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Identical boy twins, **Nicholas & Nathan Ferra**, age 9-months (*at the time of this photo.*) These adorable cuties live in Colorado with their parents.

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Nature -Vs- Nurture... Who is Happy?



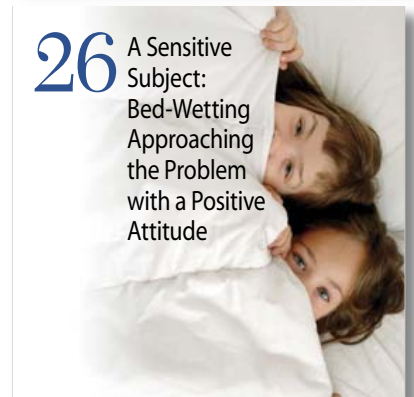
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A Sensitive Subject: Bed-Wetting Approaching the Problem with a Positive Attitude



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Mini-Feature: Low Cost Family Entertainment Solutions



Summer is finally here and that means much more time to spend with your kids, right? All this extra time also means much more time for us parents to have to figure out ways to keep them busy and safe while also enjoying all the fun these warm, sunny months bring! Inside this edition, we introduce a brand new column called 'Family Fun' and include fun activities for you to do with your twins. We introduce a new column called 'Family Fun' and include fun activities for you to do with your twins, like a fun way to celebrate July 4th with festive cupcakes as well as a few easy and fun no bake goodies that are wonderful for your young little chefs.



We also focus on ways for you to be a better listener to your twins—not always an easy task and explore the issue of how busy parents like you can enjoy one-on-one time with each child in our center-feature called 'Center of Attention'. I remember when my twin boys were toddlers and my husband and I would make a special point to take the boys on separate adventures so they could get used to being apart and we could enjoy the individual time with each one. Even if I would take one to the grocery store with me to 'help' it was nice for both of us to experience this special alone time and also gave my husband and other twin the opportunity to enjoy the same special time. Even when we added two more singletons to our family, we continue to make special one-on-one time 'a priority' with all four boys.

Another big focus this edition is offering tips parents can use to build self-esteem in your kids as well as ways to guide their behavior when they are toddlers and good strategies for resolving conflict with your pre-schoolers.

Summer is a great chance for you to try and slow your schedule down if possible and take time to be silly and make lasting memories for your children. It really doesn't matter if you go on a huge family vacation or pitch a tent in your backyard and make old-fashioned favorites like smores, your kids will remember the fact that you were there with them having fun. They may not remember what exactly you did or what you ate but they will have a lifelong memory of the valuable time you spent with them and that is something you (& them) will always cherish.

We hope you enjoy this digital online edition and be sure to look for your Summer print edition to arrive in your mailbox this July!

Sincerely,

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



12-year-old fraternal twins Nick & James last summer in Florida

TWINS™

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Father seeks advice when news of 2nd set of twins is on the way!

Hello TWINS™ Magazine,

My wife and I have twin daughters who turned 2 recently. In October, however, we were surprised to learn that my wife is pregnant. We were more than surprised to learn it is twins (again.) We've been feeling a little overwhelmed by the situation and the quickly-approaching due date. We do not know of any other couples who have two 2-year-olds and twin newborns or anyone who has had a similar experience. I guess I'm looking for some advice, if you have any to offer, beyond the realm of, "I feel sorry for you" or "Oh, you'll be fine." Establishing a routine is the key, I believe, but that could be tricky with four kids, two of whom are not even potty trained yet.

We realize we're "going to have our hands full," as many people have repeatedly (and with a hint of unintentional annoyingness) told us, but I think it would be nice to perhaps find some solace in expert tips on a variety of things, including how to help our 2-year-olds deal with the transition, the best ways for everyone to get some sleep and maybe some easy ways for Mom and Dad to keep their sanity. I'm pretty open to any suggestions at this point. I'll even settle for semi-expert advice and tips. Thank you for your time.

Kevin Ryden, a concerned and non-expert father from Olney, IL via email

Editor's Note: Dear Kevin: Wow, congratulations! That is fantastic news yet I'm sure you are feeling a bit overwhelmed. There are many, many of our readers that have been surprised by the news that they are having another set of twins. It's important for you to connect with other families that can truly relate to your challenges. Go to the TWINS™ Magazine Facebook fan page and post that you are seeking support and I'm sure you will get the help and advice from others that have or are going through the same exact situation. Keep us posted on how things are going, too!

Facebook Fans Love TWINS™ Magazine

Dear TWINS™ Magazine:

Twins Magazine has been a wonderful resource for me. Here are my little cuties, Cooper and Conner, are 15 months old now and it's been fun every step of the way!

Sheila Dunkin Wallbrown via Facebook



Dear TWINS:

Loving every minute of Twins Magazine! Here's our pair, Jasmine "Jazzy" and June "Junie", who are 11-months-old.

Francesca Howley via Facebook




Dear TWINS™ Magazine:


I've been with your magazine for what will be 18-19 years. You have saved (my life) and advised me plenty through my sons growing up and the different stages. (Thank You!)

Kimber Orchid Jones Gylr via Facebook





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Mom of twins starts innovative new business in San Diego!

Dear Editor:

I am a mom to four year old twin boys and a two year old boy. Yes, our lives are non-stop. Yes, I wish I had a bit more time for myself but I wouldn't trade three energetic, witty, funny, and often stubborn boys for anything! Last June, I was laid off from my job that allowed me to work from home and be there for my children. Before I lost my job, I secretly wished I had a job outside the home to find myself again. Now, I realize despite the challenges I love staying home with the kids and just being there.

I recently began a company called Travel Babees of San Diego. We provide baby equipment to families traveling to San Diego. I love the concept of our company and everything it offers our customers. I



love helping ease the stresses of travel with young children. I believe I would have traveled more when the twins were younger had I known this service was available. We just wanted to let other twin moms know about us (we need all the support we can get!) for those planning vacations to San Diego.

Very sincerely,
Genevieve
www.travelbabees.com

Editor's Note: Dear Genevieve, thank you for contacting us and letting us know about your new, innovative new business! We love supporting fellow parents of twins so keep us posted on your progress and we wish you all the very best in your new endeavor.

Writer thanks TWINS™ Magazine for including article on very important topic!

Dear Ms. Reed:

Thanks so much for publishing my article about Tracey Gerald and her twin Stacey in your spring 2010 print edition. Tracey has already touched so many lives... now that number will be multiplied exponentially.

Emilia Zsuzsanna Rak
Via Facebook

Editor's Note: Emilia: We really wanted to include your article on this topic since so many twins have suffered a loss of their twin and as parents, it is important for us to understand and appreciate this lifelong bond. Good luck to you and thanks again for submitting your piece to TWINS™ Magazine, we're glad we could run it in our last edition.



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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.



Dyson DC23 Turbinehead

An Investment for Families That Will Save Money

by Jocelyn Ramos Campbell

If you have children in your home, you understand the meaning of the word “messy”. Smashed bananas, crumbled Cheerios, and spilled fruit juice are all part of the fun daily routine of life with children. The floors of homes with families of multiples can seem to have a never ending sound to them. Ever step on a snail by accident? The crunch sound and slimy gunk on the bottom of your shoe was not a snail—it was one of the multiples who left their goldfish crackers and cereal bar on the floor. Needless to say, all homes need a quality vacuum to pick up life’s messes. The **Dyson DC23 Turbinehead** is not only a dependable vacuum for your home, but beneficial to your environment.

I had the opportunity to test a **Dyson DC23 Turbinehead** vacuum, recently. As in most homes across America, the vacuum is a household item that gets used on a daily basis. During the past decade, I have purchased various vacuums from major appliance distributors and have repaired each and everyone. Even before I was married with children, I still found myself at a vacuum repair shop replacing or fixing belts, filters, and bags. The cost of maintaining these vacuums were expensive and inconvenient when you have to leave your vacuum at the shop to be fixed. For families, especially those with multiples, these costly repairs are added expenses that are not productive to the family budget.

Dyson has a long standing reputation as revolutionizing the vacuum cleaner industry so I was eager to review the **DC23 Turbinehead**. It has a powerful suction due to the Level 3 Root Cyclone technology. Bagged vacuums can lose over a third of their suction and **DC23 Turbinehead** doesn’t use bags. The powerful suction could be felt as it quickly and efficiently picked up items from carpets, rugs, and hardwood floors. In most vacuums you

cannot see the brushes, but in the **DC23 Turbinehead** you can easily see and inspect them.

Worrying about carrying a heavy vacuum was not an issue with the **DC23 Turbinehead**. The **DC 23 Turbinehead** is portable and relatively lightweight. It was very easy to maneuver and clean the stairs as it sits on the stairs as you clean. The extension tube adjusts to any length as you safely clean stairs and not compromise safety while vacuuming a staircase.

Dyson vacuums are home and environment friendly. The **DC23 Turbinehead** is certified asthma and allergy friendly by the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America. Thanks to the HEPA & Bactisafe filter, air expelled from a Dyson has up to 150 times less bacteria and mold than the air you breathe. The HEPA filter is under a lifetime warranty. With a large handle, emptying out the dust from the canister is hygienic and quick to empty to ensure minimal contact with dirt.

The **DC23 Turbinehead** manufacturer’s suggested retail price is \$399.99. This price is affordable when you consider the frequent and expensive vacuum repairs and maintenance you pay with other vacuum brands. You will not have to keep paying for a lifetime worth of replacement bags, filter, belts, etc., and the added inconvenience of not having your vacuum at your disposal when it is away for repair. With a lifetime HEPA filter warranty and a 5 year warranty on the **DC23 Turbinehead**, it is really a one time investment for many years of excellent return.

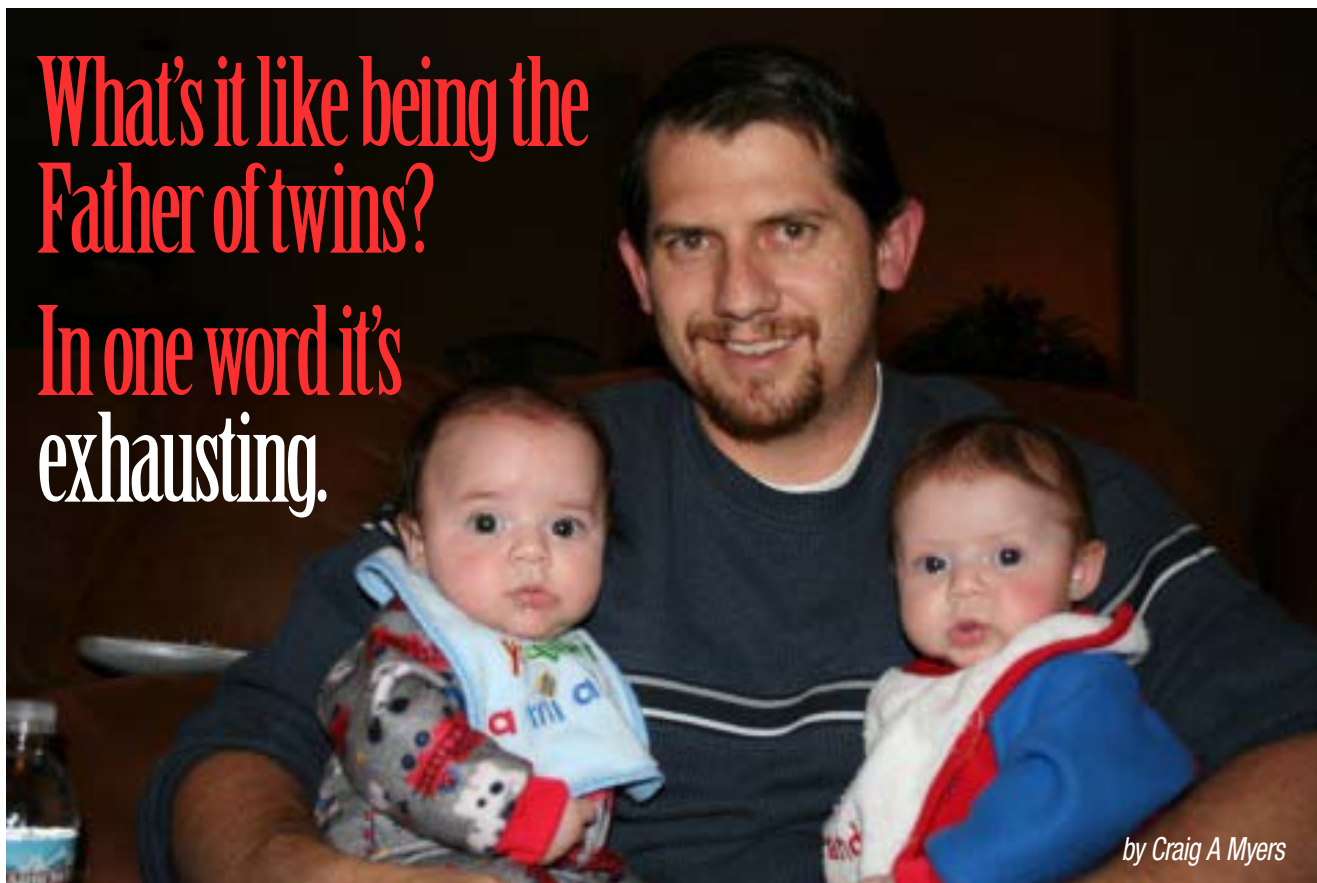
For More Information: Visit the **Dyson** website: <http://www.dyson.com> and the **Dyson DC23 Turbinehead** webpage: <http://www.dyson.com/store/product.asp?product=DC23-TURBINE-HEAD-US>



Jocelyn Ramos Campbell offers resources for parenting multiples and bilingual children. She is a mom to identical twin toddler boys and a pre-teen son and is a proud military wife. She has been a public relations executive and senior marketer for the federal government. As a Latin representative, she created bilingual content for federal clients, including, the U.S. Dept. of Transportation’s U.S.-Mexico border policies. Currently, she is the Orlando Parenting Multiples Examiner for Examiner.com and creator of Mami & The Multiples.

What's it like being the Father of twins?

In one word it's exhausting.



by Craig A Myers

Craig Myers is father of 8 month old fraternal twins

Now that the kids are just beginning to sleep through the night AGAIN, maybe sleep will now come in more than 3 hour increments. But then again we thought we had the sleep thing down pat, that was until runny noses and the common cold made an unannounced visit to the house. Used to be the only thing I had to worry about was what T.V. program I was going to watch, or what plans we could make for the weekend, now that the twins are here we don't make too many plans and T.V

viewing is typically limited to Sesame Street and Sid the Science Kid.

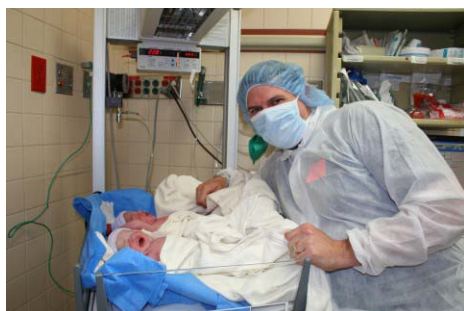
As for planning a day out, it's a logistical nightmare. The pick up and go attitude that I used to have is all but gone. There are bottles to

pack, diaper bags to stock, toys to stow, and the double stroller to load. Then getting the kids dressed, fed, changed, re-dressed and loaded in the van typically blows the entire morning and part of the afternoon. Usually after the kids are in the van they fall asleep during any drive that lasts more than 5 minutes, that quiet time is more than enough to make you want to pull over and rest your eyes, even if just a minute, but there is no rest for the weary.

Oh yeah the van, it looked cool in the dealership lot and has all the entertainment needed for the kids, but good ol' dad, yeah he only gets to drive it from point A to B and doesn't get to partake

in the viewing of a movie or catch up on some much needed shut eye, he's just the driver.

When we do arrive at our destination we start the load and unload process all over again! Typically I only want to make one trip in any given day because after all this work, then I'm ready to go home and watch Elmo and Abby... ♡





Do you know a fantastic father of twins/multiples?

Nominate your favorite dad of multiples for the:



Father of the Year Contest!

Here's how you nominate the dad in your life:

- 1) Write an essay (*no more than 500 words*) describing why you think the favorite dad in your life deserves this honor. Include things he does when parenting his multiples that makes him special and why he should win as well as his occupation, age, age of multiples and anything else you want to share about your fantastic father!
- 2) Submit your nomination essay with a photo of dad with his twins/multiples by **June 15, 2010** to contest@twinsmagazine.com;
- 3) Include your name, phone number and email address in case we need to contact you.



Here's what the winning Dad will receive:

- 1) The winning essay for the TWINS™ Magazine's Father of the Year will be published in the Summer 2010 Print edition of TWINS™ Magazine and featured on the home-page of our popular website the week of Father's Day;
- 2) The winner will receive a one year Print/Digital Combo Subscription to TWINS™ Magazine (\$39.95 value);
- 3) The winner will receive a check for \$100.00 from TWINS™ Magazine.



By submitting photos to TWINS Magazine for this contest, you release all rights to submitted photos and they become the full property of TWINS Magazine.





Predicting & Treating Preterm Labor

by Leslie Montgomery, R.N.

Being pregnant with multiples places even the healthiest woman at high risk for pregnancy complications. This makes it very important to see an obstetrician who has experience in dealing with high-risk pregnancies.

Happily, there are ways to treat the risk and all are helpful:

- Early diagnosis of multiples;
- Additional ultrasounds;
- Bed rest;
- Working outside the home;
- Exercise;
- Controlling stress levels;

Tocolytic drugs (which stop preterm labor contractions)

Discuss them all with your obstetrician on your initial visit. Get good, clear answers. While you're evaluating your OB, it is also important that you feel comfortable with the office staff. You may need them throughout your pregnancy.

Although even the best prenatal care and nutrition do not always prevent preterm labor, you can take steps to optimize your chances of getting full-term, healthy babies.

Leslie Montgomery, RN, BSN of Englewood, Colorado, specializes in educating expectant parent of multiples. She is a childbirth instructor, and the mother of boy/girl twins.

STAY CALM

Your best chance to prevent preterm labor contractions involves eating the right foods, drinking plenty of water, resting frequently during the day, and feeling for uterine contractions.

In recent years, medical researchers also have found that psychological factors also play a significant role in the onset of preterm labor. A 1992 Belgian study, for example, hypothesized that the failure to build a positive emotional relationship with your unborn babies could predispose you to preterm labor. Difficulties with the motherhood process could influence the outcome of pregnancy and ultimately the bonding process. The research could well be applicable to women pregnant with multiples, who already experience a whirl of heightened anxieties, stresses, fears, and excitements.

Researchers have invented still other tests to try to identify women predisposed to develop preterm labor. The first is a test for something called "fetal fibronectin" found in amniotic fluid and in fetal membranes, which helps attach fertilized eggs to a site in the uterus.

In normal pregnancies, fetal fibronectin can be found up until about 20 weeks, and then disappears. It reappears just before delivery. So if doctors find it between 22 and 34 weeks of gestation, they know preterm labor is more likely. In fact, there is an elevated risk of imminent delivery within 14 days after they collect the fluid sample.

Some of preterm labor's symptoms are lower back pain, pelvic pressure, menstrual-like cramping with or without diarrhea, change in the amount of vaginal discharge, and just not feeling quite right.

TESTS VARY

Testing the amniotic fluid is only one way to determine the risk of early delivery, and should be used in conjunction with other tests and patient symptoms.

Mammmary stimulation tests (MST) also help predict preterm delivery. Sometime between 24 and 32 weeks of gestation, the patient sits with an electronic fetal monitor on her abdomen to measure uterine contractions and the babies' heartbeat. She is then asked to stimulate one nipple through her clothing for two minutes, followed by a short rest period.



The test is “positive” if the stimulation provokes uterine contractions that last for 40 seconds or longer. In a recent study, a positive MST identified 84% of the patients who delivered prematurely. Of the patients who delivered at term, 94% had a negative MST.

Better yet, the mammary stimulation test is cost effective, readily available to physicians, and takes only about 20 minutes to complete. Do not perform this test at home, or without your doctor’s consent.

The new tests hold a lot of promise in helping prevent premature births.

COMMONLY PRESCRIBED DRUGS

If you do have preterm labor contractions, physicians can use one of a number of tocolytic drugs to treat you.

One of the most commonly prescribed drugs is called terbutaline, it is popular because it can be administered in a variety of different ways and is inexpensive. The most common side effect is that of feeling shaky because your heartbeat rises anywhere from 10 to 30 beats per minute above your normal rate. Some women have a headache for the first few days. This drug should not be used if you are diabetic. The side effects to your babies are minimal. Terbutaline is almost always given after the 20th week of pregnancy when the development of the babies is not likely to be affected. Occasionally, there is a slight increase in your babies’ heartbeat or blood sugar values, but these effects are temporary in most cases. If you have been treated within 24 hours of delivery, your pediatrician will most likely check your babies’ blood sugar levels.

Indocin, a medication that inhibits prostaglandins (a substance that can cause uterine contractions), has been shown to be effective in some people. It’s limits: it is only used on a short-term basis and not past 32 weeks gestation. Headache and nausea are common side effects.

Typically used for heart problems, Procardia can also be used to relax the uterine muscle, thus stopping contractions. Side effects may include dizziness, nausea, headache, or a severe lowering of blood pressure.

Lastly, magnesium sulfate is a drug that is given intravenously, and only in a hospital setting. It is a central nervous system depressant, so you feel very warm and flushed, have nausea initially, and a flu-like fatigue. The side effects to the babies are minimal, although they may have decreased muscle tone if born within 24 hours after it has been discontinued. That problem, however, is easily corrected.

Some people, of course, may suffer many more side effects from the tocolytic drugs, some of them quite serious. Never take yourself off a medication without first talking with your doctor. It is best to do everything you can to prevent preterm labor, and if these medications help to prolong your pregnancy, they will be well worth enduring the side effects. Remember, it is still very important to eat well while on these medications, so if you are having nausea or vomiting to the point that you are not eating, discuss this with your doctor. There may be an alternative. ♥

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Bringing HOME BABIES



Karen M. Trevor, former elementary school teacher, lives in Downers Grove, Illinois, with her five children, including 2-year-old twins.

by Karen M. Trevor

You've been planning this for months. You've gone through labor and delivery, agreed on names, pinched yourself to make sure it's all really happening, and now the only thing left is a huge dose of reality: bringing home those babies! The practical moment-to-moment details can be overwhelming.

- Attending to the basic baby functions of eating, sleeping, and crying;
- Managing your house;
- Feeding your relationship;
- Working.

Rest assured that, as you take care of your helpless, demanding infants, your lives are about to be completely overhauled. And remember: this is a wonderful thing!

In her book, *Having Twins*, Elizabeth Noble discussed the hardships of caring for two when you get home. She believes that postpartum depression is greater for mothers of twins, and 76% of twins' mothers reported being constantly exhausted. Ongoing fatigue and sleep deprivation can prolong the depression. To be better able to handle this rough period, you need to recognize what you are up against, get help, and establish a routine.

Initially, many people will offer their assistance. Be sure to take them up on it, but try to make it on your terms. Free help is best, but you may want to consider a mother's helper or

even a part-time arrangement. Many new moms stubbornly resist accepting help; Elizabeth Friedrich and Cherry Rowland in *The Parent's Guide to Raising Twins* say it is because they want to prove they can cope without it. But, in the long run, denying your limitations and trying to be supermom burns you out quickly.

FEEDINGS TAKE FOREVER

Feeding my babies seemed to take up the bulk of my day. At 20 minutes of feeding per baby, repeated about every three hours, you'll begin to understand why. While breastfeeding is encouraged and has met with a great many successes, I chose to bottle feed. I used the more convenient (albeit more expensive) ready-to-feed formula the first few weeks. Prepare at least six bottles per baby every evening so there is always one handy during the next day. Ask your pediatrician or the hospital nursery if the babies were using preemie nipples, which require less sucking effort and make feeding easier.

Bottle feeding enabled me to enlist help from others, especially dad at those night-time feedings. My husband and I would "claim a baby" every evening before we went to sleep. We quickly learned to recognize each baby's cry. If "your" baby woke up, you fed her. If "his" baby awakened, you nudged your husband, said a quick "thank you," and rolled over until it was your turn. This system seemed to work well for us

because the babies would eat at different times, so one person was not constantly sleepless.

Keeping the 3 am feedings as fast as possible was essential. We kept the lights dim, spoke softly, and cuddled them back to sleep. My babies initially slept in drawstring nightgowns for easy changes, too. And, when possible, we changed them before the feeding so as not to disturb their full-tummy slumber. The procedures helped set the night-time routine apart from the day-time feedings, which involved a lot more interaction and stimulation.

When on your own with two crying, hungry babies, a pacifier may help one for a while so you can feed the other. The squeaky wheel theory applies here, with the noisiest one often getting fed first. You can also feed two at once by putting them both in bouncy chairs or swing seats, facing you. Inevitably, while I was burping one, the other would spit up before I could get her burped. Keep cloth diapers or other types of shoulder rags in several rooms of the house.

Also, be sure to keep a record of which baby ate how much and at what time. You'll need to know how much they are eating and when to expect the next feeding. You will think you'll remember this, but you won't. Write it down.

SLEEP? A LEARNED SKILL

For the first six weeks, my daughters slept in bassinets in our room. Borrow them if you can because the babies don't use them for long. While having the babies nearby in bassinets was comforting for us because we could hear them softly breathing, it also tended to make me a light sleeper. I awoke at every gurgle and snore.

When we moved them to their own room down the hall, I kept a monitor in my room for a while, ready to bolt to their side at the slightest provocation. But it turned out there was no problem hearing those 3 am wails, and after giving up the monitor, we tended to get some much-needed sleep in between the crying.

I put the girls in separate cribs on opposite sides of the room, although many people recommend putting them in the same crib to provide some of the ongoing intimacy of the womb experience. Others recommend separate rooms to establish a sleeping experience! One baby tended to wake the other. We always tried to whisk the noisy one out before her sister awakened, with limited success. I also would move a bassinet downstairs or use a layette swing for daytime naps. I tried to use the crib mainly for night-time sleep, hoping to set it apart from naps, as well as for letting them get used to the not-so-quiet of the household by being downstairs most of the day.

After a few weeks, the babies' increased awake time gave us the opportunity to establish more routines. Routines tend to give you a bit of control amid all the chaos and get you through the basics. I would try to feed the girls one after the other; then play for a while, stimulating them with mobiles, rattles, or stuffed toys to look at, and then keep them awake for lengthening times during the day. I found a baby swing to be essential, and would hang toys from them to swat or look at. My daytime activity patterns started to take shape when they were seven to eight weeks old, and settled into routines towards three months.

BE READY FOR WAILS

Noble notes that a chorus of wailing babies is much rougher on the nerves than that of a solo infant... what an understatement!

When both babies are crying and it's not a feeding issue, there are a few comforting techniques. You can hold one on each shoulder, although it takes some getting used to and won't work if they start thrashing about. You can lay them across your lap, one on each thigh, facing up so they can see your face and hear your comforting voice. Or you can put one in a Snuggli device and hold the other, or use two Snuggli's criss-crossed on your chest.

Anticipating your babies' needs helps to cut down on crying time, too. Have that bottle ready to go when you know they're about to awaken. A change of scenery also seems to help everyone. Go for a car ride or walk. Especially with a colicky baby, take any break you can get, if only for your own sanity. In extremely desperate situations, it's perfectly all right to close the door and take a breather. You'll be much better able to calm them when you yourself are calm. I recall struggling to get the girls into snowsuits and car seats while howling the whole time, fastening them in the van, closing the door and just standing in the garage breathing deeply as I gathered my wits.

GETTING OTHER WORK DONE

The wonderful adage "sleep when the babies sleep" sounds great, but isn't completely practical. I found it difficult to relax, as exhausted as I was, when I knew the floor was sticky, the laundry piled up, or the bills needed paying. Instead, I would whip through the house like a maniac during nap times. My aim: de-clutter the place. Making it sparkling clean often was not possible. With this done, I found it easier to get the most from a 30-minute catnap.

The amount of laundry will be overwhelming. Accept a lot of hand-me-downs for extras, and plan on doing at least a load of baby clothes every day. Kids are good helpers at folding baby t-shirts and jammies, so delegate this job if you can. I also found cheap cleaning help twice a month temporarily for a more thorough toilet-bowl-and-tub-scouring cleaning. Shower and dress every morning, you will need the psychological boost it will give you.

And make your bed. With an exhausting day behind you, crawling into a made bed may be the greatest domestic accomplishment of the day. Take what you can get!

Most importantly, seize all the opportunities for bonding, playing with and getting to know your new ones. Do not hurry through the activities. Always talk to the babies. Make eye contact as often as you can. Lay them on a blanket together while you talk to each of them. Touch them. Make play and enjoyment the priority of your day. Let the vacuuming wait.

FINAL WORDS OF WISDOM

Rely on your instincts and trust yourself. You can do this. The hectic, constant pace of the first few weeks will slow down, and you will adjust. You really will look back on this time and wonder how you got through it, and you'll feel good knowing you did it and did it well. ♥



Guiding Behavior

by Janet Gonzalez-Mena

Janet Gonzales-Mena, of Napa, California, teaches early childhood education at Napa Valley College. She is author of the book **Dragon Mom**, and the mother of five children.

HAS THIS EVER HAPPENED IN YOUR HOUSE?

Michael and Brianna, age 2, are struggling over a stuffed bear. Each has a firm grip on a leg, and the two are engaged in a fierce tug-of-war. Finally Brianna pulls the toy out of Michael's hands.

He sits back hard on his padded bottom

and begins to screech at the top of his lungs. This is the time you arrive on the scene. What do you do?

TACTIC ONE: "THE JUDGE APPROACH"

The parent arrives as a judge to settle the argument. But this is no trial, so instead of examining evidence he or she makes a quick decision based on what was seen or what was imagined. "Michael had it first, Brianna. Give it back to him" Brianna runs the other way holding the bear against her tightly. "Make me," she seems to be saying by her actions. Michael screams louder. The parent gets mad now. "Young lady, you get back here right now." Brianna disappears down the hall.

The parent tries to comfort Michael, then storms down the hall to remove the bear, pry it out of Brianna's hands if necessary. The parent returns, hands Michael the bear, and Brianna can be heard screaming in the distance. Michael holds the bear for a fraction of a second, drops it and then is off to find something more interesting with which to play. End of scene.

Michael didn't want the bear after he finally got it. He's happy now to go play. On the other hand, Brianna is furious. You can be certain that she'll be back to hassle Michael. This scene probably won't end until nap time.

TACTIC TWO: "THE QUICK SOLUTION APPROACH"

The mother gets up from the desk, pulled to the scene by Michael's screams. She's busy paying bills, and in a hurry to settle this. She takes the bear from Brianna, puts it on a high shelf and says in a firm voice, "If you two can't share the bear, neither of you can play with it." As she goes back to paying the



bills, she notices that Michael has pulled a chair over to the bookcase. She removes the chair, puts the bear in a locked cupboard and sits back down to the bills. Five minutes later the two are tussling over a toy telephone. What's a parent to do?

TACTIC THREE: "THE PROBLEM-SOLVING APPROACH"

Consider this third tactic: The problem-solving approach. The mother moves over to be close to her squabbling twins before the screaming starts. She comes not as a judge or referee but as sports announcer. She crouches at their eye level and says calmly, "You both want that bear very much!" There is no hint of judgment in her voice.

Michael gives way, lands on his seat and begins to scream. He's not hurt, just unhappy. Still calm, the mother says "Brianna has the bear now. You don't like that!" She doesn't do anything. She stays close by knowing that Michael might get up off the floor and hit Brianna. She won't let that happen. She'll use words backed up by action to prevent any violence. He doesn't get up, but sits crying. His screams subside to sobs. Brianna stands watching him.

The mother says to Brianna, "Michael is unhappy because he doesn't have the bear." She waits. She has presented the problem, acknowledged the feelings and is going to let the children solve the problem.

OUTCOMES OF THE "PROBLEM-SOLVING APPROACH"

The happiest solution is that Brianna

- Gives Michael the bear;
- Gives Michael another toy; or
- Goes and gets Michael's blanket and pats him, trying to comfort him.

It doesn't always happen that way, but sometimes it does. Maybe Brianna doesn't show any empathy toward Michael. After all, she's only two. Understanding the feelings of another is difficult at this age, though some twins have an advantage over singletons when it comes to felling closely connected.

Let's say that Brianna starts playing with the bear and Michael continues to sob. The mother doesn't say anything, although she's still available. Michael crawls over to her



and reaches up one arm. She picks him up. In the meantime Brianna has gone on to play tea party, sipping pretend liquid from a small plastic cup. The bear lies abandoned. Michael glances at it, and then goes to get a teacup. There are plenty of tea cups. The squabble is over.

ADVANTAGES OF THE PROBLEM-SOLVING APPROACH

See the difference between acknowledging feelings and waiting for the children to solve the problem themselves. They always do, either by solving it directly or by abandoning it. Many problems just go away if the adult doesn't interfere too much.

Of course, you can't just leave 2-year-olds to work everything out all on their own. They'll get too physical and hurt each other. The mother was ready to stop things if damage to children or property threatened to occur. She'd use protective measures, but she would still let them solve the problem. Sometimes solving the problem means holding the children apart until they calm down and quit trying to tear each other apart.

TACTIC FOUR: TIME OUT

Time out isn't necessarily a separate tactic, but can be one part of a problem-solving approach. Used by itself or as a punishment, however, doesn't work. Time out works fine when it is what the child – rather than what the parent – needs. If a

child is out of control and can't calm down, maybe he needs to be removed from the situation. When he is back to himself again, then you can get the two back together. If there is still a problem, let them work on solving it. Putting a toddler in time out away from your sight is risky. Many a wall has been scribbled on because an out-of-control child found a crayon while in time out. Twins in time out together away from your sight is even more risky. No telling what they might do to each other or to the room.

Using time out as a punishment causes resentment and perhaps even a lowering of self-esteem. Time out doesn't teach problem solving or how to get along with others. Time out should only be used when the child needs a breather to settle down. In the example above, there was no need for time out for either child.

The best thing about practicing problem solving with a nurturing adult right there is that they gain a valuable skill. Later in life, when the temptation is to do violence, they are more likely to try to solve the problem peacefully first. Even in the midst of an ugly argument, saying "We have a disagreement, let's talk about what we can do," can make a big difference.

Imagine if everyone had good problem-solving skills and used them! It's not the only solution to violence in the world, but it is one solution. The best thing of all is that using a problem-solving approach isn't that hard and you can start early. Toddlers are the perfect age to begin learning about the feelings and perspectives of others. ♥



PRESCHOOL

Resolving Conflict with your Twins

Kathy Wexler, M.A., is a marriage, family and child counselor with the Phillips Graduate Institute in Encino, California, and the mother of two boys



by Katherine Wexler

Arguing and conflict are a normal part of family life. If your twins said, "Yes, Mommy," and raced to comply with every parental request, you'd probably reach for the thermometer! And with two in the playroom, hassles between your children are inevitable. Sometimes it's hard to choose the best way to settle a struggle: Should you say, "I'm the parent, so just do it my way," or should you explain yourself, and maybe get hooked into an unmanageable debate about why and whether your decision is the right one?

Generally, discussion helps your children develop their thinking and problem-solving skills. And they're ready now to move in that direction. When they were toddlers, distracting

them from conflict often worked. For instance, if one of them wanted a toy that the other was using, presenting another attractive choice avoided a struggle.

At this age, however, distraction is not a good conflict resolution strategy. As preschoolers, they need to learn how to compromise, take turns, make choices, and resolve conflict more independently. Now they want to know the "why" of everything, and that includes rules and limits. Preschoolers need to explore cause and effect, what is "fair," and how decisions are made. So when you take the "I'm the boss" position, you're passing up a learning opportunity for your little ones. Whenever possible, explain why we have to take turns, or save

sweets until after a meal, or keep the paint on the paper instead of the wall. Even better, ask them to explain the reasons to you. Their logic may surprise you!

And if it's an argument with a decision to be made, encourage your children to present their point of view. Remember, debating done right is a useful skill. To debate, you have to understand general principles, assemble your evidence, and convince your listeners that your point has more going for it. Your preschoolers are just beginning to have the words and the logical thinking ability to do this kind of reasoning, and its good "mental exercise."

Needless to say there'll be many times, especially when health and safety are involved, when explanations take too long, and debating a decision is the wrong way to go. Here's where "the boss" comes in. It helps to have a tone of voice or a look on your face that tells your children immediately that this issue is non-negotiable. Things like hitting or scratching or pushing aren't up for debate, they're just not OK. Usually it doesn't even matter why one twin pushed the other, or who started it. The behavior is wrong and has to stop. Here's where your twins can learn more about cause and effect: the consequences of fighting, for example, should be clear and unvarying. Time out for both combatants is often a good plan.

Sometimes "I'm the boss" actually is a relief for both parent and children. If you feel the argument is getting too hot, and the struggle has become more important than whatever you're arguing about, then it's time to become the authority: "I can tell that you each want to win more than you want to solve the problem. There are too many words, and you are not listening to each other. So I'm going to choose for you."

Experts have researched three common parenting styles: authoritarian (the basic I'm-the-boss position), authoritative (set limits, but allows for discussion) and permissive (sets almost no limits). You don't have to be an expert to guess that the moderate, authoritative style wins out in the long run, producing successful young adults who feel good about themselves, both taking initiative and accepting authority appropriately. So the goal is to be authoritative when your preschoolers are in fights, either with each other or with you. That means deciding how and when to discuss and debate. ♥

WAYS TO BUILD YOUR CHILDREN'S DEBATING SKILLS

1. Ask them to explain: "How did you figure that out?" or "Tell me more about why you think this plan will work?"
2. Help them keep track of their ideas or reasons. A debate is a great opportunity to show your children how listing pros and cons work in a decision-making process. Try printing their words on a large sheet of paper or have them draw pictures to represent their ideas.
3. Help them empathize with the other person. Children at this age are ready to have their self-centeredness challenged a bit: "What would happen if I let you take all the clothes off of Caroline's doll?" "Of you always get to choose the cartoon you watch, how is your brother going to feel?"
4. Trust your children's competence: "I know you can solve this problem. You know the rules, so figure out what the best thing to do is, and tell me what you've decided."
5. Support win-win thinking: "How can we all get at least some of what we want?" The best way to answer this kind of question is by demonstration. When you are in a minor argument with another adult, show your children how compromise can make everyone feel like a winner.

DECIDING HOW TO DECIDE

1. Can you offer a choice? Sometimes the option isn't open. You need to be clear with your children whether or not they can have input. Transitions from one activity to another are often a situation where there is no room for debate. Bath, meal, and bed times are facts, not open to argument.
2. Can you frame the debate in terms they can understand? For example, you might want to include your daughters in a decision of which preschool they're going to attend. Don't ask, "Which school would you like to go to?" That's far too abstract for their developmental state. Instead, ask specifically what they liked and didn't like about a school they've recently visited. Encourage each child to offer her own thoughts, rather than looking for agreement right away.
3. Can you lay out a decision-making process that fits their sense of what's fair? For example, the endless argument about who gets the first turn with something desirable can be decided by tossing a coin. It's quick, and they're old enough now to understand how objective it is.
4. Can you stay out of the conflict? If it's between the children, you need to set up a system for them to use, then let them handle it alone, unless you child repeatedly takes advantage of the other. Even identical twins will vary in assertiveness and verbal skills. Does one of your children seem to be a better arguer than the other? You may need to help the quieter child find a way not to get bull-dozed into submission every time there's a fight. You might require the "pushier" child to convince his twin, not you, and prompt the quieter child if he caves in without trying to be heard.

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5 Tips for Confronting Bully-ism

by Dr. Rick Niece

The street stretching in front of my office on campus serves as a bus stop for local school students. Pickup days gather a diverse crowd of youngsters. The other morning, a police car was parked beside the bus. A benign interloper, I watched

intently as two unsmiling officers spoke to attentive, fear-frozen little faces inside the bus. Curious, I waited before walking to my office to ask the policemen what had happened. They shook their heads in quiet frustration before one responded to my question.

"Several parents have reported incidents of bullying on this bus and at the elementary school. We were asked to speak to the students, to give them a lecture. I guess that's our job." In light of this episode and some other ugly incidents on the national scene, I offer five recommendations for curbing bullying.

1. Speak Out

Bullying is not acceptable. As adults, we need to impress on children that bullying and making fun of others will not be tolerated. To put it simply, it is wrong.

2. Teach Respect

Children crave role models, big people to emulate. Grown-ups do not merely set the standard - we are the standard - and our behavior is often modeled. We are the ones

responsible for teaching children the importance of respecting others, emphasizing that respect is extended even to those we do not care for. We teach respect by being a model of respect ourselves. If we are not, good lessons go unlearned.

3. Remember Civility

We are surrounded by hate language. So are our children. Hate language is ubiquitous: at school, during athletic events, around the neighborhood, on talk radio and television, in daily conversations. The malevolent message is that if you disagree with me, I have the unconditional right to talk you down, no matter how vile my words may be and no matter how silly the disagreement. All the while, we forget that children are listening.

Remember the meaning of civility, then practice being civil. If we are caught off guard by someone's awful actions or when we begin to flare-up during our angriest moments, let's respond civilly. I think civility is as contagious as contemptuousness.

4. Understand the Individual

Encourage children to make friends with a person who is different than they are. Knowing someone on a personal level increases awareness while decreasing misperception. When I was 9 years old, I met my soon-to-be best friend: a boy with very severe cerebral palsy who was on my paper route. Initially, I was afraid to meet Bernie — who knows why young boys fear what they fear — and our first meeting was a disaster. That evening, my father offered advice that has stayed with me a lifetime: Focus on making people comfortable with you, rather than fixating on your discomfort with them.

5. Make a Difference

Can we stop all bullying? I am not that naïve nor can I think that big. I can, however, make a difference on the micro-level that is my own backyard. When I was a high school English teacher, I did not always agree with my principal or the inflexible district-wide policies. I certainly was not a rebel, but when I closed my classroom door and was alone with the students, I was in charge of that domain. That is where I made a difference.

We each exert influence in our domains, our personal arenas — the classrooms, the workplace, our family, a circle of friends, church, even a college campus. We can each make a difference in our own backyards, yards that reach out to connect with others. We can each build a bully pulpit, stand atop it, and speak out against the acts of bully pummel. We are the voices of respect and the keepers of tolerance. We are the teachers and the role models. ♥

Rick D. Niece, Ph.D., author of "The Side-Yard Superhero," currently serves as president for the University of the Ozarks in Clarksville, Arkansas. Along with his wife, Sherée, he works to provide intellectual and cultural enrichment for the 650 students at the university, preparing them for graduate school and professional employment success while establishing lifelong values. For more information, please visit www.RickNiece.com.



Education Experts Ask: Who's Really to Blame for Bullying?

As *PEOPLE* magazine printed its third story about Phoebe Prince, the teenager who took her own life after being bullied at South Hadley High School, the community came down hard on the administrators of the Massachusetts public school and called for their resignations. New information indicates that the 15-year-old Prince, who had recently moved from Ireland, went to an administrator before her January 14 suicide and asked permission to go home. She stated that she was afraid of being beat up by bullies. Despite the concerns she voiced, the response was that she had to stay in school.

Detractors claim that the school administration did not provide the leadership to create a safe environment for students. Others claim that staffers were aware of the bullying and that they could have 'nipped it in the bud.'

"We all want to find the source of blame in terribly heartbreaking situations like this one," says Malcolm Gauld, president of Hyde Schools, a network of prep and charter schools focused on character education and leadership development. "But it's not as easy as focusing on an isolated case."

Unfortunately, what happened to Phoebe was not uncommon. In fact, her experience supports these troubling statistics from parentingbook.com:

- 160,000 children miss school every day due to fear of attack or intimidation by other students.
- 85 percent of girls and 76 percent of boys have been sexually harassed in some form, and only 18 percent of those incidents were perpetrated by an adult.
- One in seven students is either a bully or a victim.
- 71 percent of students report incidents of bullying as a problem at their school.

Bullying is reaching epidemic levels in the American school systems. Teachers and schools are taking the heat right now for unchecked bullying — but what about parents and the home where the birth of a

bully begins, the media, local community, and the individuals who bully?

Gauld feels that even if we manage to install so many controls that we succeed in stopping blatant bullying, there are two risks that we may inadvertently fuel:

- (1) We may drive the bullying underground (or onto the web) where things get especially nasty; or
- (2) We run the risk that our children will grow up ill-prepared to handle the many challenges they will face as adults when we are no longer hovering like helicopters to protect them.

"Conversely, the balance may tip to the other side," says Gauld. "Kids may not want to tell their parents or other adults about being bullied. They may feel ashamed, initially think they can handle it on their own, or worry their parents will make matters worse for them when they have to face the bullies back at school."

From his 30+ years working with educators, parents, and their families at the successful schools he leads, Gauld believes any parent or school can stop bullying and, in most cases, prevent it. As opposed to punitive actions in response to bullying, Gauld contends that the answer to its demise rests with the child's primary influencers in life—the adults—parents, teachers, coaches, mentors.

"What we pay attention to is what we reinforce in our homes, schools, and athletic arenas," says Gauld. "Adults who recognize that it is possible to guide children in creating a positive peer culture, where principles are at the core of relationships and concern runs far deeper than for just oneself or ones own and is extended to others understand this very basic concept. Most adults — without even knowing it — are, at best, paying this concept lip service. An honest and positive school and home environment where kids and family members look out for each other is possible," says Gauld. "The kids can't do it by themselves. We cannot do it for them. But we can form a partnership with communities and schools that get it done." ♥

FIRST STEPS TO PREVENT BULLYING

Gauld backs his assertions with what he calls "first steps" adults should take to create an environment where serious issues such as bullying cannot thrive:

1. Raise the issues we often avoid in our daily interactions. There is no need to wait for bullying, cheating, disrespect to occur. Discuss these issues and the expectations we have of one another in order to be members of a home or community.
2. Clearly define the values that are important in the environment you are trying to create. Talk about them; provide opportunities for discussing how we use them or have failed to use them in our daily lives.
3. Never kid a kid. Regardless of whether a child can figure out the quadratic equation we want them to solve, they will never misread our true expectations of them. They simply establish their priorities in accordance with ours.
4. Prioritize attitude over aptitude, effort over ability, character over talent. Really! Overhaul, or better yet, flat-out junk what you've got and begin anew with fresh priorities.





SUMMER CAMP FACTS!

What you need to know

Selecting and finding the right camp for your twins can be a challenge. Consider the following information when choosing the very best summer camp option for your family:

6 TIPS ON SELECTING THE RIGHT SUMMER CAMP FOR YOUR TWINS

Summer is almost here, and selecting the right summer camp for your twins can be a daunting and a time consuming task. Some parents even hire third-party consultants to assist in the selection process. In case a consultant sounds a bit excessive for your budget, David Ettenberg, co-owner of Camp Shane recommends parents consider the following six factors before signing up for any camp:

1. The Staff. What is the camp's hiring procedures? Do they check references and run complete background checks? Also - many camps hire teens as junior counselors, which can be a wonderful experience for all, but it can cause problems if the camp relies too heavily on this cheaper workforce. It is important that a number of experienced adult staff members are on hand to deal with any problems that may arise. Also, ask to speak to the camp's director, he or she sets the tone for absolutely everything and will be able to give you an immediate sense of the camp's culture.

2. Referrals. Get them, but get meaningful ones. Don't make the common mistake of relying solely on the names offered to you by the camp—these are typically hand-selected and will undoubtedly

be positive. Instead, try to get five names of families that live within 20 minutes from you to ensure a more random sampling. It's ideal if you can ask someone you know whose child has attended the camp. If you don't know anyone personally, ask around in your community, chances are you'll find people.

3. Healthy Atmosphere. If possible, try to visit the camp during the summer while in session to ensure there is an active, "happy" atmosphere, with a non-clicky and non-threatening environment. It should be a place where your twins can find strong support and make lifelong friends. Also, ask about the kind of food that is served at the camp—make sure they provide healthy, balanced meal options. You would be shocked to see what's on the menus at some "reputable" camps.

4. Marketing Materials. Read all marketing materials carefully. If they are sloppy and unimpressive it may reflect how they run the camp. On the flipside, beware of materials that appear super-slick; a surprising number of camps are now owned by corporations or investors who produce the marketing materials but have zero contact with your kids. Look for realistic reflections of the camp and specific information that will give you insight to determine if the camp's philosophy, people and procedures will create the best experience for your child. Also, make sure to read the fine print; some weight-loss camps in particular advertise insurance reimbursements – but check with your particular carrier, as this is often times not the case.

5. The Facilities. Are the buildings in good repair? Has everything been freshly painted? Has the grass been cut? Chances are if they don't take care of the facility, they won't do such a good job with your children.

6. Kid's Choice. Make sure to keep your twins involved with the decision-making process. They need to be comfortable with the camp, or the experience won't be optimal. Also, do your children want to focus in on a special skill or sport? Be sure to consider his or her specific interests and needs. State-of-the-art athletic fields are great but they won't do anything for a kid who loves music.

"Taking time to research summer camps is the key to ensuring a fun, safe, and enriching environment for your children - but it doesn't have to be overwhelming," says David. "By focusing your search based on a few key factors and by asking the right questions, you can easily find a great match that suits your children's particular needs."

CAMP COSTS – WHAT FAMILIES NEED TO KNOW

Camp is an important part of childhood, and has helped generations of children develop the life skills needed to become successful adults. Families considering a camp experience may be concerned about the cost of this life changing opportunity. It's important for these families to know that, even in today's economic climate, camp is affordable. Yes, affordable.

There is a camp for every child, and just about every budget. Camp fees range from less than \$100 per week to \$800 or more per week. And, for families who are looking to keep camp budget-friendly, there are several options. The American Camp Association® (ACA) offers the following tips:

Assistance offered from camps:

- Camps offer special discounts—for everything from early registration, full-season, or multiple enrollments from one family.
- Many camps offer partial or total scholarships and financial assistance. Parents shouldn't assume their income doesn't qualify.
- Some camps offer payment plans or structured payment schedules, allowing families to break camp fees into smaller pieces.
- It's important for families to talk to camp directors about special pricing options and financial assistance.

Assistance offered from the U.S. government:

- Parents should inquire into whether the camp participates in income-eligible subsidy programs, for instance through Title XX.
- A Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account allows parents to be reimbursed on a pre-tax basis for child care or adult dependent care expenses for qualified dependents that are necessary to allow parents to work, look for work, or to attend school full time. Visit the FSA Feds Web site for more information.
- In certain circumstances, day care expenses, including transportation by a care provider, may be considered dependent care services and paid with pre-tax dollars. Visit the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) for more information.
- Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit: The IRS allows an income tax credit of up to \$6,000 of dependent care expenses if you have two or more dependents (up to \$3,000 for one dependent). The amount of the credit is based on your adjusted gross income and applies only to your federal taxes. This applies to qualifying day camp expenses as well. Visit the FSA Feds Web site for more information.

FUN IN THE SUN— SUN PROTECTION STRATEGIES



Summer provides ample opportunities for children and youth to play in the fresh air and discover the great outdoors. There is much fun to be had in the sun, but it's important to remember sun safety. The American Camp Association® (ACA) provides tips from Linda Ebner Erceg, R.N., M.S.,

P.H.N., and executive director of the Association of Camp Nurses, to help families brush up on sun safety:

- ☀ Children should wear a sunscreen for minimum protection. Most experts recommend SPF 30, however some professionals do recommend using SPF with minimum coverage of 45.
- ☀ Provide your child with clothing options that protect from harmful rays:
 - Wear a hat with at least a four-inch brim that circles the head or a flap that covers the neck.
 - Use UV-rated sunglasses. Overexposure to UV rays may cause glaucoma.
 - Remind your child to put sunscreen on his or her torso, too!
- ☀ Cloudy days are not exempt. Families should remember to wear sunscreen and take precautions even when the sun isn't shining brightly.
- ☀ Learn to recognize the signs of melanoma by using this ABCD Watch:
 - Asymmetry — if folded in half, the skin mark doesn't match or is unequal in shape.
 - Border — the area has a scalloped or poorly circumscribed border.
 - Color Varies — the area has changed color or varies from one area to another. There may be shades of brown and black, or even red or blue.
 - Diameter — the area is larger than six millimeters (larger than the diameter of a pencil's eraser).

Sun overexposure doesn't have to put a damper on summer fun! Remember: Sunburn is completely preventable. Taking preventative measures will help you and your children have a safe and happy summer outdoors.

For more tips and information on seeking a summer camp or on health and safety, families can visit www.CampParents.org, ACA's family resource site. Families can search ACA's Find a Camp database, which allows families to look for a camp based on region, activity, cultural focus, budget, session length, and much more! In addition, families can follow ACA on Facebook and Twitter for helpful hints and camp information. ♥

About ACA

The American Camp Association® (ACA) works to preserve, promote, and enhance the camp experience for children and adults. ACA-Accredited® camp programs ensure that children are provided with a diversity of educational and developmentally challenging learning opportunities. There are over 2,400 ACA-accredited camps that meet up to 300 health and safety standards. For more information, visit www.ACACamps.org.

How to be a Better LISTENER to your TWINS

By Alice M. Vollmar

"I discovered that I never listened to my kids before. I'd wait for them to finish talking so I could say what I had to say," wrote one of the coauthors of *How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk*, by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish.

Like that author/parent, many multiples' parents are surprised and dismayed to discover that we don't actually listen to our children even when we thought that we were. Our listening habits are shaped early in our lives by the people around us. Experts say

that most people listen as they were listened to – or not listened to – as children.

But the results of good listening are hard to overestimate. "Taking turns comes naturally to my twins," said Linda Robinson, mother of fraternal girls, Elizabeth and Alexandra, 4. "They are used to taking turns with other things, so one twin just waits. They know it's going to be fair and that each will get her turn. I've also trained them to say, 'Excuse me,' when I'm busy and they want to talk to



me. They know that when they say that, I will take time to listen, no matter what.”

Like Robinson, Melanie Tuininga, with identical twins Katie and Kelly, 4, and singleton Emily, 7, established an interrupt rule: “When I am on the telephone or involved in something and a child wants attention, she places her hand on my hip. I respond by covering her hand with mine and look at her. Then she knows I will listen as soon as I can.”

Teaching such patience, however, requires first that parents know what kind of listeners they are. In the book *Listening: The Forgotten Skill*, Madelyn Burley-Allen identifies three kinds.

Level One: An empathetic listener who hears “from the heart” and refrains from judging and interrupting.

Level Two: Listeners are detached; they hear words but fail to catch the speaker’s intent or feelings.

Level Three: This listener only listens in spurts and is somewhat aware of the speaker but mainly pays attention to himself and listens only enough to get a chance to talk.

Alas, although well-intentioned, we parents often fall into levels two (listening while we read the newspaper) and three (jumping in with corrections, advice and solutions).

WHY LISTENING MATTERS

Half-hearted listening conveys the message that the child is not worth listening to, Burley-Allen contends. The all-knowing-fixer listener implies that the child is incapable of handling his own life situations that he’s somehow lacking. Level three, ego-centered listening also robs a child of talking out a situation and figuring out what to do about it. In contrast, empathetic listening helps a child feel accepted, worthwhile and competent, and allows her to develop skills in handling feelings and solving problems. It’s also a primary way to raise a child’s self-esteem.

In *How to Talk So Kids Will Listen*, Mazlish and Faber offer easy tips for listening and responding empathetically to a child’s expression of feelings:

- 1) Give the child your full attention
- 2) Respond with a simple, “Oh.” “I see.” “Hmmm.”
- 3) Name their feelings: “You are feeling frustrated.”
- 4) Create a fantasy about their wishes: “Oh, I see the fruit bowl is empty. I wish I could wave a magic wand and fill it with 100 apples, all for you.”

Additionally, Madelyn Burley-Allen advises listeners to refrain from interrupting, avoid internal distractions, and eschew preaching and interrogating.

GUIDELINES FOR EMPATHETIC LISTENING

The good news is that listening habits can be changed by paying attention to how we listen to our twin and singleton children, and then working to become more attentive listeners. Eugene Anderson, Ed.D., George Redman, Ph.D., and Charlotte Rogers, Ph.D., in their book, *Self-Esteem for Tots to Teens*, offer helpful guidelines for listening:

- Encourage your children to talk more about their feelings: “Tell me more about it.” Don’t measure the child by your adult standards.

- Respond without judgment to what your children are thinking and feeling by paraphrasing or mirroring back what they have said to you. Try not to lecture and “teach a lesson” in response. Invite your children to talk openly about their needs and interests without disapproval or ridicule.
- Express interest and concern, which help them become considerate of others by your example.
- Let your children express negative as well as positive feelings. To respond with, “Oh, it’s not so bad,” negates the validity of their feelings. Respect your children by listening without judging them or creating the “worst scenario.”
- Use open questions that draw them out: “And what happened after that?” Try to stay calm and not overreact.

These authors noted that empathetic listening is distinct from condoning behavior or ideas unacceptable to you: “We are not saying ‘Let kids do as they please.’ We are saying, ‘Let what is inside your children be heard. Listen to them and accept them for who they are at every state of their lives.’ Then proceed as a parent to do what you think is best. Remember, you do not lose control when you listen to and acknowledge your children’s feelings. You gain control because children will gain respect for you and themselves.”

To be an empathetic listener requires that we give full attention to the child – not an easy task in a household with twins. Invariably, both twins clamor for a parent’s attention at the same time. What to do?

Parents interviewed for this article said that asking their twins to take turns speaking works most of the time.

Shirley Plantz, whose identical twins, Brian and Jason, are 5, noted that “mostly, my twins just want my attention. We try not to overtly correct them when, for example, they misuse a word; instead, we repeat what they’ve said using the word correctly. And if we let them talk out a situation, they figure out what to do about a problem on their own.”

Erlene Nelsen, mother of identical girls, Haley and Katie, 3, and older singleton, Alexander, says it’s important to make eye contact and be at the same eye level (by kneeling or holding a twin on your lap), and to keep attention focused on listening.

Most parents we talked with find it difficult to set aside time to listen to each twin separately. Instead, they make the most of occasional one-on-one situations when they happen, such as a morning when one twin sleeps later. In the Aasgaard family, fraternal twins, Kimberly and Scott, 7, and older singleton, Jeff, do each get special time to talk about the day at dinner. And their mother, Julie, recounts with amusement a situation that exemplifies how acknowledging a child’s feelings can work: “My older child at 1 or 2 was sick of being in the car, crying and angry. I finally said, ‘You are really mad and want to get out of this car.’ And he quieted down. Sometimes a child just wants to know that he’s being heard.”

“When children really feel they’ve been heard,” agree *Self-Esteem for Tots to Teens* co-authors Anderson, Redman and Rogers, “they will not only feel more lovable and capable, but will also move more quickly to mature behavior.” The effort expended in listening to our twins and other children pays dividends in both the near and distant future. It bolsters self-esteem, helps our children feel worthwhile and competent, and prepares them to be empathetic listeners in adulthood. ❤️

Alice M. Vollmar, of Minneapolis, Minnesota, is a freelance writer and the mother of six children, including fraternal twins.

The Center of Attention

Enjoying
one-on-one
time with
each child

by Carolyn B. Heller



When our twin daughters were 3, my husband, Alan and I thought that each might try spending time with each girl individually. So one Saturday morning, I announced “Today, Michaela gets to have special time with Mommy and Talia’s going to have special time with Daddy. Won’t that be fun?”

Both girls burst into tears. “I want to be with my sister,” they sobbed in unison. Alan and I exchanged worried looks, but after explaining to the kids that we’d all be back together soon, I picked up Michaela, gave Talia a hug, and went out the door. As soon as we got into the car, Michaela’s tears topped. By the time we had pulled out of the driveway, she had my undivided attention. And for me, though I love both my daughters clearly, going out with just one was amazingly peaceful.

Individual time, when each child spends time alone with one parent, quickly became a favorite family activity. And we’re not alone. “It’s so easy with one child,” says Jennifer Stone, mother of 4-year-old Eric and Elise. “You can really focus on what they’re interested in.” “There is no fighting!” adds Karen Franks, whose twins, Elisabeth and David, are 5-year-old.

WHO HAS THE TIME?

Many experts stress the importance of encouraging multiples’ individual development and spending time with each child one on one can be an important factor. As Jan R Hirschmann writes in “In Search of Self” in *The Twinship Sourcebook*, “While respecting the unique bond that is inherent in the twinship, parents of twins can provide opportunities where each child can grow as an individual.”

Yet harried parents ask, “How can I make time to be alone with each twin? I can’t manage all I have to do now!” Or, “How can I do that? My twins can’t stand to be separated.” It was hard at first, admits Jennifer Stone. “They would always want the other twin along,” when a separate outing was proposed. Stone found that initially, if both twins couldn’t go, they would often choose to stay home rather than be apart.

In their article, “Encouraging Individuality in Twins,” authors Patricia Malmstrom and Elinor Davis note that, “If providing outings for one at a time imposes a great financial or logistical hardship on the family, try something simpler, like a five minute special talk-time with each child every morning, or at bedtime.”

Rockney Walters, father of 17-year-old identical twins, Lauren and Christi, remembers that he and his wife “would regularly read

independently with the girls." Especially when the twins were little, arranging those few minutes of one-on-one time was all the Walters could manage. "It was just survival," he sighs. As his daughters got a little older, Walters says, "Going for ice cream, even running to the hardware store, any reason for leaving the house, I would have one girl ride with me."

Walters also notes, "Our girls really liked each other," and as teenagers, they still choose many of the same activities and shared many friends. "But they've really appreciated time alone with their parents. The communication channel is much less noisy."

BUILDING SELF-ESTEEM

Malmstrom and Davis write that, "Short periods away from a co-twin give each twin the opportunity to interact directly with an adult or other child, without help, interference or competition from each other. Such experiences can be helpful for the development of language and a sense of individual social competence."

Victoria Hilkewitch Bedford, associate professor in the department of psychology at the University of Indianapolis, and an identical twin, says she remembers one occasion when she was 5 or 6 years old, her uncle and one of her older cousins took her to the theater all by herself. "It was one of the happiest experiences in my life," she says "being the only child, the center of attention."

Bedford explains that multiples get a lot of special attention just for being multiples. She and her sister were "constantly oohed and aahed over" as children. But, she says, that type of attention does nothing to build self-esteem. "I didn't earn it," she emphasizes, adding that when twins spend all their time together, "they don't really get the chance to find out the response they get just for being."

SUPPORT SEPARATE AND SIMILAR INTERESTS

As multiples grow, some may choose separate activities, and parents can help their children to learn that it's okay to do things without their twins. Karen Franks says that her daughter Elisabeth takes gymnastics lessons, while David is about to begin a karate class. During Elisabeth's sessions at the gym, Franks and her son share a snack and take the opportunity to spend some time together.

Bedford cautions that many twins naturally gravitate to the same pursuits, and parents must walk a fine line in encouraging differences. Although, Bedford's parents didn't emphasize one-on-one time with her or her sister, she says, "My mother went overboard in encouraging separate interests," labeling her the scientist and her sister the artist. "When I finally took an art class and loved it, I didn't tell anyone," Bedford laughs.



SPECIAL TOGETHER, SPECIAL APART

Sometimes, unique family circumstances can create memorable opportunities for individual time. When Franks and her family moved back to the Midwest after spending a year in Connecticut, they had two cars to move. Franks drove with Elisabeth, while her husband traveled with David and their older daughter.

"Elisabeth got to live out her lifelong fantasy of being an only child!" her mother remarks. When she and Elisabeth stopped for lunch en route, her daughter looked around and said, "No one here knows I have a twin brother," Franks says, "She felt she was in disguise as a singleton."

In a recent conversation, I asked my daughters to explain why they enjoy individual time. Michaela immediately answered, "We learn things that the other doesn't know, so we can teach each other." Talia agreed and then paused thoughtfully before giving her own reply, "We learn to be separate." While multiples enjoy a unique bond, ultimately their special relationship becomes even stronger when their parents help them learn to be both together and apart. ♥

Carolyn B Heller of Cambridge, Massachusetts, is a freelance writer and the mother of twin girls.

MAKING TIME


Turn errands into a one-on-one adventure---You have to go to the market or the hardware store anyway, so take one child with you while the other(s) stay with your partner. Keep trying even if they protest at first. Eventually you may be surprised at how eager they are to help choose the lettuce!

Encourage play dates for one---Let other parents know that it's ok to invite only one of your multiples. Help your kids understand that they can sometimes play together and sometimes apart. Find something special to do with the one who stays home.

If relatives offer to help, let them---Take one twin to the park while your sister stays with the other. Or as your multiples get older, let them visit grandparents independently. They'll build relationships with their extended family, while enjoying individual time with you. Support, but don't force, independent interests.

Encourage unique ideas---Many multiples naturally select the same activities, but encourage them to make their own choices. Even the little things count. If you can spend five minutes a day alone with each child---perhaps reading a story, folding the laundry or just sitting and talking---that seemingly ordinary time will come to be very special.



A photograph of two young girls with brown hair lying in bed, peeking over a white blanket. They are looking towards the camera with curious expressions. The background is a plain white surface, likely a bedsheet.

A Sensitive Subject: **Bed-Wetting**

*Approaching
the Problem
with a Positive
Attitude*

By Christine F. Ridout

*B*ed-wetting is a difficult subject for any child, but the problem is aggravated in twins if one is dry at night and one isn't. Because multiples often use each other as points of reference, the child who is wetting the bed may feel doubly embarrassed and his self-esteem may be undermined. There is also a chance that the dry twin will tease him, making the situation worse. Experts say that children take their cues from the parents: If mom and dad are relaxed about bedwetting, the kids will be, too.

Children vary enormously in their ability to achieve nighttime dryness. This is particularly true for boy/girl twins because girls typically achieve control earlier than boys. Even same-sex twins show a great deal of variation in their ability to attain nighttime control. According to Dr. Rehka Agrawal, assistant professor of pediatric nephrology at Loyola University, there are two kinds of bed-wetting – continuous and discontinuous. Continuous bed-wetting means a child has never achieved nighttime dryness. It is most common in boys and can last to the age of 10, sometimes longer.

Most bed-wetter's (80%) are continuous, and the condition is simply a matter of bladder maturation. It also tends to be inherited. Parents of bed wetter's frequently were bed wetter's themselves.

In contrast, discontinuous wetting begins after a child has been dry for a long time. It is usually triggered by stress. However, Dr. Agrawal emphasizes that physical problems, such as urinary tract infections, must first be ruled out. The two types of bed-wetting require different responses, but both must be handled with sensitivity.

IF ONE TWIN HAS NEVER BEEN DRY

Dr. Alexander Goldbin, director of child psychiatry at Cook County Hospital in Chicago, says the best approach to nighttime wetting is a calm, relaxed attitude that doesn't communicate anxiety and shows confidence in the child's ability to achieve dryness. Never punish shame or compare the child to his twin. If the dry twin is the one who has also achieved other developmental milestones first, parents must be especially sensitive to how this will affect the relationship and the co-twin's self-esteem.

Most children, who are continuous bed-wetter's, stay in diapers at night while they are still young. If one twin is still wetting, put his diapers on quietly and in privacy. If you're really tactful, the dry child may not even be aware that his twin wets at night. However, if the dry twin is aware – and there's no need to deliberately hide it – Dr. Goldbin recommends dealing with it matter-of-factly, explaining that children mature at different rates and that his twin will be dry soon, too. Dr. Goldbin also points out that many twins are extremely supportive of each other and that you can enlist the support of the dry twin.

AS THEY GET OLDER

If your twin does not achieve dryness by the age of 4 or 5, he may begin to resist diapers. Both Dr. Goldbin and Dr. Lane Robson, director of pediatric nephrology at Children's Hospital in Greenville, South Carolina, say that a child should not be forced to wear diapers if he finds it humiliating. Let the child make the decision and then deal as best you can with the wet bedding. When diapers do come off, there are ways to minimize the bed-wetting problem:

- Enlist the child's cooperation in solving the problem.
- Make it clear that you will be helpful and supportive.
- If he wakes in the night, he should be able to put on dry clothes and deal with his bedding so he doesn't disturb the family
- Let him know that if he is wet in the morning, he should change his clothes and strip his bed

Bed-wetting can also create significant social problems for older multiples who are invited to sleepovers or who want to go to camp. Being a multiple, and often participating in the same social group, accentuates the issue and hurts the child who hasn't achieved dryness.

You may have to face the issue of whether one goes and one doesn't. If you require the dry one to stay home, he may feel resentful that he can't go because of his twin. On the other hand, he may be supportive and not feel it's a big deal.

DISCONTINUOUS WETTING

If one twin returns to wetting in response to stress, you should handle the situation much as you would if he were a continuous wetter, with a few variations.

Carefully consider the issue of whether he will return to diapers. This is particularly embarrassing for a child who has been dry a long time and whose twin remains dry. Express confidence in his ability to achieve dryness again.

By being as low-key as possible, the other twin may not be aware of the problem. If he is, explain what has happened and ask him to be supportive.

If your child returns to wetting, it's important to identify and reduce the stress that may be causing it. Dr. Joan Luby, assistant professor of psychiatry at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis; suggests that you ask yourself what was going on just before the wetting began. She also recommends looking for patterns, keeping a log of what happened each day and whether your child was wet that night.

Common childhood problems are frequently accentuated in multiples. This is certainly the case with bedwetting. But all doctors emphasize that as the child matures, the wetting almost invariably stops. Continue to be calm and supportive. However, do seek help if the child is suffering with the problem. Many treatments are available. ♥

Christine Ridout, of Wayland, Massachusetts, is a freelance writer and mother of three boys, including twins.

RESOURCES:

Books for Children

Dry Days, Wet Nights by Maribeth Boelts is a story of a young rabbit who eventually outgrows his bed-wetting with the love and support of his parents.

Dry All Night by Alison Mack is a book that is divided into two parts: one for parents and one for children.

Information for Parents:

The National Kidney Foundation provides information on bed-wetting and has a Physicians Referral Network. For more information visit their website: <http://www.kidney.org>

A Guide to the Treatment of Enuresis for Professionals by Penny Dobson, is a book that's intended for professionals. However, it's very readable and very useful for parents. The book has chapters on assessment, treatment methods, choosing a treatment program, dealing with relapse and advising the older child. Order if from the Simon Foundation: http://www.simonfoundation.org/Education_Materials.html



Low Cost Family Entertainment Solutions this summer



(Family Features) This summer, there may be some fantastic opportunities to have some family fun. Whether a three-day weekend is scheduled on the calendar, your family may be preparing for a road trip or keeping close to home for a “staycation.” Whichever route you choose, make fun family entertainment a top priority by keeping a variety of enjoyable, and inexpensive, activities on hand to ensure a non-stop good time that won’t break the bank.

Rather than spend money on a day at an amusement park or a double feature at the movies, keep family and friends close by suggesting activities that everyone can partake in, and are also low cost, or even free. You’ll be having such a great time that you may start a family tradition.

Those who are planning a long weekend at the beach should toss a deck of cards into the beach bag for quick games packed with fun. Card games such as Go Fish, Crazy Eights, Scrabble Slam or the new Sorry! Revenge card game can be played while lounging on a towel or taking a break under an umbrella. In addition, bring a few board games for a relaxing family game night after a long day in the sun.

Whether in your own backyard or away at a vacation destination, spending time outdoors playing games such as capture the flag or bocce ball will entertain people of all ages. Looking for some

healthy competition? Split into teams for a game of kickball or softball and get the entire family involved. Be sure to pack plenty of refreshments, such as water and lemonade, to stay hydrated.

For an afternoon or evening of unplugged fun, plan activities that don’t require a television, computer or cell phone. Gather around the kitchen table to solve a puzzle or play chess. For a game that players of all ages can participate in, try the Pictureka! game where players must find wacky images hidden in the ever-changing game board. Once the kids go to bed, the adults can play a lively game of charades or Taboo to get everyone out of their seats and laughing.

If bad weather spoils your plans, take the party indoors. Build a fort in the living room and spread sleeping bags out on the floor. Prepare a pretend campfire by making favorite camping snacks such as s’mores by microwaving marshmallows and sandwiching them between graham crackers and chocolate bars. Make the night extra-special by letting the twins pick a board game for the family to play, such as The Game of Life, Connect 4 or Clue. Capture all your memories by having a camera available for snapping photos of expected and unexpected moments. For more family game night tips, visit www.familygamenight.com. ♥



HAVE A FLAG-WAVING FOURTH



(Family Features) Celebrate the Fourth with a fabulous finale....serve dessert while you enjoy the fireworks.

These all-American cupcakes are festively adorned in red, white and blue from top to bottom, beginning with star-studded Old Glory baking cups all the way up to the waving flag. They promise to be patriotically pleasing for all - kids and adults alike.

The cupcakes can be any flavor, made from a mix or from scratch. Ice with white buttercream to create a canvas for star-spangled decorating fun. For a surprise in every bite (if you're making yellow or white cupcakes), the Wilton Test Kitchen recommends folding red, white and blue nonpareils, sprinkle mixes or jimmies into the cupcake batter just before filling the baking cups. Use up to one-fourth cup for a two-layer cake mix. Now they're patriotic inside and out!

To make a flagpole for the candy flag topper, simply insert a lollipop stick into the cupcake and attach the flag icing decoration with stiff buttercream. Or use stars and stripes party picks or patriotic foil pix to top the cupcake instead of the candy flag. Either way, they will be a perfect tribute to the occasion.

Cupcakes can be baked, sprinkled and iced up to one day in advance; store covered at room temperature. Top with the flag just before serving.

To order star-spangled decorations, or for additional holiday, special occasion and everyday celebration ideas, visit www.wilton.com.

FLAG FESTIVITIES CUPCAKES

Makes 24 cupcakes

1 package (18.25 ounces) yellow or white cake mix

Egg, oil and water to prepare mix

1/2cup red, white and blue nonpareils, sprinkle mixes or jimmies, divided

3cups ready-to-use white decorator icing or buttercream icing

24 4-inch lollipop sticks

24 Patriotic Flags icing decorations

Preheat oven to 350°F. Place baking cups in standard muffin pan.

In large bowl, prepare cake mix following package instructions. Stir in up to 1/4 cup of the sprinkles; spoon into baking cups. Bake 18-20 minutes or until toothpick inserted into center or cupcake comes out clean. Cool completely.

Ice cupcakes smooth; add remaining sprinkles. Insert lollipop sticks into cupcakes; attach icing decorations with stiff icing.

Easy, No-Bake Goodies

(Family Features) Summer is a great time to get kids into the kitchen to make some snacks and desserts. Whether you need something to take to a picnic or just something to do on a rainy day, making easy, no-bake goodies like Rice Krispies Treats® can show kids just how fun cooking can be.

Even young children can be kitchen helpers, so the whole family can get involved. What can your child do to help prepare a recipe?

2 To 3-year-olds Can

- Wash and scrub fruits and vegetables
- Name and count foods

3 to 4-year-olds can

- Shape foods
- Mix dry ingredients together
- Pour pre-measured liquids into batter

4 to 5-year-olds can

- Help measure ingredients
- Open packages
- Pour cereal
- Mash soft fruits and vegetables
- Press cookie cutters into dough or soft food

6 years old and up can

- Beat recipe ingredients with a whisk
- Help locate ingredients in a spice rack or pantry

Make some summer magic with this tasty no-bake recipe for Itsy Bitsy Fruit Pies. For even more kid-friendly recipes you can make together, visit www.Ricekrispies.com.



Note: The following recipes should be made with adult supervision.

ITSY BITSY FRUIT PIES

Prep Time: 25 minutes

Total Time: 30 minutes

Servings: 24

- 1/2 cup butter or margarine
- 1 cup milk chocolate morsels
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
- 4 cups Kellogg's® Rice Krispies® cereal
- 2 cups assorted fresh chopped fruits
- Frozen non-dairy whipped topping, thawed
- Assorted sprinkles

In medium saucepan, melt butter over low heat. Stir in chocolate morsels until melted. Remove from heat. Stir in cinnamon.

Place cereal in large bowl. Carefully pour melted chocolate mixture over cereal. Gently stir until cereal is completely coated with chocolate.

Spoon cereal mixture into twenty-four 1 1/2-inch muffin-pan cups coated with cooking spray. Using your finger or thumb, press cereal mixture onto bottoms and up the sides of each cup, forming crusts.

Place crusts in freezer for 30 minutes. Remove from freezer. Refrigerate, covered, until ready to serve.

Before serving, fill each crust with fresh fruit. Dollop with whipped topping. Decorate with sprinkles. Serve immediately.

Note: Extra unfilled crusts may be frozen in air-tight container for up to a month. Let stand at room temperature for 15 minutes before serving.

Kid-friendly Kitchen Tips:

- Children of all ages should have an adult assistant with them at all times when cooking.
- Chefs 7 and older can measure the ingredients and help stir the melted chocolate into the cereal.
- Little ones, ages 3 to 6, will enjoy pressing the mixture into the muffin cups and decorating with the fruits and whipped cream.
- Make sure to have plenty of extra fruits for snacking while making these little pies.



BEING TWINS

By Judy Houghton-James

Being born one of identical twins

Oh so much it means

Years of joy untold for sure

If we just could have had more

We took pride in being alike

Made sure that no one lost sight

Togetherness that was our might

Kept our future bright alright

What better friend to have had

To be with me whether happy or sad

Stood beside me when others made me mad

Shared in everything that made me glad

Someone who could finish my sentence

*Understand what I meant even if it did not
make sense*

Sometimes uttered statements in unison

Much to amazement of many a person

A ready mate in times of recreation

No better confidant or companion

Always present to share hobbies and interests

Even both becoming Freelance Journalists

Special holidays had so much meaning

I realize it more now that my twin is missing

To be without my twin is hard to bear

*And to think that from now on it will be so from
year to year*



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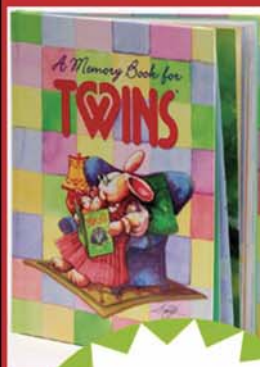
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Treasured Twinship Memories

by Judy Haughton-James

It was good to have come into the world with an identical twin sister on November 4, 1961. I consider it a blessing and will treasure all the memories of our almost 47 years together. Janine and I arrived over 10 years after our two brothers Richard and Sutcliffe. Our family lives on a farm in an isolated area of the country so it would have been a lonely life if I was born a singleton. As a matter of fact about a year after our birth our brothers were off to boarding school.

What a wonderful companion Janine was. When you have an identical twin you have someone who has so much in common with you. The word that comes immediately to mind is togetherness. I am grateful that our parents encouraged us to take pride in being alike and saw no problem in our spending a lot of time together. Of course they never failed to help us realize that each of us was an individual.

Over the years I found it extremely easy to get along with my twin sister. There were times when I would rush to tell Janine something and she was about to tell me same thing. Furthermore in discussions each of us could finish the other's sentence or we even uttered the same words in unison.

Throughout our school days we excelled in the same subjects doing particularly well in the Arts. It was beneficial to us that our teachers and parents recognized that we had the same capabilities and there was absolutely no reason why one should be put in a class below one's standard just to be separated. Knowing how alike we were in thoughts we made sure never to sit beside each other in the classroom. This was done just in case any teacher failed to understand how much we thought alike and believed we copied each other in tests and examinations.





Twinship gives lessons in social skills that parents should enhance. The ability to smile, be polite and communicate with even persons whom we were meeting for the first time is a trait that I will always treasure. I have no doubt that the ease with which we were able to do so come naturally because we were twins. I cannot forget how shocked Miss Josephs, our History teacher at St. Mary High School was when she found out that Janine and I were new students. We had completed 5 years of high school at Marymount High and had just moved to St. Mary High to pursue Advanced Level studies. She was amazed at how well we settled in with our new classmates.

Since my twins death I have read the book 'Twin Loss' by Dr. Raymond Brandt. For the first time this book informed me about utero bonding where twins bond together while sharing their mother's womb. This first experience teaches twins to share. Being accustomed to sharing things with one's twin equips one with a level of ease in sharing with others. In other words living the life of being a twin is all about sharing and caring. Parents should never stifle this inborn trait while cautioning children how far to go.

It is important to touch the lives of others by showing what it is to be a true friend. This strong sense of friendship is again an offshoot of being twins. Our friends have been long lasting starting from when we were very young until today.

There are many funny moments when you are twins. My twin and I could not help being amused when people could not tell the difference. Most amusing was when someone came across one of us not knowing that there was an identical twin somewhere else only to be totally surprised on seeing someone looking exactly like the person they had just seen. Only a few close friends and our immediate family could tell the difference.

Every child should be taught to appreciate plants and animals and where we live they are in abundance. Janine and I developed a deep interest in birds and about 10 years ago we started a collection of bird figurines. It has grown into a huge collection that graces our living-room in a display unit. This collection stands as a memorial to our shared love for our feathered friends.

When it comes on to special holidays and birthdays it is particularly good to have a twin to celebrate these moments. I especially notice how important these have been since my twin's death. I no longer look forward to these holidays and my birthday. Anyway I think a good way to remember a departed twin is for parents and

the remaining twin to give a donation to a church, charity or some organization. In the case of my twin I am thinking of making a donation to the Jamaica Cancer Society on my next birthday as this terrible disease took my twin away.

I would encourage all parents of multiples to help their children enjoy their twinship and treasure all the wonderful memories that come with it. I consider 47 years with my twin to have been a short time together on earth. However I have enjoyed this short time and although now facing the pain of having lost my twin I would rather it be so than not to have been born one of identical twins.

Judy Haughton-James was born one of identical twins on November 4, 1961 in the parish of St. Mary on the Caribbean island of Jamaica. They lived on a farm with their parents and two older brothers. She first experienced the loss of a family member when their father Harold died of a heart attack when they were only 13. She suffered an even greater loss on October 16, 2008 when her identical twin sister Janine died of stomach cancer, just a few weeks before their 47th birthday. She writes articles and poems about life without her twin and has found it to be therapeutic. She is a Freelance Writer who holds an Honors Diploma from the London School of Journalism and have had articles published in two of Jamaica's national newspapers, The Gleaner and Herald and international publications including The New Writer and The Pet Gazette.



10 Tips for Building Self-Esteem in your Twins



by John Clark

When helping to build your children's self-esteem, never underestimate the power of your positive influence. Here are 10 suggestions that will help you in the process.

1. Remember, your children are each a unique treasure.

Recently, I was entrusted with the care and keeping of our five children for several days. As we ambled through the zoo one afternoon, I pushed the double stroller that carried our 2-year-old twins, while the other three children competed for hand-holds on either side. Soon I became aware of an interesting phenomenon. As we made our way from one cage to the next, the visitors at the zoo began turning their attention from the animals to our own little menagerie, staring as we passed. I know we were a sight to behold!

I thought about the beauty and interesting behavior of each of our children – no two being exactly alike, even our twins! I promised myself at that moment that I would make sure I told each one of my children every day that she or he is a precious gift!

2. Make sure your marriage is sound.

Children seeking self-esteem need the security of a strong marriage. However, it's important to realize that a marriage relationship does not remain static. The two partners either grow together as a couple or move apart. All couples are going to experience some stress in their relationship, but to foster their children's security and self-worth, parents need to reassure them that they love each other and will stay together as a family.

3. Take advantage of interruptions.

"Dad, can you play ball?" "Mom, can you read me a book?" Many times parents' standard response to such requests is, "Just a minute." Waiting 'a minute' does not damage children's self-esteem, but sometimes the minute becomes 10 minutes, then an hour, then it is forgotten. No child wants to face the fact that his request – and, in his mind, he himself – is forgotten.

Therefore, part of the secret of helping children feel important is to learn to view their unplanned requests as opportunities to do some self-esteem-building instead of as inconveniences to their parents' schedules.

4. Plan some 'down time'.

Be sure there is a "nap time" scheduled – not for your children, but for you! Especially if you are a stay-at-home mom with young ones around, you will not be as effective in helping your children feel good about themselves if you come to the task tired and worn. Try to schedule at least 15 to 30 minutes in the afternoon that is yours to do with as you please.

I know what you're thinking – this is impossible. It will, indeed, take some effort at first, but even toddlers can be taught to rest quietly for awhile. It will be a discipline worth developing.

5. Take your kids to lunch.

Our children learned at an early age that some of their dad's most important meetings take place over lunch. So I began having a standing appointment for lunch with each of our children on day

a week. I must say that most of our conversation has centered on the acquisition and consumption of food. But that's OK. My main objective is to have a good time and communicate how special each child is to me.

Sometimes the conversation takes unexpected turns. Just the other day, I was at lunch with Julianne, our 7 year old, who was admiring the playground toys. "Daddy, do you remember when I used to hide in the big hamburger and you would act like a monster and try to get me?" She remarked, adding wistfully, "Those were the good ole days."

To me, those...and these days of more recent lunches are warm memories!

6. Don't be afraid to apologize.

When you have made a blunder in your relationship with your children, tell them so and apologize. When we choose to gloss over or ignore our gaffes, we project the notion that we are infallible. Instead of helping our children see that it's OK for them to make mistakes, we simply reinforce the idea that they must be something they are not.

7. Utilize your children's mistakes.

When your son walks in and says "Dad, I broke a window with the baseball," or your daughter says, "Mom, I failed a test," do not overlook the fact that these are opportunities for the building of self-esteem. Use your children's mistakes to demonstrate your unfailing acceptance of the, and then problem-solve with them how to learn from their mistakes. When children realize that their parents accept them at their worst, as well as their best behavior, they will much more readily accept themselves unconditionally.

8. Take plenty of pictures.

My wife has prepared five small photo albums for our children; each features a particular child. I have been amazed at how much time my children spend reviewing their albums. The albums remind our children that they are a part of a family who cares about the experiences its members share.

9. Look for ways to include your children.

Although you may be busy with many professional and domestic responsibilities, look for ways to include your children in some of them. For example, take each of your children with you to the grocery store, on a rotation basis, perhaps. If you are working on your car, ask one of your children if he would enjoy some instruction about automobile engines.

10. Keep your eyes open.

Take advantage of those times when you can give encouragement to help your multiples become more self-reliant. Simple tasks such as getting themselves dressed, making their own beds and washing their own hair are invitations that are uniquely yours to use in helping your children feel good about who they are and their abilities to take care of themselves.

John Clark of Kansas City, Kansas, is a pastor and the father of five children, including twins.

Nature ^{VS.} Nurture

Who is Happy?

by Nancy L. Segal, Ph.D.

A TWINS™ CLASSIC

Nancy L. Segal, Ph.D.,
is a professor of psychology and director of Twin Studies at California State University, Fullerton

Psychologists have spent years trying to identify the factors that affect human happiness. What they've found is surprising: Most things that we believe should permanently influence feelings of happiness, such as marital status or religious commitment, do not have lasting effects.

In fact, according to David Lykken and Auke Tellegen, professors in the department of psychology at the University of Minnesota, "religious conversion or being 'born again' is said to be a joyful experience, but its effect on mood may not be more lasting than being promoted or winning the lottery."

Everyone wishes to be happy and most people try to structure their lives with this aim in mind. However, it often seems that the joy we experience at achieving certain goals doesn't boost our mood indefinitely. Instead, it's short-lived.

Lykken and Tellegen published a 1996 article, "Happiness is a Stochastic Phenomenon," in the journal, *Psychological Science*. This paper reports findings from a twin study of subjective well-being, based on over 1,000 pairs of identical and fraternal twins reared together; and more than 100 pairs of identical and fraternal twins reared apart.

MEASURING HAPPINESS

All participants in the study completed the Minnesota Personality Questionnaire. The PMQ, developed by Tellegen, includes items that measure a person's standing on 11 different personality scales, such as traditionalism and social closeness.

Scores on the well-being scale reflect the tendency to feel good about one's self and one's place in the world, while the stress-reaction scale is a measure of negative emotionality. Happiness



researchers, David Myers and Edward Diener, have suggested that subjective well-being (SWB) includes both positive and negative feelings. It's for this reason that in the present study, SEB was calculated as WB-SR, or the difference between the well-being and stress reaction scores.

MANY FACTORS IRRELEVANT

Several sets of analyses were conducted. First, it was found that educational attainment (i.e., highest grade in school), marital status and even income did not have a major impact on either well-being or on subjective well-being.

Furthermore, religious commitment, as measured by the traditionalism scale of the MPQ, was unrelated to happiness. In other words, people who are highly involved in religious activities do not report greater happiness than those who are uninvolved.

Next, the researchers compared the similarity of the identical and fraternal twins to see if there was the finding that identical twins reared together were much more alike than fraternal twins reared together, which is consistent with a genetic effect. The identical twins reared apart were as similar as the identical twins reared together.

This is a very important finding because it shows that events and influences in the same home have very little effect on happiness level.

Another significant result was that the similarity between the fraternal twins was quite low, as compared with that of identical twins. This suggests that many different genes are associated with one level of happiness. Recall that identical twins share all their genes and, therefore, will share unusual gene combinations.

In contrast, fraternal twins share only half their genes and so will tend not to share the unique combinations and configurations of genes that underlie complex traits such as happiness. Overall, the data shows that about 50% of the variation that we see in happiness is influenced by genetic factors. The other half is influenced by environmental factors.

THE RESULTS

A subsample of the twins who were about 20 years old at the first testing period completed the MPQ a second time 10 years later. This allowed the investigators to examine the stability of happiness. Specifically, what was done was to compare twin 1's score at time 1 with twin 2's score at time 2, and vice versa. The similarity was considerably higher for identical twins than for fraternal twins. That's to say, the happiness of one identical twin was a better predictor of the twin partner's happiness at a different time than was his own marital status, educational attainment or income! This means that the stable part of our happiness level is also affected by genetic factors.

HAPPINESS IN THE REAL WORLD

What do the findings from this twin study of happiness mean for everyone else? Everyone undergoes various daily fluctuations in how happy they feel. These changes are largely due to the many unplanned favorable and unfavorable events that happen to all of us throughout our lives. However, all of us appear to have our own special set point, or characteristic level of happiness, and it is this

particular point around which the unplanned events cause us to vary.

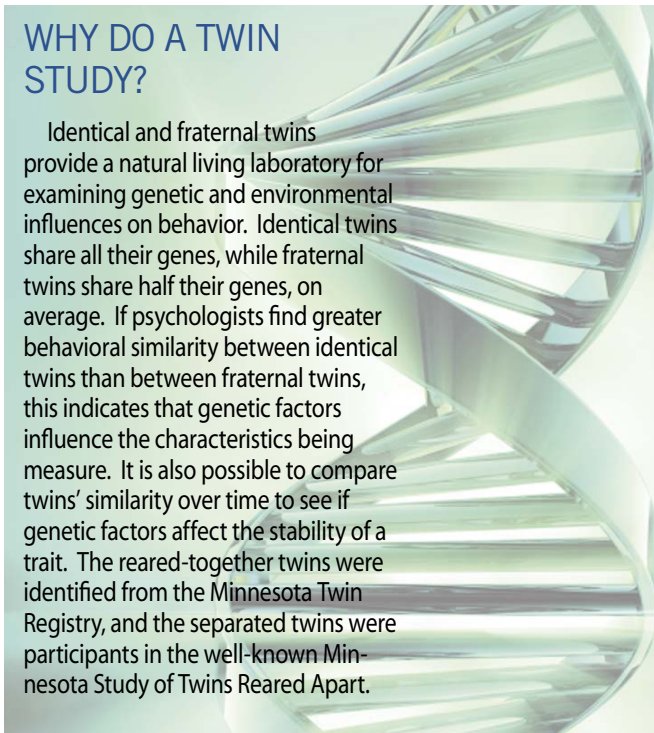
Many people have believed that positive or negative fortunes have the effect of altering happiness in a significant way, but this has been shown to be largely untrue. The twin study suggests, instead, that our basic moods or dispositions lead us to seek out certain experiences, people or events. For example, a contented individual may savor social gatherings, while a discontented individual may prefer to withdraw from others. In the words of the investigators, the proper interpretation is "from mood to behavior" rather than the other way around.

MORE TAKE-HOME MESSAGES

There are some additional important take-home messages for twins and families. Parents raising identical twins can expect general similarity in their level of happiness. In the event that large differences are observed, efforts should be made to discover the cause. Perhaps a difficult situation at school or with peers has persisted for one twin and not the other. In contrast, parents of fraternal twins should not be surprised if their children differ in how happy they seem, despite sharing the same family and school – such children differ genetically and will, therefore, differ in personality traits that are tapped by measures of well-being. Of course, behavior similarity is not always predictable from genetic relatedness, and so some identical pairs are expected to differ somewhat, while some fraternal twins may be similar.

We should not feel discouraged or confused when the efforts we make on behalf of those who are discontented fail to raise their spirits as much as we would like—but we can keep trying. Similarly, we should not feel let down because the exhilaration of our accomplishment has faded all too quickly. The twin research reviewed in this article should help us make sense of these events. ♥

WHY DO A TWIN STUDY?



Identical and fraternal twins provide a natural living laboratory for examining genetic and environmental influences on behavior. Identical twins share all their genes, while fraternal twins share half their genes, on average. If psychologists find greater behavioral similarity between identical twins than between fraternal twins, this indicates that genetic factors influence the characteristics being measure. It is also possible to compare twins' similarity over time to see if genetic factors affect the stability of a trait. The reared-together twins were identified from the Minnesota Twin Registry, and the separated twins were participants in the well-known Minnesota Study of Twins Reared Apart.

What was the

Which one is the 'evil' twin?

CRAZIEST

Which One Was Born First?

Are They Twins?

Are they Identical?

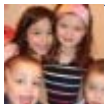
Do Twins Run in Your Family?

QUESTIONS

You have ever been asked by strangers ?



We recently asked fans on our Facebook page what was the absolute strangest question they have ever been asked in public when out with their twins? Boy did we get some fantastic responses so that is why we wanted to share as many with you as possible! We're sure you also have a few of your own, too! These are funny to read and we know that as parents of multiples, it's all part of the experience so it's good to think of some funny responses to give to people to see what kind of reactions you receive. Good luck and remember, people love twins and are very curious about them so that is why they cannot help themselves when they see adorable little bundles in a double-stroller passing by!



Jennifer Canter

How can they be fraternal if they are both girls? (We have boy twins + girl twins)



Becky Van Westen

Of my fraternal twin girls = Are they both yours?



Amanda 'Bednarek' Nethero

Stranger: Are they twins? Me: Yes. Stranger: Are you sure?



Jennifer Lovegrove Roy

Identical twin baby boys in identical blue, very masculine outfits and still people ask us, "Oh, a boy and a girl??" They even had exactly the same hair. Then whenever I am with any friend that has a little girl people always gasp and say, "TRIPLETS!!!"



Tysa Kihn

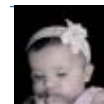
When my boys were 1 week old, I was asked once "who was the mother?" because I was still pregnant. I didn't have to answer, all the other women around me turned to look at the lady that asked like she had 3 heads and explained that it takes awhile to look not pregnant when you've just given birth.

I'm also asked on a regular basis if they are twins. Um... yeah, they are identical so it doesn't even make sense to think that maybe I'm babysitting one and the other is mine. I always politely say yes, and a few people catch themselves and laugh at what a silly question it was.



Britni Wood

Stranger: Oh, are they twins? Me: Yes! Stranger: are they identical? Me: No, they are a boy and a girl. Stranger: Well they don't look like twins... *walking off* :) Why did they ask if they were identical if they didn't think they look alike? :) Hahaha:)



Carrie Cilfone Scalzo

When my fraternal twins were infants a woman at the Mall came up to me and asked if they were identical (they are very obviously not) I replied- no they are fraternal. And she said- "you should check with your doctor because I think they are identical." UGH!! LOL



Jennifer Douglas

I have boy/girl twins and several times I was asked "are they identical?" I'd always answer "no they can't be identical if he has an outie part and she had an innie." I was always dumbfounded when people asked that.



Sally Rosenthal

I had someone who must have been watching too many soaps ask "which is the evil twin?" I thought she was kidding, but she wasn't. I told her neither of my sons was evil, though I wish I'd told her we were waiting to see which one grew a goatee...



Thomas Ambra

Are they twins? I answer nope there three months apart lol



Alyssa Davis Nelson

People will look at my boy/girl set of twins and say "Well they certainly are not identical." I look at them and say, "They ARE a boy and a girl." I think people say this because my two do not look anything alike (although my girls look alike and both of my sons look alike.)



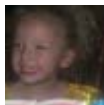
Debbie Bittle Moore

Once, when my girls were little, one had a pink bow and the other had a blue bow... someone thought I had boy/girl twins... I thought about saying "yes, it's a blue bow, but it IS still a bow!"



Jennifer Lovegrove Roy

An annoying thing people always ask (as you all have experienced) is "Oh, so they have totally opposite personalities, right?" ummmm, no. Apparently there is this concept floating around in everyone's minds that identical twins are always exact opposites. Like one person got split in half and half the personality went to one and half went to the other, lol. These stories are funny to read!



Beth Fletcher

I have fraternal twin 2 yr old girls... One has blonde hair and one is a brunette... Some asked me if I dyed one of their hairs... Seriously dyed a 2 yr olds hair?



Jean McClure Maynard

Lady, muttering to her husband as she walked away after asking if they were twins, "They CANNOT be twins, they are NOT dressed the same." Got me, lady, I lied.



Demarais Duckworth

I have 2 year old fraternal boys that look NOTHING alike! At all! Although, they are the same height and weight, like everyone else, when they were little, people would ask if they were boy/girl even though they have never worn anything remotely girl colored! Now, people just stare for a little while and then say "They aren't twins are they?" Sometimes, I just want to say "Nope, I grabbed this one in the parking lot, or thought I'd try him out for the day!" Sometimes I answer the question before it's asked... "Yes, they are twins...both boys."



Michelle Calvin

Once I had someone tell me that her kids were 15 months apart and that it was just like having twins... uhh..no??

People ask me if they are identical or maternal..they are boy/girl FRATERNAL twins.

I recently had a girl and my b/g twins are two. I had someone say.. Oh, young, younger and youngest. I was like, they are twins.. My biggest pet peeve is Oh, you have your hands full...I just want to say...Ya think? I have 5 kids..I am WAY outnumbered...But, I wouldn't change a thing.



Pam Thompson

These are funny. One of my favorites was when I was still pregnant. One of my co-workers is an older woman and she asked me if we had used fertility treatments. A) none of her business B) I have FOUR older children, why would we go through that pain and expense. I always go to the same grocery store at around the same time since it is easier with the babies. The same employee every week: "oh, twins?"... I always go to the same grocery store at around the same time since it is easier with the babies. The same employee every week: "oh, twins?"...

Me: yep

Him: a boy and a girl?

Me: nope, identical girls (in pink car seats, with bows, dressed alike.)

Him: oh, I bet they eat a lot (looking at my cart full of food)

Me: not so much yet, they are three months old.

Him: you have your hands full.

Me: yep

Him: a boy and a girl?

Me: nope, identical girls (in pink car seats, with bows, dressed alike.)

Him: oh, I bet they eat a lot (looking at my cart full of food)

Me: not so much yet, they are three months old.

Him: you have your hands full.

Every.single.week.



Diane Bollinger Spicer

My identical (6 year old at the time) boys who were up way past their bedtime and were being crazy late one night when we were on vacation at the beach were cornered by a man who had clearly been partying all day and night: Drunk man: are you boys identical or fraternal? Both my kids in total twinness: neither we're nocturnal! To which the drunken man looked extremely confused and stumbled away thinking there was a third kind he didn't know about!



Gina 'Walton' Darr

My story is more the answer rather than the question. We have fraternal girls - they are now 9. When they were very tiny my husband and I had been walking around the mall with a side by side double stroller and after two hours of answering the same question my husband decided it was time to change up the answer to see if people were actually listening. When asked "are they twins?" his answer was "actually we have triplets and had to leave the other one in the car". Thankfully the people saw the humor after a second or two and my husband apologized and then gave a straight answer. But the look on their faces was the best. (And I apologize if I have offended anyone) - It was just the spur of the moment thing.

Continued on page 43

Twice the Love—Stories of Inspiration for Families... with Twins, Multiples and Singletons

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



This book now ships in a 2-pack so that each child can have a book to call their own! Teach your child the alphabet in pictures and words. There are more than 20 places for filling in personalized information about your child - birthday, your family's details, home address, Mommy's and Daddy's names, and more. You'll want to take advantage of this limited time offer - get one, FREE! With this exclusive offer, each child will have one to complete and to keep as their own 32 pages, softbound



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.

A Very Special Twin Story

\$7.95

EXCLUSIVE TO TWINS BOOKSHELF!
Buy one book, get the second absolutely FREE!

Your child will be delighted with the chance to play the major role in telling his or her own personal story. This delightful book contains dozens of places to fill in details about the time he or she was born, the city where your family lives, favorite colors, games and activities. Each twin "owns" personal attributes that make up his or her unique personality and identity. This personalized story book for twins help

each twin understand what it means to be an "I" and not just "one of the twins." You'll want to take advantage of this limited time offer - get one, FREE! With this exclusive offer,

each child will have one to complete and to keep as their own. 32 pages, softbound

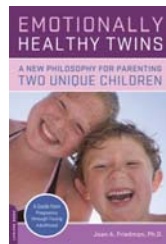


Emotionally Healthy Twins

\$15.95

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.



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

\$18.50

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

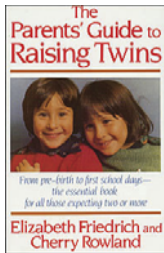
Author Lynn Lorenz is an identical twin herself, and the mother of triplets and a singleton. She's an accountant by profession, and developed this wonderful handbook in her spare



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.



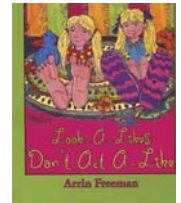
Twin Tales—*The Magic and Mystery of Multiple Birth* by Donna M. Jackson.

\$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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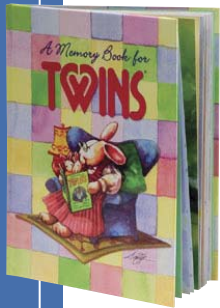


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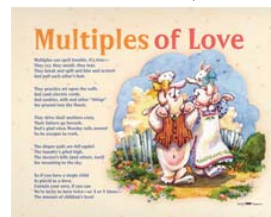
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Continued from page 39



Patrick. Radojic

We have b/g twins our son is 5 lbs. bigger than our daughter, we've had someone actually argue with us telling us that it's not possible that their twins. Hello I was there!!! Or they'll say he was born first, like 1 minute makes a 5 lb difference.



Sarah Pries Symans

Two elderly women at a Mall asked me if my girls were twins. Before I could answer, the one woman says to the other, "No, they aren't twins." I replied that they were indeed twins and the one woman said, "No, no they are not twins. Look, one is a half inch taller than the other." I tried again, "Even so, they are twins". Together the women replied, "No, no they are not". There was no convincing them. I'm just the Mom, what do I know. :-)



Heather Winegarden Johnson

When my identical twin boys were in their car seats in the grocery carts strangers would always ask, "Are they twins?" My husband would reply, "No, they were a set of triplets, but we didn't want to be greedy so we chose our two favorites and left the third one at the hospital." We got quite the looks.



Amanda Conkol

We live near Twinsburg, Oh and go to Twins Day every year. A couple years ago we stopped at a restaurant after the festival for dinner. The waitress asked if the girls were twins. I said yes and her follow up question was - did you get them for Twins Days? Friends that were with us quickly said no - we won them at the festival it was win one get one. The waitress asked to not serve our table after that.



Chiello Baker

I have 2 sets of twins both sets were born on the same day and month 17yrs apart. I am always asked the question if I planned for them to all be born on Oct 26. I want to ask someone how you plan something like that.



Holly Thomas Ward

I was asked if I had taken "litter juice." I was so shocked that I just answered with the truth... no.



Kathryn McGinnis Whiteley

Stranger: Twins? Me: Yes. Stranger: Did you use IVF? Me: No, we used S-E-X



Sheila Dunkin Wallbrown

Stranger: Are they twins or brothers? Answer: Yes



Endri Dennison

I also hate it when people ask "who's older?" Does three minutes really make my daughter older than my son?



Melissa McFadden

Ha! I loved reading all the comments. :) It's great to know we all get the same 'crazy' questions. Going to the grocery store is the worst. You would think they were alien attractions instead of twins the amount of attention we receive.

In the grocery store:
Stranger: "They twins?"
Me: Yes
Stranger: "Are they both yours?..."
Me: No, just the one in the front is.
Stranger: "I thought so..Cause they look nothing alike!"
I had to just smile. I agree that my 9month old b/g twins favor each other..but, do not look alike. Just 5feet away we are stopped once again.
Stranger #2: "They twins?"
Me: Yes
Stranger #2: "Identical?"
Me: No..Boy & girl.
Stranger #2: "Yes, but they're identical though, right? Because they sure do look alike!"
Me: Well, excluding his penis...I guess they are!
Stranger #2: "I knew it. I knew they were identical!"



Karen O'sullivan

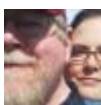
my triplets, you are 5 months old now, I was asked a few months ago "Are they all yours?" Me "yup" Her "Are they boys or girls?" Me "Two girls and a boy" Her "Are all of them identical?" Me "Well since they are different genders, what do you think?" and off we went! Should have turned around to see the look on her face!



Akanbi Taiwo

We are 29yrs old.: Strangers: Are you guys TWINS..? Both: YES, Strangers...OMG, I LOVE YOU.

Some we see both of us and they will feel like asking but they conclude in themselves by saying... YOU GUYS MUST BE TWINS...And we will both SMILE due to the way they we be surprise in asking the question...its amazing being a TWINS



Karen Elliott Bolding

The OB on duty for the weekend I had the twins who are fraternal (one very blonde and one with jet black hair) at 2 days old He asked me "Do you want to set up genetic testing to see if they are identical or not?" Me... "umm no I can tell they are not" him "Ok but they do have the same blood type it might be a possibility" are you serious they are 6 now and don't even look like they are sisters LOL



Amanda Haskett

My twins look nothing alike. One has brown hair and the other has red hair. One is also a head taller. I am at the store- stranger they twins? Me- yes stranger- were they born on different days? Me??



Rebecca Jagers Everett

"Twins?" "Yes" "boy and a girl?" "Yes" "oh, bet you won't do THAT again!"..... Do what? Ovulate with two eggs at the same time?! *roll eyes*

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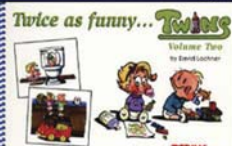
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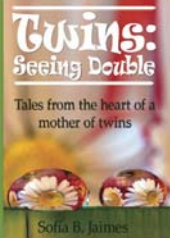
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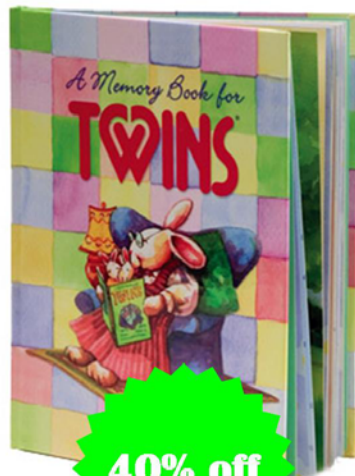
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Double Takes

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 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 Brooke & Benjamin
25 mos.
Canal Winchester, OH



4 Ryan & Kyle
5 mos.
Rochester, NY



5 Logan & Lilly
7 yrs.
Little Rock, AR



6 River & Raine
3.5 yrs.
Cudahy, WI



10 Adele & Avery
15 mos.
Lake Charles, LA



11 Taren & Travis
4 yrs.
Corpus Christie, TX



12 Olivia & Julian
4.5 mos.
Bay Harbor Islands, FL



16 Vaylin & Toryn
2.5 yrs.
Fredonia, KS



17 Amelia & Charlotte
18 mos.
Hopewell Junction, NY



18 Ryan & Rebecca
6 yrs.
Shirley, NY



2 Caroline & Greyson
5 yrs.
Marietta, GA



3 Jackson & Parker
3 yrs.
Austin, TX



7 Miranda & Marissa
3 mos.
Elgin, IL



8 Eli & Gabriel
3 yrs.
Kenner, LA



9 Chloe & Sidney
3 yrs.
Mansfield, TX



13 Annabelle & Ashleigh
14 mos.
Belpre, OH



14 Jakob & Zachary
4.5 yrs.
Milton, FL



15 Eric & Nicole
4 mos.
Oakton, VA



19 Mia & Zoe
4.5 mos.
Kailua-Kona, HI



20 Drake & Lainey
6 mos.
Ocala, FL

Based on Parental Reports

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

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