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Are You a
"True Parent of
Multiples?"
Take our Quiz!



Unique & Rare
Twin-Types

Are They
Identical?
No Way!

10 Tips for
Laughing at Life
in the name of good
health!

Tips to Get
your Toddler
Twins to Eat!

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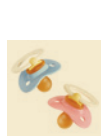
Your Birthday themed twins!

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On the Cover:



Angelina and Michael Sorena from Houston, Texas were just 8-months-old at the time of this photo. They are now 16-months-old and their mom, Amanda believes this photo was the perfect glimmer into the personalities they were already forming. Angelina is mischievous, outgoing, and energetic. Michael is a bit more reserved, cautious, and loving. They are each other's best playmates and they can often find them off in a corner giggling and plotting their next moves. They love each other and their older sister dearly and will no doubt be the perfect complement to each other growing up.

Cover Photo taken by Kelly Chausovsky of Happy Soul Photography

<http://www.happysoulphotography.com>

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Volume 31 Number 2
March/April 2014
Founded in 1984

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www.TwinsMagazine.com

Owned and Published by:

Sterling Investments I, LLC dba:
 TWINS™ Magazine

One Sock, Two Socks, Red Socks, Blue Socks...

I live in a man's world... literally. I proudly live with (5) five males (*my husband and four sons*) and wouldn't change my life for anything... it is what it is. However, with that said having four boys that range in age over a span of 10 years (*ages 6, 11 and 16-year-old twins*), you can only imagine what my laundry piles look like. Yes, I said piles (*plural*) as I don't think I have actually ever gotten completely caught up in the 16 years of parenting and don't even recall when I only had a "as in only one" laundry pile. I do remember way back in the fall of 2010 getting pretty darn close (*for about a minute*) but then I was back to pile(s) within no time.

My laundry room is located downstairs on the bottom level and is not really that big. It functions to strictly clean and dry clothes only. Clothes will get washed and dried (*and sometimes re-washed a few times because I get so busy that I have to leave the load in the washer, thus creating that beloved 'moldy smell' that makes me have to re-wash the load over and over again.*) It's a vicious cycle...

But that's the easy part... washing and drying. Folding on the other hand, gives me the most troubles. Our folding room or "ground zero" as I sometimes refer to this very special place in our home takes up our entire downstairs family room. Typically on any given day, "ground zero" is filled with large piles and piles of clean clothes. Often times, these clean piles end up looking like the Swiss Alps (*mountains of laundry*) and it becomes an overwhelming task nobody in the family wants to tackle.

So, with my coffee in hand, Netflix on the TV and sheer will and determination, I set out to do what no "man" (*in my house*) will do and that is an all-out, folding marathon. I proceed to fold and stack clothes with great precision and accuracy. I don't have time to group socks, though, so I use the "throw all socks in one basket" method and pronounce to the household "this is the official sock box" find socks on your own (*that's the least they can do, right?*)

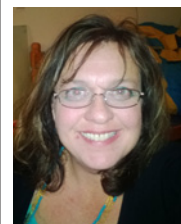
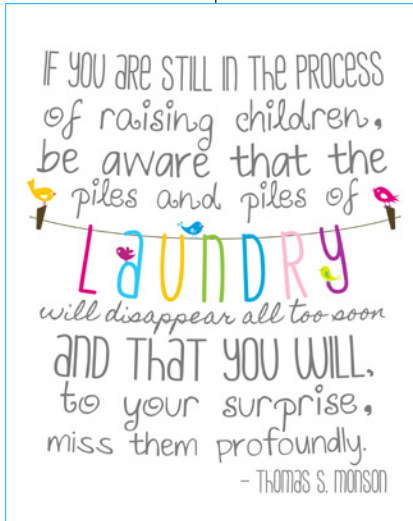
There comes the time when I finally get down to the final item to fold and I am sitting there sur-

rounded by these huge stacks of folded clothes, I take a deep breath and look around only to see another dirty pile forming on the floor yet all I can do is smile. That's right, smile. Why? Well, for now, this is the season of my life... washing (re-washing), drying, folding, stacking and caring for these little men in my life is what I do now. However, it will not always be like this and there will come a time where I will miss all the action of my folding marathons and stacking sessions. That is why when I recently came across this wonderful quote by Thomas S. Monson about this very topic I thought it was worthy of sharing with all of you...

We have another fantastic issue packed with a ton of great tips and information all parents of multiples can use, no matter what age and stage you are currently in!

From pregnancy to pre-school and beyond... we include practical and informative help and advice that you can't get anywhere else on this planet. Inside this issue we tackle topics like: tips for when you have to be on bedrest; tips for parenting twin infants; how to get your toddlers to eat; ways to resolve conflict with your pre-schoolers; and include 10 tips for laughing at life (things we all need!) We also feature great articles on identical twins and their traits; very unique and rare twin-types; and cover the issue of where we are headed in youth sports, all useful information. Plus, be sure to check out all the adorable spring themed "Double Takes" photos from all over the world!

I hope you enjoy this beautiful season of new beginnings and fresh starts and be sure to create fun memories with your kiddos that will last a lifetime! Always remember, they want your TIME and ATTENTION way more than any material things you can give them... (wrinkled clothing and all!)



Sincerely,

Christa D Reed

Christa Reed,
 Editor-in-Chief

Elementary School Seeing Double As Twins Take Over Kindergarten

(Pittsburgh, PA) Every school year, kindergarten teacher Dana Kokos from Burchfield Elementary School in Allison Park, Pennsylvania talks to her students about their class being like a family, but this year, many of the students are family.

The school boasts 10 sets of twins in the building's 2013-14 kindergarten class totaling 98, an unprecedented number for the school with 20 percent of the kindergarteners being twins!

"I've never seen that many," said Kokos, who has two sets of twins in her Burchfield classroom. "It's pretty crazy they're all in kindergarten and all in one school. It's very exciting." "Luckily, we have four classrooms, so we have two to three sets in each one," Burchfield Principal Jeff Rojik said.

It's not just the kindergarten class either. The principal says the first grade at Burchfield has four (4) sets of twins and one set of triplets. Some people are asking... is there something in the water?

"It's crazy," said one twin mom Jamie Murphy. "I didn't have twins in my class until 10th grade of high school, and here, we



have 10 sets in one school. It's nice for them because they don't feel different."

Murphy's children are in Kristine Bork's kindergarten class with two other sets of twins, including their cousins, who are the only identical twins in the Burchfield group. Bork has been an area kindergarten teacher for 14 years, but this is the first time she has experienced three sets of twins in her class.

Bork tries to encourage individuality by separating the twins as much as possible, but during lunch and recess, the four girls in the twin pairs seem to stick together. However, as a teacher, Bork said the twin pairs don't have a large impact on the classroom

dynamics; among the pairs, there are 10 boys and 10 girls and 20 different personalities.

"I wasn't sure how it was going to work, but it seems to work out fine," Bork said. "It's just like having 20 individual kids in the class."

Twin Brothers Stand Up in Solidarity to Help All Children Affected by Cancer



Meet athlete Joey Chamness, who chose to shave his head on Friday, March 14, to stand in solidarity with all children affected by cancer. Joey and his twin brother Robbie always find a way

to schedule in fundraiser activities to support the St. Baldrick's Foundation, despite their rigorous sports practices and school schedules.

The twins and their family became involved with the Foundation in 2005 when Joey was diagnosed with Osteosarcoma at 8 years old. Joey is now cancer free but still sports a bald head once a year. Robbie, decided to take a new approach to fundraising this year, and ran the Big Ten 5k Run in downtown Indianapolis on March 16, as a continued act of support for his brother and a way to raise funds for childhood cancer research.

Despite damage to Joey's leg as a result of his cancer and treatments, he continues to play tennis and shares the court with his brother Robbie on the Catholic Youth Organization basketball team. Robbie is currently captain of his high school's lacrosse team, which holds the title as reigning Indiana High School State Champions. Off the field, these brothers can be found cheering on their favorite home team, the Indianapolis Colts.

The head-shaving is a signature event of the St. Baldrick's Foundation, a volunteer-driven and donor-centered charity dedicated to raising money for childhood cancer research and funding the most promising research initiatives to find cures. To date, the Foundation has raised more than \$20 million through volunteers and shavers like the Chamness twins.

Two (2) Sisters and Two (2) Best Friends give birth to twins in less than 7 Months!

Proud grandma of two sets of twins, Karen Price sent us these photos of both of her daughters and two of their best friends with their twins. In 2012, all four women had twins within six months



Pictured in photo: sisters, Alicia Carpenter Schuster and Sheri Carpenter Czerwinski and best friends, Ashleigh Woznak and Kristen Allen all holding their twins:

Alicia Schuster had identical girls, Addison & Brooklyn, born May 10, 2012

Sheri Czerwinski had identical boys, Casimer & Kylar born, November 28, 2012

Ashleigh Woznak had fraternal boys, Henry & Jaxon, born July 29, 2012

Kristen Allen had fraternal boy/girl twins, Eli & Emma, born September 24, 2012

of one another. They all live close to each other and surely get lots of attention when out in their city of Marine City Michigan with four sets of twins! It's kind of like they have their very own built-in twin-mom support group for sure!



Canadian Photographer Captures the Beauty and Wonder of Newborn Twins!

Stephanie de Montigny is a newborn photographer located in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. She has had the honor of already photographing (3) three sets of newborn twins, and (2) two moms expecting twins and she truly enjoys the entire experience.

"Naturally, raising multiples tends to make the cost of raising a child multiply as well. That's why I don't charge any more for a twin or triplet session than a single baby. One of the only times parents of multiples will have that relief," says Stephanie.

She is always looking for newborn twins/multiples in the Ottawa region and currently has an open casting call for triplets, too! You can learn more about Stephanie and her newborn photography business by visiting:



<http://stephaniesphotographs.com/> or on Facebook at: www.facebook.com/stephaniesphotographs



International Double Takes

In honor of our ongoing media sponsorship with the International Twins Association (ITA) and their upcoming 80th Annual Convention taking place over Labor Day weekend at the Hilton Doubletree Hotel Chicago, we thought it would be fun if we featured some "International" twins submitted by our readers and fans that live all over the world! **To learn more about the upcoming annual ITA convention, be sure to visit: <http://www.intltwins.org>**



Jodi and Erin Lundy, ID,
Age 4,
Sydney, Australia



Eliana & Adina, FR
Age 6-months,
Romania



Imogen Skye & Elissa Sheena-Rae, FR
Age 8 months
South Yorkshire, England



Jimmy & Michael, ID
Age 3
"BIGGA" in NSW Australia



Talloulah-belle & Indie-rose, ID
Age 10 weeks old
Middlesbrough, England



Mia & Zoe, FR
Age 5 1/2 months
Hervey Bay Australia



Antonia & Teodora, FR
Age 2 in photo but now Age 8
Freilassing, Bayern, Germany



Fabian & Julian, FR
Age 6 months old
Freilassing, Bayern, Germany



Laya Grace & Levi Gregory, FR
Age 16 weeks
Alameda, Saskatchewan, Canada



Tygo Finn and Izzy Tess, FR
Age 4
Rotterdam, Netherlands



Sophie & Keely, ID
Age 3-months
Vancouver, Canada



Miley & Marissa, FR
Age 2 1/2
Tweed Ontario Canada

Who's Who in the NICU



Neonatologist: a doctor who is specially trained in the care of premature and sick babies.

Registered nurse: has graduated from an accredited school of nursing; these nurses provide much of the daily care of preemies.

Neonatal nurse practitioner: a registered nurse who has advanced training in neonatal care.

Clinical neonatal nurse specialist: a registered nurse who has additional neonatal training in patient and nurse education.

Social worker: can provide information on nonmedical care, such as insurance coverage, emotional support, and transportation.

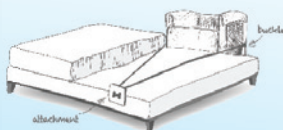
Respiratory therapist: a specialist who provides the respiratory needs of ill babies.

Developmental therapists: help enhance a baby's physical development.

Medical specialists: doctors with further specialized training in such areas as the eyes, heart, lungs, and brain.



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Are You a True Parent of Multiples? Take Our Quiz...

When I was suddenly transformed from a mother of one very independent 5-year-old daughter to a mom with a kindergartner plus twin baby girls, I found that my parenting style relaxed a great deal. If you're like me and catch yourself saying, "Oh well, they can use all the nutrition they can get!" when you see your twin toddlers eating food scraps from last night's dinner off the floor, then this quiz is for you! You may find that you, too, deserve a master's degree in TPM-True Parent of Multiples! Read through each question and circle your answer. When you're finished, see the instructions for calculating your score.

You know you are a parent of multiples when...

You cut their fingernails:

- A. Weekly
- B. When they scratch a sibling while trying to grab a toy
- C. Only when they wake up with big red marks on their cheeks

You cut their toenails:

- A. Weekly
- B. Only if they are exposed while you're cutting their fingernails
- C. When they scratch you during a diaper change (It can happen!)

You change their diapers:

- A. Every three hours, or more if necessary
- B. When your spouse reminds you
- C. Only when you smell that distinctive odor

You feed them:

- A. On a set schedule as the pediatrician advised
- B. Nutritious food, like peas, the rest of the family won't touch
- C. Any time they scream because it's the fastest way to quiet them.

You bathe them:

- A. Daily
- B. When they are really messy
- C. Only if the bathtub has been scrubbed, and who has time for that?

You have time alone with your husband:

- A. Every Friday night when the sitter comes
- B. For a half hour every night between getting the children to sleep and falling asleep yourself
- C. What exactly is time alone again?

You're sure your pediatrician is:

- A. Providing the best possible care for your multiples
- B. Becoming quite wealthy, thanks to you
- C. Refusing to answer the phone because you have awakened him/her for the umpteenth time in the middle of the night with serious concerns about one of your sick twins, trips, quads or quints.

You have them professionally photographed:

- A. On an every-four-months schedule, as the photographer suggested
- B. Only once a year because having all of them fed, clean, rested and smiling by the time you get to the studio leaves you exhausted for the next 12 months
- C. Never again. You did it once and it was such a nightmare you swore off it for good.

You go on overnight trips:

- A. Monthly to visit in-laws
- B. Once in a blue moon because you are an eternal optimist and hope each trip will finally be the one that starts them sleeping away from home
- C. Never again. You did it once and it was such a nightmare you swore off it for good

You hear a child crying or whining and you:

- A. Check it out immediately—someone could be hurt!
- B. Wait five to 20 minutes and see if the noise stops, then check to make sure everyone is okay
- C. Convince yourself that it's the neighbor's kids and cover your head with a pillow

CALCULATING YOUR SCORE

Give yourself 10 points for every 'C' answer; 5 points for every 'B' answer and 1 point for every 'A' answer.

100 points: Congratulations! You are an official TPM and you definitely deserve a break! It's amazing that you even found time to take this quiz. Give yourself a hand for taking 5 minutes from your busy schedule just for you.

50-99 points: You are well on your way to becoming an over-tired, under-appreciated parent of multiples. Either that or your multiples are older and they spend a lot of time playing Wii or at their friend's houses.

10-49 points: You either have a nanny or you are incredibly organized. At any rate, you're making this rest of us look bad. Set your alarm for 2:00 a.m. and 4:00 a.m. every night and stay up for at least 20 minutes each time. This will help you achieve the bags-under-the-eyes look needed to convince people you're a parent of multiples! ♥



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by Amy E. Tracy

What to do if your're Sent to Bed

Amy Tracy is the author of *The Pregnancy Bed Rest Book* available at www.twinsmagazine.com.

When Kelli Campbell, of Dallas, Texas, learned she was carrying twins, she figured she'd have to slow down a little, but she never expected to land on the couch for nearly six weeks. After experiencing labor-like symptoms six months into her pregnancy, Kelli's doctor recommended cutting back on her work as a web master and avoiding stressful situations, such as driving in rush-hour traffic.

But that didn't stop the contractions, and on December 15, 30-year-old Kelli was placed under house arrest—no going to work, no trips to the park with her two-year-old son, not even a drive to the grocery store.

"I tried to stay upbeat, but it was really lonely lying there all day," says Kelli. "At about three or four in the afternoon, I would start going nuts. I just wanted someone to talk to or a project to do."

Feelings of isolation and boredom are common among the over 700,000 women who are prescribed bed rest each

year for pregnancy complications, including premature labor and multiple babies. A little preparation and planning can help pass those long days in waiting. Based on suggestions from those who have been there, the following guide can help you not only survive but thrive while staying off your feet.

LEARN YOUR LIMITATIONS

Bed-rest orders can range from some activity restrictions and

periods of lying down to strict bed rest at home or in the hospital. According to Dr. Judith A. Maloni, a leading researcher on pregnancy bed rest at the Bolton School of Nursing at Cleveland's Case Western Reserve University, "A woman must understand the

"It's important for women to feel supported during their unique pregnancy. Talking with someone who has been down a similar road and who had a good outcome can give an expectant mother a positive outlook."

—Tracy Hoogenboom, co-director of Sidelines National Support Network and mother of triplets

reason her doctor is recommending bed rest, and she must get clear guidelines as to what she can and cannot do. A second opinion from a high-risk obstetrician is a good idea, too."

Some questions to ask:

- Can I continue working full-time or part-time, or will I need to go on temporary disability?
- Can I take care of my children (specify ages and needs), or do I need childcare?
- What household chores can I do, and which ones should I avoid?
- How often and for how long can I get up during daytime hours? (Short walks throughout the day may reduce inactivity's ill effects, such as muscle and cardiovascular weakening.)
- How often can I take a shower or bath?
- Can I eat meals at the dinner table, sitting up in bed, or should I lie down to eat? (A tablecloth thrown on the bed and a bib can catch those crumbs and drips.)
- Can I drive, or be a passenger in a car?
- In what ways can I be intimate with my partner?

WHO TO TURN TO

Sidelines National Support Network
(949) 497-2265 • www.sidelines.org

Mothers of Supertwins (MOST)
(631) 859-1110 • www.Mostonline.org

The Triplet Connection
(209) 474-0885 • www.tripletconnection.org

Bed Rest in Multiple Pregnancy:
www.twinslist.org/bedrest.htm

Pregnancy Bed Rest:
www.pregnancybedrest.com

WHAT TO KEEP ON HAND

Resist the temptation to get up by keeping these items within arms' reach:

- A container of water and a drinking cup (to stay hydrated, try to drink at least eight glasses a day);
- A cooler or dorm-size refrigerator for snacks, meals and drinks;
- Toiletry items in a makeup case or other small bag;
- A tray or table for eating and writing (an ironing board can be lowered and raised to the right level);

- Your smart phone;
- Entertainment equipment, such as a TV, I-pad, computer or tablet;
- A communication device, such as a baby monitor, walkie-talkies, intercom, or bell;
- A storage container, such as a hanging shoe rack with pockets or a three-tiered storage shelf on wheels, to keep craft supplies, reading material, pens and paper, and other necessities nearby.

BEDSIDE PARENTING

"When parents and children join forces during mom's bed rest pregnancy, most children do just fine," says Dr. Deborah S. Simmons, a licensed marriage and family therapist in St. Paul, Minn., who experienced her own bed-rest pregnancy. "The key is to keep life as normal as possible, and to reassure your children that you're still there for them."

Sticking to a regular schedule, including meals, bedtime, and activities, is important. Also, try to follow the same family rules and rituals.

Giving children the opportunity to help you can also make them feel more in control. Even very young children can talk to the baby, rub your tummy, bring you items, and do some meal preparation.

Explain to your children that you can't go to the park or play ball outside, but you can spend time together playing games, coloring, and reading. www.aplacetoremember.com.

LIFTING YOUR SPIRITS

"Being trapped in your home or the hospital, not doing the tasks you normally do, can make you feel inadequate," says Kristine Jablonski, a Placentia, Calif., psychotherapist who was on bed rest herself during two pregnancies. You also have too much time on your hands to worry about your family, household, finances, job, and your babies' health. "For mothers expecting twins, it's double jeopardy. You worry about two lives," says Jablonski.

What can help, she says, is finding ways to gain some control of your situation. Try to keep to a daily routine: take a morning shower and change clothes; eat meals and snacks at regular times; schedule times for naps and visitors. Make to-do lists for helpers, and do small projects from bed that won't cause added stress, such as folding clothes and organizing files.

Celebrating each day that passes can also help. Write a V for victory on a calendar, or light a candle at the end of the day. When a week goes by, share a movie or massage with a loved one. Try not to focus on the length of your bed-rest sentence; a trimester or even a couple of weeks can seem unbearable. Instead, take it one day at a time—and soon, you'll have those babies in your arms. ♥



Make Life a Little Easier ... try these

by Christa D. Reed, Editor-in-Chief

Christa Reed has been the Editor-in-Chief of *TWINS Magazine* since 2007 and currently resides in Colorado with her husband and four sons, including a set of fraternal twins now age 16.



20 Tips with your Twinsfants!

Okay, you survived your twin pregnancy but now it's on to the real challenge, caring for two babies at the same time! You will adjust to this new, exciting, amazing and challenging phase with time and TIPS—lots of them to make your life just a little easier! Take it from me, one who has survived many ages and stages of parenting twins (so far!), always accept advice from those that have already been down this path because they will give you the most helpful AND realistic information you will ever receive. Here's a list of 20 tips for new parents of twins/multiples:

#1 A great way to help you get organized is to consider color coding your babies by assigning each a different color. When you designate a different color to each baby and buy clothes, bottles, and gear in each twin's color it can make life easier in the fog and confusion of constant feedings, diapering and lack of sleep. Another tip: if you are having trouble telling them apart, paint one twin's toenail with that baby's color. To further help friends and family members tell your twins apart, talk about little differences, such as how one's ears are slightly different from the other's, or how one has a dimple when he or she smiles. You can drop the code as they get older, one young pair of color-coded twins thought everyone was color-coded, "The red lady... the green man!"

#2 In the first few days after birth, your babies will wet only a few diapers in a 24-hour period. By the end of the first week, expect at least six to eight soaked diapers and three bowel movements in a 24-hour period.

#3 If your twins are on different formula, color-code their bottles, or write their initials on their bottles with a permanent marker or try wrapping one of the bottles with a rubber band. Never give a bottle with a rubber band to an older baby who could remove it and choke on it.

#4 If you develop tender breasts when you first begin to breastfeed (and who doesn't?), try the soothing sock treatment. Take two athletic socks and fill them about three-quarters of the way with brown rice. Tie a strong knot in the end and toss them in the microwave. The rice retains the heat nicely, will conform to any shape. Nipples unaccustomed to breastfeeding can also suffer. Pure lanolin will comfort actual splits, but so does a little fresh air and sunshine. Sunbathing topless for a few minutes can feel so good, so do gel pads, too!

#5 To keep your breasts fairly equal in size when breastfeeding your twins, alternate twins on each breast because one twin may be a stronger nurser than the other. This will also position the babies' heads in alternating directions each time they nurse.

#6 If your partner is unable to go to doctor's appointments with you, recruit a family member or good friend to help. Lay out your clothes and pack everything you'll need for the outing the night before. Don't forget your list of questions.

#7 Whenever you return from any outing, be sure to clean out and repack your twins' diaper bags. Keep them by the door and they are ready to go. You can even keep a backup bag filled with extras and emergency supplies in the car, too!

#8 To keep interruptions from curious strangers to a minimum try some of these strategies: Place a sign on the stroller such as "Yes, they are "identical" (or "fraternal") twins," or "Yes, my hands are full, but so is my heart." Try hiding the fact that you have twins by carrying one twin in a sling and pushing the other in a stroller. Or have your partner or a friend go with you; each take one baby and divide the shopping list. Feeling tired? Stay home and send someone else. It might help your patience to remember that everyone loves twins and people want to admire your babies. Try to keep it light and enjoy the 100th question as much as the first.

#9 Develop a bedtime routine with your babies. They will love hearing you sing or read to them. It will also promote lifelong enjoyment of music and books. It will also set

a strong precedent which will help when they begin to try to postpone bedtime. Also, to make life much easier in the middle of the night, buy three or four mini-flashlights and place them near cribs and changing tables this makes middle-of-the-night searches for diapers, gowns, onesies and other necessities much easier than fumbling around in the dark.

#10 When babies teethe, their gums swell and they drool. Teething is more painful for some babies than for others. It does not cause diarrhea or fever but it can make your babies fussy. To relieve discomfort, you might consider giving them chilled teething rings or frozen washcloths to chew. Try rubbing your finger on swollen gums with Vanilla. Older babies might like Zwieback toast or Holland rusks.

#11 If you have a fussy baby, think twice before you call him or her colicky. Colic is a name for prolonged fussiness with many possible causes, such as food allergies or an immature digestive tract. Some say that colicky babies follow the rule of threes (3's):

- Colic begins in the first (3) three weeks of life;
- Colic lasts at least (3) three hours a day;
- Colic occurs at least (3) three days a week;
- Colic continues for at least (3) three weeks and;
- Colic seldom lasts beyond (3) three months of age.

#12 Caring for twins generally goes more smoothly if you establish routines. While babies, especially preemies, need to be fed frequently and on demand, you can gradually move to synchronized schedules. If one baby wakes hungry, wait no longer than 10 or 15 minutes before waking the other to feed. After doing this for a period of time, their schedules should begin to mesh, especially if they are monozygotic. If, however, you have babies who balk at adjusting their internal clocks, you may spend more time and energy trying to change their schedules than feeding, bathing or putting them down for a nap sequentially.

#13 Be sure to sleep when your babies sleep. Let the housework wait, or ask your helpers to pitch in with the laundry, cleaning and grocery-shopping. When you are napping, shut off your phone.

#14 When your babies are awake, place them on their tummies for play-time. This will help them learn to roll over and crawl and will help prevent the back of their heads from becoming flattened.

#15 When your twins start to crawl, get on the floor with them. Let them crawl over you, around you and on top of you. Lift each one over your head. One dad wrote that he used his twins as "dumb bells!" You can stretch, do sit-ups and leg lifts while they play around you.

#16 Twins can make a huge mess when learning to eat. Place newspapers under the high chairs and roll up the mess and toss after each feeding. You may find it easier than washing a plastic throw cloth after each meal.

#17 If possible, find a pediatrician who is experienced in caring for multiples. Schedule a block of time with the pediatrician for back-to-back appointments. Some doctors' offices will try to squeeze twins into one appointment. Ask for the extra time you and your children need.

#18 Parents tend to bond with multiples as a unit first, then, as they get to know them as individuals, each one separately. Often one twin stays

in the NICU longer than the other. Some mothers report attaching more closely to the twin that is healthier and more responsive. It may be because she is involved with that twin's care and nurturing earlier and more completely than with the sick twin's care. If you experience this, you may have to work at developing a relationship with your less responsive baby. Also, compared with singletons who attach most strongly to their parents, twins also attach to each other, especially monozygotic twins. Researchers have observed the reactions of 1-year-old twins when their mothers left them alone together in a room. Only two of the monozygotic (identical) pairs cried, while 12 of the Dizygotic (fraternal) pairs did.

#19 Monozygotic (identical) twins typically teethe around the same time. Mirror image twins probably will get their first teeth on opposite sides of their mouths. Dizygotic (fraternal) twins' first teeth may come in months apart. Most babies get their first teeth between 3 and 18 months.

#20 Don't allow yourself to become isolated from the world. Try to get out of the house every day, even if it is just for a stroll around the block. Fresh flowers can brighten a house and your mood.

Join a local Parents of Multiples club. The best support you can find is from those who know the ropes, who have traveled your road before you. Those are the parents who fully understand what it is like to take two babies to a doctor's appointment, to the park or to a local business. They know the meaning of exhaustion, the heartache of the NICU and the exhilaration that comes with every milestone for a preemie. You can find a local club by visiting the "Multiples of America" website at: http://www.nomotc.org/index.php?option=com_clubsearch&Itemid=43 ♥

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Are Your Toddlers Picky Eaters?

TIPS ON GETTING YOUR TODDLER TWINS TO EAT! *Compiled by editors at TWINS Magazine*



We receive lots of emails and messages from readers and fans who can't seem to get their toddler twins to eat and the issues that go along with this ongoing struggle. We thought it would be very helpful to include some of the emails and advice we have received from other mothers of multiples and advice from an expert that can help get your picky eaters back on track...

Amy of Lansdale Pennsylvania writes: "I am a mother of 2-year-old twin girls and am having a hard time getting them to eat dinner. Kelsey is a big eater; Kira sometimes picks at one or two pieces of food, but usually does not eat anything at all. She cries to get down from the table. Letting her down makes Kelsey, who would eat, want to get down, too! The last time I took them to the doctor, Kira had lost some weight. After that, I gave her whatever she wanted—cereal, baby food, etc. Some people say I should give them anything they want so that Kira will not

continue to lose weight; others tell me that by doing this my twins will never learn "this is what is for dinner." With the two instigating each other, I do not know what to do. Please help!"

ADVICE FROM OTHER MOMS

I'm a mother of 3-year-old twin boys and I'm experiencing the same problems. I have found that they eat much better if they eat as soon as we are home in the afternoon. If the picky eater is having problems eating, I just make sure he gets something such as milk, pudding or grilled cheese that I know he will eat. Usually, if we eat dinner right away he will eat. Just remember when they get hungry they will eat. I don't like forcing them to eat; it makes dinner time unpleasant.

—Patsi Johnson, Centralia, ILL

I have 27-month old boy/girl twins. Sometimes they don't eat as well as I would like. Snacking before meal time and drinking a lot of juice will fill them up, causing them to be less likely to be hungry enough to eat. I came up with some ideas to get them to eat that might work:

Never let the other one down until both are finished eating. Give the first one finished a toy or read a book to both while they are eating.

Play games with them. One of these is I shut my eyes and tell them I'm waiting for the bunny to eat the food off my spoon. Then I act surprised when the food is gone.

Let them prepare their food. They can help pour drinks, crack eggs or mix items together in a bowl.

If they don't eat at dinner, save their plates and give it to them as bedtime snacks. But, you must decide if a food you serve is something they just don't like.

—Edie Shultz, Denver, CO

I have 18-month-old twin girls, one of whom eats great. I give them what I know they will eat and sometimes feed them baby food. I don't let the other one down from the table until both have eaten. You have to train them that when it's meal time, it's time to eat and not time to play games. I am a single mother and it's hard, but in the long run it turns out to be easy.

—Michelle Eshelman, Scio, OR

I have 2-year-old twin boys and one also refuses meals while his brother eats enough to get by. We try feeding them later in the evening, around 6:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. I have found that they ask for more and play with the food less if we give them small portions, one at a time. First, we give them a small portion of vegetables, then take it away and give them a small portion of our main dish. If you give them drinks all day, it suppresses their appetites. Our doctor also put my boys on PediaSure, a nutritional formula for toddlers, and it has helped. Check with your doctor about their weight gain, too!

—Sara Ferry, Tampa Bay, FL

I have 2 ½-year-old fraternal twin boys. The picky eater, who weighs 10 pounds less than his brother who is a big eater, frequently says "don't like it" and throws the food on the wall, floor or at me. It sounds as if your twins are sitting in a chair at a table for meals. I tried this, and it was a major free-for-all. High chairs are the best way to get them to settle down and eat. I always have something he likes already on the tray (when I put him in it). I have the food already prepared and serve small amounts at a time. I let him have crayons and paper or small toys to extend the "sitting" time.

I am a Registered Dietitian, so getting my picky eater to eat is very important to me. I received some valuable advice from the feeding clinic at Children's Hospital in Buffalo, where I take my son because his height and weight skirts the bottom of the growth chart. They gave me "The Food Rules" that includes, among other rules, regular meal and snack times, seated in the high chair or table, and only water between meals. This has helped relieve my anxiety, because if he doesn't eat a meal or snack well, another scheduled time is soon coming to make it up. I also try and make every bite count by making it nutritionally and calorically dense; I add milk powder to the milk for extra protein, grind up nuts and seeds and add them along with wheat germ to his peanut butter, make high calorie milkshakes, etc.

Although you don't want to feel like a short-order cook in an all night diner, I think you have to respect each individual's food preferences. Always have an alternate on hand that you know they will like if they don't like what's being served. To my dismay, he loves "junk food," which I let him have in small amounts. What your child eats over the course of a week or so matters, not that one meal or that one day. Following these tips, my son has shown a gradual, steady weight gain. My good eater has learned to sit in his high chair and continue eating leisurely while his brother, always on the go, may need to get up before the rest of us and go play.

—Susan Natali, Buffalo, NY

I am a mother of 18-month-old twin boys and also have a 4 ½ year old boy. My twins, although full-term, have a lot of medical issues including a very rare disease called Diamond Blackfan Anemia. They do not produce red blood cells. Michael weighs 25 pounds now but gets a little help from the prednisone he is taking. Andrew is only 18 pounds. When I feed them, one watches the other to see if he will eat a food. If one won't eat, the other won't, so I have them sit back to back. If they don't eat much, I go to the next part of the meal. As far as having a toddler that doesn't eat, give them what you know they will eat. It could be that they might have an underlying problem like reflux, which would make eating uncomfortable. You might also benefit from taking your picky eater to a dietitian.

—Donna M. McCaughey, Havertown, PA

WHAT DO THE EXPERTS SAY?

Patricia Malmstrom, M.A., director of Twin Services Consulting and co-author of "The Art of Parenting Twins" gives parents some good advice. ... Of course any parent is worried when one child doesn't seem to be eating properly. You want your toddlers to eat and to eat well. To achieve both goals provide them with a comfortable atmosphere in which to have meals and nutritious food which appeals to their individual tastes and appetites.

Keep in mind that toddlers have immature digestive systems. Not all are ready or able to adapt to three meals a day. In fact, some adults feel much better on several small meals a day, rather than three large ones. How do you meet their needs and maintain a semblance of household order? I remember a family much like yours that eliminated dinner time struggles by letting the children eat meals earlier and at their own low table in the kitchen. Afterwards, the girls were welcome to join the rest of the family at the dinner table or to play nearby. Seated at their own table, unworried about keeping up with their grown-ups, they relaxed. Their parents kept a variety of healthy foods available on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator so that they could eat whenever hunger struck. At meal times the girls served themselves foods which they helped to set out on their table. Research tells us that when they are allowed to choose, children will eat what they truly need. Their choices during one day may not resemble a balanced diet but will be balance over a longer stretch of time.

Once they were freed from the pressure of adult expectations the children became more interested in food and began to help prepare it. They mixed the frozen orange juice, measured rice into the cooking pot, spread peanut butter on bread. A messy process at first, but as their skills improved they became truly helpful in the kitchen. A favorite story in their family was Bread and Jam for Frances by Russell Hoban. Your little ones might enjoy it, too! ♥



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

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



by Katherine Wexler

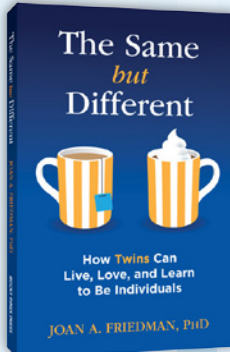
tells your children immediately that this issue is non-negotiable. Things like hitting or scratching or pushing aren't up for debate, they're just not OK. Usually it doesn't even matter why one twin pushed the other, or who started it. The behavior is wrong and has to stop. Here's where your twins can 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 fights, either with each other or with you. That means deciding how and when to discuss and debate. ♥

DEALING WITH THE CHALLENGES OF BEING

A TWIN?



"The Same but Different presents a stunning, in-depth look at the lives of adult twins as they face the twin challenges of closeness and independence, love and resentment in their evolving relations with each other."

—Nancy L. Segal, PhD, author of *Born Together—Reared Apart*

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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 your 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.





They're Identical? No Way!

by Nancy L. Segal

Identical twin partners, on average, show greater physical similarity than do any other pair of relatives. It is, however, a common misconception that the physical characteristics of identical twins (such as height, weight or hand preference) are always exactly the same. There are many observable differences between identical twins that have been documented in the scientific literature, some of which are more apparent than others.

Identical twins also vary with respect to how identical they appear to others and to themselves. Some identical twins and their families are persuaded that the twins are not identical, despite the fact that other people confuse them. This may be explained by the increased sensitivity of twins and their close relatives to subtle differences between them (such as slight differences in expressivity, or differences in facial markings such as birth marks or moles.)

Individuals outside the twinship may readily distinguish between some twin partners, but may have difficulty distinguishing between other twin pairs. The uncertainty of some twins and their families with respect to true twin type may be associated with contradictions between medical reports and their own observations.

A SIMPLE MATTER OF CAUSE AND EFFECT

The source of physical differences between identical twins is almost always environmental in origin. This is because identical twins share 100 percent of their genes, having formed from the division of a single fertilized egg. There are, however, various intrauterine environmental events that may be associated with differences in appearance. In fact, when the various sources of differences are consid-

ered, it seems somewhat surprising that most identical twins are as alike as they are.

Delayed splitting of the fertilized egg has been associated with reversals in some anatomical traits in identical twins. They include direction of hair whorl (clockwise or counterclockwise); fingerprint patterns (lines on the left hand of one twin mirror the lines on the right hand of his co-twin); handedness (one is left-handed, the other right-handed); facial asymmetries (such as larger eye on opposite sides of the face); and dental patterns (opposite cross-bites). Any combination of these reversals may be observed depending upon the timing and location of the split. Processes associated with splitting have also been associated with more extreme twin differences in physical features. In some cases, one member of an identical twin pair may display cleft lip and palate, or spina bifida (failure of the neural tube to close), while the twin partner will be unaffected.

In some cases, twin fetuses may receive unequal nutritional supplies from the mother. When the situation is not severe, this could possibly result in slight differences in size. When the situation becomes more extreme, such as in cases of a detached placenta, more obvious differences may be apparent. As a graduate student, I identified such a case involving identical twin females. At age 8 years, these sisters showed a height difference of five inches and a weight difference of nine pounds.

The fetal transfusion syndrome, or shared blood circulation, also called Twin-to-Twin-Transfusion Syndrome (TTTS) is another prenatal condition that has been associated with twin differences in health characteristics. There are two forms of this condition, chronic and acute. The chronic condition involves blood transfusion between identical twins who share a chorion, the outer membrane

surrounding each fetus. Marked discrepancies in size, or even death to one or both fetuses, may result. Elizabeth M. Bryan, MD at the Queen Charlotte's and Chelsea Hospital in London, England, explains that the donor twin is typically the smaller twin whose development is checked by a loss of nutrients.

In contrast, the acute form of the condition occurs during labor and also affects identical twins who share a chorion. The twins may, however, be of similar birth weight. Immediate treatment of both twins is usually required to avoid cardiac failure.

It is well known that identical twins show larger birth weight differences, on average, than fraternal twins. This finding may be associated, in part, with the various prenatal influences cited above which uniquely affect identical twins.

ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

I was associated with the Minnesota Study of Twins Reared Apart from 1982 to 1991. It was striking to observe the various physical differences between some identical twins that were associated with differences in their rearing. I recall a pair of identical females who differed in the extent to which they had received medical attention as children. One twin had, for example, undergone orthodontic procedures, while her co-twin had not. This difference led to subtle variations in their facial structure.

Places of residence can also contribute to identical twin differences in appearance. Differential exposure to sunlight can differentially alter the tone and quality of skin. This can, in some cases, cause one twin to look older than the other. Similar effects can be achieved in the event that one twin smokes and the other does not. Adult female twins also tend to show greater weight differences than adult male twins. Interestingly, adult male twins reared apart are as similar in weight as adult male twins reared together. Weight differences between female twins have been explained with reference to differences in pregnancy, dietary habits and/or exercise program.

“I GOTTA BE ME”

Adolescence is a period when individuals may confront issues involving their identities, and may be tempted to experi-

ment with new styles of dress, activities, friends, etc. Certainly, some identical twin adolescents face such situations, although differentiation from their co-twins may pose additional issues. Some co-twins may prefer to emphasize (or even create) physical differences between them, by means of hairstyle or dress. Such differences may persist or may disappear with time, depending upon life history events and the twins' particular personalities.

Psychological studies demonstrate that identical twins tend to make similar choices regarding dress and lifestyle, so that similarities in appearance may be likely, following divergence during adolescence. This may be especially true if twins being living apart due to different educational or occupational opportunities; if the twin partner is not continually present, then the need to appear different may not longer be present.

IN THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER

Several years ago, I compared mothers' accuracy in judging twin type with indices provided by various physical measures, such as blood type. 14% of the parents provided opinions that were inconsistent with the twins' final classification as identical or fraternal. This finding may be explained in part, by the enhanced sensitivity of parents to subtle physical differences between identical twins. My research indicated that a twin researcher who is unfamiliar with the twins is a more accurate judge of twin type than a parent.

Just as some identical twins appear to be more alike than others, some identical twins will enjoy looking more alike than others. This attitude should be respected on the part of family members and others. Of course, accidents or illnesses may sometimes impose physical differences on identical twins. It is, however, possible to enjoy the benefits of identical twinship even in the absence of identical physical identity. An important advantage of identical twinship is the support and understanding that are often uniquely available from this specialized partnership and bond. ♥

Nancy L Segal, Ph.D., is an associate professor in the department of psychology and is the Director of Twin Studies at California State University, Fullerton.

WHY IDENTICALS AREN'T ALWAYS “IDENTICAL”

- A common misconception is that the physical characteristics of identical twins (such as height, weight or hand preference) are always exactly the same.
- The source of physical differences between identical twins is almost always environmental in origin. This is because identical twins share 100 percent of their genes, having formed from the division of a single fertilized egg.
- Delayed splitting of the fertilized egg has been associated with reversals in some anatomical traits in identical twins including direction of hair whorl; fingerprint patterns; handedness; facial asymmetries; and dental patterns.
- In some cases, one member of an identical twin pair may even display cleft lip and palate, or spina bifida (failure of the neural tube to close), while the twin partner will be unaffected.
- Twin fetuses may receive unequal nutritional supplies from the mother; and, depending on the severity of the problem, this can result in slight or marked physical differences between identical twins.
- Identical twins show larger birth weight differences, on average, than fraternal twins.
- Some rare cases of genetic differences exist between identical twin partners. It can happen that, after fertilization, the chromosomes may fail to assort properly, resulting in identical twins with marked physical differences.
- Many adolescent twins prefer to emphasize (or even create) physical differences between them, by means of hairstyle or dress, to increase their recognition as individuals.
- Psychological studies demonstrate that adult identical twins tend to make similar choices regarding dress and lifestyle, so that similarities in appearance may be likely, following divergence during adolescence.
- Accidents or illnesses may sometimes impose physical differences on identical twins.

Have you heard of these

by Christa D. Reed

Rare & **UNIQUE** Twin Types?



When most people think of twins they think they are either Dizygotic (fraternal) twins that result when two eggs are fertilized or Monozygotic (identical) twins that come from a single fertilized egg that splits; but there are other types of rare and unique twin types that you may not have heard about. Here is a run-down of some of the twin-types that are quite unusual and a rare in our twin-world:

Polar Body Twins or “Half Identical”

What happens when the egg splits and then each half meets a sperm? That’s what scientists and researchers propose happens when polar body or “half-identical” twins are formed... twins who are very much alike but aren’t a 100% DNA match sharing about 75% of their genetic DNA which is less than identical twins but more than fraternal twins. To date, polar body twinning remains a theory and there is no definitive tests to confirm whether you are carrying polar body twins even though there have been cases confirmed.

Semi-Identical Twins

A type of twinning identified as identical on the mother’s side but sharing only half their father’s genes, these rare twins develop when two sperm fertilize a single egg, forming a triploid, which then split. In 2007, the Journal of Human Genetics described cases where one twin was a hermaphrodite (someone who is born with a discrepancy between their internal genitalia and

external genitalia) being raised as a female, with both testicular and ovarian structures, while the other is anatomically male. Semi-identical twinning is distinguished from Polar Body twinning because the egg was fertilized by two sperm before splitting.

Boy/Girl Monozygotic (Identical) Twins

Identical twins are always the same gender because they form from a single zygote that contains either male (XY) or female (XX) sex chromosome. In the past there have been a few reported cases of a genetic mutation in some male twins where one twin loses a Y chromosome and develops as a female. The female twin would then be afflicted with Turner's Syndrome, a genetic disorder in girls caused by a missing or defective X (female) chromosome. It occurs in 1 of 2,000-2,500 live female births. There are many different features associated with the syndrome and not all girls have all symptoms but typically they are short in stature and lack ovarian development, have hearing disorders, abnormal fingernails, toenails and drooping eyelids (Ptosis). The only other time where there would be gender differences in identical twins would be if one twin had a sex change operation.

Mirror Image Twins

Mirror image twins make up about 25% of identical twins and happen when the fertilized egg splits late - more than a week after conception. Twins can develop reverse asymmetric physical features like having birthmarks on opposite sides of their body, hair whorls that swirl in opposite directions and may be right and left handed. So when these type of twins face each other, they would appear to be exact reflections of each other like looking in a mirror.

Superfetation: Twins Conceived Separately

Typically, when a woman's egg is fertilized, her cycle is interrupted and her ovulation will cease. However, rarely, an egg can be released while she is already pregnant, thus resulting in twins that are conceived at different times. This happens when eggs from two separate menstrual cycles are released as opposed to normal fraternal (Dizygotic) twins where multiple ova are expelled in a single cycle. This is quite a rare occurrence in humans but is quite common in animals and usually results in a twin or higher-order multiple pregnancy where the fetuses show an obvious difference in gestational development. There was a case back in 2009 when a woman became pregnant with two babies due to superfetation. Ultrasound revealed that this Arkansas mom was pregnant with two babies conceived about two and a half weeks apart.

Heteropaternal Superfecundation: Twins with Different Fathers

When you read the definition for twins it says... "Twins are two babies who are simultaneously born from one mother." (Encyclopedia Britannica) You can see that it only refers to the mother but what about the fathers? We know that when a woman releases multiple eggs in a single cycle that is known as hyper-ovulation and result in fraternal twins. Superfecundation happens when the eggs are fertilized by sperm from separate incidences of sexual intercourse. Like in cases when a woman has sex with different partners, ultimately the twins could have different fathers and the term is called heteropaternal superfecundation. Genetic testing and advances in technology have made it more evident that twins can have two different fathers

and only applies to fraternal twins, not identical twins. This situation can also occur when twins are the result of fertility treatments. In 1995, there was one case of Dutch twins that were a result of In Vitro Fertilization or IVF and there was a mix up in the lab when a piece of lab equipment had been accidentally used twice which caused another man's sperm to be mixed in with the fathers and was fertilized with the mother's sperm. When delivering their twins, they immediately knew something was not right when one baby was white and the other baby was very dark. You can read more about this case here which was covered by Dateline NBC.

Twins of Different Races: So rare... the odds against this — a million to one!


As mentioned above, Heteropaternal superfecundation can explain cases of fraternal twins with differing racial characteristics. The case above was due to a lab mix-up during an IVF procedure. However, in the United Kingdom back in 2005 and described as a "one in a million" occurrence, fraternal twin girls were conceived from two bi-racial parents and each inherited different genetic characteristics from their mixed race parents. So essentially one is white and the other is black. For this rare occurrence to take place there must be a combination of circumstances starting at the exact moment of conception. This can happen when both parents are mixed race; each is conceived from a separate egg fertilized by separate sperm (fraternal); and each sperm and egg must carry the genes for a particular skin color (i.e., black/black or white/white).

Conjoined Twins

Conjoined twins are identical twins that do not fully separate from each other due to the incomplete division of the fertilized egg. The individuals will be connected at certain points of the body, and may share tissue, organs or limbs. The occurrence is rare and is estimated to be about 1 in 200 sets of identical twins are born conjoined or about 1 in 85,000 births.

Parasitic Twins

A type of conjoined twins that develops asymmetrically, with a smaller, less formed twin dependent on the stronger, larger twin. In Cairo, Egypt back in 2005, there was a case of Parasitic twins that gained worldwide notoriety and even featured on the Oprah Show. Manar Maged was born with a second head attached at the skull to her own. While the head could blink and smile, it was not capable of independent life. The weight of the appendage would prevent Manar from crawling or sitting upright, prompting surgeons to remove it when she was ten-months-old. A thirteen-hour surgery was performed on February 19, 2005 to remove the attached head. The girl was released from intensive care in March 2005. She passed away from a brain infection shortly before her second birthday on March 25, 2006.

A variation of parasitic twinning is fetus in fetu, where an abnormally formed mass of cells grows inside the body of its identical twin. It survives during pregnancy, and even occasionally after birth, by tapping directly into the blood supply of the host twin. This report describes an Indian man whose fetus in fetu was discovered as an adult. 

Christa D. Reed has been the Editor-in-Chief of TWINS Magazine since 2007 and currently resides in Colorado with her husband and four sons, including a set of fraternal twins age 16.

by Janet Bailey



10 TIPS FOR LAUGHING AT LIFE

...in the name of good health

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

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

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

#1. Remember that everyone can have a sense of humor.

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

"When you talk to people about humor, they usually think of jokes and comedy," says C. W. Metcalf, president of a company in Fort Collins, Colorado that trains business people in how to use humor. "But less than two percent of us are capable of remembering and telling jokes. Humor is much broader than that. It's a set of skills that anyone can learn to develop. It's a sense of perspective, of being able to look at things in an offbeat way; it's a sense of joy in being alive."

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

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

#3. Recognize what makes you laugh and put more of it in your life.

Does your taste run to Stand-up comedy or Comedy Central? Bugs Bunny? Sunday funnies? Which TV sitcoms do you like? Which writers make you laugh? Once you've figured out what amuses you most, Dr. Fry suggests, start a humor library. Collect your favorite books, cartoons, DVDs, films and just funny gadgets. Then, when you're having trouble seeing the bright side, head for your stash for a quick pick-me-up.

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

If you're having trouble seeing the humor in a situation, Goodheart says, describe it in a deliberately light way: "The IRS is auditing me, tee-hee." The ridiculousness of that sentence tickles the funny bone, helping you to change the way you look at it.

You might try adopting the paradoxical approach. When you can't seem to laugh about a problem, try the opposite. Tell yourself this is no laughing matter and nothing can make you laugh about it. Usually the harder we try not to laugh, the more irresistible the urge becomes.

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

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

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

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

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

"One couple remembered the day they made love outdoors – and the lawn chair folded up on them! They chose the

words 'lawn chair' and agreed that whenever either one of them evoked that phrase, their argument would stop," Goodheart says "It always made them laugh and broke the tension and helped them resolve the problem."

Mihalap's family adopts a foreign accent when touchy subjects arise. "My husband is Russian, my father is Greek, and I'm a Southerner," she says. "So ever since our kids were small, we've found a lot of humor in the way people speak. If they are getting on each other's nerves, they'll start talking in a heavy Russian accent. Even if one of them knows there's a reprimand there, it's easier to take when it's said in a funny way."

Joking with someone around whom you're usually serious can add a new dimension to the relation. "This is an assignment I give my students," says Mindess. "I tell them to think about it beforehand, because it isn't always appropriate. But the ones who try it report remarkable results. You can really break through to a new level of intimacy, openness and relaxation with another person this way."

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

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

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

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

And what feeds that love better than laughter? 

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DoubleSpeak DILEMMA

by Craig Chappelow

As if it weren't already difficult enough being the father of multiples on a day-to-day basis, I just discovered something that has fractured the very foundation of my value system. What I realized is this: women lie all the time. Apparently this is completely accepted, if not expected, in the world of women. The kinds of lies that I am referring to are not the kind that would land a woman in jail or subject her to a tax audit. These are lies that women tell for the preservation of peace and the overall good of global society. Here is how it works: women mean one thing, but (here comes the tricky part) they say the opposite.

Craig Chappelow of Greensboro, N.C., is a product director at the Center for Creative Leadership and is a father of three, including twin boys.

Take this example. One woman, we'll call her Lisa, sees her co-worker, Mona, walking down the hallway toward her. Lisa notices that Mona has a new haircut. It is so ragged and patchy that it looks like it could be the result of severe radiation poisoning. Lisa and Mona pass in the hallway. Let's listen in:

Lisa: "Hey, you got your hair cut."
Mona: "Thanks."

As a guy, you probably missed the complex set of falsehoods and half-truths that lay just below the surface of this conversation. Ha. I

used to be just like you—naïve, believing everything I heard, taking the comments of women at face value. But now, I am much wiser. Please, allow me to translate this interaction for you.

Lisa: "That is the worst haircut I have ever seen, and I'm trying very hard not to stare at it. You look like Genghis Khan."

Mona: "I know it is awful, but I paid \$80.00 for it, and I'm just going to wait for it to go away."

Lisa: "I agree, it is horrendous, but the same thing may happen to me someday, so I am being supportive."

Mona: "Thanks, I'm glad we had this little talk."

Once I cracked this code, I realized that women lie to me all the time. But, being a guy, I was not able to hear it. Their criticisms and barbs bounced off me like the ultra high frequency from a dog whistle.

I can remember times when, while spending time out in public with my 2-year-old twin boys and their 4-year-old brother, women would compliment me on my care and attentiveness to my kids. And I thought they meant it. Sucker! Now I recognize their comments for what they are—a mixture of pity and skepticism carefully wrapped in a thin veneer of care and compliments. I do not fall for it anymore and neither should you, dads!

Fathers of twins must strive to become more defensive listeners. Otherwise we all wander through the rest of our lives slack-jawed and naïve, taking comments at face value in a sad, literal existence. In the interest of rescuing other dads from this fate, I have put together this handy translator for your use.

So be alert and do not be drawn into the comments of women without conducting a careful analysis. Remember, if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. By the way, may I say that you look just as young, fit and handsome as you did before your twins were born? And I really mean that. I am so glad we had this little talk.

DAD OF TWINS TRANSLATOR....

More of what women say and what they 'really' mean

What they tell you: "Twins MUST run in your family"

What they 'really' mean: "You probably took fertility treatments."

What they tell you: "What beautiful twins!"

What they 'really' mean: "They don't look anything like you."

What they tell you: "This must have brought you and your wife closer"

What they 'really' mean: "During the fertility treatments, did you have to give your wife shots in the butt?"

What they tell you: "Does your wife still work?"

What they 'really' mean: "I am a radical feminist who hates you and the correct answer better be yes, after all you did to her."

What they tell you: "Which one was born first?"

What they 'really' mean: "I have run out of things to talk to you about."

What they tell you: "Does flying bother their ears?"

What they 'really' mean: "Please, dear God, don't make me sit near those kids on this airplane."

What they tell you: "I always thought I would love to have this sideshow of yours for 15 minutes"

What they 'really' mean: "That is, until I watched your little twins."

What they tell you: "Do you always dress them so cute?"

What they 'really' mean: "Shouldn't that one be wearing pants, too?"

What they tell you: "You and your wife must have a strong relationship."

What they 'really' mean: "What's it like to know you will never have sex again?"

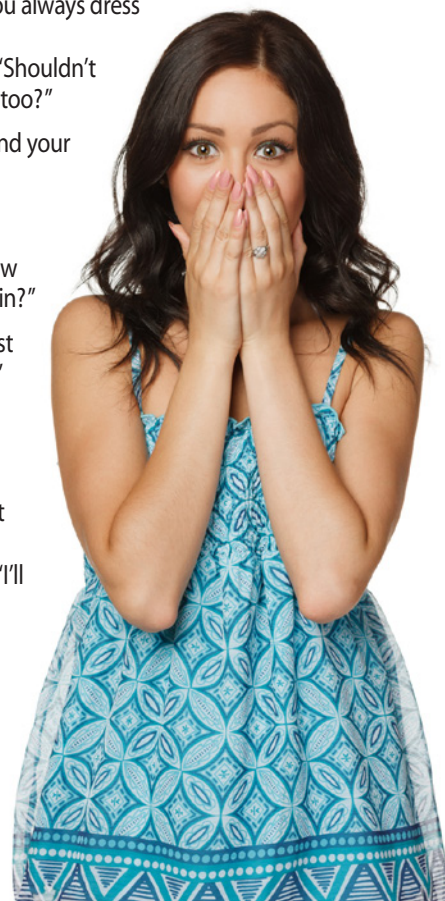
What they tell you: "It must be expensive raising twins."

What they 'really' mean: "Especially after all of those fertility treatments."

What they tell you: "I'll bet your home is busy!"

What they 'really' mean: "I'll bet your home smells like a stable."

What they tell you: "This must be your chance to bond with your sons." ♥





Run RABBIT Run

by Jacqueline Davidson Kopito and Amy Davidson Lombardo

Growing up, I never wanted a pet. Because I was allergic to cats and dogs, I was never an animal person. Even though my identical twin sister Amy was also allergic to cats and dogs, she never stopped loving all types of animals. Even while sneezing and scratching her itchy eyes, she would keep playing with the neighborhood cats and dogs which I never quite understood.

When we were in the 6th grade a lot of our friends were getting pets, but it never bothered me that we didn't have one. This wasn't the case with Amy, who pleaded with my parents every night to buy her a pet. After months of pleading, my parents finally gave in and told us that we could get a small pet. Because of our allergies, cats and dogs were out. That left either a goldfish or a bunny rabbit. I didn't care one way or the other so I let Amy make the decision.

One morning, we piled into the car and headed to the pet store. On the drive over, I starting getting curious and asked Amy, "So, what is it going to be, a goldfish or a bunny rabbit?" She didn't answer me and was giving me the cold shoulder because she couldn't understand how I didn't want a pet. As soon as we got to the pet store and I saw Amy staring at the rabbits with a huge smile on her face, I knew that the fish had been ruled out. Amy motioned for me to come and look at the cute little rabbit that she had just found. However, what Amy saw and I saw were two different things. Amy saw a soft and fluffy white rabbit and was excited just looking at it. On the other hand, I saw a much bigger hamster...Ugh!

The decision had been made; the rabbit was coming home with us. During the car ride home my twin wanted to name the pet and was asking if I liked any of her suggestions. She still wanted my opinion, after all, I was her twinny. After rejecting at least 10 names she ultimately decided it would be called "Fluffy." I finally agreed to "Fluffy" even though I didn't think it was very original.

Over the next few days, Amy spent most of her time playing with Fluffy. Before school she would feed her, and after school she would play with her and comb her hair. Before bedtime she would check to make sure that Fluffy was happy and then wished her a good night. Amy obviously loved Fluffy. I thought that over time Fluffy would grow on me and I would come to love her too, but that never happened. Although I never played with her, I did make sure she was fed when Amy wasn't around. After all, even if I didn't love her, I didn't want her dying of starvation.

One day, Amy had a ton of homework, so she asked me and our Mom to clean Fluffy's cage, which was the last thing I wanted to do. Not wanting to disappoint Amy or Mom, I helped her carry the cage to the front yard where we had our garden hose. Mom laid down a large beach towel on the grass so Fluffy could roam around and asked me to keep an eye on her while she emptied the cage and hosed it down. I must have gotten distracted because when I looked down I

didn't see Fluffy anywhere. I tried to remain calm as I started looking around the front yard. Where could she have gone so fast? As panic began to set in, I had a thought. Fluffy must be having fun out of the cage; she'd been cooped up in a cage for so long. Maybe it was best that she was now free.

All of a sudden, I saw Fluffy hopping down the driveway and I started yelling "Run rabbit, run!" I was thinking that she would finally be free, and I was determined to help her escape. But then I heard Amy shriek "Fluffy is headed towards the sewer, stop her!" Then before I knew it, I saw Amy running like crazy towards the sewer where she quickly scooped up Fluffy just before she made it in. With tears streaming down her face Amy held this tiny ball of fluff close to her chest, and in that moment I realized just how important Fluffy was to her.

For the next hour, Amy and I played with Fluffy and I started to understand how Amy loved her so much. Fluffy was an innocent little friend who brought joy and happiness to Amy who in exchange gave Fluffy love, food and a clean home. Even though I still felt bad that Fluffy had to live in a cage most of the time, I now knew that I never wanted her running away again and promised Amy that I would always look after her because that is what a good twinny does for each other. I guess you could say that the little fluff ball finally grew on me.

Final Twinny Thought: Pets are great friends! ♥



by Pamela Fierro

Safety in

One of the most harrowing experiences of my life was driving home from the hospital with my newborn twins in the car. There they were, secured in their infant car seats. We'd carefully chosen these seats to offer the ultimate in safety, but now they'd seem worthless and powerless to protect the tiny, tender bodies they encased. I couldn't bear to sit in the front seat where I couldn't see my babies, so I sat between them in the back seat of our Toyota Camry while my husband drove—VERY SLOWLY—the 15 miles or so back to our home.

My head swiveled ceaselessly between the two car seats, checking every breath. Each bump and pothole was a menacing jostle. Every other car on the highway was a speeding bullet aimed right at my heart. I wanted to scream at the other drivers. "HEY! Slow down! Can't you see there are baby twins here? I've kept them safe inside me for the last 36 weeks, but now they're HERE! Out in the open! I've got to keep them safe!"

I'm sure everyone feels this same sense of trepidation as they start on the road to parenthood. However, I think I felt particularly overwhelmed by the idea that I had two precious babies to protect from the evils of the big, bad world. How would I do it? Who would I grab for first when evil threatened?

Fast forward ten years to a bright summer day. It was the inauguration of a big milestone in my twins' lives. I was allowing them to ride their bikes to the neighborhood swim club – on their own. It's about a half mile ride, with a paved bike path the whole way and no major streets to cross. I had agreed to this big step of independence—this freedom ride—on one condition: that they'd stay together. I was allowing them to venture out in the big, bad world on their own because there were two of them.

One of a parent's biggest challenges is keeping their child safe, protecting them from the dangers and pitfalls of the world. For parents of twins, this task comes with a mixed blessing. One the one hand, there are two of them to watch out for. On the other hand, there are two of them to watch out for each other. It presents some interesting issues for parents to consider.

With young twins, parents must split their attention between multiple children. They definitely feel on heightened alert, with two young children simultaneously learning to explore their world and test limits. They may need to take some extra measures to ensure their safety. Where a family with singletons may childproof their home, a home with multiples requires "twin-proofing." For example, breakables can't simply be moved to higher ground. They

Numbers

need to be removed completely, out of the reach of a team of toddler twins who might climb the furniture—or each other—to reach greater heights than one child would access on his own.

Parents of twins may find themselves utilizing safety equipment that they'd never have considered for just one child. Gates, play yards and enclosures become standard décor in homes with multiples. Harnesses or tethers can keep multiples from wandering away when families are out and about. Many families find that the safe confines of a stroller or crib ensures that this equipment enjoys a longer lifespan with multiples than with a singleton.

Yet, after the increased diligence of those early years, older twins present another unique set of challenges. In many ways, the “built-in buddy” relationship of twins allows them to expand their horizons – as my girls did on their bike journey to the swim club – with the comforting presence of a partner. For parents, this can provide a level of security, but they must be cautious not to take it for granted. Sometimes multiples are more daring or adventurous as a team, than the individuals ever would be their own. Don't be lulled into a false sense of safety, thinking that everything will be okay as long as they stick together.

While the safety considerations for multiples may be a bit different, all parents have to remain vigilant about their children, constantly evaluating and re-evaluating situations. Despite our best efforts, unless they live in a bubble, our kids won't escape every ounce of harm. Accidents will happen; heads will get bumped, knees will get scraped and tears will fall. We can only use our best judgment to anticipate and prevent the pitfalls of life, be proactive about instituting safety precautions, set reasonable limits, and pray constantly.

While it seems like only yesterday that we took that terrifying drive home from the hospital, it will only be a few more years before my twins get behind the wheel of a car and learn to drive on their own. Oh, how my heart will pound then! ♥

Pamela Fierro is the *Guide to Twins & Multiples* at About.com, and the author of several books about pregnancy and parenting multiples including her most recent book entitled, *'Mommy Rescue Guide for Twins, Triplets and More... Lifesaving Techniques and Advice for Surviving Life with Multiples'*.

The Race to Nowhere

in Youth Sports



"My 4th grader tried to play basketball and soccer last year," a mom recently told me as we sat around the dinner table after one of my speaking engagements. "It was a nightmare. My son kept getting yelled at by both coaches as we left one game early to race to a game in the other sport. He hated it."

"I know," said another. "My 10 year old daughter's soccer coach told her she had to pick one sport, and start doing additional private training on the side, or he would give away her spot on the team."

So goes the all too common narrative for American youth these days, an adult driven, hyper competitive race to the top in both academics and athletics that serves the needs of the adults, but rarely the kids. As movies such as ["The Race to Nowhere"](#) and recent [articles such as this one from the Washington Post](#) point out, while the race has a few winners, the course is littered with the scarred psyches of its participants. We have a generation of children that have been pushed to achieve parental dreams instead of their own, and prodded to do more, more, more and better, better, better. The pressure and anxiety is stealing one thing our kids will never get back; their childhood.

The movie and article mentioned above, as well as the book *The Overachievers: The Secret Lives of Driven Kids*, highlight the dangerous path we have led our children down in academics. We are leading them down a similar path in sports as well.

The path is a race to nowhere, and it does not produce better athletes. It produces bitter athletes who get hurt, burnout, and quit sports altogether.

As I said to my wife recently, the hardest thing about raising two kids these days, when it comes to sports, is that the vast majority of the parents are leading their kids down the wrong path, but not intentionally or because they want to harm their kids. They love their kids, but the social pressure to follow that path is incredible. Even though my wife and I were collegiate athletes, and I spend everyday reading the research, and studying the latest science on the subject, the pressure is immense. The

social pressure is like having a conversation with a pathological liar; he is so good at lying that even when you know the truth, you start to doubt it. Yet that is the sport path many parents are following.

The reason? FEAR!

We are so scared that if we do not have our child specialize, if we do not get the extra coaching, or give up our entire family life for youth sports, our child will get left behind. Even though nearly every single parent I speak to tells me that in their gut they have this feeling that running their child ragged is not helpful, they do not see an alternative. Another kid will take his place. He won't get to play for the best coach. "I know he wants to go on the family camping trip," they say, "but he will just have to miss it again, or the other kids will get ahead of him."

THIS SYSTEM SUCKS.

It sucks for parents, many of whom do not have the time and resources to keep one child in such a system, never mind multiple athletes. There are no more family trips or dinners, no time or money to take a vacation. It causes parents untold stress and anxiety, as they are made to feel guilty by coaches and their peers if they don't step in line with everyone else. "You are cheating your kid out of a scholarship" they are told, "They may never get this chance again."

It sucks for coaches who want to develop athletes for long term excellence, instead of short term success. **The best coaches used to be able to develop not only better athletes, but better people, yet it is getting hard to be that type of coach.** There are so many coaches who have walked away from sports because while they encourage kids to play multiple sports, other unscrupulous coaches scoop those kids up, and tell them "if you really want to be a player, you need to play one sport year round. That other club is short changing your kid, they are not competitive." The coach who does it right gives his kids a season off, and next thing you know he no longer has a team.

And yes, most importantly, it sucks for the kids. Any sports scientist or psychologist will tell you that in order to pursue any achievement activity for the long term, children need ownership, enjoyment and intrinsic motivation. Without these three things, an athlete is very likely to quit.

Children need first and foremost to enjoy their sport. This is the essence of being a child. Kids are focused in the present, and do not think of long term goals and ambitions. But adults do. They see “the opportunities I never had” or “the coaching I wish I had” as they push their kids to their goals and not those of the kids.

They forget to give their kids the one thing they did have: A CHILDHOOD! They forget to give them the ability to find things they are passionate about, instead of choosing for them. They forget that a far different path worked pretty darn well for them.

So why this massive movement, one that defies all science and psychology, to change it?

We need to wise up and find a better path.

Parents, start demanding sports clubs and coaches that allow your kids to participate in many sports. You are the customers; you are paying the bills, so you might as well start buying a product worth paying for. You have science on your side, and you have Long Term Athletic Development best practices on your side. Your kids do not deserve or need participation medals and trophies, as some of you are so fond of saying, but they do deserve a better, more diverse youth sports experience.

Coaches, you need to wise up as well. **You are the gatekeepers of youth sports, the people whom play God, and decide who gets in, and who is kicked to the curb.** You know the incredible influence of sport in your life, so stop denying it to so many others. Are you so worried about your coaching ability, or about the quality of the sport you love, to think that if you do not force kids to commit early they will leave? Please realize that if you are an amazing coach with your priorities in order, and you teach a beautiful game well, that kids will flock to you in droves, not because they have to, but because they want to!

Every time you ask a 9 year old to choose one sport over another you are diminishing participation in the sport you love by 50%. WHY?

To change this we must overcome the fear, the guilt and the shame.

We are not bad parents if our kids don't get into Harvard, and we are not bad parents if they do not get a scholarship to play sports in college. We should not feel shame or guilt every time our kid does not keep up with the Jones's, because, when it comes to sports, the Jones's are wrong.

PLEASE REMEMBER:

1. These are **KIDS**
 2. This is a **game**
 3. Most coaches **VOLUNTEER**
 4. The officials are **HUMAN**
 5. **No** college scholarships will be handed out today
 6. People remember **You** for what you say, keep it **POSITIVE**
- Panthers Lacrosse

As this recent article from USA Lacrosse stated, college coaches are actually looking to multi sport athletes in recruiting. Why? Because they have an upside, they are better all around athletes, they are not done developing, and they are less likely to burnout.

You cannot make a kid into something she is not by forcing them into a sport at a very young age, and pursuing your goals and not your child's goals. Things like motivation, grit, genetics and enjoyment have too much say in the matter.

What you can do, though, is rob a child of the opportunity to be a child, to play freely, to explore sports of interest, to learn to love sports and become active for life.

Chances are great that your children will be done with sports by high school, as only a select few play in college and beyond. Even the elite players are done at an age when they have over half their life ahead of them. It is not athletic ability, but the lessons learned from sport that need to last a lifetime.

Why not expose them to as many of those lifelong lessons as possible?

Why not take a stand?

Why don't we stop being sheep, following the other sheep down a road to nowhere that both science and common sense tells us often ends badly?

It is time to stop being scared, and stand up for your kids. Read a book on the subject, pass on this article to likeminded people, bring in a speaker to your club and school, but do something to galvanize people to act.

There are more of us who want to do right by the kids than there are those whose egos and wallets have created our current path. We have just been too quiet for too long. We have been afraid to speak up, and afraid to take a stand. We are far too willing to throw away our child's present for some ill fated quest for a better future that rarely materializes, and is often filled with so much baggage that we would never wish for such a future for our kids.

If you think your child will thank you for that, then you probably stopped reading while ago.

But if you want to get off the road to nowhere in youth sports, and to stop feeling guilty about it, then please know you are not alone. Our voice is growing stronger every day. We can create a new reality, with new expectations that put the athletes first.

We can put our children on a road to somewhere; one paved with balanced childhoods, exploration, enjoyment, and yes, multiple sports.

Someday our kids will thank us.

See more at: <http://changingthegameproject.com/the-race-to-nowhere-in-youth-sports/#sthash.RPnRgVlz.dpuf> ❤️

John O'Sullivan is the author of the National Bestseller Changing the Game: The Parents Guide to Raising Happy, High-Performing Athletes and Giving Youth Sports Back to Our Kids. He is also the founder of the Changing the Game Project, which provides live events and online education for parents and coaches, designed to teach them how to build a “player first” environment for their young athletes. You can learn more at www.ChangingTheGameProject.com.



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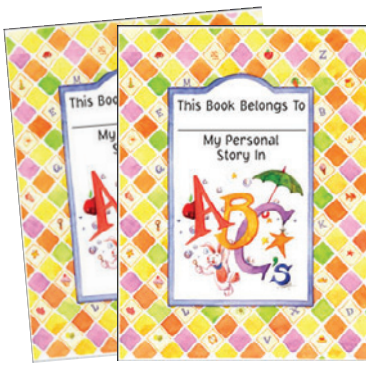
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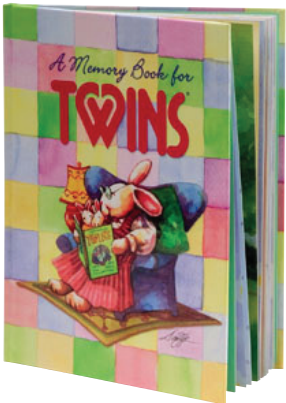


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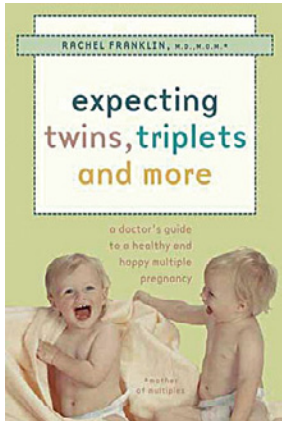
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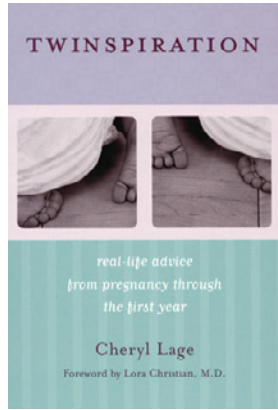


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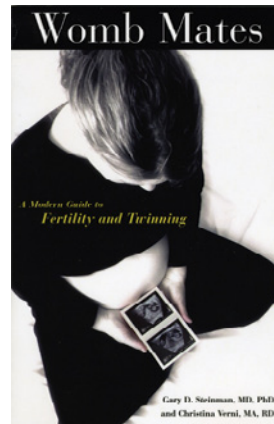
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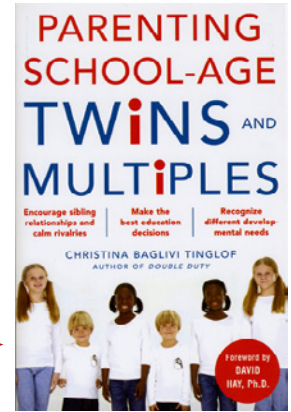
Expecting Twins, Triplets and More



Twinspiration



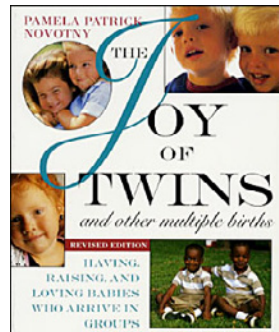
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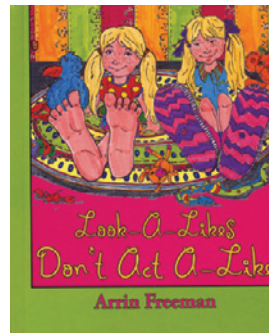
Parenting School-Age Twins and Multiples



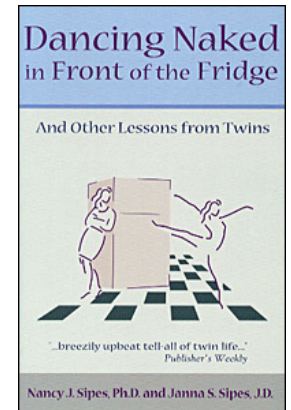
Twin Tales



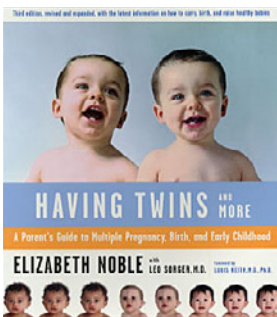
The Joy of Twins and Other Multiple Births



Look-a-Likes Don't Act-a-Like



Dancing Naked in Front of the Fridge



Having Twins and More



Mothering Multiples



Two Times the Fun

Bedtime Safari



Double Takes



Isaiah & Matthew, FR
Age 6
West Covina, CA



Easton & Savannah, FR
Age 1
Conway, SC



Crimson & Creedence, FR
Age 9 months
Hettick, IL



Preston & Tristan, FR
Age 4
Council Bluffs, Iowa



Parker & Preston, ID
Age 5
Grayson, GA



Carly Alana & Chloe Malia, FR, Age 5, &
Catalina Alohi & Callaway Makana, FR,
Age 18 days, Elkridge, Maryland



Foster & Myles FR
Age 6 months
Franklin, TN



Joseph & Finley FR
Age 18-months
Redwood City, CA

March/April 2014



8

Jonathan & Ruth, FR
Age 3
Saint Louis, MO



10

Lexie & Malina, FR
Age 5
Northwest Suburbs of
Chicago, IL



11

Ryker & Sawyer, ID
Age 13 months
Spokane, WA



12

Adalyn & Brooklyn, FR
Age 9-months
Scottsdale, Arizona



13

Reegan, Ridley & Raleigh FR, ID, ID,
Age 1
Pittsburgh, Pa



14

Ali & Adrian, FR, Age 7,
Alora, Abram, Amelia, FR Triplets
age 22 months,
Hillside, NJ



15

Halle & Isla, ID
Age 4 months
Cedar Rapids, IA



16

Logan & Brayden, FR
Age 2 1/2
Easton, PA



17

Heidi Blake & Nora Kate, ID
Age 7-months
Kannapolis, North Carolina



18

Leah & Owen, FR
Age 4-Months
Lancaster, Pennsylvania



19

Liam & Owen, ID
Age 11-months
Oologah, OK

Double Takes



20

Cole & Emily FR
Age 6 ½, FR
Corpus Christi, TX



21

Hazel & Violet, FR
Age 9-months
Lomita, CA



24

Zechariah & Aliyah
FR, Age 7,
Wellsville, PA



22

Trace & Tucker, ID
Age 2 ½
Lexington, TN



23

Harper & Landon, FR
Age 9-months
Diamondhead, Mississippi



25

Brogan & Roland, ID
Age 8-months
Quitman, LA



26

Stella & Josephine FR
Age 5 weeks
Steamboat Springs, CO



27

Hannah & Jenna, ID
Age 1
Ilion, NY



28

Declan & Caelan, FR
Age 3-months
Washington Crossing, PA



29

Delaney & Cooper, FR
Age 11-months
Anaheim Hills, CA



30

Lily & Rosie, ID,
Age 2
Loveland, CO

March/April 2014



31

Eli & Ezra, FR
Age 9.5 months
Westford, Ma



32

Mila & Isaac, FR
Age 3-months
Austin, TX



33

Laila & Peyton, FR
Age 5
Indian Head, MD



34

Gina & Louis, FR
Age 3
Westbury, NY



35

Gina & Louis, FR
Age 3
Westbury, NY



36

Hailie & Celine, ID
Age 9-months
Mounds View, MN



37

Jackson & Jentezen, FR
Age 1
Shawnee OK



38

Justin & Kaitlyn, FR
Age 1
Milliken, CO



39

Shelby & Kennedy, FR
Age 10-month
Cincinnati OH



40

Olivia & Penelope, ID
Age 8-months
Manchester, NH

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