



ICOMBO
INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF
Multiple Birth Organisations

SAVE THE DATE

*International Multiple Birth Awareness Week
November 7–13th, 2016*

News From Around The World

May 2016

Chairperson Report



Monica Rankin

Greetings everyone,

I must apologise for the lateness of this newsletter. I am on holiday at the moment, we have been travelling through Italy and Greece for the past 5 weeks and I haven't had time to finalise articles for this edition of the newsletter.

The most exciting news in this edition is the release of our long awaited survey on single parenting of multiples. Please circulate the links as widely as you can - to Facebook, websites and other social media. We would like as much information as possible so that we can prepare a comprehensive publication on single parenting. A HUGE thank you to Susan Griffith who has written the survey and done a lot of work uploading the various versions onto Survey Monkey. Thank you also to our volunteers who translated it from English into French, German, Czech, Japanese, Spanish and Finnish.

I hope you enjoy the latest news from ICOMBO. As always, I would love to hear your comments on anything you read here.

Regards, Monica

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INTERNATIONAL MULTIPLE BIRTH AWARENESS WEEK 2016

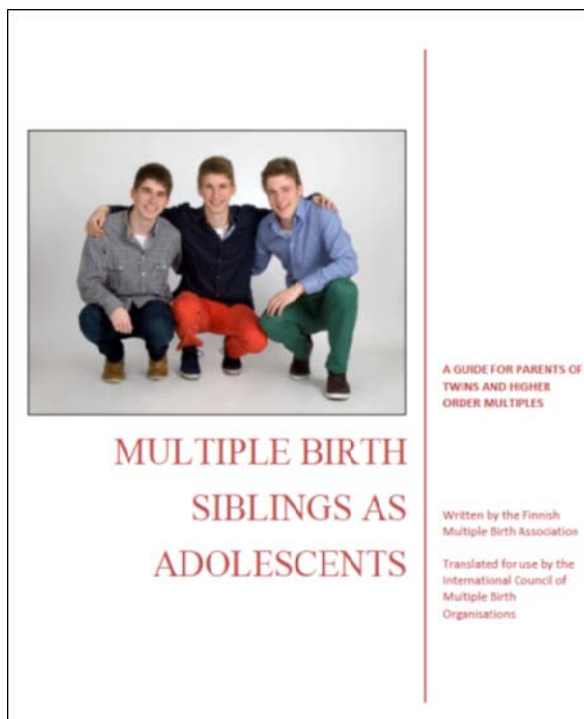
We will be celebrating International Multiple Birth Awareness Week (IMBAW) from Monday 7 November through Sunday 13 November. The theme this year is “Adolescence in Multiples, the transition from a child to an adult in a multiple birth relationship.”

We will explore the complexities of transitioning to becoming an independent adult while maintaining the unique relationship and bond that multiples have with their co-multiple(s).

Please advertise these dates within your organisation. It would be great if you are able to organise events at this time to promote the week. This is an excellent time to schedule a twin panel on this topic at your local club meeting.

We need your assistance in preparing materials – in English and in other languages on this topic. If you can assist by securing written materials from your members or known authors, or assist in any other way, that would be greatly appreciated. Please contact Monica at chair@icombo.org

ICOMBO Proudly Announces.....



LAUNCH OF OUR NEW PUBLICATION –

Multiple Birth Siblings as Adolescents

We are very excited to announce that the English version of this title is now available to ICOMBO members. At convention 2014, in Budapest, the Finnish Multiple Birth Association offered their publication for use by ICOMBO members. They had received funding to research and publish the resource, so it was a very generous offer. Ulla, from Finland, also sourced some volunteers who gave their time for several months to translate the publication into English. We are very grateful to these volunteers and thank them for their work. It would not have been an easy task.

- ◆ The publication is available for all financial members of ICOMBO. As it is 29 pages in length, it is large to email, so it has been uploaded to our remote storage site. Please download it directly from this site.

<https://remote.tamba.org.uk/remote>

REMOTE ACCESS STORAGE FACILITY

You may be aware that some time ago, TAMBA offered the use of their remote access storage facility, so that we can store documents and publications securely and have them available to all members, using a password. As this information is only available to financial members of ICOMBO, the password has been changed. By the time you read this newsletter, you should have received information on the current password and how to access the site. If you haven't received the email, please contact Monica at chair@icombo.org

STILLBIRTHS IN MULTIPLE BIRTH PREGNANCIES

It seems that the incidences of stillbirth in twin, triplet and HOM pregnancies is much higher than the rate of stillbirths in singleton pregnancies. We are trying to collect data to show the rate of stillbirths in multiple birth pregnancies in different countries. So far, we have information from Germany, New Zealand, Australia and United Kingdom.



ICOMBO would like to approach clinicians/doctors/researchers with some data and ask them to investigate the reasons for the high incidence in multiple births, and to perhaps find ways to better manage the pregnancies to improve the outcome for families. If you are able to assist in any way, by supplying data for your country, or assist with the research in some way, please contact Monica at chair@icombo.org.



Single Parenting of Multiple Birth Children

ICOMBO is pleased to announce its **Single Parenting Survey** that is ready for distribution. Please encourage all your single parent members to complete this survey during June or July by publishing the link on your website and announcing it through your social media or other outlets. Results will be shared in an upcoming newsletter.
monica.rankin@bigpond.com

A special thanks to Susan Griffith for authoring the survey and all the ICOMBO members who assisted with the various translation.

English version

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BX2QZCL>

Czech version

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/W6FFL9L>

French version

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/G3WSRTB>

German version of ICOMBO's

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/W6HHJV2>

Spanish version of ICOMBO's

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/W6ZJ6GM>

Finnish version of ICOMBO's

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WZVB5RZ>

Japanese version of ICOMBO

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WZSTBW6>





On Mothering Multiples: Complexities and Possibilities

Edited by Kathy Mantas

This edited collection of narratives documents the sorrows, joys, fears and the complexities of intertwined emotions and realities involved in conceiving, birthing, parenting and caring for multiple babies. Each situation is well described and documented with care and compassion. The stories are candid, realistic and relevant; each confronting controversial issues and debunking myths with clarity and conviction. The authors have clearly come to understand themselves and to gain new insights as gendered social beings. They raise questions on the social construction of good mothering from various perspectives that provoke reader response as well.

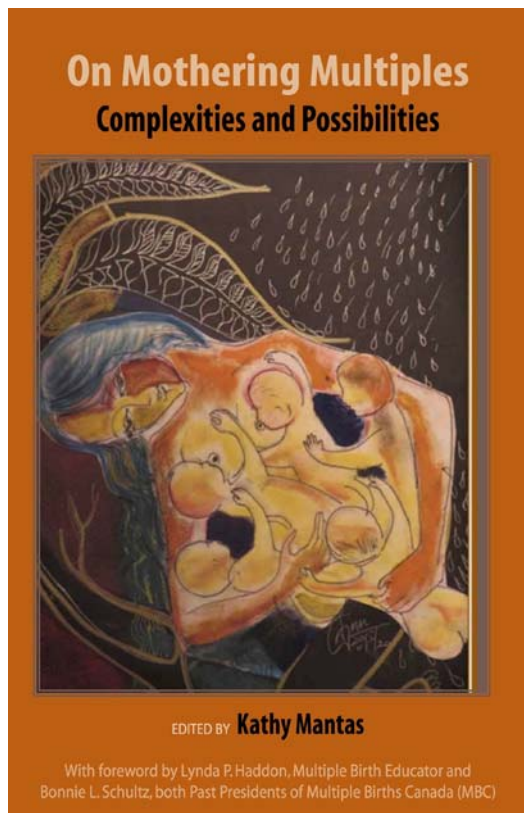
—**Sharon Abbey**, Director, Centre of Adult Education and Community Outreach, Faculty of Education, Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario

As many parents would doubtless agree, going from one child to two more than doubles the workload and often completely changes the parenting experience. Parenting twins or triplets, however, brings an entirely different set of complications and considerations. On Mothering Multiples offers a diverse array of narrative, scholarly, and artistic contributions on the topic, individual entry points into what, for many of us, is a foreign experience.

—**Rachel Epp Buller**, author of *Reconciling Art and Mothering*

On Mothering Multiples: Complexities and Possibilities is not a traditional “guide” or “how to” parenting book; rather, it offers reflections on some of the more challenging aspects and stages of mothering (and parenting) multiples and provides insight into some of the realities of those that conceive, give birth to and mother multiples. By attempting to cover topics and experiences that are often neglected in traditional multiple-birth literature, this collection of thought provoking, scholarly and creative articles makes a valuable contribution to the subject of mothering multiple-birth children. This book is a celebration of the array of complexities, possibilities and emotions involved in receiving the gift of multiple-birth children and of mothering multiples.

—**Kimberley Weatherall**, former Executive Director, Multiple Births Canada (MBC) / Naissances Multiple Canada, Board Member and Past Chair, International Council of Multiple Birth Organizations (ICOMBO)



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Multiples NZ (formerly New Zealand Multiple Birth Association) National Conference 2016

This year Southland Multiple Birth Club is hosting our annual Multiples NZ conference from 30th September to 2nd October in Invercargill with the theme 'Keep Calm and Soldier On!' A mantra all too familiar for us parents of multiples. Our hectic lives filled with juggling routines, cuddles, finances and relationships often require us to stop, breathe and soldier on...

The organising team have created a timetable full of choice with enough scope to allow participants to formulate a plan which will meet their vision for the trip. We understand that the annual conference provides an opportunity to get away for the weekend and have some 'me time'. We are sure that the events we have in mind will allow for this, while still providing ample opportunity to learn, form relationships and gather information to take back to clubs.

Our main headline speaker is Dr. Eileen Pearlman, from California. Dr. Pearlman is an identical twin, so is privy to some insider knowledge! She is also a licensed marriage and family counsellor, child therapist and the founder of Twinsight. Twinsight is a foundation which provides counseling, workshops, and seminars to multiples and their families. She is also the author of *Raising Twins*, a highly regarded book on what parents want to know when navigating this world of multiples. Dr. Pearlman will talk about twin loss, identity and what our multiples need from us. This information will be of benefit to all of us and will aid us in our understanding of the needs of our families, particularly during the trauma of losing a child. We feel very fortunate to have her join us as her knowledge, insight and understanding are second to none.



Our second speaker is Dr. Alexandra Hart, from Auckland. Dr. Hart specializes in relationships and how our personalities affect the way we interact with people. She will describe the five love languages and how we can use this knowledge in our daily lives, particularly within our relationships with our children. This topic will be particularly beneficial for parents of teenagers. Understanding our children's needs and how we can fulfill these is extremely important as we help them to navigate the transition from teen to adulthood.

We have many other events scheduled for the weekend, covering a range from the serious to the silly. The Multiples NZ Exec have several sessions targeted just for presidents and other committee members. These include 'Managing the Tough Stuff' (Equip yourself with the skills and confidence you need to resolve conflict and negotiate difficult situations) and 'Recruiting and Retaining Volunteers'.

We would like to extend an invitation to anyone in the international multiples community to join us from Friday the 30 September until Sunday the 2nd October in Invercargill for a wonderful weekend of reflection, learning, collaboration and relaxation.



Crossroads & Connections
Atlanta, Georgia—2016

Multiples of America
56th Annual Convention

Thursday-Sunday, July 28-July 31, 2016

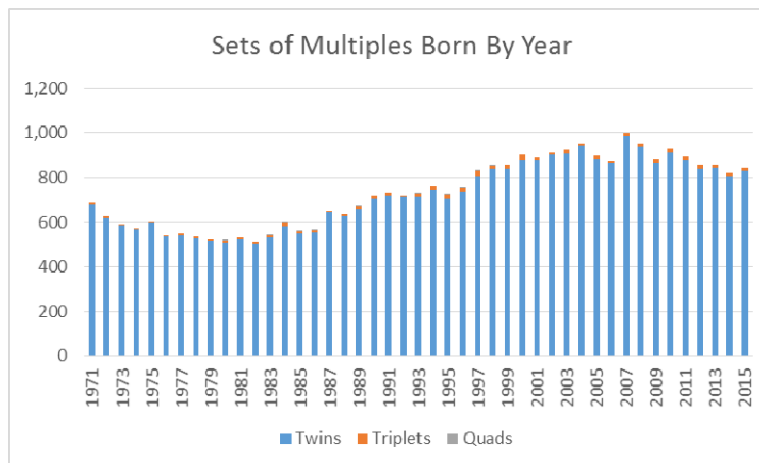
Contact us at: convention2016@multiplesofamerica.org
Or on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/NOMOTCConvention2016>

New Zealand Multiple Birth Figures

Statistics New Zealand have recently released birth figures for the 2015 year. In 2015 there were 828 sets of twins born and 14 sets of triplets (these figures include stillbirths). This is up slightly from 2014 (808 sets twins and 11 sets of triplets) but total births were also higher. Multiple births accounted for 1.39% of all births in 2015 compared to 1.44% in 2014. There hasn't been a set of quads born in New Zealand since 1998!

The following graphs show the long term trends for multiple births in NZ. The number of births in New Zealand had been on the decline but increased slightly in 2015, hence probably why the number of multiples born was slightly higher than the previous year. The peak in total numbers of multiples born was in 2007, which was also around the peak of total births. Total births in 2007 were similar to 1971 (when the records on Statistics NZ website start) and after this point they dropped quite significantly through to mid-80's when they rose again, plateaued then rose again in mid- 2000's and since then mainly on a downward trend.

Looking at the picture of multiple births as a percentage of all births the picture is quite different. In the 1970's multiple births only sat at around 1% of all births. This then rose through the 80's, 90's and early 2000's before dropping a little and now appearing to plateau (although well above rates for the 1970's). The increase can be attributed to fertility treatment but now only one embryo is transplanted in most cases this accounts for the slight drop. Other factors that probably contribute to increase in multiple births are the age of the mother (we are having babies later) and use of the contraceptive pill (there is a higher chance of multiples if you conceive just after coming off the pill).



2016 ICOMBO MEMBERSHIP

Do you know an organization or individual that could benefit from being an ICOMBO member?

Please contact Monica at membership@icombo.org

TWINS FOR LIFE

How are the lives of twins, as individuals, affected by their twinship? The popular myths about twins ('a permanent best friend in your own image') may be contradicted by the actual experience of twins themselves. In adulthood they may experience fundamental contradictions and confusions because of the influence of the twin relationship.

Focusing on opposite-sex twins, Oliver Shirley (an O/S twin himself) has recently carried out a pioneering study on the lifetime effects of twinship. He interviewed six opposite-sex twins, four females and two males. They were all middle-aged or older, like himself, and therefore in a position to look back on their lives and think about the effects of their twinship. Oliver found that none of the six interviewees reported having had a close relationship with their mother in infancy and childhood, but five said that they had had a close relationship with their co-twin which continued into adulthood and up to the present. Cleaving to their co-twin seemed to have complicated and disrupted their development as an individual and compromised their ability to form mature adult relationships. They responded to the challenges of twinship in different ways. Some of their responses were defensive and regressive but others were progressive and developmental. For example, some had developed creative activities such as art making; others had found work situations in which their ability to get on with members of the opposite sex was a positive advantage; one had developed a successful career as an entrepreneur. Oliver concluded that the basic dilemma that they all faced was similar to that of same-sex twins - how to honor their twinship while at the same time attempting to forge a unique identity. But when it came to developing adult relationships with members of the opposite sex these six O/S twins seemed to have experienced an additional and fundamental challenge.

To read Oliver's study go to:

British Journal of Psychotherapy Volume 32, Issue 1, Pages 1-150, February 2016

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/bjp.12197/abstract>

(You have free access to this content)

or contact him direct on:

oliver@shirleyassoc.freemove.co.uk



Share your organisation news here!

- ◆ New Board members?
- ◆ Conference coming up?
- ◆ Survey to share?
- ◆ Reference materials or books to share?

Join us on Facebook

ICOMBO ON FACEBOOK

ICOMBO public Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/InternationalCouncilofMultipleBirthOrganisations?ref=hl>



We are gaining more interest from individuals around the world. Have you taken a look and “liked” the page?

Do you have any information you would like to see posted on this page? If so, please contact Monica at chair@icombo.org

ICOMBO also has a members-only closed group on Facebook. The concept behind this group is so that members can discuss issues about their organisations with some privacy, rather than post comments and questions publically. There are up to 4 or 5 individuals from each of our member groups who are members of this ICOMBO Facebook group. For more information, please contact Monica at chair@icombo.org

ICOMBO Board Members

- ◆ Monika Rankin, Australian Multiple Birth Association, Chair
- ◆ Susan J. Griffith, Multiples of America
- ◆ Tiffany Wimberly, Multiples of America
- ◆ Terri Gillis, Multiples of America
- ◆ Kimberley Weatherall, Multiple Birth Canada
- ◆ Donald Keith, The Center for Study of Multiple Birth
- ◆ Keith Reed, Twins and Multiple Births Association, UK
- ◆ Christine Disselkamp, ABC Club, Germany
- ◆ Pat Preedy, Twins and Multiple Births Association, UK



Do you have organisation or event news to share?

*We want to hear what is happening in your organisation! Articles are welcome for the next edition of the ICOMBO newsletter. **Deadline: August 15, 2016***

Send to: vicechair@icombo.org

JUMEAUX 2016

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TWINS DAY
JUST FOR LAUGHS FESTIVAL
Montreal, Canada

Twins, triplets and quadruplets and more !

Whether identical or atypical, classic or eccentric, rather arts or even athletics, you are invited to our 2016 Twins Day and Parade.

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in prizes to win !!!



Saturday, July 23, 2016

Come to our great annual humorous appointment.

For informations or registration:
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