



**ICOMBO**  
INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF  
Multiple Birth Organisations

**AIMS/GOALS  
MEMBER  
ORGANISATIONS**



## News From Around The World

March 2021

### Chairperson Report

Greetings!

It seems hard to believe that we have now been facing the challenges of Covid-19 for over a year. From what I read and see on television, many of you are in difficult situations, with lockdowns and many restrictions on how you can live your lives. I hope and pray that our lives will improve during 2021.

The summary of our Declaration of Rights and Statement of Needs of Twins and Higher Order Multiples states that:

***Twins / triplets and higher order multiples have unique conception, gestation and birth processes; health risks; impacts on the family dynamics developmental environments; and individuation processes. Therefore, in order to ensure their optimal development, multiples and their families need access to health care, social services and education which respect and address their differences from single born children.***

The mission of the **International Council of Multiple Birth Organisations (ICOMBO)** is to raise awareness of the unique needs of multiple - birth Infants, children, adults and their families promoting their health, education and welfare. One of our objectives is to “provide a structure to enable individuals and multiple-birth organisations to share and develop resources.

I am thrilled that we, as a worldwide organisation were able to support the TAPS Support Foundation for TAPS Awareness Day. The work that everyone did in sharing information truly shows how we can work together to raise awareness of the unique needs of multiples.



Monica Rankin

Thank you to Stephanie Ernst-Miller who led the social media campaign and supplied ICOMBO with lots of information and images for us to share. Thank you also to the people in our member organisations who promoted the day in their social media accounts. I was very impressed to see the TAPS awareness day logo translated into Japanese. JAMBA – fantastic work!!!

With best wishes for you all,

*Regards,*

*Monica*

**“IT'S AMAZING  
WHAT WE CAN  
ACCOMPLISH  
WHEN WE'RE IN IT  
TOGETHER.”**

*Esie*

Home page: <http://icombo.org/>

Resources: <http://icombo.org/resources/>

Research: <http://icombo.org/research/>

Members: <http://icombo.org/membership/>

*The International Council of Multiple Birth Organisations (ICOMBO) is a voluntary organization whose aim is to raise awareness of the unique needs of multiple-birth infants, children, adults and their families promoting their health, education and welfare.*

# Have You Heard

## CONGRESS UPDATE

You may be aware that the Beijing Congress, to be held in June will now be totally online. Registrations are open – <https://www.mcscientificevents.eu/twins/>

Costs are:

ICOMBO ISTS members (level one member) €50, online registration

ICOMBO non-ISTS members (level two members) €90, online registration

I have cancelled the Pre-Congress Workshop and the Business meeting. There may be sessions that are of interest to you, please read the program to check.

Plans are well underway for the Budapest Congress, to be held in November. At this stage we do not know how many people may be able to attend, and we are expecting that many people will attend online. I won't be there in person; I will attend via technology. The ICOMBO Business Meeting will be conducted, along with some other ICOMBO sessions. I will forward information to you as more decisions are made.

### [2021 Multiples of America Virtual Run/Walk/Sleep In - Multiples of America](#)

**MULTIPLES RUN/WALK IN MY FAMILY**  
Multiples of America  
Virtual Run/Walk

A benefit for  
EDGE Endowment Fund &  
Marge Ainsworth Scholarship Fund

**5K 1K Sleep-In**

Run, Walk, or Sleep-In from anywhere,  
anytime during April 2021

Join in on your own, with a friend,  
as a family, or with your club.

**REGISTRATION:** \$30.00 for 5K/1K  
Fee includes: **finisher medal**  
Commemorative t-shirts available at an additional cost.

Join in the fun. Share selfies or stories  
online on social media as you go into  
training for your race. Send us a photo of  
a previous run/walk experience.  
Or show us your storehouse of medals!  
We'd love to post it or use it in Multiple  
Connections, our virtual newsmagazine.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR  
April 2021  
4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
11 12 13 14 15 16 17  
18 19 20 21 22 23 24  
25 26 27 28 29 30

Look for registration  
details coming soon.  
[www.multiplesofamerica.org](http://www.multiplesofamerica.org)

**multiples** OF AMERICA | support education research

#move4multiples  
#supportmultiplied  
#multiplebirthawareness2021

**Multiples of America (USA)** invites our international friends to join in a fun virtual race to celebrate MOA's Multiple Birth Awareness Month during April.

During these pandemic times, a virtual race allows you participate in a Walk/Run event when and how you choose. Just post your results online using the links provided at the Multiples of America site to celebrate your success. [www.multiplesofamerica.org](http://www.multiplesofamerica.org)

A beautiful finisher medal will be provided for those who register to run or walk on any day during April. It will be mailed to you.

So gather your friends, family, and club members and join the fun. Just remember to follow social distancing guidelines for your area.

#### **Some fun ways to participate:**

- Run/walk on your own, at your own pace.
- Gather a group of friends for a fun outdoor event.....just follow social distancing guidelines.
- Gather other family members and make it a family affair.

**Registration is open. Just click on the link at the top of this article and have fun!**

# Research on Multiple Births

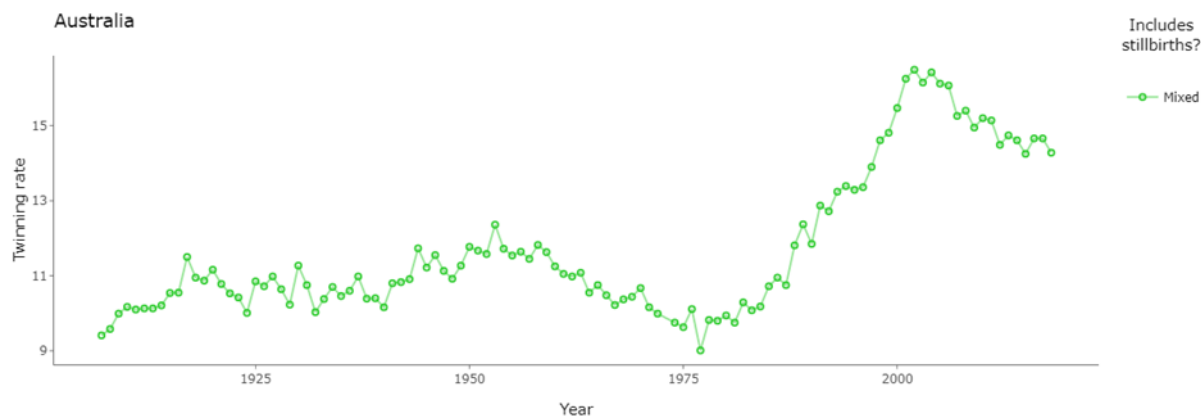
## HUMAN MULTIPLE BIRTHS DATABASE (HMBD)

I was made aware of this research project by our friends in France, thank you Isabelle. I am very pleased that Professor Pison invited us to sit on the advisory board of this group. Carolyn Lister and I both accepted the invitation. “HMBD gathers the number of twin births and the twinning rates for countries with reliable statistics. The database also provides statistics on other multiple births (i.e., triplets, quadruplets, etc.) whenever possible.” (from website)

There is currently data from the following countries:

<a href="#">Australia</a>	<a href="#">Austria</a>	<a href="#">Denmark</a>
<a href="#">England and Wales</a>	<a href="#">Finland</a>	<a href="#">France</a>
<a href="#">Germany</a>	<a href="#">Iceland</a>	<a href="#">Japan</a>
<a href="#">Netherlands</a>	<a href="#">New Zealand</a>	<a href="#">Norway</a>
<a href="#">Scotland</a>		

I was amazed to find data for Australia dating back to 1907, more than 100 years ago!



Data obtained via the Human Multiple Births Database. Australian Bureau of Statistics. Extracted from: <https://www.twinbirths.org> 08/03/2021.

You can find the website for HMBD [here](#). If using the data, please be aware of the correct use of citations for this work.

## School Placement Survey

In our last newsletter we highlighted results from our recent School Placement Survey. Be sure to visit our website for the most current information on School Placement and resources.

Visit our website at:

<http://icombo.org/classroom-placement/>

# ICOMBO Members Share Aims and Goals

## Sound Familiar?

- ◆ *Parents in the United States have just given birth to twins at their local hospital. They are excited as they leave for home; and, at the same time wondering what will make the transition to home life with new multiples a little easier.*
- ◆ *A mom in England is trying to decide on school placement for her multiples. Should they be placed together; or should they have different classroom experiences?*
- ◆ *Parents in Rwanda have just given birth to multiples and want to know more about development patterns between boy/girl multiples.*
- ◆ *An educator in Australia has multiples in her classroom and would like to know more about multiples and their dependencies on each other.*
- ◆ *A young couple in Japan have just learned they are expecting multiples and feel a bit overwhelmed. They are looking for resources and other multiple parents who can provide support and knowledge.*
- ◆ *An expectant couple in Finland is seeking resources to further understand a diagnosis of Twin to Twin Transfusion Syndrome (TTTS).*

Now, take the country out of each of the scenarios above and these along with many other multiple related scenarios are the same. Multiple birth resource needs across the world are often the same. And, the members of ICOMBO help meet those needs everyday.

We recently asked our ICOMBO members to share their aims, goals, and missions. In doing so, it provided a clear picture of just how alike we are. Coming together as a global community within ICOMBO further provides a strong network of knowledge, resources, and support to parents, researchers, and educators as they seek information about the wonderful world of multiples. And, ICOMBO provides a platform to celebrate multiples through our Multiple Birth Awareness activities.

Read on as we highlight our members who responded for this article. And, we encourage you to seek out another member organisation from below if you feel they have resources that may assist you and the support you provide to your communities.

### Thanks for the Quick Response!

A big thank you to the three member organisations that took the challenge and were the first to respond for this article!

**TAPS**

**Japan Multiple Birth Association**

**Multiples New Zealand**



**And, a thank you to everyone who participated!**

Turn to Page 9 to learn more about TTCOW, in Rwanda, one of our newer support groups for



In this picture, our members were constructing a small house for a single mother with triplets and twins.



## ICOMBO Members Share Aims and Goals



**Organisation name:**  
**Country:**  
**Contact email address:**  
**Contact Position:**

**The TAPS Support Foundation**  
The Netherlands  
[stephanie@tapssupport.com](mailto:stephanie@tapssupport.com)  
TAPS nerd and Founder

**How many members do you currently support?**

Around 500

**Current Purpose/Aims as shared with your membership:**

We raise awareness of Twin Anemia Polycythemia Sequence in the wider community, provide support to people diagnosed, and raise money for research projects into TAPS (as well as help with the research)

**What communications/activities/ or educational materials do you provide members in support of your Purpose/Aims? (Top five)**

- ◆ Active Facebook Group
- ◆ Website
- ◆ Social Media campaigns
- ◆ Access to research
- ◆ Advocacy materials

**How has your organisation changed how you communicate or meet with your members during 2020 due to the Pandemic? If so, how? And has it been successful?**

It has stayed the same for us - we are mostly online, however we don't have the access to the researchers as much as we had (for obvious reasons). Team meetings have transitioned well to being online, and our facebook community is rocking.

**Have your members changed how they communicate with other parents of multiples during 2020 due to the Pandemic?**

We're mostly all virtual, but we have had to stop our local "catchups" that we were just beginning.

**If you could share a best practice (Something working well for your organisation today), what would that be?**

Transparency and honesty - we have a centralized communication point in a program called Slack, as well as project management in Asana. Everyone knows what everyone is doing, and we talk about everything.

**If you could ask other members for advice or strategies to assist with an area of concern you are experiencing in your organisation what would you ask?**

I'd like help with growth, and perhaps also the best way to connect with the media.

## ICOMBO Members Share Aims and Goals



**Organisation Name:**

**Japan Multiple Births Association (JpMBA)**

**Country:**

JAPAN

**Contact Name:**

Takafumi Matsuba

**Contact email address:**

takafumimatsuba@gmail.com

**Contact Position with Organisation:**

A board member for International Affairs

**How many members do you currently support?**

Board members - 19, treasurer -2, Special counselors- 4  
\*About half of the directors also serve as representatives of prefectural or local support circles. The remaining half are medical professionals, researchers, or technical professionals.

**Current Purpose/Aims as shared with your membership:**

Our aim is to expand the circle of multiple birth support, and to realize a society in which multiple births can be born and raised with peace of mind anywhere in Japan.

**What communications/activities/ or educational materials do you provide members in support of your Purpose/Aims? (Top Five)**

Technical guidance for multiple birth circles

Providing expertise to multiple birth circles

Accumulation of expertise and statistical information on multiple births

Hosting workshops for professionals such as public health nurses, midwives, and nurses

Negotiations with local governments and central government offices

**How has your organisation changed how you communicate or meet with your members during 2020 due to the Pandemic? If so, how? And has it been successful?**

We changed to online conference format using Zoom. It worked well, but there remained problems in the formation of new relationships through face-to-face meetings, workshops and congress.

**Have your members changed how they communicate with other parents of multiples during 2020 due to the Pandemic?**

We changed to online conference format using Zoom. For example, online educational workshop.

\*We do not mainly support multiple birth families directly, but do indirect activities such as working with multiple birth circles and local governments in each region.

**If you could share a best practice (Something working well for your organisation today), what would that be?**

1)Japanese Statistical information  
2)Animated video about TTTS similar disease (forthcoming in March)

**If you could ask other members for advice or strategies to assist with an area of concern you are experiencing in your organisation what would you ask?**

Social public relations  
Securing the number of members  
Social introduction of discount system for multiple births (such as successful example by Twins Trust)

# ICOMBO Members Share Aims and Goals



**Organisation Name:** Multiples New Zealand  
**Country:** New Zealand  
**Contact Name:** Heather Ben  
**Contact email address:** president@multiples.org.nz  
**Contact Position with Organisation:** President

**How many members do you currently support?** 14 Affiliated Clubs to July 2020  
- 1233 families within those affiliates

**Current Purpose/Aims as shared with your membership:** Mission Statement: To address the diverse needs of the families with multiples through networking, educating, support and advocacy. Working in partnership with local community groups, health care providers and educators to ensure our values are upheld.

**What communications/activities/ or educational materials do you provide members in support of your Purpose/Aims? (Top five)** We relaunched our website in early 2020, it is much more user friendly and available across platforms. We have a number of resources that are available to our club members and are also available through our website, with two in reprint. A new feeding resource was produced in 2020, and we have committed to having these available in electronic format of which the first is now available.  
We have been using our Zoom Account to connect with our Affiliated Club Trustees, having President's meetings, collaborating and sharing information.

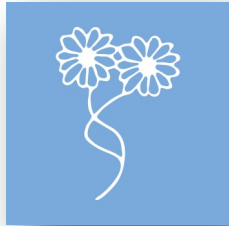
**How has your organisation changed how you communicate or meet with your members during 2020 due to the Pandemic? If so, how? And has it been successful?** Zoom has become the norm and we offer our ZOOM account to our affiliate clubs for their meetings.  
We completed a series of Facebook Live sessions with experts speaking on the topics of sleep, feeding, mental health, etc.  
These initiatives have proven to be successful and popular.

**Have your members changed how they communicate with other parents of multiples during 2020 due to the Pandemic?** Yes. However, we found that most of our community was already strongly connected via Facebook, as having multiples, prem babies, etc. is often isolating to start with (pre-COVID), Our clubs have had fewer events but support remains strong.

**If you could share a best practice (Something working well for your organisation today), what would that be?** Communication. I personally found it hard delivering our Volunteer Awards via Facebook Live and then our AGM via ZOOM. However feedback I have received is that they were enjoyed and in fact we have been asked to consider continuing to have our AGM via Zoom rather than as part of our annual Training Forum (Conference)

**If you could ask other members for advice or strategies to assist with an area of concern you are experiencing in your organisation what would you ask?** Succession Planning and growing our volunteer base, this has been something we have struggled with most of the time I have been involved both at club (local level) and Executive (National level) however without the in person opportunities in 2020 it seems even harder to persuade others that volunteering is worthwhile and fulfilling.

# ICOMBO Members Share Aims and Goals



**Organisation Name:** The Twin to Twin Transfusion Syndrome Foundation  
**Country:** USA  
**Contact Name:** Mary Slaman  
**Contact email address:** mary@tttsfoundation.org  
**Contact Position with Organisation:** Founder and President

**How many members do you currently support?** We average direct support to approximately 2000 families a year, with this number growing. Thousands ore are supported through our website and other social media.

**Current Purpose/Aims as shared with your membership:** We are solely dedicated for over 30 years to providing immediate and lifesaving educational, emotional and financial support to families, medical professionals and other caregivers before, during and after a diagnosis of TTTS including TAPS, SIUGR and TRAP. We are passionately dedicated to saving the babies and providing NICU, special needs and bereavement support to families suffering immense loss as well as furthering research into monochorionic placentas so that all babies can come home with families and be together the way twins, triplets and more are meant to be.

**What communications/activities/ or educational materials do you provide members in support of your Purpose/Aims? (Top five)**

1. [tttsfoundation.org](http://tttsfoundation.org)
2. Support Groups on Facebook
3. Care Packages
4. Phone
5. Events

**How has your organisation changed how you communicate or meet with your members during 2020 due to the Pandemic? If so, how? And has it been successful?** We really have not needed to change except for online fundraising.

**Have your members changed how they communicate with other parents of multiples during 2020 due to the Pandemic?** No change except the obvious of no in person meetings.

**If you could share a best practice (Something working well for your organisation today), what would that be?** Accepting online communications are here to stay!

**If you could ask other members for advice or strategies to assist with an area of concern you are experiencing in your organization what would you ask?** How to get social twins clubs to care /focus more on medical conditions in-utero. Providing prospects needed education materials or pathways to help with in-utero conditions is invaluable.



## ICOMBO Members Share Aims and Goals

**Organisation Name:**

**TWINS AND TWINS PARENTS' INITIATIVE FOR COMMUNITY WELFARE- RWANDA "TTCOW" (Former Rwanda Twins Family) RWANDA**

**Country:**

Pascal NIYOMUREMYI

**Contact Name:**

**Contact email address:**

rtwinsfamily@gmail.com

**Contact Position with Organisation:**

CEO & Founder

**How many members do you currently support?**

783 members are accessing our communication platform.

We are still receiving calls and request from all corners of the country unfortunately we are not reaching all of them due to many challenges.

**Current Purpose/Aims as shared with your membership:**

Community welfare services and activities amongst Multiple Births in Rwanda.  
Empowering multiple birth families through mentorship, capacity building and other related programs.  
Advocating for Multiple Births rights especially children and wives.

**What communications/activities/ or educational materials do you provide members in support of your Purpose/Aims? (Top five)**

Rwanda Twins Family annual event  
Meetings  
Campaigns  
Physical discussions  
Community activities known as UMUGANDA ( Unique in Rwanda)  
We are planning to empower our social media pages (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter).  
We are also planning to build a website

**How has your organization changed how you communicate or meet with your members during 2020 due to the Pandemic? If so, how? And has it been successful?**

During 2020 until now, we are communicating using WhatsApp platform and few members can access google and zoom meeting. This communication was effective for those who are accessing smartphones and internet facilities.

Many of our members do not have a smartphone. We used to find them to their respective places. Due to Covid 19 pandemic, we totally stopped some activities we used to take from the grass-roots.

**Have your members changed how they communicate with other parents of multiples during 2020 due to the Pandemic?**

Members kept communicating internally through WhatsApp platform but it was not easy to communicate with external partners. They used to find members in the official gathering or meeting.

**If you could share a best practice (Something working well for your organization today), what would that be?**

Something working well for our organization is sharing what we have. Those with financial means think about those with limited financial means especially during covid 19 pandemic, we managed to get family support for the most vulnerable single mothers and twins.

Another Uniqueness we can Share is The community activity known as "Twins Special Umuganda" where twins and twins' parents meet in partnership with local government to support community members.

**If you could ask other members for advice or strategies to assist with an area of concern you are experiencing in your organization what would you ask?**

As a young ICOMBO member we have a lot to learn from other members. We are looking for knowledge and skills on how to run and manage a multiple-birth organization. This includes recording Twin, Triplet and Quadruplets and their parents in Rwanda. We are lacking some professional tools and staff to work for the organization. We are all volunteers.



# ICOMBO Members Share Aims and Goals



**Organisation Name:**

**Multiple Births Foundation (MBF)**

**Country:**

UK

**Contact Name: (Person completing)**

Jane Denton

**Contact email address:**

Jane.denton1@nhs.net

**Contact Position with Organisation:**

Director

**How many members do you currently support?**

We don't have a membership structure but our services are available to all parents and families with multiple births and health care professionals who care for them.

**Current Purpose/Aims as shared with your membership:**

The aim of the MBF is to support multiple birth families with direct services and provide education and training for healthcare and allied professionals.

**What communications/activities/ or educational materials do you provide members in support of your Purpose/Aims? (Top five)**

The MBF has collaborated with Birmingham City University to establish the Elizabeth Bryan Multiple Births Centre (EBMBC). We have three work streams - education, research and developing services for multiple birth families. Research underway includes a project to find out more about parents experiences in the first five years. An online module "Individualized care of multiple birth families from conception to one year". We are setting up a Family Faculty so parents and older twins, triplets and more will be involved with the work of the EBMBC. Our work is national and international and offers great opportunities for collaboration.

**How has your organization changed how you communicate or meet with your members during 2020 due to the Pandemic? If so, how? And has it been successful?**

The main change is that all our communication with families directly has been on line or phone calls instead of face to face.

**Have your members changed how they communicate with other parents of multiples during 2020 due to the Pandemic?**

The reports we have received at the MBF are that local meetings of Twins Clubs have been suspended and this has limited meeting other parents. Social media is used increasingly by parents.



**Did we miss you in our member organisations highlights in this edition of our newsletter?**

Or do you have an event you would like to share with other members?  
Contact [newsletter@icombo.org](mailto:newsletter@icombo.org) with news, pictures, and events you would like to share.



# ICOMBO Members Share Aims and Goals



**Organisation Name:**

**Twins and Multiple Birth Club**

**Country:**

Czech Republic

**Contact Name: (Person completing)**

Klara Vitkova Rulikova

**Contact email address:**

dvojcata@atlas.cz

**Contact Position with Organisation:**

Director

**How many members do you currently support?**

We support 12 families for longer than 6 months, work with 15 families currently (for several weeks) and consult on 2 or 3 concrete problems regarding twins and more families per week.

**Current Purpose/Aims as shared with your membership:**

Supporting families with not only social problems. But currently the social and material problems are more common. We organize collections of things for the families and help such families by our public finance collection.

**What communications/activities/ or educational materials do you provide members in support of your Purpose/Aims? (Top five)**

Prior to COVID time:

- we organize lessons for pregnant mums of twins or more
  - we have meetings for mothers of twins and multiples every month
  - we have weekend activities for families with multiples
- We have websites with a lot of free information and leaflets for download free of charge.  
We have on-line and phone advisory

**How has your organization changed how you communicate or meet with your members during 2020 due to the Pandemic? If so, how? And has it been successful?**

As mentioned above.

The change from prior to 2020 for us is we moved to on-line consulting (through Skype or WhatsApp) and regular meetings for families with twins and multiples through MS Teams.

The initial shyness and uncertainty disappeared during the year, and the joint meetings, in particular, gained popularity.

**Have your members changed how they communicate with other parents of multiples during 2020 due to the Pandemic?**

Our local Twins clubs meetings moved into social networks- Facebook, Instagram. Unexpectedly the Facebook groups are attended by more families (mothers) then before 2020 attended local meetings.

**If you could share a best practice (Something working well for your organization today), what would that be?**

MS Teams meetings either for board meetings or for replacing our regular meetings work well.

**If you could ask other members for advice or strategies to assist with an area of concern you are experiencing in your organization what would you ask?**

We have problems with recruiting new members for the board or finding volunteers. Our clients have a lot of problems to solve, which leaves little time or strength to get involved.  
The second problem is, that our leaders of local twin clubs stay there only for 3-4 years and then leave the position after going back to their jobs. Sometimes these twin clubs are "dead" for several years before some new leader appears.

# ICOMBO Members Share Aims and Goals



**Organization Name:**

**Country:**

**Contact Name:**

**Contact email address:**

**Contact Position with**

**Organisation:**

**Finnish Multiple Births Association**

Finland

Ulla Kumpula

toiminnanjohtaja@monikkoperheet.fi

executive director

**How many members do you currently support?**

**Current Purpose/Aims as shared with your membership:**



**What communication/activities/ or educational materials do you provide members in support of your Purpose/Aims?**

**How has your organization changed how you communicate or meet with your members during 2020 due to the Pandemic?**

**Have your members changed how they communicate with other parents of multiples during 2020 due to the Pandemic?**

**If you could share a best practice (Something working well for your organization today), what would that be?**

**If you could ask other members for advice or strategies to assist with an area of concern you are experiencing in your organization what would you ask?**

17 local multiple birth associations. They have 1789 families as members.

We assist multiple births associations and coordinate their volunteer and peer support work as well as family coaching. We offer advice to families and professionals,

We strive to get the needs of multiple birth families more sufficiently met (currently parental leave),

We produce information on multifetal pregnancy and delivery, on parenting multiples and multiple life as well as on our work, and share this information with families, professionals and officials,

We build support for families (currently e.g. chat-advice with child psychiatrist for families via remote connections, remote connection to build up family coaching courses for parents expecting multiples)

- Kaksoiset ja kolmoset koulussa (twins and triplets at school)- booklet, available free [https://monikkoperheet.fi/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Rinnakkain-rinnalla\\_monikkovauvojen-imetyks-opas-suomen\\_monikkoperheet\\_ry.pdf](https://monikkoperheet.fi/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Rinnakkain-rinnalla_monikkovauvojen-imetyks-opas-suomen_monikkoperheet_ry.pdf)
- Kiehtova kaksoisuus (Fascinating twinship - book, first wide nonfiction book of twinship as cultural, biological, psychological and social phenomenon which is in Finnish language, available at libraries and bookstores, <https://kauppa.gaudeamus.fi/sivu/tuote/kiehtova-kaksoisuus/2667690>
- Meille tulee vauvat (we are having babies) -booklet, available free [https://monikkoperheet.fi/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Meille-tulee-vauvat\\_opas.pdf](https://monikkoperheet.fi/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Meille-tulee-vauvat_opas.pdf)
- Rinnakkain rinnalla - Monikkovauvojen imetyks (Breast feeding multiples) - booklet, available free [https://monikkoperheet.fi/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Rinnakkain-rinnalla\\_monikkovauvojen-imetyks-opas-suomen\\_monikkoperheet\\_ry.pdf](https://monikkoperheet.fi/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Rinnakkain-rinnalla_monikkovauvojen-imetyks-opas-suomen_monikkoperheet_ry.pdf)
- Kohti nuoruusikää useamman samanikäisen kanssa (available in English Multiple birth siblings as adolescents - A guide for parents of multiples) - booklet
- [https://monikkoperheet.fi/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Kohti\\_Nuoruusikaa\\_opas.pdf](https://monikkoperheet.fi/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Kohti_Nuoruusikaa_opas.pdf)

We communicate via Teams- and Zoom -remote connections with personal, member associations and the board. It has been successful.

Yes, we help our member associations ("twin clubs") to create a Teams, Zoom or Google Meet -meetings with their parents of multiples and stay available during the meeting if necessary. Google Meet is good because our members can create the connection on their own. They do not necessarily have their own Teams or Zoom and if they use Teams or Zoom they need worker of Finnish Multiple Births to start the meeting.

We have 15 local member associations to provide family coaching courses for parents expecting multiples. We help them to get in contact with local health professionals and provide education and educational materials for peer supervisors e.g. <https://monikkoperheet.fi/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Vertaisohjaajien-opas-monikkoperhevalmennukseen.pdf> and professionals <https://monikkoperheet.fi/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Ammattihenkilösten-opas-monikkoperhevalmennukseen.pdf>

During the covid time we help local associations to provide courses via remote connections by helping with the connections (Teams, Zoom) and providing professionals.

How do you work with free peer groups (In Facebook etc.) that consist mainly of parents not members of your association?



# ICOMBO Members Share Aims and Goals

**Organisation Name:**

**Country:**

**Contact Name:**

**Contact email address:**

**Position with Organisation:**

**How many members do you currently support?**

**Current Purpose/Aims as shared with your membership:**

**What communication/activities/ or educational materials do you provide members in support of your Purpose/Aims?**



**How has your organization changed how you communicate or meet with your members during 2020 due to the Pandemic?**

**Have your members changed how they communicate with other parents of multiples during 2020 due to the Pandemic?**

**If you could share a best practice (Something working well for your organization today), what would that be?**

**If you could ask other members for advice or strategies to assist with an area of concern you are experiencing in your organization what would you ask?**

**Multiple Births Canada**

Canada

Frances Keech

office@multiplebirths.ca

Office Manager

1787 families

To improve the quality of life for multiple birth individuals and their families in Canada by providing support, education, research, and advocacy.

1. Free Resources available for parents and professionals put together by subject matter experts
2. Facebook peer support network groups targeting different areas of multiple births related issues
3. Monthly member newsletters with valuable relevant information from the Board of Directors and the multiple births community
4. Virtual Prenatal Information Session for those expecting twins triplets or more
5. Website access to a member's only portal for discounts to attractions, products and services, parenting webinar videos and presentations

As a response to Covid19, our in person annual Conference was moved to a virtual platform, offering keynote speaker workshop webinars covering various parenting topics. Online Chapter events and social gatherings were also offered, with the entire conference free to members nationwide, culminating with the first ever Virtual MBC Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Making A Difference Awards (MADA) ceremony. It was a huge success as many who would normally not be able to attend in person, connected and participated, when they would have missed out in years prior. This has laid the foundation for increased online possibilities so that more Canadian families can be included in the future.

Throughout the year we have increased our social media presence including the output of human-interest stories multiple times per week, along with promotion of available MBC Peer Support Networks in order to reach as many families nationwide as possible. We have seen an increase in followers on all of our social media platforms, along with an increase in online engagement between members throughout our Peer Support Networks.

In 2020, for the first time ever, MBC offered virtual prenatal information sessions for anyone expecting multiples, assisting many soon to be parents nationwide as all in person prenatal classes offered by local Chapters were cancelled.

Local Chapters have had to cease all in person events and have therefore moved their focus to increased online support. Many Chapters have been creative moving their events and fundraising efforts online. Unfortunately, many Chapters are seeing a decline in membership numbers and volunteer availability as they struggle to show value when in person events and making face to face connections are not possible.

Increased social media presence to keep the organization relevant. Direct and relevant information promoted to multiple birth families through a regular newsletter, exclusively emailed to members only. Online webinars on topics relevant to parents and expectant parents of multiples

As there are no current in person events happening, our local Chapter membership numbers are declining with concerns of some not having volunteers to continue. The hope is that, as the vaccines become available and the in person event restrictions loosen, that parents and families will start meeting together again and club memberships will return to normal. What are other organisations doing to ensure that these clubs are still active when the pandemic is over? What are you doing to combat member attrition and encourage member retention?



# ICOMBO Members Share Aims and Goals



**Organisation Name:** Multiples of America  
**Country:** United States  
**Contact Name:** Amy Bredemeyer  
**Contact email address:** ResearchVP@multiplesofamerica.org  
**Position with Organization:** Research Vice President  
**How many members do you currently support?** 9,345

**Current Purpose/Aims as shared with your membership:**



The Multiples of America aka NOMOTC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organisation dedicated to supporting families of multiple birth children through education, research, and networking. In partnering with local support groups, health care providers, researchers, and educators, and with the highest standards of integrity, respect and professionalism, we endeavor to aid parents of multiples and to raise public awareness of the unique qualities of multiple birth families.

We are a network of local parents of multiples clubs across the United States meeting to support parents of multiples through social events and discussing the care, development, parenting, and schooling of multiple birth children.

**What communication/ activities/ or educational materials do you provide members in support of your Purpose/Aims?**

- Quarterly e-magazine, "Multiple Connections"
- Monthly newsletter, "Multiple Messages"
- 2020 Revision of our guide for parents and educators on "Placement of Multiple Birth Children in School"
- We provide additional support services for families parenting special groups, such as higher order multiples, special needs multiples, families experiencing bereavement, and LGBT families.
- Invitations to participate in both outside and in-house research studies on families of multiples, and reports on published studies

**How has your organization changed how you communicate or meet with your members during 2020 due to the Pandemic?**

Multiples of America has increased its methods of communication with members during the pandemic. We compiled resources for our member clubs to use regarding successfully navigating the Work-School Space at Home as well as Celebrating Holidays during the Pandemic. Additionally, in summer 2020, several presentations that would typically be available only to those who attended the national convention were made available as online videos. Conducting parts of the business of the organisation, such as elections, online has resulted in a higher turnout of voting clubs than is typical.

**Have your members changed how they communicate with other parents of multiples during 2020 due to the Pandemic?**

Quite a few of our member clubs have indicated that their communications have changed over the past year. Video conferencing has been popularly discussed amongst our local leaders, and there has been an increase in communication between local leaders in exchanging ideas and projects.

**If you could share a best practice (Something working well for your organization today), what would that be?**

During the pandemic, we have had to find creative and "outside-the-box" thinking to continue to engage our members. We have shared more posts to gain attention on our social media platforms, had a town hall Zoom meeting, and conducted in-house surveys to determine what our members want and need. Using our e-tools has helped us to stay connected as best as we are able during this time.

**If you could ask other members for advice or strategies to assist with an area of concern you are experiencing in your organization what would you ask?**

Growth and retention often come up as questions from our Local Membership Clubs. In utilizing a Leadership Forum, leaders of all member clubs can share ideas and connect, which lends itself to finding innovative ways to enhance their local clubs. At the national level, we too struggle with retention, which then leads to tighter finances. By having our national organisation face the same challenges as the local clubs, we can help each other.

## ICOMBO Members Share Aims and Goals



<b>Organisation Name:</b>	<b>The Mighty Mothers</b>
<b>Country:</b>	Belgium
<b>Contact Name:</b>	Carola or Kate
<b>Contact email address:</b>	carola@themightymothers.com
<b>Contact Position with Organisation:</b>	
<b>How many members do you currently support?</b>	1-500 followers
<b>Current Purpose/Aims as shared with your membership:</b>	As mothers of multiples, Kate and Carola aim to help others by sharing their honest and funny stories in the hope that they will reassure and empower others on their journey to being mighty mothers.
<b>What communications/activities/ or educational materials do you provide members in support of your Purpose/Aims? (Top five)</b>	PODCASTS which include interviews with other groups and individuals. Book published - proceeds going to Maternity World Charity Website Facebook Instagram
<b>How has your organization changed how you communicate or meet with your members during 2020 due to the Pandemic? If so, how? And has it been successful?</b>	Launched in August 2020; therefore, no pre-pandemic experience.
<b>If you could share a best practice (Something working well for your organization today), what would that be?</b>	Connect Love Share
<b>If you could ask other members for advice or strategies to assist with an area of concern you are experiencing in your organization what would you ask?</b>	How to use our platform to collaborate more and help others more globally.

The next ICOMBO member meeting (to be held via ZOOM), will include a workshop discussion to review member best practices and areas of concern shared by members who participated in this newsletter article. If your organisation has additional areas you would like added to the workshop contact us at [newsletter@icombo.org](mailto:newsletter@icombo.org).