

The Magazine for Multiples Since 1984

TWINSTM Monthly Milestones & Movements...

A 12-month Guide
for your Multiples!

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**ONE AWARD
& TWO KIDS?
TIPS TO TACKLE
THIS TRICKY
SUBJECT...**

**How to Be
a Better
Listener to
Your Twins**

**10 TIPS ON
SURVIVING
HOSPITAL
BEDREST!**

**It's time to Start
Sleep Training!**

July/August 2015



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Highlights from the Multiples of America's 55th Annual Convention 'Building Bridges 2015' in Cincinnati, Ohio

On the Cover:



Cover Photography by Cindy Arthur Photography and Design in Plano, Texas
www.cindyarthur.com

Meet 7-year-old fraternal twins, Ryan and Emerson. They are getting ready to start 2nd grade. Ryan loves playing hockey and Legos and Emerson loves ice skating and playing basketball. They also love spending time at the beach and fishing with their daddy. They were each others first best friend and love the uniqueness of being twins — although Emerson is taller, Ryan likes to point out that he is older, by 20 seconds!!



10 Top 10 Survival Tips for Hospital Bed Rest



16 Classroom Placement... In Their Best Interest



20 Ready or Not... Helping Multiples Realize their Unique Potential



22 One Award & Two Kids... Tips to Tackle This Tricky Subject



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PUBLISHERS

William F. Cody, Jr.
 bill@twinsmagazine.com

Regina Rubin Cody
 gina@twinsmagazine.com
 publisher@twinsmagazine.com

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
NATIONAL ADVERTISING
DIRECTOR

Christa D. Reed
 twinseditor@twinsmagazine.com

ART DIRECTOR

Michelle Kenny
 artdirector@twinsmagazine.com

CUSTOMER SERVICE

William F. Cody, Jr.
 bill@twinsmagazine.com

CIRCULATION

William F. Cody, Jr.
 bill@twinsmagazine.com

EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTORS

July/August

*Christy Brunton; Craig Chappelow;
 Jill Klinge; Angelica Manrique;
 Bethany Masters; Robin Price
 Hutchins; Christa D. Reed; Kaylynn
 S. Rice; Laura Toffler-Corrie; Judy
 Travis; Alice M. Vollmar; Natasha
 Yates*

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Sterling Investments I, LLC dba:
 TWINS™ Magazine
 30799 Pinetree Road, #256
 Cleveland, OH, 44124

MAIN CONTACT

PHONE NUMBER

Tel: 1-855-75-TWINS

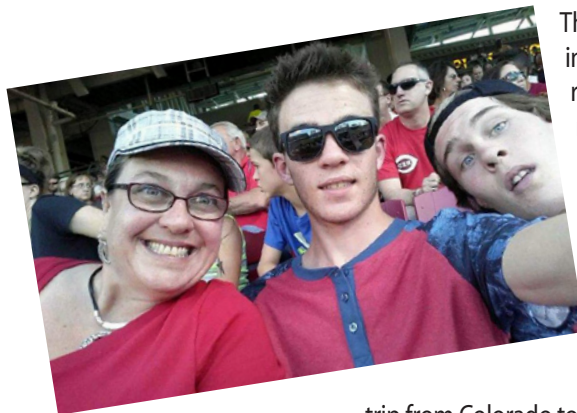
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Hitting the Road with my Twins



This summer I started a new mother-son tradition in my family. It all kind of happened by accident, really... but something I will now plan to do with my younger, singleton sons, too. A new tradition that will take place the summer right before the start of their senior year in high school. I am talking about taking a good old-fashioned summer ROAD TRIP!

This is exactly what I did this summer with my twin sons, now age 17, when all three of us piled into my mini-van to head on a long, two day road

trip from Colorado to the Multiples of America's national convention in Cincinnati, Ohio (more on that inside this issue!) This was the very first trip we have taken on our own without my husband and without my two younger sons so it was a very special occasion for us.

This new tradition gave me the opportunity to really have some quality time with my twins, something hard to get with two teenage boys. As we drove across the wide-open prairies of Western Kansas with endless fields of nothing to see, and because we were all confined inside the car for miles and miles we were able to discuss the vast intricacies of life... I was able to really get an idea of who they are as young adults. I was able to hear their thoughts, hopes and even fears about their future and where they want to go in life. What they want to study, their favorite music, movies and creating inside jokes only we will know. With their music hooked up to the car stereo (some of which I actually liked!) and an intricate system that only twins can create for the "shot-gun" position, this was probably one of the very best times we have ever had together... I even let them help me drive, too, and I am here to share my story so it all worked out really well.

So, if you ever have the opportunity to take a road trip with your twins when they get older, I highly recommend this fun experience. It is something I will forever treasure. Right now, it may be hard for you to even think about your twins as young adults when you are so busy changing diapers, feeding, not sleeping and just feeling completely overwhelmed. But just know that your hard work you are putting in now will pay off later. Trust me.

It really does seem like yesterday that my twins were cute little toddlers and I was chasing them in two different directions but time does go by so fast and you find yourself waking up one day and your twins are all grown up and getting ready to start their final year in high school. Yes, it happens that fast. So I am extremely grateful I had this chance to really make some memories that both my twins and I will always remember and a special mother-son tradition I will continue with my two singletons as well!

Inside this issue of TWINS we cover a variety of topics just for you like hospital bedrest, sleep training, fun in the sun with your toddlers, and classroom placement. We also feature articles on how to be a better listener to your twins, helping multiples realize their unique potential, what to do when you have one award and two kids and tips on ways to get your twins to sleep from twin-mom and YouTube's #1 Millennial mom Judy Travis. Also inside this issue is my recap of the 55th Multiples of America national convention that was held in Cincinnati and 40 sets of adorable summer-themed photos of twins! Enjoy these final days of summer while you can!



Sincerely,
Christa D Reed
 Christa Reed,, Editor-in-Chief
 twinseditor@twinsmagazine.com

Teenage Twins Run Successful Nonprofit Organization Called, Bake Me Home!

When 14-year-old twin sisters, Emma and Amy started a charity called Bake Me Home back in July 2008 (with a little help from their Mom!) they set out to help moms and kids at a homeless family shelter in Cincinnati, Ohio. Since then they have expanded with the help of thousands of volunteers to include families using local food pantries, kids in foster care, and members of our military. They founded Bake Me Home based upon their own love of baking and spending time together. They started their Tote Bag Program to help families leaving shelters celebrate the beginning of a new life in a new home. Amy and Emma delivered tote bags to the first shelter in October 2008, and today this program



serves more than 750 families per year from 18 agencies in 4 Ohio counties.

While their original idea began with a simple jar of homemade Bake Me Home Oatmeal Chocolate Chip Cookie Mix, they quickly decided to add all the supplies needed to bake the cookies. This pile of goodies necessitated delivering them in a sturdy tote bag, hence the name for their program. A \$10 gift card to Kroger was also added for

the essential butter and eggs needed to complete the recipe and to purchase a few other groceries. Finally, a recipe booklet filled with low-cost, kid-friendly, nutritious recipes donated by the Nutrition Council of Greater Cincinnati was added with funding from Ronald McDonald House Charities. While prices can change slightly, the total cost for each of their Bake Me Home Tote Bags averages about \$25. Volunteers help them fill all of their jars of cookie mix and assemble each Tote Bag. To date, over 2600 tote bags have been delivered.

Other programs these twins have launched is the Picture Me Home program providing moms leaving the shelter a free professional, framed 5x7 portrait of their kids, often the only photos they have; the Bake Me Back Home program that sends cookies to our troops overseas; and the Fisher House Scholarship and Bake It Forward scholarship programs. To learn more about these dynamic, philanthropic teenage twin girls and how you can donate please visit their website at: www.bakemehome.org.

Looking for Family Fun this Labor Day? Attend the 81st International Twins Association's (ITA) Annual Convention in Orlando, Florida!



Save the date and make your plans to bring the family to the ITA's 81st Annual Convention taking place September 4-6, 2015 at the Rosen Plaza Hotel in Orlando, FL. Special convention rates apply (Single or Double occupancy rates: \$89 + tax per room, per night / Family rate: Children 17 & under

are FREE!) be sure to visit the ITA website on how to get this rate! Trips to Disney, Kennedy Space Center; Golfing; Silent Auction, Twins Contest & more! Want more information on how to attend this twin's convention? Visit <http://intltwins.org/index.php/en/convention-info>

Milestone Cards Introduces a New Baby Set Just for Twins!

Milestone Cards, the creators of the original photo cards to celebrate life's precious moments are introducing a new baby set just for twins! These new photo cards are the perfect way for new parents to photograph important moments from that two cute first year. Simply position the card with the twins, snap a photo, and the memory is instantly captured. The photo can be added to a scrapbook or shared on social media with friends and family.



Milestone Baby Cards Twins

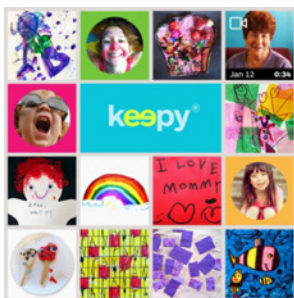
- Milestone Cards is the first company to offer parents photo cards for developmental milestones



- 30 photo cards to capture previous firsts
- Photo cards for shared moments, like the day the twins come home and the first day they smile at each other
- Photo cards for individual landmarks, like sitting up for the first time and the first tooth
- Photo cards to document growth in weeks and months
- Available on Amazon starting in September for \$34.00 each.

Introducing 'Keepy' a New APP Helps Parents of Multiples Save & Share their Kids' Artwork and Life Moments!

Which pieces of your child's schoolwork to keep and which to "round file?" What's too personal to share via traditional social media? Chronicling your multiples' life doesn't need to be double (or triple) the work. There are free tools, such as Keepy, an easy-to-use app for parents to save and share their kids' artwork and life moments available to make the job twice and fun and half the work. Keepy creates beautiful, emotional timelines, which families can utilize to preserve their most precious mo-



ments and visual mementos that may otherwise be lost. Audio/video comments add the perfect touch allowing private, invited guests to comment — i.e. your child's description of her first self-portrait or a grandparent's congratulations on a great report card.

KEEPY FAST FACTS

- Available on Apple iOS, Android devices and Kindle Fire, www.keepy.me
- Selected in 2015 by Samsung as a pre-installed free app for millions of global Galaxy S6 users
- App Preview - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=im9WrxJD5Tk>
- General Video - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Npdk79EygD0>
- Pricing: The Keepy App basic plan is free, and users receive 15 photos and videos/month.
- Monthly subscribers at \$5.99/month and yearly subscribers at \$29.99/year receive unlimited photos and videos. Free and paid subscribers receive unlimited kids, fans, voiceovers and comments, as well as unlimited Dropbox sync and Ad Free. <http://keepy.me/pricing/>





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Monthly-Milestones-4-Multiples

MONTH 1

Head flops back if unsupported ♦ Strong reflex jerkiness ♦ Roots to breast ♦ Grasps rattle or finger briefly ♦ Startles unexpectedly (Moro reflex) ♦ "Molds" to person holding baby ♦ Focuses on face within 6 inches ♦ Makes eye contact ♦ Sees large black & white patterns ♦ Prefers human face to other patterns ♦ Cries for assistance ♦ Turns head toward familiar sounds, voices



MONTH 2

Lifts head at 45 degrees ♦ Holds object for few seconds ♦ Focuses on objects several feet away ♦ Bats hands at objects ♦ Smiles at familiar sounds, voices, faces ♦ Soothes self with sucking ♦ Shows anticipation, excitement ♦ Coos and gurgles when happy ♦ Begins to recognize voices, faces, objects

MONTH 3

Raises head, chest when lying on tummy ♦ Tracks moving objects side-to-side ♦ Puts both hands together ♦ Laughs, squeals at play; cries when play stops ♦ Distinguishes parents and familiar faces ♦ Follows moving objects with eyes ♦ Studies own hands, feet ♦ Sees colors

MONTH 4

Lifts head to 90 degrees ♦ Supports upper body with arms briefly when on tummy ♦ Rolls over one way ♦ Grasps rattle or slim objects ♦ Smiles at reflection in mirror ♦ More able to self-soothe ♦ Smiles and gurgles to gain attention ♦ Makes consonant sounds ♦ Reaches for objects ♦ Responds to music ♦ Begins to display memory



MONTH 5

Holds head steady when sitting or held ♦ Guides dangling toys to mouth ♦ Sucks toes ♦ Holds bottle w/one or both hands ♦ Vocalizes more to gain attention ♦ Responds to others' emotions ♦ Imitates sounds: vowels and consonants ♦ Seeks fallen objects, reaches for objects ♦ Curious about new environments ♦ Protests if toy is taken away



MONTH 6

Bears some weight on legs when held ♦ Turns head in both directions ♦ "Swims" & pushes when on tummy ♦ Wants to feed self, play with food ♦ Expresses pleasure and displeasure ♦ Shows anxiety at separating from mom ♦ Reacts negatively to strangers ♦ Recognizes own name ♦ Combines sounds ♦ Studies, compares objects ♦ Twists & turns in all directions

MONTH 7

Sits without support ♦ Rolls over in both directions ♦ Rocks on hands and knees ♦ May crawl, forward or backward ♦ Balances head well ♦ Eats a cracker without being fed ♦ Shows sense of humor ♦ Demonstrates social orientation Says "Mama" and "Dada" ♦ Waves bye-bye

MONTH 8

Sits alone and plays by self ♦ Pursues & picks up objects ♦ Crawls forward or backward ♦ Pulls self up on tables, chairs ♦ Stands while holding onto something ♦ Demands attention ♦ Pushes away unwanted objects such as toys and food ♦ Smiles at own image in mirror ♦ Claps hands, plays patty-cake ♦ Recalls events, out-of-sight people, objects



MONTH 9 Pulls to sitting position from stomach ♦ Pulls to standing from sitting ♦ Begins to climb ♦ Cries simply because twin is crying ♦ Passes toy from one hand to the other ♦ Eats finger foods ♦ Likes to perform for an audience ♦ Wants to play near mother/father ♦ Uses objects (telephone, hairbrush, spoon) appropriately ♦ Locates lost or hidden objects easily ♦ Gets bored with repetition of same game or activity ♦ Begins to evaluate people's moods ♦ Performs for an audience and will repeat the act if applauded



MONTH 10 Walks around furniture ♦ Sits in upright position ♦ Carries objects in one hand ♦ Dances to music ♦ Plays peek-a-boo ♦ Enjoys social interaction, attention ♦ Becomes very self-aware ♦ Displays moods ♦ Babbles & chatters ♦ Points to nose, mouth, ears on request ♦ Likes to roll ball back to you, toss objects ♦ Imitates gestures, face expressions, sounds ♦ Understands meaning of "no" ♦ Follows simple instructions, commands ♦ Curious, wants to discover contents of drawers, cabinets, purses, boxes

MONTH 11 Becomes well-balanced ♦ Squats and stoops ♦ Stands on tiptoes ♦ Sits intentionally without falling ♦ Tastes, chews everything ♦ Fits small objects inside larger ones ♦ Expresses wants w/ gestures & sounds ♦ Pulls off socks, unties shoes ♦ Seeks approval, shows stubbornness ♦ Helps dress self ♦ Describes objects, people, places ♦ Drinks from a cup w/o assistance ♦ Links words with objects, places ♦ Recognizes & learns sexual identity

MONTH 12 Crawls up & down stairs ♦ Stands alone ♦ May try to walk ♦ May climb out of crib, highchair ♦ Shows affection to favorite people, toys ♦ Demonstrates needs w/o crying ♦ Resists napping ♦ Throws temper tantrums ♦ May become picky eater ♦ Imitates words ♦ Identifies animals, objects, colors in picture books ♦ Turns pages of books (sometimes in clumps) ♦ Recalls objects, people for longer times



MOVEMENT STAGES....

By the ages listed here, children have typically mastered these milestones...

3 MONTHS

Supports upper body with arms, pushes down on legs when feet are placed on a firm surface

7 MONTHS

Rolls from stomach to back and from back to stomach, sits, and supports whole weight on legs

12 MONTHS

Crawls on belly, creeps on hands and knees, pulls self up to stand, walks around furniture

2 YEARS

Walks alone, carries object while walking, walks up and down stairs while holding on to support

3 YEARS

Climbs well, runs easily, kicks a ball, pedals a tricycle, and bends over easily without falling

4 YEARS

Hops and stands on one foot, walks up and down stairs without support

5 YEARS

Throws ball over head, catches bounced ball, moves forward and backward easily



Natasha Yates is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Education at St. Catherine University. She lives with her husband, daughter and identical twin boys in Red Wing, MN.

by Natasha Yates

Twelve Year Old Boys, Physics, AND A PAIR OF GLASSES

We live along the Mississippi River in a small town tucked in and around beautiful bluffs in rural Minnesota. In the summer the old growth trees are thick and ground cover rocky and tangled with vines and roots. The bluffs are full of the sounds of crawling critters, deer darting, leaves blowing, birds singing, and rustling creatures that stay out of sight. The bluffs are full of great climbing trees and fort making debris. In the autumn the forest lights up with brilliant fall colors as the days get shorter and the temperature gets cooler. The leaves fall resulting in mounds of ground cover to scoop into piles and jump into, to kick and listen to the crackling of crushing leaves beneath one's feet. In winter there is peacefulness in the bluff, the animals still there but a calming silence through the winter months. As we sleep the deer come down to peoples yards looking for food in the night; until in spring the bluff bursts back into bloom for another season.

Out our front door, up a dead end road of half a block is the base of one of those bluffs that my twelve year old twin boys play in throughout the year. One of their closest friends lives at the top of that bluff a steep, straight climb through the woods to *Tristan's house is often how afterschool begins. They spend hours building forts, going on adventures, imagining battles, and discovering creatures imagined and real. When they were younger they would drag the bluff home with them, full of questions. "Look what we found, what is it?" "A deer's skull," I'd respond. A frog, "Can we keep it?" "No." Rocks, sticks, an old rusted metal toy gun from the

'40s, an abandoned bird's nest with the remnants of shells, acorns, leaves, an assortment of beetles crawling over each other in a jar, a hornets nest (thankfully empty), police tape (hmmm), an animal femur, and a badger skull. At which point I taught them to leave the bluff, dead or alive, in the bluff; just come home with stories and questions. Parenting in the 21st Century can feel like a never ending battle to get them off "screens" it is so nice to just send them to the bluff to play. As a parent I encourage their unstructured play in nature – so close that I just walk to the base of the hill and yell their names for dinner; they show up soon, exhilarated, dirty, and hungry.

One late October afternoon I was in the kitchen preparing dinner when my phone rang. That August we bought the boys their first phones; I saw that it was David calling. "Hi, Mom, we're with Tristan in the bluffs and just wanted you to know that I lost my glasses. We've all looked and looked and looked and they're just gone. I'm really sorry." I paused, then answered, "I hear your frustration – I'd just like to let you know, you cannot come home without your glasses." Pause. "Oh," was his response. Let's face it they weren't "just gone" I'm not interested in paying for brand new pair of glasses just because they got tired of searching.

Time went by and as dusk approached the boys had not shown up. I realized those glasses needed to be found before dark. So, I headed to the bluff and called out their names to locate them. "Over here mom." They had retrieved headlamps from Tristan's



house and looked like little miners furiously tossing leaves around looking for the glasses. The incline was easily 70 degrees; it was hard to stand up without slipping. I asked them to all stop moving; my fear was with all their flailing leaves about they had stepped on the glasses somewhere.

"David, where exactly did you lose your glasses and how?" I asked.

"Well, Justin pushed me and I slid forward stopping myself by grabbing this tree trunk (that was lying on the ground) and my glasses flew off my face into the leaves."

I asked, "Did they fall down straight or go flying off in some trajectory?"

"Just down," he said.

Tristan and Justin continued digging in leaves.

"Stop moving," I demanded. "Let's think. You've been out here nearly an hour looking. Let's use physics to help us think through where they are everyone just squat where you are." I was next to David near the fallen tree trunk. Justin was directly uphill from David. Tristan was three feet east of David. They looked at me and I asked, "Justin, why are you looking for the glasses up there?"

"Because I looked down there and I couldn't find them, and so I'm looking here."

"Using what you know about physics what are the odds the glasses fell uphill from where David lost them."

Justin, "Oh, well, I guess gravity wouldn't let them fall uphill."

I asked, "What is Newton's First Law of Motion?"

David stated, "A thing moving will keep moving till something stops it." Well, okay good enough they are just twelve and this isn't a science test.

Tristan started digging through leaves. "Stop digging." I said, "Why do you guys keep digging down through the piles of leaves, are the glasses so dense you think they will sink?"

"Ah, no they're pretty light and the leaves are kinda wet and matted." Tristan stated.

David asked, "What do we do?"

I said, "Just sit, observe with your eyes and think." "What would Newton's first law of motion suggest happened to the glasses?"

Justin, "When the glasses flew off David's face they would have kept moving."

I asked, "Would they move forever?"

Tristan, "No, they would move until some force stopped them."

"What forces are out here that could stop the glasses from moving?" I asked.

David, "Friction," Justin, "Gravity." Tristan, "Hitting another object."

As dusk was slowly getting darker we all sat still and looked downhill from where the glasses fell off David's face.

Tristin, "There they are! At the base of that tree."

About five feet directly downhill from David was a tree. Silently, cradled on top of some dryer leaves at the base of the tree were the glasses, unharmed, unscratched waiting to be seen by 12 year old boys using physics to find them. The boys gave the headlamps to Tristan who headed up the bluff, as we headed down the bluff to dinner, glasses safely returned to David's face. ♥

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Top 10 Survival Tips for Hospital Bed Rest



by Bethany Masters

When I was pregnant with my twins I had to be on bed rest for ten weeks. The first four of those weeks were spent at the community hospital. Here is what I learned:

1 Bring whatever you can from home. Clothes, pillows, toothpaste, etc. You will feel much more comfortable.

2 If possible, call before you are scheduled to arrive to find out what you have in your room. The hospital had complimentary wi-fi. The room I was in also had a cd player and a dvd player. It was so nice to know that I could bring my laptop and favorite movies with me.

3 Stash snacks in your room and ask your family to bring you occasional meals. The snack options the hospital had were very limited and the meal menu was rotating. Even though the food was good, by week three I was bored with the menu options.

4 Ask if the hospital has any parenting education programs or groups you may go to. My doctor allowed me out of my room once a week for a breastfeeding support group that was held on the hospital's first floor. It was the highlight of my week!

5 Educate yourself and be your own advocate. Never be afraid to ask questions. When I arrived at the hospital the nurse inserted an IV line "just in case." The IV line was very uncomfortable. Day three I asked for it to be removed and the doctor okayed it. I did not end up needing an IV during my whole 4 week stay!

6 Ask your doctor to give you a firm idea of when you will be going home. I was hospitalized because there was concern that my twins would be born dangerously premature. My doctor and I set week 28 of my pregnancy as the goal date for me to go home if I had not delivered yet. When the days were long and difficult that goal kept me sane.

7 If there are any projects that you need to do before the babies come and that you can do on bed rest take it with you. The days on hospital bed rest can seem to drag on forever. I had been working on a pregnancy scrap book and I used my hospital bed rest time to work on that. I am glad I did because once my girls were born there was very little time for projects.

8 Get into a routine. It will help your days go faster.

9 Take advantage of the time to bond with your babies. It can be very frightening to be on bed rest if the health of your babies is at stake. It was hard for me not to worry that my girls would be born too early and be very sick or not survive. One of the things I worked into my routine was reading them a book at night. It helped me keep my focus on the fact that bed rest was for them and that I was doing all I could to protect them.

10 Get as much rest as you possibly can. Nap. Relax. Once your babies come you will be very busy and starting from a rested point instead of already being exhausted is a huge help.



International Twins Association (ITA) 81st Annual Convention

September 4-6, 2015
Orlando, Florida



This Year's Convention will be at the Rosen Plaza Hotel

Reservations by phone: 1-800-627-8258 or 1-407-996-9700 **Group Name: International Twins Association**, Make Online Reservations at: www.IntlTwins.org. **Single or Double occupancy rates: Contact Hotel for Room Rates; Family rate: Children 17 & under are FREE, Book by JULY 29, 2015 to reserve your room!**

We invite Twins/Multiples of all ages along with friends & family to attend our 81st Annual Convention. Each year over Labor Day weekend, we get together to celebrate twins/multiples! This year's activities include the annual Double Trouble Golf Tournament, Sunday Evening Silent Auction, the Wonder Works Dinner & Magic Show, the Annual Multiples Judging Contest, and Tours of attractions, shops, the Kennedy Space Center and of course Disney World!

To Register visit our website
www.Intltwins.org

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INFANT

Quick tips on getting started with

Sleep Training

Christy Brunton is a mom to identical twin girls who are ten years old and a singleton girl who is six years old. She was involved in her local moms of multiples club where she served as president for several years. It was in this role where she realized how many parents struggled with getting their babies to sleep and how they all wanted the same thing...quick answers to their many sleep questions. This is where the idea was born to write a quick reference guide about sleep training which has helped hundreds of families so far with their sleep issues.



by Christy Brunton

If I took a poll of 100 parents of newborns, I bet one of their top questions would be about sleep and specifically, when will their baby or babies start sleeping through the night? As a mother of three children including one set of twins, that was all I could think about for the first few months. I was able to get a pretty good feeding schedule together but all I really wanted to know was when and how could I get them sleeping through the night.

When my twins were six weeks old, I joined my local twins club and I can still remember sitting next to a red-headed mom who had twin boys and looked all put together and I remember grilling her before and after the meeting and many meetings to come about this exact topic.

The answer I got...sleep training. Many people associate sleep training with intense schedules and scary methods such as cry-it-out. When I look at sleep training, I look at a skill I am teaching my kids that they will use the rest of their lives.

Healthy sleep habits are not just about "how do I get my baby to sleep through the night?" I know this is the million-dollar question all new parents ask. I know I did. Healthy sleep habits are about the 24-hour sleep cycle and teaching techniques that will be with your children through adulthood. Day sleep (naps) is as important as night sleep and getting it right all starts with sleep training and a consistent schedule. Babies won't learn this or fall into the pattern by themselves (unless you are extremely lucky!). As a parent, it is our job to get them there; to teach them the technique, similar to how you would teach them to ride a bike or tie their shoes.

Below are a few tips on getting started with sleep training.

- Choose a plan that works for your style of parenting. There are many different sleep training plans out there. I used the method by Dr. Marc Weissbluth who teaches the two-hour wake rule. He teaches the importance of sleep and teaches that babies can really not be up for more than two-hours before becoming tired again. I found this to be very true. Using this two-hour wake rule method and watching for drowsy signs allowed me to get my babies on a very consistent nap schedule as early as six weeks old.
- At six weeks old, start "practicing" your schedule. They won't truly understand how it works until about three – four months old, but practicing early will help them fall into a routine which will make it much easier when you officially start sleep training.
- At four months old the morning nap will really start to develop. This is also the time where you can tackle night training with success. There are several methods you can use to tackle night training including cry-it-out, check and console and scheduled awakenings.
- At six months old, the afternoon nap starts to become consistent. By this point, my babies were on a very regular schedule (I could set the clock by it). They were also sleeping from 7 pm – 7 am regularly.

- For twins, triplets and more, it is sometimes helpful to separate them for naps or at night during sleep training in order to understand their different needs and patterns.
- Finally, if you are going to sleep train, you have to commit to it. Find a time where you aren't traveling and can be at home for most naps. Plan your outings and errands around the nap schedule so your children can get used to the schedule and used to sleeping in their cribs. This consistency will pay off!

I am not going to say it is easy. It takes patience, dedication and, most importantly, consistency. But, if you are willing to dedicate a few weeks to it, it will pay off. It takes teaching and it takes practice. As a result, you will get a happy, well rested and adjusted children who like knowing what comes next. I am still reaping the benefits of all the hard work I put in that first year with my two ten year olds and six year old. They are still great sleepers today!

If you want to get started quickly on a plan but don't have time to read a lengthy book, I recommend a cliff notes version of Dr. Weissbluth's method that can be read in one night. It is a step-by-step guide on how to implement his method. It is broken up by age and gives several tips and tricks on getting started including example schedules and special tips for sleep training twins, triplets and more. This book even helped a mom of sextuplets get her six on a schedule and sleeping through the night. To see a sample of the book, search *Sleep Training for the Exhausted Mom* on Amazon. ♥

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by Jill Klinge



Toddler Fun in the Sun

FROM BOUNCY SEATS TO BABY BOUNDARIES, TIPS FOR SAFE FUN IN THE SUMMER FUN

Jill Klinge, is an attorney, freelance writer and the mother of three, including boy/girl twins now age 12.

Summer is here and families everywhere are making a mad dash to the backyard. A generation ago, this simply meant that parents of babies set up a playpen in the shade. Today's parents face a multitude of new products on the market meant to entertain infants while keeping them confined to a protected area. The choices can be overwhelming and parents of multiples face an additional dilemma—finding adequate accommodations for more than one child, without breaking the bank.

PLAY YARDS AND BEYOND

In the past several years, variations on the playpen have become available. Mesh-sided play yards that fold down into small, portable cases are commonplace. Now new and improved models fold into pouches about 18 inches in diameter, small enough to fit into a diaper bag or a suitcase. Manufacturers are also recognizing the need for play spaces to be fully enclosed. Mesh or fabric coverings prevent older children from climbing out and keep insects from coming in. Luckily for parents of multiples, many play yards now fit two or more children comfortably, yet still fold up into small, flat pouches.

The biggest downside of the play yard is that, sooner or later, your multiples will grow tired of the confinement and want to

explore. As soon as my twins, Naomi and Nathan, were able to walk, they saw their play yard as an unbearable prison. I was able to prolong the playpen stage for several months with a used Super yard, a six-panel gate that forms a large ring, creating a play area much bigger than a standard play yard. The ring can be made as large as you like by purchasing extensions. My twins could feel the grass or sand under their toes, and they didn't seem to feel as trapped as in a playpen. When they grew out of the Super yard, I used the panels to gate off dangerous areas, such as the barbecue. During the rainy season, I moved four panels inside and gated off the fireplace.

Stationary activity centers, such as the Exersaucer, are also extremely popular. Infants who can support their heads can rock and spin in their seat, play with attachable toys, and eat out of the tray. Swings are now battery-powered, and can be purchased with seats that recline, or bassinets to lay babies flat. Bouncy seats are great entertainment for very young infants who can bounce themselves with their own movement. You can find bouncers that fit two infants side by side for added entertainment and interaction.

BUYING SMART

A great money saver for parents of multiples is to buy single products that have many uses. Bouncy seats, for example,

can be used for feeding infants too small for high chairs. They also make comfortable napping spots as well. Some swings have detachable seats that act as an infant carrier and feeder. Parents of multiples are often tempted to buy two of everything. But before doubling up on a particular item, be sure that both babies will use it regularly. Tanya Keene of Lutz, Florida, found that her twins Emily and Ryan, now 17-months, had very different tastes when it came to entertainment. "I only had one Exersaucer," she says. "My little girl would only last about five minutes before she started screaming to get out. My boy could stay in it forever." The activity gym, however, was a different story. "I only had one, but my son didn't care too much for it anyway. My daughter couldn't get enough of it."

Shannon Pitton of Seattle, Washington, also learned that not every product struck both her twins' fancies. For her fraternal sons, Andre and Thierry, "we found the Exersaucers useful year round. We started with one, and then got another because they were so great at keeping the boys entertained and in one spot." On the other hand, "we rarely used the bouncy seats we had," she says.

Even when a product is a hit with both twins, you will probably want to alternate your babies between activities every 20 minutes or so to prevent boredom. Only when you determine that both twins will benefit from the activity simultaneously, on a regular basis, should you consider buying a second.

BUYING SAFE

Another way for parents of multiples to save money is to buy equipment second hand. Most baby equipment can be found at garage sales in good condition for a fraction of the new price. But parents need to be aware of safety issues that arise when buying older equipment or accepting hand-me-downs.

As popular as portable cribs, playpens and play yards are, they are also a huge safety concern. Since 1995, the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has announced the recall of more than 11 million products. In about 1.5 million, the support rails can collapse, entrapping and suffocating a child. Another 10 million have protruding rivets around the rails which can create a strangulation hazard.

BUYER'S CHECKLIST

Before deciding which products to buy this summer, ask yourself the following questions:

- Is the product portable?
- Can you use it indoors when the weather turns cooler?
- Can you easily transport it to the park, the beach or other places you frequent during the summer?
- Does it have more than one use?
- Can you borrow one from a friend first to see if your children are entertained by it beyond the first day?

BEWARE OF OVER-EXPOSURE

Excessive exposure to the sun in childhood may increase the risk of skin cancer later in life. Manufacturers are responding to this concern by creating more products with canopies or sunshades. Some are coated with a UV treatment to offer maximum protection. Children over 6-months old should also be protected by a sunscreen.

According to Nychelle Fleming, spokesperson for the CPSC, 13 children have died in the United States from getting their heads caught in collapsing side rails. Another eight have died from getting clothing or pacifier strings caught on protruding rivets. Fleming urges parents to check for recalls before buying used portable cribs, playpens and play yards. "Parents should check our website (www.cpsc.gov) at least once a month to stay up to date," she asserts.

Second hand purchasers are not the only ones who should be conscientious about recalls. Linda Ginzel, cofounder of Kids in Danger, a non-profit organization dedicated to protecting children from defective products, warns that, "You are not 'safe' just because you don't buy second hand. Many people think that if they buy new, they don't have to worry about recalls. But a product you buy new can be recalled the day after you purchase it." Linda suggests calling the CPSC hotline or calling the manufacturer directly to check for current recalls. Most major manufacturers have toll-free numbers and websites on the box. "The CPSC can take products off the shelves, but they can't get into your home," Linda cautions. "The only way you're going to know if you're using a recalled product is if you check yourself."

KEEPING IT IN PERSPECTIVE

Though the new products on the market are fun and enticing, beware of going overboard. Determine which items are necessities and go easy on the rest. After all, this time next year you'll be starting all over again with wading pools, wagons and scooters. ♥

SAFETY FIRST

Information on product recalls is available 24 hours a day from the Consumer Product Safety Commission. Call the CPSC Hotline at (800) 638-2772 or visit their website at www.cpsc.gov.



PRESCHOOL

CLASSROOM PLACEMENT *In Their Best Interest*

Laura Toffler-Corrie of South Salem, New York is a school psychologist and freelance writer. She is the mother of fraternal twin girls.



by Laura Toffler-Corrie

School placement is such an important decision. "Of course I sometimes worry if I'm doing the right thing," remarks Katie O'Sullivan, mother of 4-year-old twins, Meghan and Ryan. "But I think it is right to insist that my twins be in the same preschool class. After all, I know them best."

For all parents of twins, the same questions arise sooner or later: When our children begin school, should they be in the same class? Should they start out in the same class and be separated later on? Will being in the same class discourage independence? Will separation create anxiety? And most notably, if the school has a policy of separating twins, should we object?

SCHOOL RULES

You might wonder why schools adopt certain blanket policies about twins in the first place. After all, isn't each twin relationship unique? Doesn't each family deserve to participate in the decision about whether or not their twins stay together? As far as many school administrators are concerned the answer to these questions is firm yes and no.

It's not that educators are insensitive to the needs of twins—it's their job to provide the best learning environment for each student. It's just that most schools operate with a "for the good of all" philosophy and most of the time, what works

for the majority of students and teachers, works for all. Many educators believe what works best for a twin is separation.

WHY SEPARATION?

Parents know that there is not just one kind of twin relationship, just as there isn't one kind of relationship between singleton siblings. But most people have erroneous notions about twins. For example, some people believe that the strong bond between twins is unhealthy. Hence, twins should be separated whenever possible in order for them to develop autonomy and self-esteem. Some believe that twins are really fiercely competitive and that placing them in the same class only fosters jealousy.

Also, in cases of identical twins, a policy to separate twins makes the teachers' job easier. They aren't confused about who's who or how comparative grading will affect the children. What's more, one blanket policy makes administrators' lives easier. They can eschew pesky family meetings that consist of dickering over which twins will be separated and which won't.

School Placement of Multiples

One of the publications available from the National Organization of Mothers of Twins Clubs, Inc. (NOMOTC) now the Multiples of America (MOA) is *Placement of Multiple Birth Children in School: A Guide for Educators* by Linda Hosteller Dreyer.

The guide states, "Since the incidence of multiple births is rising, educators are going to be increasingly confronted with educational issues concerning these children. Therefore, decisions made regarding the classroom placement of multiple birth children should be based on:

- Zygoty of the twins (identical or fraternal)
- Research studies
- Parental input
- Previous separation experiences
- Personality of each child within the twin set
- Articles and books on the subject

After a thorough examination of the "to separate or not to separate" question, the guide responsibly concludes with the recommendation that placement of each set of multiples be evaluated on an individual basis.

Classroom placement is clearly an issue where you must be an advocate for your young multiples. It is only reasonable for parents to expect that the education team—administrators, principals and teachers—will include them in the decision making. As the children are able to express their feelings on the subject, they should contribute to the "group" decision.

WE DID IT OUR WAY

When the O'Sullivan family enrolled Meghan and Ryan in preschool, they insisted that the children be together. According to Katie, the twins are very close and would do well in a classroom together. She also felt that separating them for their first school experience would make them anxious. "Of course the school felt compelled to go along with us. After all, we were paying them," Katie chuckles.

Unfortunately, the children's teacher wasn't supportive of the decision. Determining that Meghan and Ryan needed to be autonomous, she kept them apart whenever possible. She objected to Meghan playing with Ryan and his friends, claiming that she was missing out on relationships with other little girls. "She even labeled Meghan as codependent," Katie declares.

The O'Sullivans responded quickly. Not only did they voice their objections to the teacher and school administrator, they supplied the school with articles about twin relationships from TWINS Magazine. Ultimately, the school officials responded positively and subsequently held a seminar to educate their own faculty.

After all, isn't that what all parents of twins want—the right to choose what they think is best for their children. ♥



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by Alice M. Vollmar



How to be a Better Listener to your Twins

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

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

But the results of good listening are hard to overestimate. "Taking turns comes naturally to my twins," said Linda Robinson, mother of fraternal girls, Elizabeth and Alexandra, 4. "They are used to taking turns with other things, so one twin just waits. They know it's going to be fair and that each will get her turn. I've also trained them to say, 'Excuse me,' when I'm busy and they want to talk to me. They know that when they say that, I will take time to listen, no matter what."

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

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

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

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

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

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

Why Listening Matters

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

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

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

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

Guidelines for Empathetic Listening

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

Tots to Teens, offer helpful guidelines for listening:

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

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

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

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

Shirley Plantz, whose identical twins, Brian and Jason, are 5, noted that "mostly, my

twins just want my attention. We try not to overtly correct them when, for example, they misuse a word; instead, we repeat what they've said using the word correctly. And if we let them talk out a situation, they figure out what to do about a problem on their own."

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

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

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

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

by Kaylynne S. Rice



READY OR NOT

Helping
multiples
realize
their
unique
potential

When my 2 ½-year-old boy/girl twins entered a mother's-day-out preschool program, there was never a question in my mind about keeping them together in the same class. I have always been a big believer in the bond between twins and I was afraid that separating them would somehow lessen the strength of that bond. I thought they would grow apart—even at the tender age of two.

DIFFERENT LEVELS

When Alex and Averie entered their second year of preschool, it became apparent that Averie had inherited my powerful motherly instinct, while Alex assumed the role of big brother. Averie watched over Alex and Alex protected Averie. I thought it was wonderful that they carried their bond into the classroom. However, their teachers didn't share my joy.

Academically, Averie's mothering role began to interfere with Alex's progress. For Averie, learning came easily. She grasped and

retained everything she was taught. Alex, on the other hand, would listen attentively, answer appropriately and try to color within the lines, only to discover that his brain space was better utilized by thoughts of Batman and other Super heroes. Averie instinctively sensed his lack of concentration and began answering questions for him, and helped him color in the lines.

When they brought their brown paper bag alphabet puppets home, Averie would proudly admit that she helped Alex color his. This mothering trend continued through all three years of preschool. Alex always knew Averie would help him if he got stuck.

KEEPING THEM TOGETHER

Kindergarten was approaching and the decision to keep them together or separate them weighed on my mind. I talked to their preschool teacher and she felt that since they each had their own friends and pretty much went their own way in class, they could stay together. The principal at their elementary school didn't agree. She felt they might rely on each other too much, stifling their own abilities. Almost everyone I talked to thought entering kindergarten was the perfect time to introduce separation. I, however, stood firm. They would stay together, at least during this critical first year of transition to real education.

A DIFFERENT TRANSITION

Kindergarten proved to be a difficult transition for both of them. They went from a class of 10 to a class of 27 and from three half days a week to five half days, leaving friends they had known almost their whole lives. Averie's transition was the most apparent. She became shy and introverted. Surprisingly, she no longer picked up the slack for Alex. She was trying to carve out her own space in this new environment. Without Averie's motherly attention and academic assistance compensating for his less-than-perfect attention span, Alex began to realize that other kids knew the alphabet, but he didn't. He started shrink-

ing into the background, never raising his hand or participating in class.

Alex is an extremely bright little boy. He rode a bike without training wheels when he was three. He can navigate his way through a computer program and is very proficient at his Sony Playstation. It's just that learning his ABCs didn't take priority. Averie needed training wheels, hated computers and despised even the sound of video games. But she loved writing and memorizing her ABCs, coloring within the lines and sounding out words.

As the months went by, the twins began to adjust and make friends. Averie began to flourish in all academic areas. But Alex couldn't get to the ABCs.

QUESTIONING TOGETHERNESS

Having four children before the twins, I never had a problem with holding a child back a year if necessary. I did it with three of my four kids, one being in third grade. The fourth child has a September birthday, so it was easy to keep him in preschool an extra year. But now, I faced a problem I hadn't encountered before. What would I do if Alex needed another year to mature, but Averie proceeded to first grade? Did I do the right thing by cementing that bond between them so securely that now the decision would be to err on the side of caution by holding them both back? I knew in my heart this would be unfair to Averie, but it would also be heart-wrenching to watch Alex continue to struggle.

After much deliberation, anxiety and faith in my instincts, I told their teacher that I would not, could not, hold Alex back and promote Averie. Either they stayed in Kindergarten together for another year, or we could begin working one on one with Alex and see if he progressed enough before the end of the school year to move with his class to first grade.

Reprimanding myself for allowing my fear of breaking their bond to take precedence over their emotional well being, I was

determined to help Alex realize his full potential. I took him shopping for "fun" things that would reinforce the alphabet. He chose flash cards and an alphabet train puzzle. I also talked to a friend who sells educational toys and found a computer program that sounded like it fit the bill.

Alex and I went home armed with the alphabet in all different sizes, shapes and formats. He didn't even realize it was learning we were after. He just thought I was being an awfully nice mom and buying him some fun stuff. Averie sensed our preoccupation with teaching him the alphabet. Whenever Alex had enough tutoring, he would start to cry and Averie would whisper in my ear, "Mom, don't worry. He'll be ok!"

ALL CAUGHT UP

Four weeks later, Alex's teacher called me and said the transformation was incredible. He no longer shrank back in class. He raised his hand and beamed the response. Something finally clicked. Maybe he just needed to grow a little older. Maybe he was finally adjusting to being on his own without Averie's support. Maybe it was the fun alphabet tools we used. Whatever it was, his teacher no longer felt he needed another year of kindergarten. If we continued to work with him throughout the summer, she felt he would be more than ready to start first grade.

LESSONS LEARNED

If I could go back in time to when Averie and Alex were in preschool, I probably wouldn't take Averie's mothering so lightly, allowing Alex to relax, knowing she would back him. I'm also trying very hard not to be afraid of breaking a bond I know in my heart can never be broken—certainly not by classroom separation.

Will I keep them together in first grade? Absolutely---and in second and third grade, until they decide they would like separate classes. ❤️

Kaylynn S. Rice, of Woodbridge, Virginia, is the mother of seven children, including boy/girl twins.

1 Award & 2 Kids! Kids!

Tips to
Tackle this
Tricky
Subject

by Robin Price Hutchins



It's almost the time of year when schools, religious organizations and sports teams start giving out awards and recognitions. Once again, as a mother of twins, I prepare myself to rejoice for one twin while consoling the other. My husband and I have 7-year-old fraternal twin boys who are both very good at sports. But when there is one award given, it often goes to only one of them. To make matters worse, it is often the same twin who wins time and again. We have begun to be concerned about the effect on the twin left seemingly unrecognized.

Like most parents of twins, we carefully tried to keep "things" evenly distributed between the boys throughout their first six years. Now, as they get older and more involved in outside activities, it is much harder. Although we do not claim to have all the answers, here are a few suggestions that we have found to be helpful.

SEPARATE WHEN POSSIBLE

It is helpful to separate twins when possible by placing them in different classrooms at school or on different ball teams. A friend, who is an adult fraternal twin, says that we as parents place our twins in a position of competition when we put them in the same class or on the same team. Elementary-aged children do not have the "team" concept, so there ends up being an unspoken competition between players even on the same team. It is especially pronounced among twins. Children, you'll note, do not often genuinely share in the excitement of each others' performances. Because they are engaging in such a high level skill and they are still young, their focus is still on themselves and the recognition they might not get. With twins at this age, it is better for one twin's team to lose to the other twin's team than for both to be on the same team when only one gets the game ball. A personal loss becomes harder to take than a team loss.

Although separating twins is the ideal situation, and possible for some, I know it is not always workable because it adds another activity to a hectic family calendar. It also makes the parents feel as if they have to split their involvement equally between both children's activities. But there are times it can be done without completely rearranging the family schedule. For example, last summer, we put the boys in separate classes while both attended vacation bible school.

PRAISE EACH CHILD'S EFFORT AND LOVE UNCONDITIONALLY

Parents can praise effort more than performance. While performance is a must for professional athletes, in our homes we can emphasize effort. Effort is that good old-fashioned "doing your best," "doing more than you're asked," and "trying again and again even after failing." As parents we certainly need to praise our children's accomplishments and awards, but kids also need to know that we love them unconditionally; a love that is not based on performance. In the book, *Hide or Seek*, Dr. James Dobson writes of a great college football coach who was being interviewed on television. The coach's son was a successful player on his team. The father was asked if he was proud of all his son's accomplishments in the game of football. The father replied that he was very proud of his son but would be just as proud of him if he had never played the game at all. His talent was recognized and appreciated, but his human worth was not dependent upon his performance. That is the message our children need from us, especially with our twins and their varied activities.

ADDRESS NEGATIVE FEELINGS

When one twin goes without "official" recognition while the other receives many awards, hurt, jealousy and anger obviously can follow. Discussing such feelings is critical. Whether they are discussed openly

as a family or privately between a parent and child depends on the personalities involved. For our family, a private discussion between a parent and the hurting child works best.

Two things are significant here. The timing is very important. It may not need to be immediately upon arriving home from award night. In fact, it may need to wait until emotions have subsided. Whether we are adults or children, emotions can often make our words like a raging fire out of control. For that reason, it may be good to wait a day or so to talk it over.

Secondly, while we encourage kids to express their feelings, we do not allow criticism of the other twin. No matter what the outside circumstances are, we are still a family and we treat each other with kindness and loyalty. The hurting twin's feelings of being unjustly injured do not mean that he can respond unjustly. Along with being an empathetic listener, it might be necessary to help our twin to verbalize what he or she could be feeling. For example, "I know you must be feeling sad and left out, but always remember that your family loves you very much."

RESPOND TO WINNING

In your rush to console the wounded child, remember to congratulate the twin who has been awarded, too! There are many lessons to learn in victory, including how to be a good winner. In our home, a good winner is humble and thankful in his response to others. As a parent, I often assume our boys know how to appropriately respond to others (until they respond and remind me otherwise). We have to teach them. Another lesson is that the twin who does not receive recognition ought to congratulate his brother or sister whether or not he means it sincerely at the time. Doing the right thing, of course, tends to make a child feel good about him or herself. ♥

Robin Price Hutchins, of Grapevine, Texas, is a freelance writer and mother of fraternal twin boys.

Tips on Ways to Get Your Twins to Sleep

from Judy Travis, Twin-Mom & YouTube's #1 Millennial Mom

Sleep. Every parents number one goal when you have a new born. For my husband and I it was no different and when we had twins it was that much more precious. Anyone who has had the joy of bringing twins into this world understands and knows the importance of sleep for yourself, but more so sleep for your babies!

My first tip is "the schedule". No matter how you do it or the methods you use, a schedule is key to peace on earth for your twins and sanity for yourself. Even when it seemed difficult, my husband and I did our best to stick with the schedule. When to pick them up from the crib. The times they went down for nap. Especially when they went down for sleep at night. At first this isn't easy however the sooner you start the sooner your babies can get acclimated to it. Any parent of twins knows that time is at a premium with two crying babies so getting to a point where you can look forward to that break or quiet time for you to work on other things is important.

Next tip is "Routine". What I mean by that is the steps that we took to put our babies down whether for a nap or bedtime was always the same. This worked really well with our first child and it's been just as effective with our twins. When you create a routine and atmosphere for your babies every time you put them down, it helps to calm them before they even get to the crib. For us it was always nursing or a bottle of warm milk right before bed with a book or bed time video as they drank. Right before they went into the crib, the same lullaby would always play. One of the bonus benefits to this is these steps were things we could duplicate even when we traveled.

Third tip. "Put them down while their awake". Yup, just turn on that lullaby, set them down in the crib, walk away calmly and shut the door behind you... No matter what. This is so important to do if you want the first two to work as well. Waiting to put your babies to sleep till the knock out on their own is putting you at the mercy of an unknown schedule. With that being said, this is the tip I know many moms struggle with most (including myself). Reason being is when you first start to do this, your baby is going to cry. For any parent it can be heart wrenching hearing your child cry and we went through it too. Self-soothing is the method we chose for our babies (and recommended by our doctor) and the good



Read more about Judy on her popular blog: <http://www.itsjudytime.com>

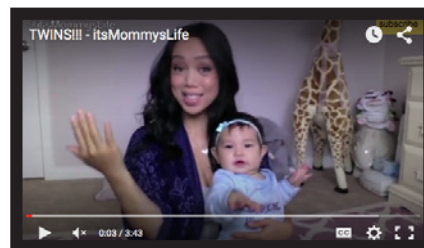
news is it wasn't as bad as we thought it would be. This only took us a week to accomplish before our babies got used to it. Tip 1 and 2 not only work better but are the reason that this tip worked as well. Having that familiar lullaby to help comfort and sticking to a set schedule are why I think it didn't take long for them to go down. My oldest almost never cries when going down and the

twins literally stop crying after 10 seconds.

Babies, they can be a handful. Raising them "correctly" can be based on how you were raised, the personality of the child, and even your personal circumstances. For this reason, the method used to do it can differ from parent to parent. Putting your baby to sleep is no different and especially controversial. I only offer these as tips that worked for me and if it just so happens, hopefully you. In no way do I feel it's the only way to do it.

SOME TIPS FROM OUR PERSONAL ROUTINE:

- Warm Bottle (or nursing) right before sleep
- Bedtime book or video during the feeding
- Warm bath at night before bedtime
- Same Lullaby as they went into the Crib



Judy's mommy channel (itsMommysLife): <https://www.youtube.com/user/itsMommysLife>

Judy Travis, also known as *ItsJudyTime* to her 4 MILLION+ followers, is YouTube's #1 Millennial Mom (also ranked in the top 1% of "Family and Children's Interests" on YouTube) and considered to be one of the industry's top beauty and lifestyle influencers. Her total channel views surpass 600 MILLION, drawing more viewers than most primetime network shows. Judy is a mom to three children, including fraternal twins.

NEED SOME HELP AROUND THE HOUSE? Enlist your twins

Some Do's and Don'ts of Giving Chores

Giving chores to kids is a struggle for any parent. How much do you give them? Do you pay them? What should happen if they don't do their assigned chores? If you've been thinking of giving your twins chores, try the following tips to make your job a little easier and to find more of a balance in your life:

1. Do: Be specific—If you tell a child to “clean your bedroom,” you'll get a variety of results. To one twin that may mean shoving everything under the bed so that you can't see it anymore and to the other it may mean pulling the comforter up over the bed making it looked fixed. Or maybe one twin's definition of cleaning their room may mean piling everything up neatly. If you use the term “clean your room,” expect it to not get very clean. With children you must be specific. Use terms such as “fix your bed,” “put all your clothes away,” and “vacuum.” Giving specific tasks will get what you want done, done.

2. Don't: Expect perfection—when you ask anyone, child or adult, to do a chore you cannot expect them to do it exactly as you would. As long as the chore is getting done, be happy. It means a break for you. Don't go back after they are done to fix up their work. If that's the end result of giving your children chores, you're better off doing the jobs yourself. Your child will never do chores like you do, so it's better to praise them and make them feel good about the job they did rather than to redo their work, which confuses them and takes a little bite out of their self-esteem.

3. Do: Lay out rewards and consequences clearly—If you plan to connect chores and allowance, make it clear how it works, by day or by week. If chores and allowance are not connected then make that clear and also add a little incentive for them doing chores, such as a weekend outing or a treat at the end of the month. If you stick with the rewards and consequences that you set out, your children will know that you mean business when it comes to chores.

4. Don't: Stand at their side—this tip ties in with not expecting perfection. Giving chores isn't an opportunity for you to lord over someone and tell them exactly how to do their job. Give them the necessary supplies and let them do the job their way. Unless they are honestly doing a sloppy, uncaring job, don't say anything about how they could improve their work.

5. Do: Make chores fun—there's no reason they can't be. Put chores that you want to be done by your children into a jar and have them pick a different chore. If you know that your child loves to dust, but hates to vacuum, and then give your child the dusting chore more often than the vacuuming chore. Needless to say children should try a variety of chores to learn how to do them, but allow them to do what they love too. They'll be more willing to do them if you compromise. ♥





A Hubby's Guide to Bed Rest

by Craig Chappelow

Craig Chappelow
of Greensboro, North Carolina, is a product director at the Center for Creative Leadership and the father of three boys, including twins.



I knew we were in trouble when my wife's OB/GYN looked at her somberly and said, "Sara, I am afraid I am going to have to put you in the hospital on complete bed rest until the twins are born." It was three months until her due date and Sara was devastated. I know men are from Mars and women are from Venus and all of that, but why is that such terrible news? Many husbands, while trying to console their wives, would be thinking, "Dang, it should have been me."

When I heard this news from the doctor, I mentally put myself in my wife's place. I visualized myself reclining on one arm, like one of those slightly wounded soldiers in an old World War II movie, while my sweet wife bustled around me fluffing pillows and setting out corn chips. At great personal sacrifice I would bravely follow orders for the good of our babies. I would do this by using my inner strength, my special love for my wife, and my DVR (and/or Netflix).

My wife is not exactly the bed rest type. As a busy executive, she is not used to staying put. She did, however, follow the doctor's orders, and her hospital bed became the mobile command center for our lives. I suddenly found myself on the receiving end of Sara's "to-do" lists. My wife is an Olympic-class list maker. She comes from a long line of list makers. I am positive that if I traced her lineage back far enough it would lead to one of her ancestors preparing to board the Mayflower holding a quill pen and checking off items such as: pack shapeless black dress, clean blunderbuss, send thank you note to Brother Elijah for travel pillow. My ancestors, by comparison, were wondering at the last minute if there was an ATM on board.

While Sara suffered in her horizontal exile, this is how things worked: She would generate a "to-do" list for me and I would dutifully march off to begin work. I would return to her and proudly display my crossed-off tasks, ready to be showered with admiration and affection. Instead she'd issue forth another "to-do" list. Visits to the hospital became increasingly stressful, I would divide my time equally between preventing our 2-year-old son from pushing the "call code" button on the wall and reporting my progress on the latest list.

Many of you are probably thinking, "Quit whining, you had the easy part!" The truth is bed rest puts incredible stress on both people. So in the interest of preserving marriages everywhere... I have outlined some of the typical roles a husband should expect to fill should this happen to you.

BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR

This is one of the times in a man's life when your job is to step gracefully out of the limelight. Expect everyone else to be completely focused on

your wife, catering to her every need, and looking past you like you are not there. Much like at your wedding...

PRESS SECRETARY

You will become the information conduit between your wife's condition and the outside world. Be prepared for interrogation. Complete strangers will ask you for an update. Did the guy filling the soda machine just ask you something about your wife's cervix? Prepare a mental list of generic responses to save you time and energy. For most well-meaning inquiries I recommend: "She is doing fine, the babies are doing great, thanks for asking." To ward off particularly nosy inquiries, try giving them a graphic report using as many gynecological terms as possible. This might require some research via Google. If done successfully, it will result in the person that just asked you that uncomfortable question smash right through the wall, leaving a hole shaped like a person running (like in the cartoons!)

SECRET SERVICE AGENT

You will be expected to screen out her visitors and regulate who is and is not allowed to pass to the inner sanctum of her hospital room. Because it is a mysterious and complicated formula you must act on her direct orders only. Do not try to do this on your own. For example, her boss is allowed to see her without makeup, but a surprise visit from your softball team or your parents would be a problem.

PHILANTHROPIST

This is a great time for you to act completely out of character and buy her something wonderful that she's always wanted. Jewelry is the perfect gift to lift her spirits.

STRAIGHT MAN

As tempting as it is, resist the urge to use your wife's situation to add material to your own amateur comedy routine. Upon looking at one of our ultrasound pictures, I squinted at the blobs and smudges that were our twin sons and announced that it looked like a cold front was moving in over Iowa. Sara did not appreciate the humor. There is a fine line between helping to keep your wife in good spirits and stepping on her swollen toes.

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL

Despite arriving 10 weeks early, our twin boys are doing fine. Sara is healthy and back to her old self again having recovered from this condition known as bed rest. As for me, I count my blessings every day for the gifts of my beautiful children and loving wife. I have to...it's at the top of my "to-do" list. ♥





Angelica Manrique is a 4th grade ELA teacher. She has been a teacher for 11 years. She enjoys spending time with her children and grandchildren. She is involved with church functions including Sunday school teacher and many retreats. She has her masters and would like to return to graduate school for a second masters in the near future.

made her an expert. I asked my doctor repeatedly as he checked for a heartbeat, "Might there be two?" Annoyed by my persistence he replied, "No, not last time nor this time." My curiosity finally was at ease after the third visit, and still only one heartbeat. Three months later, I was getting ready for my doctor visit when I noticed a small amount of blood. Relieved I was going to be seen that day, I continued as normal. During the examination my doctor was alarmed with the size of my belly and the symptoms I was experiencing, which were all the first signs of labor. He hesitantly ordered an ultrasound. Thirty years ago, performing ultrasounds were not the norm unless there were severe problems. To our surprise, it revealed twins in a piggyback position. That explained the inability to detect the second heartbeat. After one month on medication and bed rest, I delivered premature identical twin girls naturally. Holding my six pounders on each arm made me the happiest mother in the world. All the morning sickness, back aches

"Be careful, you might have twins again!" chuckled the OB/GYN as he walked out of the elevator we shared after discharge. Little did I know those exact words would replay in my mind fifteen years later.

When I conceived my first set of twins I immediately knew I was pregnant. Experiencing morning sickness 24 hours throughout my entire pregnancy was the worst time of my life. At the beginning, during my doctor visits, he would scold me for gaining too much weight, but being nauseous all the time I had no desire to eat. So, what was making me gain the excess weight? In the back of my mind I wondered, "Could I be having twins?" My mother-in-law secretly told me she was certain I was carrying twins. She could tell just by the size and shape of my belly. Carrying twins herself

TWINS LOTTERY

by Angelica Manrique

and discomforts suddenly were all worth it. Thank God I didn't reach full-term.

One morning in 2001, I woke up feeling queasy. This very familiar distinct feeling rested in my stomach as I recalled the last time I felt this way. "Could it be possible?" I silently questioned myself. Ignoring it, hoping the stomach-turning sensation would go away, it didn't. After a couple of days I realized I was pregnant and possibly with twins again.

Five years before, I had a singleton, my son. Yet, this pregnancy was delightful and his upbringing was effortless.

Having moved to another city, I search for a new OB/GYN. At my first appointment, I mentioned my history of twins, but since I had a singleton after the twins it was not a priority to perform an ultrasound. The concern was performing Genetic Screening Tests for women 35 or older. Finally, three months later, the ultrasound revealed twin girls once again. Wow...what are the odds? I delivered premature fraternal twin girls by C-section. According to Twins Statistics- The odds of having one set of identical twins and one set of fraternal twins is 1 in 10,000. Despite, having been through it fifteen years ago, it all seemed relatively new. Holding my six pounders in each arm, once again, made me the happiest mother in the world. I was so blessed!

Ironically, after the shock of the news, one of the questions most people asked was, "Do you still have your double stroller and two cribs?" Had I known this would be possible maybe I would have held on to them.

Things were different. I was now a mature careered mother of 5. The best part was, this time, I had two responsible 15 year old girls who played mommy to their little sisters.

The experience gained with my first set of twins was no doubt helpful with my second set. Obviously this was a record I never set out to achieve but I feel blessed and I would never want it any other way. ♡

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Building Bridges at the 55th Annual Multiples of America's National Convention



by Christa D. Reed, Editor-in-Chief

Are you a member of your local parents of multiples club? If so, then you know that your club is a member of a larger network of local and state clubs from across the country that make up a national non-profit organization called the **Multiples of America** (formerly the *National Organization of Mothers of Twins Clubs, Inc.*) Through this national, 501 (c) 3 nonprofit support organization, they are able to conduct pivotal research on multiple-births and provide education, resources and support to numerous families with multiples on a much larger national scale. The organization operates solely on volunteers (mostly mothers of twins/multiples) that are dedicated to making sure this national organization operates smoothly. Over 91 volunteers

are serving in numerous Departments such as: Publicity, Education, Membership, Research, Finance and the Convention along with several committees like: Nominating, EDGE Endowment, Scholarships and additional special committees are all what allows this national organization to exist and without them the organization could not continue. Even the 15 members of the Board of Directors are all volunteers that carve out time out of their busy personal lives to give back to this non-profit organization throughout their terms of service.

Each year during the last full week in July, the Multiples of America (MOA) hosts their annual national convention in order to come together to conduct the business of the organization while also having lots

of fun. If you haven't had a chance yet to experience a national MOA convention you should really add this to your bucket list! TWINS Magazine was a proud sponsor for this year's conference and I was fortunate to be able to attend this year's event (my fourth national convention I have attended) and I always have such a great time meeting fellow twin moms from all over the country.

This year's conference was held July 26 through August 1, 2015 in Cincinnati, Ohio and marked the 55th anniversary for their members to come together for a week of activities, workshops, business meetings and of course lots of laughter and fun. Teamwork is key when planning such a huge event and there were four dynamic and energetic ladies that stepped up to host a wonderful week for all in attendance. Chairman **Kari Combs** led the charge, along with **Pam Edelman** and **Jill Holloway**, both Co-Vice Chairman and **Leigh Ann Kesling** was the event treasurer. With the help of numerous volunteers that hailed from all over the US that helped with events, meals, and many of the convention details, it truly was a team effort and they pulled it off!

Convention week always starts out with some fun tours and events and this year was no different. Wednesday, was a **First Time Attendees workshop** (a must for any first timer) and the **National Workers Appreciation luncheon** honoring all the volunteers that worked so hard throughout the year to keep the national organization running smoothly. Wednesday evening was the official **"Opening Ceremonies in Cincinnati—the Queen City"** and was a Royal affair with members adorned in tiaras and featured live music playing while everyone visited with old friends and also met new ones, too.



Multiples of America's 2015-2016 Board of Directors



Here's a pic of the convention committee at the National Worker "Winner's Circle" Luncheon (Pam Edelman, Kari Combs, Jill Holloway, Leigh Ann Kesling)

Thursday was the first general session meeting where members came together to conduct the business of the national organization and later everyone attended the **2016 Convention Preview luncheon** featuring highlights for next year's convention in **Atlanta, Georgia** and the afternoon wrapped up with "Share Shops" with National club representatives and State organizations.

Thursday night's highlight was when the group attended the **Cincinnati Reds Game at the Great American Ballpark**. It was a beautiful evening in the Queen City and just a short walk from our hotel. I brought my twin sons (age 17) with me to the game and they even dressed like twins to celebrate a great night (a rare sight!)

Friday's general session included Board elections and a special **Keynote luncheon** by Julia Winston, Certified Executive Coach, author and owner of Brave Communica-



James & Nick Reed at the Great American Ballpark in Cincinnati, Ohio for the Reds Game



Keynote Speaker Julia Winston

tions, LLC. Friday afternoon featured four different workshops for attendees, a Breast Cancer Survival and Support group and a Book Club. Attendees had dinner on their own so we had to try the **Sky-line Chili**, a local Cincinnati favorite ([http://www.sky-](http://www.sky-linechili.com/)

[linechili.com/](http://www.sky-linechili.com/)) and topped it off with a stop at the world famous **Graeters Ice Cream** (<https://www.graeters.com/>).



Southside Parents of Multiples, Greenwood, IN, L to R: Laurel Castelot, Jamie Stahl, Melissa Nelson, Becca Jones

On Friday evening convention activities resumed with the popular **"Moms Mall"** where people could come in and purchase fun 'twin-related' items from a variety of



The Loni Anderson Ladies In alphabetical order: Gwen Shogren, Heather McCarthy, Joann Bullock, Judi Cimildoro, Kari Combs, Kathy Magner, Kim Kostuziak, Kym Brophy, Sue Tramontana



Having fun at the Friday Night WKRP in Cincinnati Party

vendors. Also on Friday is arguably one of the most fun events of the entire week and that is the **"Friday Night Party!"** This year's theme was **WKRP in Cincinnati** where guests were encouraged to dress up like their favorite WKRP character or from the 1970s. The party was lots of fun and the DJ played tunes from the 70s while everyone danced the night away. The highlight was when a large group of ladies all came in dressed like Loni Anderson! (Such a fun group...)

Saturday was the final day with one last general session, a memorial service and the **Club Networking luncheon** where members could talk to others from all over the country about what they do in their local clubs for fundraising, garage sales, club success stories, etc. The afternoon featured some additional workshops and an orientation for incoming volunteers serving in the 2015-2016 term. The evening ended with formal photos, a **Cocktail Reception and a formal Banquet** that included the Installation of Officers for the 2015-2016 term.

It truly was a great week filled with a wide variety of activities and events that everyone could enjoy and it was evident that there was a ton of hard work and effort put into hosting such a huge event for the members of Multiples of America. One member was quoted as saying, "

Next year's national convention will take place in Atlanta, Georgia the last week in July. Visit <http://www.nomotc.org> for more information about Multiples of America, how to find a local club and how to learn more about the 2016 national convention in Atlanta, Georgia. ♥



Double Takes

Your Adorable Summer-Themed Photos!



Blake & Bryce, FR
Age 9-months
Lima, Ohio



Anabella & Jason, FR
Age 11-months
Brownsville, Texas



Mayzie & Taylah, ID
Age 2 ½
Idaho Falls, Idaho



James & Jeremiah, ID
Age 4
Indianapolis, Indiana



Kelly & Brooks, FR
Age 8
Edgewater, Maryland



Kyndel & Kynzie, ID
Age 8-months
Mesquite Texas



Maxwell & Oliver, FR
Age 9-months
New York, New York



Kendall & Kenya, ID
Age 4
Tallahassee, Florida

July/August 2015



10

Aedin & Caedin, FR
Age 8
Gladstone, MO

11

Karabeen & James, FR
Age 5
Winter Garden, Florida



9

Theodore & Reagan, FR
Age 2
Stamford, CT

12

Gwenny & Jossy, ID
Age 8
Winter Garden, Florida

13

Henry & Tate, FR
Age 18-months
Snoqualmie Wa



14

Drew & Lilly, FR
Age 1
Macomb Township, Michigan

15

Lily & Ivy, ID
Age 10-months
Springfield, Illinois

16

Brady & Riley, ID
Age 9
Valparaiso, Indiana



17

Carson & Lincoln, FR
Age 13-mos
Athens, Alabama

18

Cara & Raina, FR
Age 4
Bristol, Virginia

19

Connor & Colton, ID
Age 6
Pasadena, Maryland

Double Takes



20

Abigail & Wyatt, FR
Age 9-months
Snow Camp, North Carolina



21

Violet & Amethyst, ID
Age 7 1/2 months
Wheeling, West Virginia



24

Lisa & Liana, FR
Age 11
Harrisburg, PA



22

Otto & Milo, FR
Age 6-months
Manassas, Virginia



23

Emily & Adrian, FR
Age 7-months
Oak lawn, Illinois



25

Liam & Levi, FR
Age 8-months
Saraland, AL



26

Logan & Aura, FR
Age 1
Fall River, MA



27

Madison & Makenzie, FR
Age 2-months
Dublin, CA



28

Jude & Jameson, ID
Age 7-months
Chaska, MN



29

Brody & Laurel, FR
Age 2
West Palm Beach, FL



30

Bailey & Brooke, FR
Age 4
Le Claire, Iowa

July/August 2015



31

Alex & Evan, FR
Age 7
South Haven, MN



32

Kinsley & Karter, FR
Age 6-months
Dayton Ohio



33

Lilly & Layla, ID
Age 18-months
Ruston, Louisiana



34

Declan & Drake, FR
Age 2 ½
Brodhead Wisconsin



35

Remington & Drake, FR
Age 8-months
Marion, IL



36

Morgan & Mallory, FR
Age 15
Daphne, AL



37

Isaiah & Samuel, ID
Age 10
Old Town, Maine



38

Riley & Emerson, FR
Age 7-months
Lexington, KY



39

Marissa & Miley, FR
Age 4
Tweed, Ontario Canada

40

Luke & Landon, ID
Age 5
Deer Park, Texas

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