

CONNECTING MBC, CHAPTERS, VOLUNTEERS AND MEMBERS

From the Desks of the Directors...

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS/CHAIR – GAIL MOORE



It's that time of year again! Time to get ready for the 2010 National Conference in Edmonton which includes preparing for the Annual General Meeting and producing the many documents that go into the AGM package. The positive outcome of finalizing the AGM materials and the

Annual Report is that the Board gets an opportunity to truly review all the amazing strides we've made as a national organization during the last twelve month period. Believe me, sometimes it seems like everything moves so slow it feels like projects and partnerships take forever to complete and put in place!

The reality is – we get a lot done for a bunch of hard-working volunteers! Here are a few examples:

Assisted Human Reproduction Canada (AHRC): In January 2010 we received our first phone call from this the federal regulatory agency responsible for protecting and promoting the health, safety, dignity and rights of Canadians who use or are born of assisted human reproduction technologies. In less than a year this partnership has blossomed to include two other national organizations – the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (SOGC) and the Canadian Fertility and Andrology Society (CFAS). By next year the members of these organizations – professionals who deal with our families – will be informed and educated about MBC and the resources and support we provide for Canada's multiple-birth community. That's thousands of new contacts supporting the work we do in our local communities!

International Multiple Births Awareness Week 2010: In January 2010 we began putting the pieces in place for this inaugural event. It started with updating the *Declaration of Rights and Statement of Needs of Twins and Higher Order Multiples*. With Donna Launslager's capable leadership it was ready to present to delegates in Seoul in June. Once approved a communications plan was developed to spread the news and measure recurrent benchmarks and practices around the world. The media kit and supporting documents will soon be distributed to hundreds of ICOMBO and ISTS members around the world. Not bad for 10 months work!

New MBC Poster and Brochure: Kim will probably tell you this one really felt like forever! The truth is in just 12 months Kim was able to initiate a partnership with Character Creative to develop two new resource pieces free of charge. Then, after a little hiccup, Kim finalized a partnership with EMD Serono to print the poster and brochure and distribute them to all our Chapters. The brochure will also be printed and distributed to all members of the SOGC and passed down to their patients. Amazingly, this will not drain MBC financial resources because it has all been done through partnerships! Pretty exciting stuff! If you need even more validation that MBC really does make a difference – please read the upcoming Annual Report.

If you have questions or thoughts regarding any of these initiatives please contact me at mbcchair@multiplebirthscanada.org.

MBC Board and Volunteers...

Officers

Chair, Gail Moore
 Past Chair, Kimberley Weatherall
 Secretary, Sheila Catto
 Privacy Officer, Todd Ohman

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Director of Chapter Development, Sheila Catto
 Director of Communications, Gail Moore
 Director of Finance, **VACANT**
 Director of Volunteer Management, Kimberley Weatherall
 Director, Todd Ohman

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Business Office

Business Services Manager, Vicki Riley

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Committee Chairpersons & National Volunteers

Breastfeeding Support Network Chair, Lynda P. Haddon
 Clothing Sale Updates, Vicki Riley
 2010 Conference Committee
 Health and Education Committee Chair, Donna Launslager
 Father Support Network Chair, Eric Novak
 Francophone Support Network Chair, Murielle Dietrich
 HOM Support Network Chair, Vanessa Luce
 Lone Parenting Network Chair, Melissa Wray
 Loss Support Network Chair, Lynda P. Haddon
 Making a Difference Awards, Lynn Stadler-Hawkins
 Multiple Moments Book Reviewer, Kim Skublics
 Multiple Moments Editor, Sabine Engoetz
 Special Needs Support Network Chair, Theresa Meininger-Sanders
 Volunteer Coordinator, **VACANT**
 Webmaster, Lori & D'Arcy Oldfield
 Web Updates

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mmeditor@multiplebirthscanada.org
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DIRECTOR OF VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT / PAST CHAIR / ACTING DIRECTOR OF FUND DEVELOPMENT – KIMBERLEY WEATHERALL



Have you noticed as you get older that summer seems to go a whole lot faster than when you were a child – I want to know who stole my summer?! It certainly was a busy one – filled a great deal of the time with MBC related projects.

It started in June with the ICTS Congress in Seoul (more details in this RFN) – what a wonderful experience and one I am happy to have shared with Gail Moore, as well as my family. From Seoul my family travelled on to

Australia for two weeks for vacation and while there I was able to meet up with some volunteers from the NSW group from AMBA, where we shared best practices and compared notes on how our organizations are so similar in their challenges – even with the thousands of miles between us. Upon returning home (and after recovering from incredible jet lag) my focus has been on preparing for the 2010 Conference in Edmonton; working with Windsor/Essex POMBA to begin planning for the 2011 Conference (yeah!); discussing with a potential host for 2012; contributing to the Annual Report; obtaining and promoting discounts and fundraisers; coordinating the production of the new poster and brochure, and a whole lot more!

I am looking forward to seeing many, long time friends in Edmonton, making many new ones and having a wonderful time being hosted by the Edmonton Chapter. I will miss many of you who have regularly attended conferences in the past and who have become such great friends over the years! Start planning now to attend the Conference in Windsor in October 2011.

For more information and/or clarification on any of the above, please feel free to email me at pastchair@multiplebirthscanada.org.

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DIRECTOR OF CHAPTER DEVELOPMENT – SHEILA CATTO



September brings so many changes, with our children growing taller (those pants fit just 2 months ago!), the cooler days and first coloured leaves, and first days at school.

As my kids begin the new school year, we're happily starting up fall children's activities, sports and music again, and volunteer activities. I hear that all our

MBC Chapters are holding meetings, planning Fall Sales, and gearing up for another season of social activities and support for multiple-birth families. And the ETTC conference planning committee in Edmonton is super-busy getting everything ready for the 2010 Conference and Annual General Meeting. It's going to be an amazing weekend for learning and networking!

The MBC Board members are planning for the two Chapter Exchange workshops, and we sent out a survey to Chapters and conference delegates asking what the hot topics are that people would like to talk about. The most important questions members want to ask other Chapters and volunteers are:

- Recruiting volunteers: How can we find more members to take on a leadership role in our Chapter? And how can we support our volunteers so they don't get overwhelmed or overburdened?
- Retaining members: How can we keep our members involved in the Chapter, especially once their children reach preschool or school age?
- Meeting ideas: What kinds of events have been popular with other Chapters? How do you bring members out to social events, support meetings or family parties?

We're looking forward to some very interesting cafe-style conversations on these and other key topics in Edmonton. We'll make notes so we can share the resulting ideas with everybody afterwards. For those who are not able to attend the Conference, please email me with your questions and ideas, so we can continue the conversations and help each other become even stronger at supporting our members.

Over the past two years I have enjoyed working with some amazing, dedicated volunteers in Chapters across Canada. If any of you are looking for new challenges and opportunities to volunteer at the national level, please consider becoming a National Volunteer for MBC, or joining the Board of Directors. It's a pleasure and a privilege to work as a team, supporting multiple births... together.

If you have questions, or great ideas to share, please contact me at chapters@multiplebirthscanada.org.

DIRECTOR – TODD OHMAN



This summer, my wife and I finally confronted one of the toughest decisions a parent of multiples has to face regarding the education system. I'm talking about the dreaded "keeping them together" or "keeping them apart" in school. With our little guys heading off to grade 3 this year, we decided to make the tough decision to split up our

triplets. Last year, the teacher recommended we split them up, but we felt that they (and likely, we as parents) were not quite ready. This year, we felt it was time and the biggest challenge we faced was not

so much splitting them up, but how to make the split. You see, there are only two grade 3 classes, which forced us to decide which child will be in a separate class by themselves. We considered many aspects including maturity levels, (their need for) independence and the ability to thrive in a new environment without the immediate support of their siblings; especially for the "One", this is breaking new ground. It was a tough decision, but we decided that the most sensible split would be to put one of the girls in her own class. The look of fear in her eyes as she lined up separately in the gym on the first day of school almost brought a tear to our eyes. However, within minutes, she noticed that some of her closest friends were also in that class and you could see some of the fear subside – not all, but enough to give us comfort that she will be okay. My wife met with their teachers to provide context and reviewed the situation; both teachers were very supportive and will keep an eye on the progress. Time will tell, but in the end, I believe we made the 'right' decision, though, tough to truly know how things would have worked out had we done it differently. We will see in the coming weeks and months, but so far so good; they all seem very comfortable and thriving in their new environments.

I encourage you to read the *Multiples in School: Parent Tips* Fact Sheet available off the MBC website for free for members and available for purchase to others, or the *Multiples In School* Support Kit available for purchase by all. I found this information to be very useful, providing us with many things to consider when dealing with this tough situation.

You can reach me at todd.ohman@multiplebirthscanada.org.

MBC Business Office Update – Vicki Riley

What a summer! Just like I remember when I was kid. I hope everyone took advantage of the gorgeous weather and made tons of memories with their families.

This is a reminder for all the outgoing and incoming Executive members regarding the changes that MBC has implemented regarding membership (no change in membership fee) and renewing, as well as *Multiple Moments* subscriptions. The Chapter Executive section (and other locations) has now been updated and forms have been revised to reflect these changes.

Since May, many Chapters have been following the new procedure. We have not received any feedback (positive or negative) regarding this new process. However, it seems that not everyone is aware of these changes. Therefore, we are asking that you please go online to the [Chapter Executive section](#) and review the information if you have not done so already. PLEASE feel free to ask as many questions as you have. We are happy to discuss and adjust any issues or complications.

Also as a reminder, when preparing your renewals for 2011, electronic *Multiple Moments* will be free to members starting in 2011 and print subscriptions will be suspended until a sponsor can be found to assist in printing, etc. Printing prices have gone up exponentially and a decision had to be made regarding this year's budget. Therefore, we are only accepting subscriptions for the next 2 issues (Q3, Q4 2010 : September – the issue which you are now reading – and December). The prices are \$2.50 per print issue and \$1.25 per electronic issue. We hope to know more regarding a potential *Multiple Moments* sponsor in the fall. Refunds may be necessary. In addition – MBC is currently charged \$2.40 per issue by Canada Post when *Multiple Moments* is returned due to a wrong address. Subscribers only pay \$2.50 per issue to begin with so PLEASE send MBC your change of address promptly.

Receiving the electronic version of *Multiple Moments* will allow all members to benefit from the educational components of this

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quality magazine, which in turn can be promoted as a membership perk to current and potential families.

If you have any questions, no matter how small, please contact me at office@multiplebirthscanada.org.

National Multiple Births Awareness Week 2010

This year's theme: "Canada's El Parental Leave must reflect the needs of multiple-birth infants" was proudly supported by many Chapters, groups and individuals across Canada.

From custom-made t-shirts, banners and signs to online, print and broadcast media stories before, during and after the event – Canada's multiple-birth community has shown that together we can be quite successful in drawing attention to issues that affect our multiple-birth families. On the national scene, as organizers of the Ottawa Rally on Parliament Hill, the MBC Board sent personal invitations and information packages outlining the relevance in this year's awareness efforts to over 300 Members of Parliament. A big THANK YOU goes to everyone who got involved as an organizer or participant and to those who continue to create awareness of this important topic! The list of this year's family and advocacy activities is posted on the [MBC Awareness Page](#).



Thoughts or comments on your event and/or on national initiatives can be shared through [an online survey](#) – in addition, there is a section at the end of the survey to indicate issues and challenges you would like to see addressed with future National Multiple Births Awareness Day themes. The MBC Board of Directors values your input and encourages you to complete this survey as soon as possible.

2010 MBC AGM and National Conference

While the conference has yet to happen, the MBC Board knows just how hard the ETTCC Conference Committee has worked to make this a wonderful experience for all that attend.



The Board would like to thank the 2010 National Conference Planning Committee, their Board of Directors and all that have supported them along the way for the time and dedication put forth to ensure the success of the 2010 Conference. Stay tuned for the next RFN/MM for highlights of the conference and of the 2010 AGM.

2011 National Conference Host and Location Confirmed!

Multiple Births Canada is pleased to announce that Windsor/Essex POMBA will be the hosts of the 2011 MBC Conference and AGM to be held the weekend of **October 13-16th, 2011 in Windsor, Ontario**.

We are thrilled they have stepped forward and have agreed to take on the task of planning and hosting the conference in little over a year's time. They already have great ideas for locations, workshops, speakers and activities. Details will be shared once they are confirmed! Mark your calendars now for October 2011!

2012 National Conference Host Needed!

While the MBC Board is very excited about having the 2011 Conference hosts confirmed, the Board is also looking to the future to hear from Chapters wanting to know more about hosting the 2012 AGM and Conference.

MBC encourages Chapters to come forward to begin planning future conferences to allow for a minimum 2-year planning period, decreasing the stress sometimes associated with conference planning. Without Chapter hosts national conferences are in jeopardy of not continuing in their current formats, as the present MBC Board is unable to host another one in the foreseeable future. National conferences do not have to be extravagant affairs – simple is good! What matters most is we bring volunteers and parents together to share with one another. We are open to ideas!

Please contact Kim at pastchair@multiplebirthscanada.org.

MBC Partnerships

Assisted Human Reproduction Canada (AHRC)

On May 28th MBC Chair and Past Chair, Gail Moore and Kim Weatherall were invited to present an overview of MBC's work during a teleconference meeting with the AHRC, the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) and the Canadian Fertility and Andrology Society (CFAS). During this conversation, MBC reconfirmed our commitment to work with these partners on patient education materials for the fertility industry.

Consequently, the AHRC is reviewing MBC Fact Sheets for distribution by members of the CFAS and is considering a similar sharing of information with the SOGC using the new MBC brochure.

The next meeting of the AHRC Patient Education Committee will be in mid-September and will be attended by Kim Weatherall.

EMD Serono

Multiple Births Canada would like to express our sincerest of appreciation to EMD Serono for their very generous donation of \$2,000 for the sponsorship of the new MBC poster and brochure currently being printed and will be launched officially in September and available during the 2010 AGM and Conference. In addition to this sponsorship, EMD Serono has reinforced their three-year commitment to MBC with their donation every spring of \$3,500.00 (with 2 years left of that commitment). These funds go directly to support the work done by the Business Services Manager (BSM) in the office, assisting with the payment of the BSM Honorarium. It is through the generosity of companies such as this that MBC can continue to support multiple-birth individuals and families in Canada.



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Welcome Eric Novak

Multiple Births Canada welcomes Eric Novak, who has stepped up as the Chair of MBC's new **Father Support Network**. Eric is a successful broadcaster, publisher and speaker. He speaks on subjects like media, marketing, leadership and the environment across the country and on TV. Eric is also a proud father of an almost eight-year-old singleton Adam, dizygotic six-year-old twin boys Matthew and Jacob and eight-month-old Isabelle. Eric can be reached at fathersupport@multiplebirthscanada.org.

New Volunteers Required!

What does it take to be a volunteer for MBC? It takes heart, dedication, caring and it takes time – yes it can take time away from your family or activities that you may be involved in now, but the benefits to individuals and families with multiples, to your family and to you personally over the long run most often are greater than the sacrifices of today.

If you are good with people; like to work as a team – or even alone at home; love to make a difference; care about improving the lives of multiple-birth individuals and families that will follow you (maybe those that will be in your own family one day) – then we surely have something for you. Maybe you have been a volunteer at the local level and are ready for a bigger or different challenge? Maybe you have been out of the work force for awhile and need to learn some new skills or practice some old ones? For whatever the reason – we need to hear from you!

There is a list of positions and tasks that are needed on our website if you have something specific in mind; but if you want to volunteer and would like us to suggest a position that we feel you are suited for – simply let us know you are interested and we will take it from there. [Click here](#) to access the list of volunteer positions on the MBC website. Here are a few opportunities for you to consider:

Volunteer Coordinator (URGENTLY NEEDED): MBC Volunteers are an integral part of our organization; without them, we would not be able to provide support and services to our Chapters, members and to the multiple-birth community as a whole. The role of Volunteer Coordinator is essential to support volunteers across the country who work independently and remotely from each other. MBC is looking for someone who has experience working with volunteers in a coordination role to oversee the recruitment, ongoing orientation and training, creation of appropriate position descriptions and tracking national volunteers' progress, as well as providing ongoing and annual recognition. The responsibilities of this position could be shared by more than one person. Average time commitment is 6-10 hours a month.

Chapter Support Network Chair (NEW Position): Working with the Director of Support Services this position will oversee Chapter Development and all Chapter related matters. Average monthly commitment is 6-8 hours.

Website Programmer (NEW Position): Multiple Births Canada is looking for a web programmer to enhance the MBC website in a number of different ways, but with the priority to develop downloadable purchasing capability for MBC publications.

Membership Coordinator (NEW Position): This new position will coordinate the receiving and administering of the annual membership renewal process for Chapter memberships, tracking additions and deletions in a database and providing updated lists as required by the MBC Office and Board of Directors.

Marketing Volunteer: Promotes *Multiple Moments* and MBC through the use of print and electronic media. This person is self-driven and has marketing skills or would like to further develop them through a volunteer position. Average monthly commitment is 2-4 hours.

Advertising Volunteer: Working with the Editor of *Multiple Moments* and the Directors responsible for Publications and Website management, to liaise with current advertisers and secure new advertising for both *Multiple Moments* and the website.

If you do not see yourself in any of the above positions, but would like to help MBC make a difference, please email Kimberley Weatherall, Director of Volunteer Management at volunteers@multiplebirthscanada.org for more information on next steps.

New MBC Board Members Required

As the number of families with multiple-births increase so too does the demand for greater supports, services, programs and the development of relationships with all those supporting and working to improve the lives of multiple-birth individuals and families.

The current Board of Directors consists of 3 women and 1 man whose personal commitments, work or life situations have changed over the years and are now making it difficult to keep up with the work required. We are a stubborn group of over achievers who do not want to give up, who see the need for MBC but cannot continue at the pace we are leading. Simply put – we need your help!

Have you volunteered at the local level and feel it is your time to move on? Have you volunteered on a Board of another organization prior to having multiples and now want to give back to a cause that will touch you directly in such a very personal way – your children? Or are you a professional in your field that needs experience in volunteering on a Board?

Please consider one of these positions:

- **Director of Communications**
- **Director of Finance**
- **Director of Fund Development**
- **Director of Volunteer Management**

If you are interested in holding a Board position and these are not areas that interest you, a Director (without portfolio) position is an option to consider. We would be more than happy to discuss what is involved with being on the MBC Board – please contact Kimberley Weatherall at pastchair@multiplebirthscanada.org.

International Congress on Twin Studies

Gail Moore and Kim Weatherall, MBC Chair and Past Chair, represented Canada's multiple-birth community at the International Congress on Twin Studies held in Seoul, South Korea in June. Gail provided international delegates with an overview of the 2010 National Multiple Births Awareness Day activities in Canada and presented an outline for the first International Multiple Births Awareness Week which will be held November 1-7, 2010. Kim coordinated programming for delegates of the Council of Multiple Birth Organizations (COMBO) sessions, presided over the COMBO Business Meeting and attended the International Society for Twin Studies (ISTS) Business Meeting.

During the COMBO meeting, Gail presented the updated version of the **Declaration of Rights and Statement of Needs of Twins and Higher Order Multiples** for membership approval, thanking Donna Launslager,

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MBC Health and Education Chair for leading the effort on this modification. The update features many new and relevant rights and statements; these have now been officially approved and added to the document that was originally produced in 1995. The final element of this project – updating the references – will be completed by August 2010. The Declaration will be the focus of International Multiple Births Awareness Week later this year. Other notables:

- COMBO delegates in attendance came from the following countries: Australia, Finland, Japan, United States, Switzerland, Germany and Canada.
- COMBO will now be identified as the International Council of Multiple Birth Organizations or ICOMBO to allow for immediate recognition as a global association.
- The ISTS is moving to a two-year cycle for meetings and will announce the 2012 location this fall.
- Beginning in January 2011 ICOMBO members will register directly with ICOMBO; ICOMBO will then pay to become affiliated with the ISTS. This will provide ICOMBO with financial resources to produce a website and coordinate communications between countries.
- Kim Weatherall will continue as the Chair of ICOMBO and will continue on the ISTS Board of Directors. Other members of the ICOMBO Board are Past Chair – Mary Adcock, United States, Editorial Director – Mari Kaihovaara, Finland, Membership Directors – Monica Rankin, Australia and Christine Disselkamp, Germany. Vice Chair and Research Director positions are vacant.
- Jane Denton and Dr. Jon Barrett, two MBC Advisory Board members, were elected to the new ISTS Board as of January 2011. Other members of the new ISTS Board include: President – Tim Spector, Vice-President – Nils Lambalk, Past President – Matt McGue, Secretary General – Gonneke Willemsen and Board Members Meike Bartels, Kaare Christensen, Catherine Derom, Nancy L. Segal and Kimberly Weatherall.



to ask countries to rate themselves using a report card featuring the rights and statements expressed in the Declaration. This will allow ICOMBO to set a current benchmark and track changes over the years for improvement in areas of concern.

Declaration of Rights and Statement of Needs of Twins and Higher Order Multiples~ 2010

Approved – June 5, 2010

Adopted by the Council of Multiple Birth Organizations (COMBO) of the International Society for Twin Studies (ISTS), May 1995 (updated 2010)

Introduction: The mission of the Council of Multiple Birth Organizations (COMBO) of the International Society for Twin Studies is to promote awareness of the unique needs of multiple birth infants, children, and adults. The multi-national membership of COMBO has developed this Declaration of Rights and Statement of Needs of Twins and Higher Order Multiples as benchmarks by which to evaluate and stimulate the development of resources to meet their unique needs.

Declaration of Rights

WHEREAS myths and superstitions about the origins of multiples have resulted in the culturally sanctioned banishment and/or infanticide of multiples in some countries:

I. Multiples and their families, as any other individuals, have a right to full protection, under the law, and freedom from discrimination of any kind.

WHEREAS the conception and care of multiples increase the health and psychosocial risks of their families, and whereas genetic factors, fertility drugs, and in vitro fertilization techniques are known to promote multifetal pregnancies:

II.

A. Individuals or couples planning their families and/or seeking infertility treatment have a right to be fully informed about:

1. factors which influence the conception of multiples;
2. the associated pregnancy risks and treatments;
3. the associated risks to one, more or all of the fetuses/infants;
4. facts regarding parenting multiples; and
5. the option of multifetal pregnancy reduction along with its associated risks and profound emotional consequences.

B. Infertility treatment should intend to prevent multiple pregnancies, in particular high order multiples.

C. Fertility services should disclose their number of multiple pregnancies, both intentional and unintentional.

WHEREAS the zygosity of same sex multiples cannot be reliably determined by their appearances; and whereas 1) the heritability of dizygotic (two-egg) twinning increases the rate of conception of multiples; 2) the similar biology and inheritance of monozygotic (one-egg) multiples profoundly affect similarities in their development; 3) monozygotic multiples are blood, organ and umbilical blood stem cells donors of choice for their co-multiples; and 4) the availability of the placenta and optimal conditions for determining zygosity are present at birth:

International Multiple Births Awareness Week

As mentioned earlier in this RFN, the newly revised *Declaration of Rights and Statement of Needs of Twins and Higher Order Multiples* will be the focus of our first ever international event in November 2010. If you have not seen this document in its updated form, it is now posted on the MBC website for your review.

The first thing you will notice is that it is not light reading, but well worth the read. It covers a full range of multiple-birth issues and the references that support the statements throughout the document. At this point the ICOMBO Executive is considering using this year's event

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III.

- A. Parents have a right to expect accurate recording of placentation, determination of chorionicity and amnionity via ultrasound, and the diagnosis of zygosity of same sex multiples at birth.
- B. Older, same sex multiples of undetermined zygosity have a right to testing to ascertain their zygosity. Furthermore, involvement in registries of multiple-birth individuals should be absolutely voluntary on the part of the multiples.
- C. Zygosity should be respected as any other human trait and deserves the same privacy rules.

WHEREAS during World War II twins were incarcerated in Nazi concentration camps and submitted by force to experiments which caused disease and/or death:

IV. Any research incorporating multiples must be subordinated to the informed consent of the multiples and/or their parents and must comply with international codes of ethics governing human experimentation and other types of research.

WHEREAS ignorance, misconceptions and inadequate documentation regarding multiples and multiple birth increase the risk of misdiagnosis and/or inappropriate treatment of multiples:

V.

- A. Pregnant women, parents and their multiples have a right to care by professionals who are knowledgeable regarding the management of multiple gestation and/or the lifelong unique needs of multiples; and
- B. Multiple births, deaths and singleton births that started out as a multiple gestation, must be accurately recorded.

WHEREAS the bond between co-multiples is a vital aspect of their normal development:

VI. Co-multiples have the right to be placed together in foster care, adoptive families, custody agreements, and educational settings.

WHEREAS multiple-birth individuals are sometimes treated as a unit by parents, professionals, and the general public:

VII. Multiples, as any other human being, have the right to be respected and treated as individuals with their own needs, preferences and dislikes.

Statement of Needs

Summary: Twins, and higher order multiples have unique conception, gestation and birth processes; health risks; impacts on the family system; developmental environments; and individuation processes. Therefore, in order to insure 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.

WHEREAS the needs of multiple birth individuals and families during pregnancy, after the births and beyond are complex and diverse:

I.

- A. Individuals and families require information about, and need access to, a wide variety of disciplines and services such as health professionals, social services, employment services, education, and the multiple birth community;
- B. Individuals and families require care from health and other professionals who are informed about multiple birth issues and possess the necessary skills; and

C. Coordination and continuity of care among disciplines and services are essential for care effectiveness.

D. Training and professional development to support the learning needs of health, social services and education professionals are necessary to ensure they can provide the multiple-birth community with the best possible health care and educational experience.

(See References, Section I).

WHEREAS mothers are at high risk of maternal stress and pre and postnatal complications, and twins and higher order multiple births are at high risk of low birth weight (<2500 grams), and very low birth weight (<1500 grams), disability, and infant death:

II. Parents who are expecting multiples have a need for:

A. education about evidence-based self-care strategies that foster maternal health and optimal fetal development;

B. education regarding the prevention and recognition of pre-term labor; and

C. prenatal resources and care designed to avert the pre-term birth of multiples, and foster maternal health and optimal fetal development including:

1. diagnosis of a multiple pregnancy, ideally by the fourth month, which is communicated tactfully, with respect for the privacy of the parents;
2. chorionicity and amnionity established by ultrasound as accurately and early as possible as this information is critical for antenatal care.
3. nutrition counselling and dietary resources to support a weight gain of 18-27 kilos (40-60 pounds)
4. prenatal care which follows protocols of best practice for multiple birth; and when the health of the mother or family circumstances warrant:
 - a. extended work leave;
 - b. bed rest support; and
 - c. child care for siblings.
5. heightened diligence toward diagnosis and treatment (when needed) for the conditions to which multiples are uniquely at risk, including but not limited to twin-to-twin transfusion syndrome (TTTS).
6. attention to the timing and mode of delivery of multiples.

(See References, Section II).

WHEREAS breastfeeding provides optimal nutrition, nurture and brain development for pre-term and full-term multiples; and whereas the process of breastfeeding and/or bottle feeding of multiples is complex and demanding:

III. Families expecting and rearing multiples need the following:

A. education regarding the nutritional, immunological, psychological, and financial benefits of breastfeeding for pre-term and full-term infants;

B. encouragement and coaching in breastfeeding techniques;

C. education and coached practice in simultaneous feeding of co-multiples; and,

D. adequate resources, support systems, and family work leave to facilitate the breastfeeding and/or bottle feeding process.

(See References, Section III).

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WHEREAS 60% of multiples are born before 37 weeks gestation and/or at low birth weight and experience a high rate of hospitalization which endangers the attachment process and breastfeeding; and whereas newborn multiples are comforted by their fetal position together:

IV. Families with medically fragile multiples need specialized education and assistance to promote and encourage bonding and breastfeeding. Hospital placement of medically fragile multiples and hospital protocols should facilitate family access, including co-multiples' access to each other.

(See References, Section IV).

WHEREAS multiple birth infants suffer elevated rates of birth defects and infant death:

V. Families experiencing the disability and/or death of co-multiples need:

- A. care and counseling by professionals who are sensitive to the dynamics of grief associated with disability and/or death in co-multiples, and emotional attachment to surviving co-multiples;
- B. access to therapies, counseling and resources when one or more multiples is affected by a disability or disorder in order to help them manage the discordance of needs and abilities among co-multiples.
- C. policies which facilitate appropriate mourning of a deceased multiple or multiples

(See References, Section V).

WHEREAS the unassisted care of newborn, infant, toddler and preschool multiples elevates their families' potential for illness, postpartum depression/anxiety, substance abuse, child abuse, spouse abuse, and relationship discord:

VI. Families caring for multiples need timely access to adequate services and resources in order to:

- A. insure access to necessary quantities of infant and child clothing and equipment;
- B. enable adequate parental rest and sleep;
- C. facilitate healthy nutrition;
- D. facilitate the care of siblings;
- E. facilitate child safety;
- F. facilitate transportation;
- G. facilitate pediatric care; and
- H. protect parental mental health.

(See References, Section VI).

WHEREAS families with multiples have the unique challenge of promoting the healthy individuation process of each co-multiple and of encouraging and supporting a healthy relationship between the co-multiples; and, whereas the circumstance of multiple birth affects developmental patterns:

VII. Families expecting and rearing multiples need:

- A. access to information and guidance in optimal parenting practices regarding the unique developmental aspects of multiple birth children, including the processes of: socialization, individuation, and language acquisition; and
- B. access to appropriate testing, evaluation, and schooling for co-multiples with developmental delays and/or behavior problems.

(See References, Section VII).

WHEREAS twins and higher order multiples are the subjects of myths and legends and media exploitation which depict multiples as depersonalized stereotypes:

VIII. Public education, with emphasis upon the training of professional health and family service providers, and educators, is needed to dispel mythology and disseminate the facts of multiple birth and the developmental processes in twins and higher order multiples.

(See References, Section VIII).

WHEREAS twins and higher order multiples suffer discrimination from public ignorance about their biological makeup and inflexible policies which fail to accommodate their unique needs:

IX. Twins and higher order multiples need:

- A. information and education about the biology of twinning; and
- B. health care, education, counseling, and flexible public policies which address their unique developmental norms, individuation processes, and relationship. For example by permitting and/or fostering:
 1. the treatment of medically fragile co-multiples in the same hospital;
 2. the neonatal placement together of co-multiples in isolettes and cribs to extend the benefits of their fetal position together;
 3. medical, developmental, and educational assessment and treatment which is respectful of the relationship between co-multiples;
 4. avoidance of staggered hospital discharge of the co-multiples whenever possible
 5. the annual review of the classroom placement of co-multiples, and facilitation of their co-placement or separate placement according to the particular needs of multiple birth children and their families;
 6. to pursue their own and unique interests including simultaneously participating on sports teams and in other group activities and/or to pursue individual sports, group or hobby interests.
 7. specialized grief counseling for multiples at the death of a co-multiple;
 8. counseling services addressing the unique needs of adult multiples.

(See References, Section IX).

WHEREAS the participation by multiple birth infants, children, and adults as research subjects has made important contributions to scientific understanding of the heritability of disease, personality variables, and the relative influence of nature and nurture on human development; and, WHEREAS relatively little is known about optimal management of plural pregnancy and the unique developmental patterns of multiples:

X. Scientists must be encouraged to investigate:

- A. The optimal management of plural pregnancies;
- B. Norms for developmental processes which are affected by multiple birth such as: individuation, socialization, and language acquisition;
- C. Benchmarks of healthy psychological development, and relevant therapeutic interventions for multiples of all ages and at the death of a co-multiple;

CONNECTING MBC, CHAPTERS, VOLUNTEERS AND MEMBERS

- D. Strategies and interventions that are effective in promoting the health of multiple birth families during the parenting period such as: breastfeeding, employment policies, prevention of postpartum mood disorders;
- E. Management of ethical issues by health professionals and multiple birth families such as: assisted reproduction, multifetal and selective pregnancy reduction; and
- F. Medical, developmental and educational assessment/treatment respectful of the relationships between co-multiples.

Update adopted by the Council of Multiple Birth Organizations (COMBO) comprised of 11 representatives of 9 organizations from seven countries: Australia, Canada, Finland, Germany, Japan, Switzerland, United States at the 13th International Congress on Twin Studies, Seoul, South Korea – June 5, 2010

Endorsed by the Board of the International Society for Twin Studies, June 5, 2010

NEW – MBC Discounts

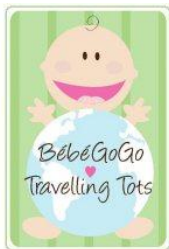
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also offer a large selection of other eco-friendly products for Mom and Baby like amber teething necklaces, baby slings, natural stretch mark and diaper rash balms, leather bibs and more. We offer many Canadian products and products made by other work at home Moms too. Drop by and visit us today or join us on Facebook for updates on all our sales and giveaways. We are offering a 10% discount for MBC members PLUS, at Cloth Diaper Kids.com there is no tax!



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If you are not a member of MBC BébéBoo offers parents of multiples a \$15 discount for orders over \$75.00 with no expiry date so use as often as you wish! Consider [joining MBC](#) and save more! To enjoy this discount use the following code at the time of check out: **save15**

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back to our local and global community whenever we can. We're all things clip! Soother clips, mitten clips, bib and blanket clips are our specialties, and don't forget our line of adorable hair clips, too.

Clippopotamus has generously offered a **20% discount** on all products excluding the Sick Kids & MBC soother clips.

Make sure to take a look at the two soother clips have been designated as an MBC fundraiser. Great idea for our multiple-birth families! For each MBC soother purchased – \$4.00 is donated to MBC!

THIS DISCOUNT IS NOT SO NEW BUT MAY BE JUST WHAT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR AT THIS TIME OF YEAR!



Multiple Births Canada has teamed up with **Click Costumes by Cody**, a sister site of **A Perfect Party by Cody** to raise funds for MBC (10% of every purchase) while offering **MBC Members a 10% Discount** on purchases made through the special MBC portion of the **Click Costumes by Cody** website. MBC is hoping that your party planning will help MBC to reach its goals!

What is Click Costumes by Cody? It is...everything you need for Halloween and other seasonal celebrations. Fantastic costumes and accessories are just a click away! Costumes for kids, tweens and adults!

Where do you go? <http://www.clickcostumes.com/mbc>

What do you do? Shop for your Halloween or seasonal celebration needs then head to the check-out where you can use the MBC Discount Code found in the Member section of the MBC Website.

FOR THE DISCOUNT CODES AND OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON THESE DISCOUNTS, SIGN INTO THE MEMBER SECTION AND CLICK ON 'MEMBER DISCOUNTS'.

REMEMBER – Many of the Summer Attraction Discounts continue into the Fall and run throughout the Winter. You can participate in the Halloween activities at Canada's Wonderland and/or Bingemans. Some of the year round sites include the Ontario Science Centre, Casa Loma in Toronto, the CN Tower and the Sony Centre for family theatre performances. Check the full list online in the Member Section of the MBC website.