in spite of her visual limitations. This mother has helped her twins by treating them fairly and not equally.

## SIMILAR QUESTIONS, DIFFERENT SOLUTIONS

Rearing twins when one is challenged and the other is healthy creates special and often unstated, difficult dilemmas, because of the deep bond twins share. When one twin suffers, the other twin may feel the pain as well, because as young children their sense of separateness from one another is not totally developed. They may be overly concerned with one another and intensely angry at each other as well. At special times, they share a deep sense of compassion for one another which truly goes beyond words. There is something magical or illusive about their closeness that parents and teachers cannot understand. Their closeness intensifies the problems of giving each child the treatment that he or she needs.

While meeting the emotional and physical needs of your twins may present the most demanding and perplexing challenges, the day-to-day practical issues are what can wear out a parent. Working through those challenges and hassles takes some planning. While parents of one delayed and one healthy twin face similar challenges, the situations and solutions often are as unique as the individuals.

## HOW CAN I CLONE MYSELF?

How to be in two places at once to care for two children who are in different stages is a question most parents with a delayed twin ask. Whether the logistical challenge is temporary or permanent, you need help.

Scott and Jennifer Carey, of Denver, Colorado quickly devised a plan when they brought home their newborn son, Jack, but were forced to leave his twin sister, Madalyn, in the hospital to recuperate from her heart surgery. To top things off, it was time for Scott to

return to work. Jennifer took Jack with her to the NICU in the morning and took turns with Scott visiting Maddie in the evenings. They called for updates throughout the day.

"Maddie's first night at home was one of my best nights," Jennifer recalled. "Forgetting all about the heart machine, the feeding tube and all of Maddie's medicine, our family was complete." They were separated again in the fall, when they took Maddie to the emergency room for what they thought was a cold. She was admitted for her second heart surgery. "We felt like we were back to square one," said Jennifer, who had returned to work. Maddie developed pneumonia, delaying heart surgery and extending the hospital-home-work shuffle.

"After the surgery and during her recovery, Scott and I took half days off work and took turns being at the hospital during the day. At night we stayed home with Jack so Maddie could rest better," Jennifer said. "Everybody helped us by taking care of Jack and going to the hospital to visit Maddie while Scott and I worked our half days. We are very lucky to have such a great family and wonderful friends to help."

In many cases managing logistics becomes a way of life, often requiring full-time help. If you do not live near family members who are able to pitch in on a regular basis, hiring a nanny experienced in caring for a disabled child—and if possible also in caring for a twin—can be the difference between struggling to survive and living a somewhat well-balanced family life.

Diane Hettasch of Brookfield, Illinois, also relied on her family, especially her mother-in-law, to help with her twins, Hannah and Lindsay, now 5. Lindsay has cerebral palsy, seizures, a developmental delay and is non-verbal. "I felt so torn," Diane recalled. "Which twin needed me more? I couldn't deny Lindsay the services she needed. I felt like if I had just had Hannah five years later, but then..."

## WHAT DO WE SAY?

Parents are often at a loss for words when it comes to helping a young child understand why his or her twin is unable to keep up. When twins enter toddlerhood, the differences often become more apparent. One crawls, walks and talks, while the other lags behind. What do parents say?

Charity Alber of Indianapolis, Indiana, found talking to be the only way to help her twin girls, others, and herself – understand and accept the differences. Charity's twin girls, Mackenzie and Madison, now five, were growing up together, in parallel, for the first 16-months of their lives, as close as any two could be, from their own language to sleeping side-by-side. Then Mackenzie contracted meningitis. She suffered a stroke and paralysis that took her back to infancy. She could not move her limbs, speak or eat. She could communicate only through her eyes.

Charity and her husband brought Madison to the hospital to visit Mackenzie, confined to a tumble chair and in braces, with tubes and bloated from water weight gain. Charity asked Madison, 'Where's Mackenzie?' Mackenzie looked all around the room and said, "Mommy, I don't see her." Charity's heart broke.

They just kept on talking and talking. From time to time Madison would ask, "Why can't Mackenzie do this?" "Sissy is very sick" was the reply, over and over. "We talked about 'germs you can't see' and a sickness that makes you start all over again," Charity said. It is important to respond not only to the words, but also to the emotions. "When you are 16-months old, it is hard to articulate your feelings," Charity said. "We just kept talking." Madison, who had the trauma of her sister and mother practically disappearing for one month,

became very clingy when Charity and Mackenzie returned home. And she had nightmares and was very upset. "Madison is still very clingy and gets upset when I go on a trip," Charity added.

## WHAT ABOUT THE TWINSHIP?

The good news for parents of a twin with a delay, long-term illness or disability is that twins often encourage each other to reach milestones and accomplish tasks that a singleton might never tackle. The twin connection can be a powerful healing tool.

Maddie's desire to catch up with Jack was unmistakable. When Maddie saw Jack crawling she wanted to be right there with him. If he had a toy, she wanted it. By 14-months of age, Maddie, who had lagged behind Jack, had almost caught up with her brother.

Often it is not a question of actually catching up, but of motivation and role modeling. When Madison first saw Mackenzie in the hospital, Charity feared the twin bond was forever broken. With Mackenzie's disabilities they could no longer play together, or chatter away in their own language. Just last year, four years after she came down with meningitis, Mackenzie walked again. Now Mack-

enzie and Madison play together and the special bond between them, including their chatter, is again visible.

"Mackenzie wants to be where Madison is. She says, 'I love my sissy'. That connection made a big difference in her recovery. The doctors said she had the peer model at home. There might not be any scientific proof but, if I've learned one thing throughout this, it is 'go with your gut'.

The relationship should not be forced, however, nor should the co-twin be pressed into the role of caregiver. Hannah and Lindsay have been aware of their difference from birth. "Hannah has never developed a close relationship with Lindsay," Diane said. "I think, even at 1-year of age, she was turned off by Lindsay's drooling." Diane wonders how the relationship will evolve and if they will be close some day.

## TAKE CARE OF MYSELF?

Committing to do a few things for yourself routinely – such as regular sleep and good diet – sounds much easier than it is. Call on family and respite care workers often – in fact, twice as often for twice as long as you think you need them.

Grieving the loss of your child's normal abilities is one of the things that track you down, even if you try to hide from it. Grief can pop up throughout life, especially as your healthier twin reaches new milestones that your other twin may never hit. "I have a cry and then move on," explained Diane, a special education teacher before her twins were born. "I am just that kind of person." Diane knew at birth Lindsay would be disabled because her head was small for her body. Her work with disabled adults and kids prepared her for what was to come, at least as much as anything could.

Few parents, however, have the advantage of a background in special education. Most parents must learn from their experience day-by-day, as they strive to adapt. It is emotionally demanding, and sometimes parents need help dealing with those emotions.

Guilt is another potentially poisonous area. "It was hard to talk about the guilt at first," Charity said, "but the cure is talking. You have good days and you have bad days. You think, 'If only I had not done this or that.' On other days, you think, 'How could I have known?'"

Parents of special needs multiples often feel isolated, but have little time to organize and do anything about it. They may not fit in with parents of healthy children in local twins clubs, but neither do they fit in with parents of disabled singletons. Many support organizations were founded by parents who had a need that was not met. Few parents of disabled multiples have the time or emotional reserves to tackle such a project and many children may suffer lifelong disabilities.

Developmental preschools are the most likely resource for parents of disabled multiples. Charity found another set of twins with similar challenges at a developmental preschool that both Madison and Mackenzie attended. (The classes were comprised of 75% disabled children and 25% typically developed children for the purpose of role modeling.)

Diane also found her best networking opportunities through a school – a conductive education program – although all of the other children were singletons. Support from other mothers in similar situations can lend perspective to your situation, help you be an advocate for your child, and give you a safe outlet for letting off steam. And they can offer a kind word when you're down. When you feel that no one understands, it's just good to know you're not alone. ❤️

## LIMITING DESTRUCTIVE DIFFERENTIAL TREATMENT

- Get the right help for your challenged twin.
- Get special individual services for both of your children. The stronger twin may feel shame and guilt for not being "challenged."
- Take your own emotional needs into consideration because when you are overwhelmed your children will suffer the consequences.
- Your job is an exhausting one. Elicit support from your family, extended family and friends.
- Find professionals who have worked with twins.
- Talk to your twins about their feelings and thoughts as often as is necessary, and explain the challenges they face in developmentally appropriate ways.
- Find schools or enrichment programs that have experience with twins.
- Give each twin praise and rewards for his or her special accomplishments.
- Reward the twin pair if they avoid a fight or conflict.
- Acknowledge and reward the stronger twin for helping his brother or sister.

## AVOIDING "PARENT TRAPS"

- Don't think you can raise these children alone. You can't!!
- Don't forget that both twins will suffer because of their deep bond with each other.
- Protect your twins from strangers who bring attention to the challenged twin's problems.
- Don't rely on the healthier-twin to take care of the challenged twin.
- Parents who are responsive are most likely to successfully work through the problems that arise when one twin is seriously challenged.

—Dr. Barbara Klein



# What is a Twin Registry?

by Christa D. Reed

Have you ever wondered what a Twin Registry is? According to the National Twin Registry website, twin studies are considered to be the gold standard for research when investigating the relative importance of genetics and environmental influences to the development of complex traits and diseases in human populations.

Because of these factors, the use of twins can significantly enhance the statistical power of a particular genetic study by limiting the amount of genetic and/or environmental variability. Fraternal twins, on average, share about 50% of their segregating genes while identical twins share all of their genes. Both types of twin pairs often share similar pre- and post-natal environments as well so this makes for a perfect participant. By determining the similar rates for a particular disease or trait among identical and fraternal twins, they can ascertain whether the risk factors for that disease or trait are hereditary, environmental, or some combination of these.

Using DNA profiles and clinical and questionnaire data, Twin Registries can compare similarities and differences between identical and fraternal twin pairs to estimate the importance of genetic and environmental influences in a wide range of common conditions such as osteoporosis, arthritis, diabetes, asthma. So having twins participate in these studies helps to continue important research for common conditions, leading to advances in science, medicine and future potential therapies.

The Twin Research Registry at SRI, an independent, nonprofit research and development institute was established in 1995 by SRI's Center for Health Sciences. Led by Director Gary Swan he explains, "Twins - with their similar genetic make-up - represent an ideal way to study various health and behavior issues and determine more exactly what influence genetic factors play and what influence environmental factors may play. Twin studies have provided scientific insights into such issues as diabetes, heart disease, obesity, as well as alcohol and tobacco use. By identifying a genetic component to these and other health issues, we can target early prevention and treatment efforts."

## WHAT TYPES OF STUDIES DO THEY CONDUCT?

There are numerous studies being conducted by Twin Registries. The Twin Registry at SRI currently includes more than 2,600 adult twin registrants and their Registry members have participated in studies focusing on the pharmacokinetics of nicotine, metabolism of commonly used medications, genetic susceptibility to cancer-causing chemicals, and sleep patterns in young twins.

The Mid-Atlantic Twin Registry, located in Richmond, Virginia and started as the Virginia Twin Registry in the 1970s and has evolved over the years and combined Virginia, North and South Carolina Registries into what is now the Mid-Atlantic Twin Registry has been researching twin pairs for years. Some of their past studies include studies on Epilepsy; Cardiovascular disease; Diabetes; Cancer; Obesity; Attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder; Clinical depression; Pregnancy complications; Alcohol, nicotine and other drug abuse; and Parenting styles; just to name a few.

## EXAMPLES OF CURRENT STUDIES

Presently, SRI International is seeking twin pairs of a variety of ages to participate in a Seasonal Flu Vaccine Study, sponsored by the National Institutes of Health- to develop more effective flu vaccines. The Mid-Atlantic Twin Registry is seeking participants for studies like: The Factors in Human Aging study; Factors that affect

human development and aging; and Genes, Environment and the Development of Substance Use. The Michigan Twin Registry is currently seeking twin pairs for the following studies: Twin Study of Behavioral and Emotional Development; A Study of Hormones and Behavior across the Menstrual Cycle; and Opposite-Sex (Male-Female) Twin Adolescent Study of Eating, Mood, and Hormones. The University of Washington Twin Registry is conducting studies covering Sleep Duration and Metabolism in Twins; An Interdisciplinary Study in Twins: Taste Perception, Hormonal and Brain Response to Food; and Inflammation and Obesity in Twins.

## HOW DO I REGISTER MY TWINS?

Registration is fast and easy and with the numerous twin registries located throughout the US and world (see side-bar for a list of Twin Registries) it's easier than ever to register your twins' data online and it only takes a few moments. Twin studies are voluntary and provide essential data and information to advance research and medicine so most that participate feel glad to contribute. According to the Mid-Atlantic Twin Studies organization, their studies often compensate twins for their participation with tokens of appreciation-usually money or a small gift and they receive a biannual newsletter containing articles about twins as well as stories and photos of fellow members and updates on upcoming events for twins. They also invite their participants to attend special twin events, such as twins' days at amusement parks with discounted tickets. ♥

List of Twin Registries continued on page 43

## The National Organization of Mothers of Twins Clubs, Inc. (NOMOTC)

A Support Group for Parents of Twins and Higher Order Multiples

[www.nomotc.org](http://www.nomotc.org)

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# Valentine's Day

## Photo Contest Results

Congratulations to the following winners of our recent TWINS™ Magazine Valentine's Day Photo Contest which was held in January on our website, message board forum and our Facebook and Twitter pages. Winners needed to have a Valentine's Day theme and could be any age, any twin-type. Keep your eyes out for our next contest coming soon! Winners and Finalists were also featured on our home-page for a week leading up to Valentine's Day.



**Fraternal twin boys, Garret and Paige, age 1 from Sacramento, California**

Mom Amy took this winning photo the day before she sent it in for the contest. Her fraternal boy/girl twins were almost a year in this photo and their birthday was February 9th. Valentine's Day is special to their family because it's also their wedding anniversary, and this year they celebrated anniversary number six. Congratulations to the family and thanks for submitting this great photo!



# Finalists



Isabella and Gabriella, 2 ½ year old identical twin girls from Paradise Valley, Arizona



Eva Jane and Josie Bec, 1-year-old identical twin girls from Butler, Pennsylvania



Hansen and Chase, 7-months old in the photo, identical twin boys from Manchester, Connecticut. They are now age 7 in the 2nd grade.



Kierstan and Korrine, 3-year-old identical twin girls from Dolgeville, New York

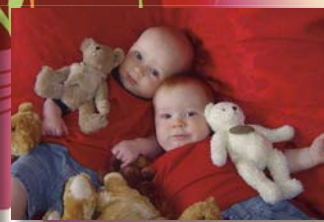
## Honorable Mentions:



Cole and Thomas, 4-months-old



Lucienne and Annelise, age 4



Carl and Ian, age 6-months



Kayla and Kyle, age 4



Joanne and Nicholas, age 2



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An Award Winning Parenting Book about raising twins and multiples!

\$13.95



Winner of the 2007 Best Parenting/Family Book in Reader Views

Annual Literary Awards! Compiled and edited by Susan M. Heim, cartoon artist by John M. Byrne.

This book is a compilation of 82 inspiring stories written by parents and other family members about their joys and challenges of raising multiples. "Twice the Love" is filled with humorous and inspiring anecdotes and the stories are grouped into small collections by topics, such as "Treasured Moments" and "Mischievous Multiples" and were submitted by American readers of TWINS™ Magazine. 214 pages, softbound



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## Emotionally Healthy Twins

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By Joan A. Friedman.

Most parents try to treat their twins as individuals, but most unwittingly undermine their best intentions because they lack a practical set of guidelines for raising emotionally healthy multiples. Dr. Joan A. Friedman, draws on her unique experience as a twin, as a mother of twins, and as a psychotherapist and outlines the seven key concepts for helping twins develop into self-realized, unique individuals while offering parents specific strategies for each stage in their children's growth. From how to set up the nursery to handling play dates and extracurricular activities, deciding on same or separate classroom education to encouraging grandparents and other family members to think beyond the pair to see individuals, Emotionally Healthy Twins will become the standard reference for parenting twins. Paperback, 221 pages.



time (yikes!) to help simplify life for other parents when they're expecting twins or triplets, and after they have their babies. This updated second edition is loaded with tips, and tells you all the things you need to plan for and think about ... everything from the perfect shower gifts (and what to steer clear of!), breastfeeding issues, to safety-proofing your house and sleeping peacefully through the night. This is a great guide for parenting twins from pregnancy to preschool.

**Ready or Not ... Here We Come!** The REAL Expert's Cannot-Live-Without Guide to the First Year With Twins by Elizabeth Lyons Published by Finn-Phyllis Press \$16.00

The mother of twins Jack and Henry, author Elizabeth Lyons recognized that raising multiple children would not be easy. In her multiples birthing class, she met a group of women who not only survived their pregnancies, but grew to be close friends as well. In her first book, Lyons and her "multiples sorority" will survive the hardships of their first year with twins. They also learn and appreciate the fun and humor associated with raising multiple children. Ready or Not... welcomes the reader into that supportive circle of friends. 165 pages, softbound 5-1/2 x 8-1/2 x 1/2"



## Our Twins Journal

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Jennifer M. Nevadomski, M.S. has just published this brand new baby journal just for your twins, with everything you need to keep track as your babies are growing and changing! This Journal includes fillable charts/schedules to keep track of each baby's feeding/diapering/napping; a section that you can personalize to record information about each of your twin's birth story and other information about their birth day and immunization schedules and doctor records for each baby. Journal also includes growth charts for comparison, facts about twins, poems and sayings about twins, and a funny section about how to answer all of those "twin" questions people ask—and more! Created by a family counselor and mom of twin baby boys!



## The Multiples Manual—Preparing and Caring for Twins or Triplets / 1,002 Tips for Expectant Mothers,

Second Edition by Lynn Lorenz and Published by JustMultiples.com. \$17.95

Author Lynn Lorenz is an identical twin herself, and the mother of triplets and a singleton. She's an accountant by profession, and developed this wonderful handbook in her spare





### The Parents Guide to Raising Twins

\$13.95

From pre-birth to first school days- the essential book for those expecting two or more by Elizabeth Friedrich and Cherry Rowland. Published by St. Martin's Griffin. Now in its eighth printing, "The Parent's Guide to Raising Twins" has been a favorite of new parents of multiples for many years. Authors Elizabeth Friedrich and Cherry Rowland are mothers of twins themselves, and offer personal experiences as well as helpful and enlightening stories from other parents and medical personnel. Carefully researched, the authors include chapters on pregnancy, the birth of twins and the months immediately after birth, adjustments in the family to the arrival of the twins, parenting from their early months to their toddler years, and treating twins as individuals. All in all, this book delivers a bounty of useful guidance.



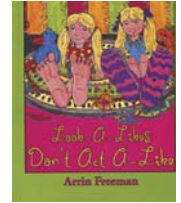
### Twin Tales—*The Magic and Mystery of Multiple Birth* by Donna M. Jackson.

\$10.95

Published by Little Brown and Company. Including both scientific research and interesting personal stories, this well-illustrated discussion of twins will appeal to inquisitive elementary-school age readers. Colorado author Donna Jackson, whose mother is a twin, explores twins and their similarities, as well as their differences. "Twin Tales" also includes profiles of famous twins, information about identical and fraternal twins, a discussion about twin telepathy, a section on "supertwins," and a complete twins glossary. 48 pages, hardbound.



This is a great children's book for twins! Artist and author Arrin Freeman is a twin who grew up with her sister Farrah. Though they looked alike, they didn't always like the same things or act alike. One sister liked scary movies. The other liked funny movies. One liked dancing, while the other liked drawing and painting. Since they were twins, everyone always assumed they were the same. For Christmas and birthdays, they would receive the same present, but in different colors. In school, they found different friends and could follow their own interests and dreams. Despite their differences, they would forever be sisters and best friends with each other. 40 pages, hardbound.



### Look-a-Likes Don't Act-a-Like—By Arrin Freeman. Published by Blue Marble Books.

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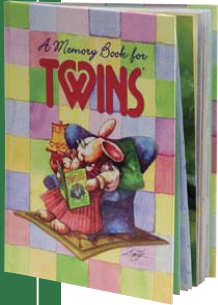


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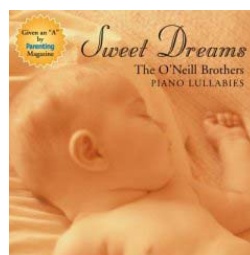
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## LIST OF TWIN REGISTRIES IN THE US:

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Institute for Behavioral Genetics  
1480 30th St, Boulder, CO 80303  
(303) 492-7362  
<http://ibgwww.colorado.edu/research/ctr.html>

### Massachusetts Twin Registry

Dr. Michael Lyons  
Boston University  
Department of Psychology  
64 Cummington Street, Boston, MA 02215  
(617) 358-TWIN [8946]  
<http://www.bu.edu/psych/labs/twin/front.htm>

### Michigan State University Twin Registry

Dr. S. Alexandra Burt's Lab  
37B Psychology Building, MSU  
East Lansing, MI 48824  
517-355-6878  
<http://www.msutwinstudies.com/>

### Mid-Atlantic Twin Registry

PO Box 980617, Richmond, VA 23298  
1-800-URA-TWIN  
1-800-872-8946  
<http://www.matr.vcu.edu/>

### Minnesota Twin Family Registry

Department of Psychology  
University of Minnesota  
Minneapolis, Minnesota  
<http://www.psych.umn.edu/psylabs/mtfs/default.htm>

### National Twin Registry

National Institutes of Health  
111 T.W. Alexander Drive  
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709  
(919) 541-3345  
<http://www.niehs.nih.gov/news/events/pastmtg/2005/twin/index.cfm>

### Twin Research Registry at SRI International

Center for Health Sciences  
SRI International  
333 Ravenswood Avenue  
Menlo Park, CA 94025  
1-800-SRI-TWIN (1-800-774-8946)  
<http://sri.com/policy/healthsci/twin/>

### University of Washington Twin Registry

Center for Clinical & Epidemiological Research  
Box 359780  
1730 Minor Avenue, Suite 1760  
Seattle, WA 98101  
206-543-5736  
<http://depts.washington.edu/uwccer/twin-about.html>

[Click Here](#) to see a list of International Registries.

# Waiting for Three *by Marie-Anne Chidiac*

I was keen to have children. Actually desperate might be a better word. Friends and family prayed hard. So hard in fact that we must have deafened the heavens with supplications and demands. I can only think that the noise level was so loud that they finally looked our way and... I was pregnant with triplets!

From my sixth month, most people I met automatically assumed I was about to give birth imminently. I was huge, waddling badly and could barely string a whole sentence together without sounding out of



breath. The further along I got, the more strangers would smile at me on the street. Yes, I would think, no need to look so smug just because I'm fatter than you! The best part I suppose is that I could just make out my lower legs but everything else south of my belly button was out of sight and mind. I could eat what I wanted, when I wanted and not feel guilty in the least – after all, the babes needed feeding!

They say that children take your breath away and mine started really early. In my last semester, it was hard to lie back as the weight of my belly at nearly 20 kilos would literally stop me breathing. And so, I had the wild choice of lying on my right or left side with a purple heart-shaped 'Dora' pillow snugly wedged under my bump. Every situation is an opportunity of course...and so, what better time to improve my one handed typing on a strategically placed laptop. A friend enviously commented how lovely it must be to have all this free time to read or write. But that, of course, was without counting on the raging hormones that had me swinging between intense irritation and sleepiness.

My 3-year-old niece Joanna would often pop her head round my bedroom door and if she spotted the Dora pillow unused, would rush in and hand it to me saying

"this is for the babies" and tap my belly gently. The pillow survived and is still used as a bottle proper with much success. I'm thinking of framing it.

At the risk of antagonizing proponents of the nurture -over- nature debate, personality traits in my trio were already clear and obvious. Maria loved sleeping, all curled up low in my belly rarely making her presence felt whilst Oriane (high on the left) feisty, demanding and curious would react to any sound by kicking me in the ribs. Finally Isabelle (mid belly towards the right), was squeezed between both her siblings and yet as a contented baby and food lover she would awaken mostly before a meal as if to say 'come on, we are getting hungry down here'. Who said you had to see your children before you got to know them?

Carrying them for so long, I seem to instinctively 'recognize' each baby, their distinctive positions, subtle movements and temperament. With the delivery day approaching, I was keen not to get them mixed up in the birthing process and explained this to my doctor. And so, during my caesarean delivery, in a room with at least twenty doctors and nurses, my gynecologist presented to me each baby in turn saying, 'and now Mrs Chidiac, top left baby, what is the name?'. ...and that is how I had the whole operating room waiting with baited breath for the name of each baby as it appeared.

And since then, well...let us just say that was the quiet period. ♥



*Marie-Anne Chidiac is a psychotherapist, freelance writer and proud mother of triplets. She lives with her husband Richard in Surrey, England and is a passionate fan of all things that come in threes.*



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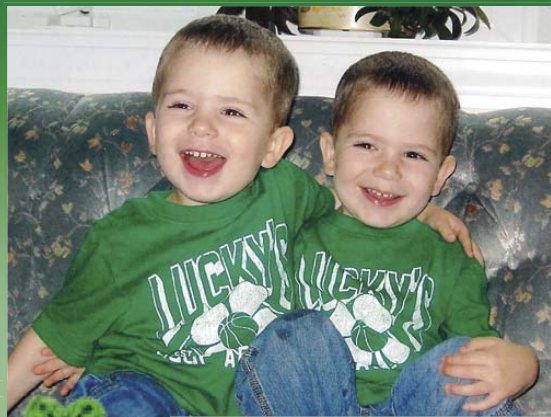
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# DOUBLE TAKES

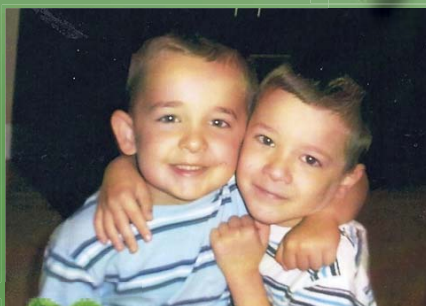
Can you guess whether the twins pictured on these pages are identical or fraternal? Send us your photos for the Double Takes section at least three months prior to publication. All photos sent to TWINS™ Magazine become the property of TWINS™ Magazine and will not be returned. Photos should be accompanied by a signed photo release form that can be downloaded by visiting [www.TwinsMagazine.com](http://www.TwinsMagazine.com) and by clicking on the Double Takes Photos button. By submitting your photos to TWINS™ Magazine via U.S. Mail or electronically you are releasing your rights to these photos for our use. Please note that we cannot use any professional photographs. On the back of your photos include an address label & phone number with your twins' names and ages along with their twin type (identical or fraternal). Send photographs to: TWINS™ Double Takes ATTN: TWINS™ Magazine, P.O. Box 271924, Fort Collins, CO 80527-1924.



1  
Evan & Owen  
2 ½ years  
Hamden, CT



4  
William & Samuel  
6 mos.  
Red Hook, NY



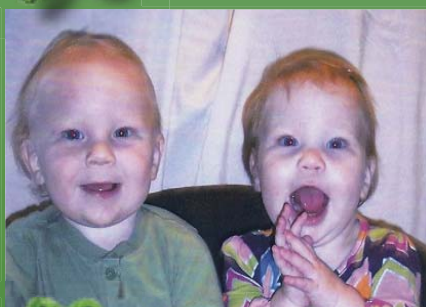
5  
Anthony & Nicholas  
5 years  
North Bellmore, NY



6  
Lauren & Lindsey  
15 mos.  
Colleyville, TX



10  
Isabel & Olivia  
2 years  
New Berlin, WI



11  
Logan & Lacey  
11 mos.  
Pulaski, WI



12  
Christopher & Joseph  
7 mos.  
West Chester, PA



16  
AJ and Michael  
3 years  
Staten Island, NY



17  
Madison & Austin  
6 years  
Chester County, PA

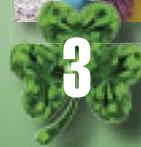


18  
Amelia & Aubrie  
18 mos.  
Plainfield, CT





**2** Matt & Abby  
11 mos.  
Commerce Twp., MI



**3** Katrina & Karmin  
3 ½ years  
Elkhorn, WI



**7** Kevin & Corey  
3 years  
Martinsburg, WV



**8** Kendra & Krista  
1 year  
Denver, PA



**9** Olivia & Samuel  
9 mos.  
La Crosse, WI



**13** Kelsey & Jack  
5 years  
Vacaville, CA



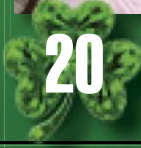
**14** Courtney & Erica  
Freemont, CA



**15** Jase & Declyn  
5 years  
Elma, WA



**19** James & Kennadi  
11 mos.  
Philadelphia, PA



**20** Ryan & Lily  
3 ½ mos.  
Mequon, WI

Based on Parental Reports.

1 - FR-BB	5 - FR-BB	9 - FR-BG	13 - FR-GG	17 - FR-BG
2 - FR-BG	6 - FR-GG	10 - ID-GG	14 - ID-GG	18 - ID-GG
3 - FR-GG	7 - ID-BB	11 - FR-BG	15 - FR-BG	19 - FR-GG
4 - FR-BB	8 - ID-GG	12 - ID-BB	16 - ID-BB	20 - FR-BG

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