

Multiple Matters

The official magazine of Multiples New Zealand



Health & Nutrition

- Happy hormones
- Self care for parents
- Dad's Perspective

AUTUMN EDITION, April 2019

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AUTUMN EDITION, April 2019 **Multiple Matters**

Nutrition With Our Multiples



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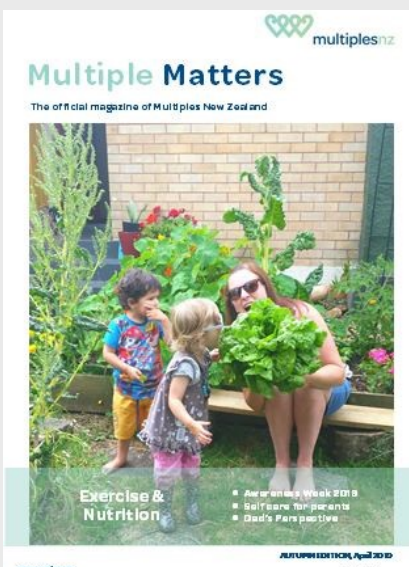
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Cover photo

Nutrition with multiples: Twins Ash and Lani Ponifasio-Hughes, age three, with mum Rosie. Meet them on page 22.



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From your Editor

Cooler Days and Longer Nights

Kirsty Saxon (Multiples NZ), Mummy to Xavier and Lilian (5), and Ruby (8).

Well by now summer is well and truly over and autumn is here. Our summer flew by as we marked a special milestone in our family. At the beginning of December, our twinkles Xavier & Lilian, turned five. I didn't realise what an achievement that would feel like, having made it through those first hard and fast five years. But there was also a kind of loss, knowing our baby and toddler days are over. This milestone also marked my five years as a volunteer for Multiples NZ. In the early days, we were members of the Nelson/Marlborough satellite club of Multiples Canterbury. It was there I started volunteering with writing for Canterbury's magazine, and went on to be a local contact for the satellite. Fast forward five years, and I went from contributing to and proofreading this magazine, to now heading into my second year as Editor and a member of the National Executive of Multiples NZ. It is genuinely a lot of work but somehow everything always falls into place and with the help of our awesome exec and support team, we get it all done. You know what they say, give a busy person another job and they will get it done.

This issue we look at how we can fit in exercise into our busy lives, what other mums are doing to stay fit, and also what we can do to support the nutrition of our busy lifestyles. I was amazed to read the inspiring stories that were shared from mums who are out climbing mountains while hunting to another who makes it work with motivating exer-

cise videos online. Something which is quite dear to my own heart, is making time for self care. We need to keep reminding ourselves as passionate parents of multiples, we need to look after ourselves first, in order to be able to look after everyone else! The old saying, "You can't pour from an empty cup" is especially relevant when we think about multiples. Read on about making yourself a priority and some ideas I have brainstormed to make this happen.

The introductory programme for the National Training Forum 2019 has been announced (see page 30 & 31). If you haven't attended a national event before, I would definitely recommend you give some thought to it for 2019. It's an awesome weekend in Wellington with like minded mums (and sometimes dads!) and at the end of the day it might even be a fun weekend away, two full night's sleep and a great party which ticks all of my boxes. And you get to learn new stuff! I hope to see you there.

As usual, we welcome submissions on any topic related to multiples or anything relevant to our families. Send me an email if you have an idea for a story you would like to write or co-write with a friend. We are also always keen to get your pregnancy and birth stories, as I know we love reading about everyone's individual experiences. Next issue's theme is 'Premature Multiples' so if you have anything to contribute, please get in touch!



Ruby, Xavier, Lilian and I in Houhora, Far North

President's Autumn Report

Multiples NZ President Ainslee Jacobson, delivers her Autumn report, and reflects on Multiples Awareness Week 2019.

Awareness Week

As our new Multiples Awareness week comes to a close, and with International Children's Day just around the corner, I happened to flick channels on the TV and caught the beginning of the New Zealand movie, Waru. What an amazingly powerful, confronting and emotional piece of art, that highlights the concept of whanau and the importance of community. The importance of community standing beside each other, and also the importance of sharing a journey to ease the pain, to strengthen reserve, and to make positive change.

Multiples Awareness Week is a point in time that allows our community to stand beside each other, virtually and in person, to tell each other, and those coming behind us that being a parent of twins, triplets and quads is amazing, challenging but amazing. It also gives us the opportunity to reflect on why an organisation like Multiples NZ exists. Multiples NZ exists to ensure that families with multiples, and families expecting multiples feel empowered to stand up for what they need, because they know what they need. We are here to support our families to feel 'normal, to feel confident that there is someone in their corner, and that someone knows what they're going through.

WINZ Home Help Payments - Multiple Birth Criteria

Through the hard work and determination of previous Multiples NZ volunteers, the government acknowledged the additional stress that multiples can place on a family that already has young children. As a result, the WINZ Home Help payment has a multiple-birth specific criteria. WINZ Home Help payments are available to help families of multiples with the cost of home help to complete household tasks normally performed in the home, such as cleaning, cooking and doing the laundry. The payment is not asset-tested under the multiple-birth

criteria. New Zealand citizens or permanent resident are eligible if they have given birth to twins or adopted twins and have another child under the age of five years old, or have given birth to or have adopted triplets, or higher order multiples.

Parents of twins can get 240 hours, to be used within 12 months. Those who have given birth to triplets or more are entitled to 1560 hours, to be used within 24 months. Home help is granted from the date that the babies are born if they are born at home, or from the date that they are discharged from the hospital.

You may use your allotted hours in any way that suits your family needs, such as short term full-time help, or longer term part-time help. However, there is no further entitlement once the hours are used up or once the maximum period has ended. It is strongly recommended that parents begin the application process before their multiples are born, and have a home helper in mind—suggestions from multiple birth clubs include employing senior high school or university students, or advertising on a local supermarket notice board, or to use a home-based childcare company or nanny organisation. Most multiples clubs will be able to provide the application forms, and help you complete them, or you can contact Work and Income (WINZ).

Multiples NZ Resources

One way that Multiples NZ empowers families is with the provision of well-researched, credible, NZ-specific resources that focus on the most technical elements of being a family with multiples.

One of those elements is feeding. It has taken many years for Multiples NZ to put this resource together and that's evidence of the level of care we have taken to ensure the material is what our families need to successfully and confidently feed their children.



The feeding resource will become one of four Multiples NZ resources that are available to our families.



Ainslee is mum to nine year old twin boys Cameron and Hunter, and lives in Wellington with her husband Craig. Ainslee juggles her president role with her work at AdviceFirst and Multiples Wellington.

Nutrition for Healthy and Happy Hormones

Rachel Garnham (Multiples Hawkes Bay) shares her expertise of making the most of nutrition to manage your hormones.

When I first met someone with coeliac disease about 12 years ago, she mentioned that her periods were a lot less painful since she had taken gluten out of her diet. I thought this was strange, as I'd never thought about the connection between what we eat and our hormonal health.

I'm now a Women's Hormonal Health Coach and food is the first place I start when helping women solve their period problems. Food provides the nutrients required for all the biochemical reactions that happen in our bodies, including those needed for optimal hormonal health. Without the right nutrients our bodies can't function correctly. Most hormonal symptoms can be improved with food or dietary supplements including:

- Painful periods
- Heavy periods
- Amenorrhea, or "missing" periods
- Irregular cycles
- PCOS (Polycystic ovarian syndrome)
- Endometriosis



So which foods are best for hormonal health?

Fats

Fats give the body the building blocks for making hormones, so having enough is crucial. Vegetables are high in nutrients but some of these are fat-soluble, so to get the optimum nutrition add some fat with your vegetables. You can find fats in these foods –

olive oil, coconut oil, avocado, nuts, seeds, oily fish, animal fat, dairy if well tolerated. Try incorporating into your day by – adding seeds or nuts into smoothies or cereal for breakfast, putting dressing on vegetables or salads for lunches and dinner.

Carbohydrates

Low Glycemic Index carbohydrates (with a low GI value 55 or less) are more slowly digested, absorbed and metabolised and are a valuable source of energy for the body. Too few carbohydrates can result in the thyroid not functioning well and may also lead to periods stopping.

There are a few low carbohydrate diets around that are appealing due to their promises of rapid weight loss (eg keto and Atkins), but it's important to remember that everybody reacts differently to food. Bio-individuality is the concept that one way of eating may suit some people and not others. For example, I have friends who get hungry mid-afternoon, have an apple and that will keep them going until dinner. Conversely, eating an apple just makes me hungrier. As always, if you're trying a new way of eating – then listen to your body. Symptoms are our body's way of trying to tell us something and your periods suddenly stopping (without a pregnancy) is a big warning sign that your hormonal health could use some TLC. Carbohydrates can be found in these foods – quinoa, rice, kumara, potatoes, millet, oats (if tolerated), pumpkin, corn. Try incorporating into your day by having overnight oats for breakfast. Check out my website (www.periodproblemsolving.com) for a few overnight oats recipes with tips on how to make them easier to digest.

Fibre

Fibre is crucial for moving things through the digestive system, that is – regular pooping! Substances in the body, including natural ones such as hormones, are broken down in the liver and then excreted through poop.

Sulforaphane Glucosinolate & Diindolylmethane (SGS & DIM)

The liver can get clogged up trying to breakdown all the chemicals that get introduced into our bodies, including alcohol, substances in skin care and BPA's. BPA stands for bisphenol A. BPA is a chemical that has been used to make plastics and resins since the 1960s. Some research has shown that BPA can seep into our food or beverages. The liver will preferentially break down these harmful chemicals over substances made in the body, for example excess hormones. Hormones may then be recycled through the body and cause an imbalance.

Some of the symptoms of the hormone imbalance oestrogen excess are painful periods, sore breasts pre-period and menstrual clots. SGS and DIM help the liver detoxify chemicals, get it working more efficiently again and can help to reduce the symptoms of oestrogen excess. You can find them in these foods: broccoli, cauliflower, kale, broccoli sprouts. Try incorporating them into your day – put a whole broccoli into the food processor (include stalks and leaves) and blitz to make "broccoli rice." Keep in the freezer so it's on hand to easily add to omelettes (I love getting a serve of vegetables in at breakfast time!), salads, soups, savoury muffins or mashed potato with no need to cook it first. I have a great recipe for chicken, bacon and broccoli meatballs on the website which kids love.

Magnesium

I recommend that all my clients take a magnesium supplement. It's such an important mineral, used in over 300 different reactions in the body. In terms of healthy hormones, magnesium works wonders for period cramps, premenstrual tension (PMT) and sleep. Magnesium reduces inflammation and helps to calm the stress response in our body (what parent, especially multiples parent, couldn't do with a bit of help with this?!). You can find magnesium in these foods – nuts,

seeds, dark chocolate (this is at least one of the reasons you crave chocolate when you have your period), and leafy greens.

Unfortunately, due to our foods not being as nutrient dense as they should be, and the amount of stress in our lives, getting our magnesium solely through food is often not enough. I recommend a daily magnesium supplement of 300mg of magnesium glycinate (chelate), this is the gentlest on the stomach. If however you suffer from constipation, take magnesium citrate to help things along. Incorporate into your day by eating nuts as a snack., you can also grow your own spinach (for maximum nutrients) and add to smoothies, salads and casseroles.

B Vitamins

B vitamins are crucial in converting the food we eat into fuel, therefore are vital for our energy levels. B vitamins are also used to produce the stress response hormones adrenaline and cortisol, so our requirements for B vitamins are higher when we are feeling stressed. Conversely B vitamins are needed to produce serotonin and dopamine which are neurotransmitters linked to our happy moods. B12 can only be found in animal products, so vegans will need to supplement.

Vitamin B6 works in several different ways to help with PMS and PMDD (premenstrual dysphoric disorder). It's needed for the synthesis of progesterone, reduces inflammation and helps the body breakdown oestrogen. It also reduces fluid retention and histamine intolerance (which contributes to period pain).

B vitamins are found in these foods – green vegetables, whole grains, meat and fish, legumes (eg chickpeas, lentils, black beans), citrus fruit, eggs, dairy, sunflower seeds, avocado, peas and sweet potato. Try incorporating into your day by eating a variety of whole foods. Additionally, a B complex supplement may be needed.

How To Bring It All Together

It's so confusing to work out what to eat with all the conflicting information and different diets out there today. One thing we can all agree on is that eating more vegetables is good for everyone.

Leafy greens are the most nutrient dense food available and with loads of fibre they are also great for digestive health. You will have seen above how often green vegetables were mentioned as providing essential nutrients for hormonal health.

The easiest way I find to add more vegetables to my day is to make a big batch of salad and eat it over three to four days. Make your favourite slaw recipe or grate a few of the following together – cabbage, carrot, beetroot, zucchini, onion, broccoli stalks, celery. Don't add the salad dressing until just before you're about to eat it, this makes it last better. When meal planning, start with half a plate of vegetables/salad, about a quarter of low GI carbohydrates (some people may need less), and about a quarter of protein, then add some healthy fats. By eating a variety of whole foods, rather than processed foods that have little nutritional value, you should be getting the range of essential nutrients.

Specific Example of Food Helping Hormonal Balance

I've had clients get great benefits from a technique called seed cycling. Different seeds are eaten during the two parts of your cycle to help balance hormones. Details and recipes for seed cycling are on: www.periodproblemsolving.com

Seed cycling can help with:

- Irregular periods (especially after finishing breastfeeding or coming off the pill)
- Oestrogen excess symptoms such as painful and heavy periods and sore breasts
- Perimenopause



The seeds provide:

- Specific minerals needed for hormonal health
- Lignans in the seed hulls which have the ability to either reduce the effects of excess oestrogen or boost oestrogen if it's low.
- Seed oils high in essential fatty acids which form the building blocks for making hormones.

Having great hormonal health makes such a difference to our moods, energy, sex drive, hair and skin appearance, fertility and periods. Because hormonal health is influenced by nutrition, we have the ability to improve it naturally.



Rachel Garnham lives in Hawke's Bay with her husband and 6 year old twins Hannah and Logan. Rachel has been part of the Multiples HB committee for the last 4 years, works part-time at Weleda and has a business called Period Problem Solving. Rachel helps women who are suffering from painful, heavy, irregular or emotional menstruation. Women can go from having periods that are something to dread and plan your life around, to periods that are easy and hassle-free.

Creating and Maintaining Balance

Sarah Miller (Southland Multiples & Triplets Plus) shares how she creates time for keeping her mind and body happy and healthy.

Sarah is a fit and healthy mum who participates in a broad range of exercise to keep up with her four kiddies!

Fitness

It was Easter 2017 and our triplets (Zoe, Kayla and Jake) had not long turned one, and their big sister Tessa turned three. It was time to lose the dreaded weight that stuck around after pregnancy, so I put a shout out on Facebook whether there was a local gym that also had childcare available, there was, so off I hopped to the next available class. I can tell you, I almost died, but it was the start of something new! Very quickly it became my “non negotiable”. Mumfit fitness classes and an hour away from the children, what more could a mother ask for?! Not only has my physical health improved but my mental health thanks me enormously! With going to group fitness classes, you don’t need to motivate yourself, you just turn up to the class and the people around you provide the motivation.

While I don’t drink alcohol at all and have actually been sober for over seven years (some days I wonder how I stay sober or sane), that didn’t stop me finding other ways to vent or reward myself, like a whole block of chocolate! I have done a lot of self reflection over the past year. I would say that I am now more aware of my triggers and how to better manage them. I try to do this in a natural way by balancing being a mum and leading a healthy lifestyle. If you really want something you will find a way. If you don’t, you will keep finding excuses. I have so many friends who ask ‘how do you manage to get the gym?’ But I don’t think I would be

able to cope without going to the gym. When I returned to work in August 2017 I had to change from my beloved Mumfit classes to night classes and then came the juggle of organising babysitters in amongst hubby’s two shift jobs.

Hunting

I find hunting considerably easier since I’ve been doing fitness classes. I have always enjoyed hunting, it has always been a part of my life, however my improved health and fitness has made it easier to enjoy and share.

We recently took our three-year-old triplets on their first deer hunt. We split off into two groups, Team Dad and Team Mum. Team Dad scored one deer and the kids all enjoyed the afternoon out in the hills. Our eldest, Tessa (aged five) is a bit of a seasoned hunter now and absolutely loves it. Getting out in the hills has always been a way of “resetting”, getting offline and the views are amazing! Being outdoors is great for boosting your energy, relieving stress and blowing off those cobwebs.



Running

I had completed a few organised running events prior to getting pregnant with Tessa, and had continued these with Tessa in the pram before falling pregnant with

the triplets.

Up until September 2018, the longest run I had attempted was 12km, I got in one longer training run of 16 kilometres just before my first half marathon which was the Dunedin Marathon event. I finished with a good time of two hours and 16 minutes. It was a little over my target time but it was a good starting point. The next run I completed was the half marathon in the Southland Festival of Running. If anyone has completed this before you will know what the landscape is like, and it was long and boring, not to mention I was really ill with a flu!



Slowly I was working up to my goal of the Queenstown half marathon in under two hours. But sitting there on Facebook one day, I saw that the half marathon entries were all SOLD OUT!!! I was just about in tears. I could have dropped down and register for the ten kilometre but I knew this distance was not a challenge for me. So I did what any “sane” person would have do, and I signed up for the FULL MARATHON! It was my first and it certainly will not be my last. The atmosphere and the peo-

ple during the Queenstown marathon were absolutely amazing! It is very addictive and I have vowed to do this event every year. The feeling of achieving that first marathon, losing toenails, my gym family cheering me on and running with me over the line is a feeling I will never forget. Make sure you pick a distance you know you can comfortably run when you start out and you can increase the distance each time.

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Tips and Tricks

My diary is my everything. I write my husbands shift work, the day-care drop offs/pick up, school drop off/pick ups, my work hours,

hunting trips, fitness classes, scheduled babysitters, appointments, events. But also make sure to schedule those "self-care" times for myself and stick to it. Otherwise I would never make it happen, as someone else's needs always make it to the top of the pile. It's not as hard as you think - fitting exercise into everyday life, you just need to be able to prioritise and plan. I schedule two lunchtime runs a week (I have a 5 kilometre loop I do around the north side of the CBD which includes the local park). I write down all the local runs in date order and select which ones I wish to complete in.

Even on days where you think it is going to be hard to fit it in, look for opportunities and try your best to make it happen. These are usually the days you need it the most and will benefit from some exercise. And if it doesn't eventuate, don't beat yourself up over it, tomorrow is a new day with new opportunities.

Life seems to keep getting busier and we are trying to do more,

achieve more, fit more in and be something to everyone. No matter how busy you are, keep fit, healthy and active. You will never have this moment again so do it now!



Sarah is mum to five year old Tessa and three year old triplets Zoe, Kayla and Jake and lives in Invercargill with her husband Bevan. She also provides amazing magazine support to our Editor of Multiple Matters.



Health and Fitness Through Twins

Karen Kevy (Multiples Hutt Valley) shares how her health and fitness routines evolved before and after the birth of her twins.

My name is Karen and I am originally from Peru, while my husband David is a New Zealander. We met in Colombia almost nine years ago.

Pre pregnancy life

Growing up, my mum was always very active. She loves dancing, exercising and anything related with the body or mind's well-being, so that was engraved in me from a young age. I have always loved working out, especially because of my love of food! During my early 20s, David and I lived in Central Wellington, so it was very convenient to go to the gym after work and I would ride my bike everywhere - it was great. David and I moved to the Hutt Valley in 2015, just before we got married. At the same time I started a new job at Hutt Valley DHB and we got our first fur baby, a German Shepard named Luna. Days started to get busy and I started to fall off track with my workout routine. One fine day in October 2015 a couple of my colleagues and I were assigned to the same area and during lunch we decided to work out together. They quickly became my workout buddies and friends. Working out during lunch time was a compromise but working out in a group made it easier.

Our routine consisted of 20 minute of HIIT (High Intensity Interval Training) and some cardiovascular workouts on the treadmill or the stationary bike. We did so well, we would track our progress with each other which motivated us to work out more - I really miss those days!

Expecting twins

In September 2016 David and I decided to try for a baby, and in December we found out I was pregnant. The first thing that came to my mind was: "I want to be a fit pregnant woman, I'm going to work out all the way through

pregnancy." Well, old me had no idea what was about to come! So, I continued with just light exercises for the time being until we got our first scan so I could ask our obstetrician for advice. It was at that scan we found out we were expecting twins. To think back on that, it felt so unbelievable - but now it's just our normal. We can't imagine life without them. Our obstetrician said it was ok to do exercise, in fact he recommended it, but like everything he cautioned not to over do it. I got so paranoid I could over do it and harm the babies, that I stopped working out and went for walks instead. I always counted on taking Luna for walks as an extra workout - she can pull so much.



As a first time mum it frightened me I was gaining so much weight. When I found out we were having twins, I looked up all the celebrities that had twins, and how much weight they gained ... why did I look up celebrities!? Why not every day mums with real lives? In my mind I wanted to make sure I would take the celebrities' steps to get my pre-pregnancy body back.

Now, I am not sure how many of you have struggled with body image, but once my belly started to grow and the babies were doing well, all those insecurities disappeared. I felt so empowered and beautiful. I would go for walks during my lunch time at work, but it was getting harder as the months passed by. My last day at work was

around the 30 week mark.

My days were pretty much the same, going for walks with David and Luna, having my treat of an Oreo McFlurry at least once a week and resting at home. Moving in general was getting a bit tough, my whole body was swollen. When I look back at pictures of my feet, I just could not recognize them.

Life with two newborns

When Mila and James were born, as for many of us, there was no time for anything but sleep and time to look after our little ones. My mother was staying with us and doing all the cooking. I shed most of the weight I gained during the time she was here. She would make very healthy meals. I am so thankful for the time and dedication she put into helping us with everything - and on top of that, helping me with the babies.



When my mum left, I had no time to cook for myself, so I would eat anything I could find the time to make. I breastfed for the first five months. I did it firstly because it is the best thing for your baby; and also because so many people say it is the best way to shed the pregnancy weight - so I was keen to try! I was weighing myself every day, and looking at myself in the mirror hoping to get my pre-pregnancy weight back. At one point everything stopped, I stopped producing milk, I stopped losing weight

and since then there have been times when I thought ... oh I look good. Then I looked at a picture someone took of me and I had to do a double take because I could not recognize myself.

A few months ago, after our twins turned one, we started using the fade-out method to train the twins to self-settle and not need a feed in the middle of the night. That gave us much more time at night to have some space for ourselves, but that didn't include working out. We would end up so tired we just wanted to sit and rest, watch Netflix or just have a cup of tea and go on Facebook.

Time to make a change

I had a weight mark I did not want to go above. I knew exactly how I looked at that weight and I was comfortable with it, until I weighed myself one day and I was a couple of kilos over. For some reason I freaked out and started researching for ways to lose weight without the physical effort (I laugh at myself while writing this). There are so many crazy diets, and some that I have tried in the past but the results don't last long. So, if I had the will and commitment to follow one of those diets, I can definitely do something healthier that will last longer.

With the hectic days of a life parenting twins, I needed to start slowly. So I started eating smaller portions, stopped eating the twins leftovers and waiting after I finished a meal, instead of rushing for seconds. Giving your body and brain a bit of time to process the fact that you have just eaten, (it sounds obvious but we don't always do it, do we). I realized how much food I really needed and felt more in control of my portion decisions. I don't really know what got me to take the tape measure but I did and took all my measurements. That was when I realized no matter how many kilograms I lost, my body would keep storing the fat in the most unpleasant places. That is when I decided to work out again and build up my strength. We all know that weight fluctuation is not an indication of getting fit, but I just forget and it is hard not to look at the scales (which is why I've hidden them away).

So, as a person who needs support (and without my colleagues to work out at home with me), I asked my husband instead if he could be my workout buddy and he accepted

(yay!!).

David and I started the first week of December and we have been doing Jillian Michaels "Body Shred" routines. It's a 60 day programme, and now we are seeing and feeling the results! We are more energetic, and slowly but surely our bodies are changing. It has not been easy, so far, we have not progressed from workouts one and two, but we were really out of shape so it's been slow going. My core strength was non-existent (back in the day I could do all those routines without struggling) so we felt we needed to truly master those routines before moving on to the next level. Recently we can feel our bodies getting better at doing the workouts, however like Jillian says "If you feel this is too easy for you, grab heavier weights" she always has ways to make one workout challenging.

Making time for us

The same old question is: how do we fit working out into our busy days? Some days we work out in the morning from 6:30 to 7:00, other days from 7:00 pm to 7:30 pm. On the weekends we either do an afternoon session while the bubbas nap or we do it at night.

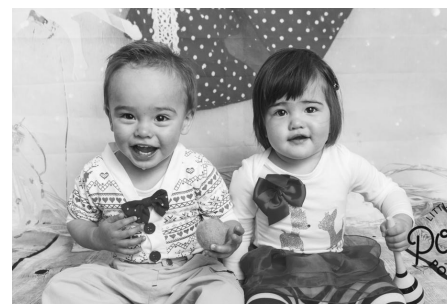
We have set realistic goals, and we aim for a minimum of three workouts a week and a maximum of five. When we don't get to have a workout session, it is fine we can always do it the next day. Some days we are so exhausted just from our daily life outside parenting twins that we just can't be bothered! However, since we started this journey of fitness we have better eating habits so we don't feel any guilt if we skip a day. The important thing is getting back to it, keep active and healthy (I still have some treats every week).

What I have learnt

At the end of the day, we just want to be at our fittest to be able to run around with our twinnies and live a long life with them.

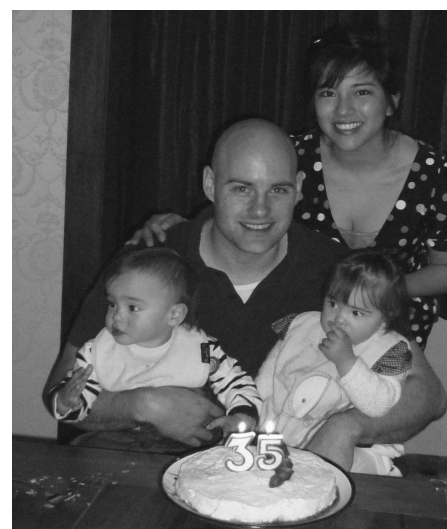
It's not easy to shrink back into a pre-pregnancy body shape, so we need to

work smarter and do our best in a short amount of time that we have. I'm trying to stay on top by doing a high intensity workout and eating better. There are so many resources online and as we all know exercise alone won't do the trick.



The hardest part for us has been changing bad eating habits and controlling our portions. I have never been to a nutritionist and many people who have been to one say it is the best thing they could have done, so I'm looking at that in the future. In the meantime I prefer to control what I eat and it is not always easy but that is ok. It is real life and we can indulge ourselves as long as we take responsibility for it and do the work it takes to compensate it.

So, keep working and doing all the best you can, changes can take time so persevere and don't give up. Our babies learn many things every day and they never stop trying even when they fall and get hurt - so why would we? Let's look at them and get inspired. Just start small and work to-



Karen and David are parents to fraternal twins, Mila and James (18 months) and live in the Hutt Valley.

Self Care Ideas for Multiples Mums & Dads

Kirsty Saxon (Editor, Multiples NZ) shares some ideas for making the most of self care for busy parents of multiples.

What self care means to me

One of my goals for this year was to make a consistent effort to take better care of myself. This included a renewed commitment to regular exercise, managing my medication and remembering my vitamins! I have also been following Leanne Baker (an Australian blogger) who is a huge advocate for self care, including setting monthly and daily reminders for self care. It's essential that parents care for themselves and their own well-being. Any effort they put into self-care has huge payoffs for their children. When parents "fill their own cups," they have more patience, energy, and passion to spread to their families. One way to think about self care is in terms of mind, body and soul.



The teacup analogy

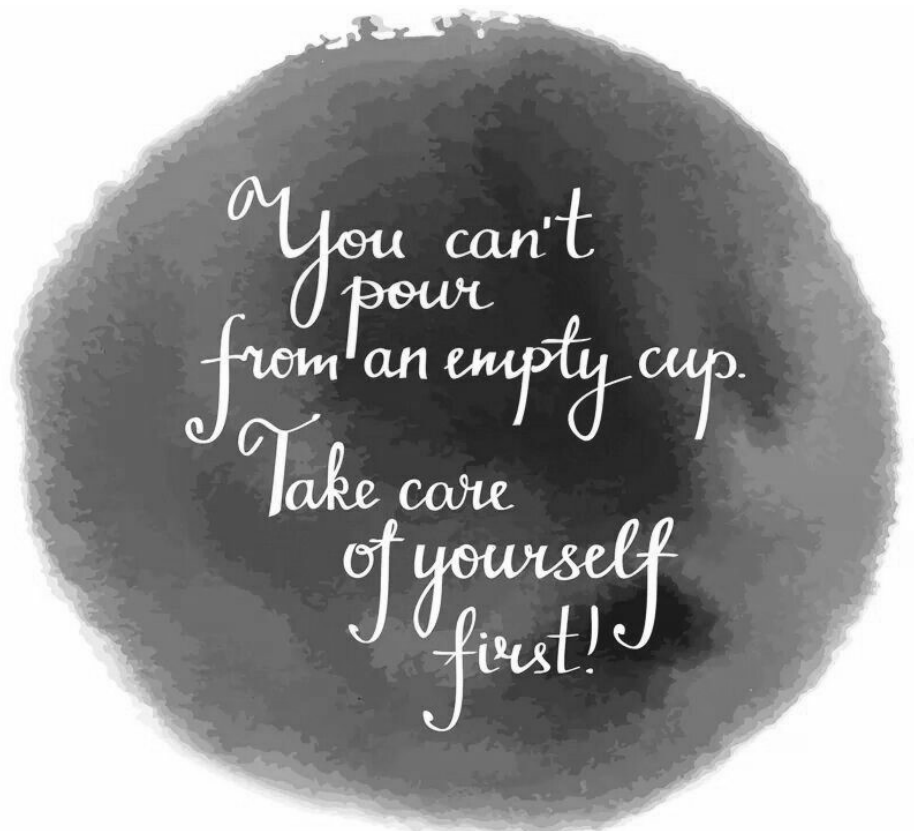
In today's day and age, our lives are so busy, and we are expected to do so much in a short period of time, that often we don't even consider taking a moment to ourselves. Eventually, we burn out. Sometimes, we are able to recognize that, and take some time for ourselves. You probably have heard the 'overflowing teacup' analogy. In order to help others, we first need to fill our own cup. We need to be well ourselves, to have the strength and energy to give what's overflowing to those around us. (Paragraph excerpt from Mira at mindoverlatte.com)

Finding time

But how to parents of multiples find time? Charles Buxton said, "You will never find time for anything. If you want time you must make it." So how can we find more time in our crazy days? Schedule everything: work, kids, appointments, activities, see where you can find more time. Rise and shine early, my kids already get up at the crack of dawn so this one's easy for me. It is so much easier to start the day when you are not rushing. Exercise: if you love or hate it you can not deny that exercise does something awesome for your body and mind. It releases endorphins and makes you feel better. So whatever you love doing, do that. For me, it is dog walking with friends (walk and whinge) and CrossFit with a group of friends. Get what you love in your schedule. Prepare everything for the next day the night before: think launch stations, clothes ready, lunches packed, etc.

Self Care Ideas

- Think of one thing you could cut out of your schedule, then do it
- Write down one goal or intention for the week and stick it to your fridge or mirror where you can see it everyday
- If you're feeling overwhelmed with too much social interaction, go home. Don't be afraid to cancel plans or say "no."
- Learn some self love affirmations. Write them on Post-its and place them where you will see them every day
- Do a short meditation by closing your eyes, breathing deeply, focusing on your breath, and saying, "Expect nothing and appreciate everything." There are lots to choose from when you start looking
- Make a vision board of your loves, goals, affirmations and mantras
- Stop being your harshest critic. Allow yourself to make mistakes. No one is perfect.



- Write out your thoughts about anything bothering you. Then burn or throw away the paper
- Think about the "rule of three." Always be consciously aware of three things you're looking forward to
- Start a journal or gratitude journal
- Go somewhere local you have never been before: a cafe, park, walk, beach, etc
- Sit on the couch and put your feet up and close your eyes
- Do a single tiny household job that's been annoying you: empty one drawer, donate something, or clean one shelf of your fridge. Pat yourself on the back for completing it.
- Do a mini-declutter. Recycle three things from your wardrobe that you don't love or regularly wear.
- Call a friend or loved one and say, "I'm having a hard time with this. Do you mind if I talk this out with you?"
- Schedule at least one uninterrupted hour with a close friend. Go out for coffee or a drink, talk on the phone, go out for dinner, or go for a walk together
- Write and send a sweet card to someone - a birthday card, a "thinking of you" card, a "get well" card, a "congratulations" card, or a "no-reason" card
- Skype or FaceTime with a friend who lives far away
- Take a family member or friend out for a special lunch or cup of coffee
- Intentionally find five unexpected beautiful things on your way to work or school
- Avoid toxic people, online and in the real world (say no)
- Plan a special one-on-one date with your child— a park visit, painting, going to movie, etc
- Colour a picture from a colouring book with or beside your child. Take your time
- Play with your pet
- Donate to a food bank or SPCA collection box at your local super-market
- Do a random act of kindness, help others
- Listen to your favourite music
- Read a book or magazine, watch a movie, catch a new show on television
- Try a new smoothie, salad or healthy recipe of some kind
- Have a bubble bath
- Light candles or try some different kinds of essential oils for relaxation (Ylang Ylang, Lavender, Bergamot, Geranium, etc)
- Pick or buy some fresh flowers
- Visit a beauty therapist for a treatment: nails, hair, massage, face-mask, etc; or do it yourself, or even invite a friend over for a mini pamper session
- Sit in the grass and watch the clouds float by
- Look at the stars, breathe in the night air
- Watch the sunset, either alone or with someone special
- Do some gardening. Dig your hands into the dirt and enjoy the feeling
- Find a new hobby or revisit an old one, a language, or use an online tutorial to learn something new
- Take a break from social media by deleting or deactivating it
- Edit your social media feeds, and take out any negative people. You can just "mute" them; you don't have to delete them

- Buy or pick yourself some flowers

Self-care encompasses just about anything you do to be good to yourself. Basically, it's about being as kind to yourself as you would be to others. It's partly about knowing when your resources are running low, and stepping back to replenish them rather than letting them all drain away. What small step could you take to take better care of yourself this year?



Kirsty is the editor of Multiple Matters and sits on the Multiples NZ Executive. Married to Jack, and mum to eight year old Ruby, and five year old twins Xavier and Lilian. The family are members of Multiples NZ, and live in Ahipara, on the edge of 90 Mile Beach in the Far North. She works part time as a photographer and graphic designer, and teaches photography two days a week to intermediate children.



10 Tips to Encourage Your Kids to Eat Fruit and Veges

Dr. Carolyn Lister (Multiples Canterbury) shares her tips for filling little tummies with fruit and

For many people, eating five or more servings of fruits and vegetables every day can be a challenge and often, even more so with a fussy toddler, two or even three!

The first solid foods most babies eat are vegetables and fruit, and they continue to be a major part of their diet for the first 12 - 18 months. However, after that, consumption often starts to decline, particularly when young children are given foods that are flavour enhanced and/or high in fat or sugar. It is important to encourage young children to keep eating vegetables and fruit, and control and limit children's intake of these other foods. I know it is easier said than done, so here are some tips to try to encourage your kids to eat fruit and vegetables.

Lead by example

What you eat is going to have a big influence on what your kids like to eat. Make sure you are eating vegetables in front of your children. If you rarely serve vegetables with meals or don't eat fruit, don't be surprised if your kids develop the same tastes. Likewise, if you grimace or complain about eating foods, there is a good chance the child will too (sometimes, you may have to put on an act and exaggerate how yummy something is, when secretly you are craving a chocolate bar). Where possible, family dining is a great time to help your kids develop healthy attitudes about food and the social aspects of eating with others (although you may not want others to see feeding time at the zoo just yet). Peer influences can also be a big influence and some kids are swayed more by other kids than their parents. If your child is going through a picky-eater stage, invite over a friend who is the same age or slightly older, whom you know likes to eat a variety of fruit and vegetables. Group feeding lets the other kids set the example and they are more than likely to join in.

Start sooner rather than later

It can help to start early, offering your toddler lots of different types of foods, especially fruits and vegetables. Studies have shown that new foods are often more likely to be accepted at ages two to four, than at four to eight. That doesn't mean that it is too late to get your older kids to eat more fruits and vegetables, but it will take more effort. Some studies have shown that babies that were breastfed for fewer than six months were more likely to be picky eaters. This may be because the infant is exposed to a greater variety of flavours (that transfer from the mother's diet to breast milk), and they get used to them before getting the "real thing" (those on formula get used to the one, same taste). These effects are most pronounced when the breastfeeding mother eats a good variety of fruits and vegetables. However, breastfeeding is not always an option when you have twins. Taking a step even further back, some studies are now indicating some food preferences, dietary patterns and adult body shape may be determined „in utero“, i.e. by what the mother eats during pregnancy. So pregnant Mums, make sure you eat plenty of fruit and vegetables.

Make fruit and veges accessible

Research has shown that the more fruit and vegetables are available and easily accessible for children, the more likely they are to eat them (especially if all the treats are hidden, or on the top shelf where only you can reach them). Keep a bowl of fresh fruit on the counter. Include fruit and vegetables at snack times, as well as with main meals. Refrigerate cut up fruit and vegetables in small bags or containers for easy snacks on the run.

Keep portions realistic

Don't offer kids a whole head of broccoli. Remember, children have small stomachs and don't tend to eat big meals. You are probably not going to get all their vegetables in an evening

meal so make sure they are also offered at lunch and as snacks. With children, a serving size isn't that big; a good rule of thumb is a serving should be the size of their own hand (same for an adult, so a big difference in size of portion). It is not as daunting as it sometimes seems, and any amount is better than none!

Variety is the spice of life

All vegetables and fruits are healthy. Fruit and vegetables may be any colour, shape, texture or variety. They can be fresh, frozen, tinned, dried, raw, cooked, steamed, boiled, microwaved, stir-fried or roasted. Variety is important, as different fruits and vegetables provide a diversity of nutrients, especially different coloured ones. As well as different flavours and colours, consider the texture of the foods. Some children prefer smooth food, whereas others like lumpy, and some children like crisp foods, but others like soft. These preferences may also come in phases and be influenced by other factors such as teething or wiggly teeth. My son also went through a phase where he wouldn't touch anything green for some unknown reason, but it did pass.

Give kids choices – within limits

Kids like to be in control, so give them some input into food choice, within reason! Too many choices can overwhelm a small child. It's too open ended to ask, "What would you like to eat?". Instead, offer them limited healthy choices, such as choosing between a banana or tinned peaches with their cereal, or carrots or broccoli with dinner.

Patience & persistence (but not pressure)

Getting your children to eat a variety of fruit and vegetables doesn't always happen overnight. Offer your children different foods; even if they are quick to reject new foods, it can help them learn to like a variety of foods over

time. Always include a small serving on children's plates and encourage them to try, but let them decide whether or not to eat. Remember, that if children have repeated opportunities to sample new foods, then at least some of them will be accepted. That may mean that you have to offer a small portion of broccoli 10-15 times before your child will even try it, and even longer to enjoy it! For really reluctant eaters, stick to their favourites and just try a new fruit and vegetable once a week, rather than every night. Children may refuse new foods if mealtimes are stressful, so try and focus on the positives about the meal and avoid arguments. Studies have shown if they are encouraged to try, rather than to "finish" their vegetables, they actually have a higher intake of vegetables and a better ability to know when it's a healthy time to stop eating. Never force your child to eat something, as this will create negative associations and discourage them from trying again in the future. It is also important not to use food (healthy or unhealthy) as a punishment or reward. It is important to consider their motivation. If the child gets extra attention when they don't eat their vegetables, they may continue to protest and cause problems at the table.

Get them involved

Involve your children in fruit and vegetable selection and preparation, or even growing them. Children are more likely to eat what they have chosen, and their own creations. Some ideas for involving your child include:

- Take your children fruit and vegetable shopping and let them see, smell and feel the fruit and vegetables with you. Tell them the names of the different items. Let your child help wash and prepare fruit and vegetables. Use this opportunity to explore new colours and shapes.
- Encourage their skills by letting them make a simple salad or tomato sandwich to serve themselves.
- Start a vegetable/fruit garden at home so your kids can eat the vegetables they grow. Let them help care for the plants, harvest the ripe fruit and vegetables, and wash and prepare them. Another alternative, if you don't have room for this, is to grow some things in pots, e.g. strawberries, a cocktail tomato

bush, herbs, etc. If even that isn't an option, trying growing some sprouts in a small container in the kitchen or take them to an orchard to pick your own fruit.

Make it fun & get creative

Children get more involved if it is fun, and don't be afraid to let them 'play' with food. Some children learn by experimentation, and you just need to set some boundaries so you are not scraping mashed potato off the ceiling. Give them age appropriate "activities", e.g. have them count how many peas they have (as they eat them of course), name the different colours of the vegetables on the plate, how many fruits and vegetables can they think of beginning with „C“, etc. Get inventive with names for fruit and vegetables, e.g. broccoli trees (steamed broccoli florets), cucumber wheels, apple mouths (thinly sliced), avocado boats (a quarter of an avocado), carrot swords (cooked and thinly sliced). Young children also tend to respond well to "tasting games," as long as they're done in a positive way. There are lots of creative ways to get your kids to eat more vegetables, from basic things such as camouflaging them in with other foods, to making them into works of art. One key thing is to make vegetables and fruit look great on the plate. Serve different coloured fruit and vegetables, chop them up in different ways or serve them on a special plate or in a variety of containers. Ice cube trays, mini muffin tins, or a compartmentalized dish, are great for putting bite-size portions of colourful and nutritious foods into each section.

If all else fails resort to stealth!

You may have tried everything and your child's lips remain firmly shut when offered a fruit or vegetable. This is when you need to undertake covert operations to incorporate fruit and vegetables in their diet. They may find they actually like the taste and after a while they may no longer need to be hidden. Some ideas include:

- Add grated vegetables (e.g. carrot, courgette) to mince for meatballs, meatloaf or bolognese sauce.
- Puree vegetables (e.g. broccoli) and stir through soup or gravy. Casseroles are also a good place to

hide pureed vegetables.

- Camouflage vegetables with a favourite sauce (e.g. tomato, cheese).
- Make vegetable soup or a chilled fruit soup, and drink through a straw.
- Slip grated or diced vegetables into favourite foods (e.g. rice, macaroni and cheese, corn fritters, pizza).
- Add fruit to baked products, such as muffins or scones, and make the baked product child bite sized (e.g. blueberry mini muffins, mini banana loaves). This can also work for some vegetables too, e.g. zucchini and pumpkin.
- Stir berries into pancake and pikelet mixtures.
- Mix fruit pieces or puree in with yoghurt.
- Puree fresh or frozen fruit, mix with some fruit juice and freeze in popsicle containers.
- Offer a fruit smoothie for afternoon tea.
- Add pureed or mashed fruit to porridge.

Resources

The following websites have lots of great information and resources. Check out the teaching resources, as there are some great ideas for activities you can do at home or at playgroups.

www.vegetables.co.nz
www.5aday.co.nz
www.dole.com



Carolyn is mum to Rose and Finn (13) and the immediate past president of MNZ and current research director for ICOMBO. She works at Plant & Food Research and lives in Christchurch.

Exercise Tips From Our Facebook Community

Kirsty Saxon (Multiples NZ) gathered all the best hints, tips and ideas for maintaining your exercise routines while being a busy parent of multiples.



Support for parents with multiples



Phone 0800 4TWINs ETC, or visit multiples.org.nz



One of our new mums has asked our online community ... "How have you found time to exercise after having twins? What are your strategies?"

Dany I go to the gym three times a week and play indoor netball on Tuesdays. My girls come along to indoor netball and cheer me on. I have been doing this routine for about five years now.

Aimee It's so hard. My boys are nearly seven months and I'm just really starting now. I walk with them a couple of mornings and have organised my mum to look after them while I go to Zumba two mornings.

Rochelle I've started going to the gym at 5.30am for 30 -40 minutes before the twins (seven months old) wake up (they usually wake around 6.30am and my partner leaves around 6.20am for work). I've met with a trainer and she has given me a really effective half hour workout. I go every morning except Sunday and am finding it so good. The mornings where the twins have woken a bit throughout the night is a tad rough, but find it worth it to start the day well. Sometimes I'll come home afterwards and just do a wee ab workout at home or do it while the

twins have a nap in the arvo. I also load them in the buggy and go for walk with them.

Hilary I try to fit in my morning exercise when the twins are having their morning nap which is usually about two hours long. Then three times a week I go aqua jogging when hubby gets home from work and I've put the boys to bed.

Louise I use Move It Mama, search for her on Facebook. Best thing ever. She is a very real mum of four young boys who does workouts from home. You can do them live with her or any time that works for you (like when babies are down). No equipment needed and only \$10 a month. Honestly can't recommend her highly enough. If you go to her web page, she does a sample workout. You can either do Back to Basics or slightly more challenging stuff. Works for all fitness levels and abilities!

Kelly Anne My gym has a creche with the membership option that I pay! It's great, and it gets me out of the house with another twin mum.

Tarn I take the twins (six months old) walking in the pram, go to a bootcamp once a week where I can take them with me, and try to have some time to myself once a week where I can go for a run or something.

Paige It's definitely possible, but it can be frustrating! I've been going to a personal trainer two times per week who works from home, so I could take the girls from a young age and also work trainings around nap times. I also go to bootcamp once a week where the girls happily sit in the pram with snacks & iPad. The girls are nearly two and I've just stopped my PT sessions as they just interrupt and get in the way too much. I've just joined a 24 hour gym close to home which I go to if my partner doesn't get home too late from work. It's nice to have something to look forward to during the day, especially when the twins are being horrors!

Lucinda Definitely possible. Find a gym with a creche! It was my sanity

time. Also we walked everywhere. It was easier than doing the torturous carseat routine (they hated the car).

Mackenzie-Rose You have to make the time even when you don't want to. I'm always tired at end of the day, but always make the time to work out and feel way better for it after! I also workout for an hour in our home gym set up in our shed in the mornings when the boys have their 10am naps. I also run with the pram three mornings a week. If I didn't exercise I think I would go crazy.

Holly I always put my girls in the pram and walked during one of their naps. When they got to one nap a day it got trickier but I do HIIT workouts at home, there's a million videos on YouTube just search for 'at home' workouts. I ended up getting a treadmill and its been the best investment ever!

Holly If your kids have a trampoline bounce on that for 15 minutes a day, it's actually a killer!

Lx I found working out to YouTube videos the easiest option. It was hard in the first year to find time but now my boys are a bit older it's easier. I normally give them a snack and pop the television on while I do a work out.

Erin So much easier when they could be confined to pram! Get out whilst you can! Now (girls are two) I find it easier to leave them at home and head out solo.

Liv Everyone is different, my boys are 18 months now and I'm just feeling like I have my stuff at home sorted enough to have the energy and mind space (and confidence that "me time" is ok) to get out running again on my own. I love it! It will happen, just be good to yourself and don't guilt yourself back into it. You'll know when you are ready.

Nicole I have been walking with the twins in the pram and I'm about to join a gym that has a childcare center there so I will put them in there for an hour while I exercise.

Hannah Walking miles and miles with

the pushchair! I lost all of my baby weight and more this way. I started when they were about two months old. I couldn't do much while I was recovering from my caesarean section but as soon as I was able to exercise again I started going out for an hour long walk every day. My mum used to come and keep me company so it was nice to have someone to talk to while I was walking! I found that the weight just dropped off (in conjunction with calorie counting). Plus I really enjoy walking - I did a lot of it before I got pregnant too so getting back into it made me feel more like the pre-pregnancy me.

Lyneen I go to Zumba every now and then but with no family round, I have to wait until my husband's rotating shift work aligns with the stars and a Zumba class! I've recently found YouTube but the kids love to stick to my legs so trying to work out at home is a mission. I do go for a walk every now and then and spend my days running around after three kids. Does that count?

Olivia Initially Pilates or yoga while the twins slept, pram walking, squats at the park, YouTube cardio wearing a front pack while the other one slept etc. Now they are three, running after them while they balance bike or challenging them to hill sprints! I'm a physio and would also say initially make sure you're doing pelvic floor and diastasis recti friendly exercise before you get back into anything too strenuous to save yourself future issues. I'd recommend wearing a basic wrap abdominal brace for all moderate exercise and heavy housework, pushing the pram, to help hold the two sides of the abdominal split closer together as they heal.

Shelley Marie Walk the pram and when you and they are ready, start leaving them with their father so you can go out and exercise. Get Dad used to it early. A mum who gets time to herself to keep fit and healthy is a better mum and partner.

Desiree I've struggled until recently where it got to the point I had to make time. My 3.5 year olds do it with me when the one year old is asleep and twice a week I walk my boys two kilometres to kindy, back home, back to kindy and back home again. I also go for little walks with all three throughout the other days and will be walking three kilometres each way to collect daughter from college too from next

week.

Caroline My twins are 13 weeks old and I did my first workout this morning! I did Kayla Itsines workouts for the last two years before I got pregnant and really loved it because it was only 30 mins of my time but really effective. I bought some weights, a bench and a mat so I could do it all from home after the twins go down after their morning feed.

Liz Use your mornings! Up at 5.40am and do it before they wake, hubby does breakfast.

Missy I push the stroller up and down the hills of our neighbourhood everyday, I recently started running with the twins in the stroller (the mountain buggy duet is great!) and do classes/workouts when they are in bed for the night. There are gyms that offer free childcare, like Club Physical.

Josie I walk my kids to school and kindly, they're on scooters while I'm pushing the twins. It's 15 minutes each way, so up to an hour walking each week day, with pushing the pram and trying to keep up with the older two it's a good way to exercise without feeling like I do too much. I also have an exercise class nearby I go to once or twice a week in the evenings after 7pm. Everyone is in bed, I'm not leaving my husband to parent all four on his own (he's perfectly capable, it's just easier).

Rachel Yummy Mummy fitness online is awesome. You can try YouTube ones for free, the paid ones are much better than that. I was doing 5.30am workouts or post bed. I try and fit in walks when I can and if you're in Auckland FreeFitNZ is awesome. Their trainings are FREE and all fitness levels are welcome. Look them up on Facebook.

Rosie I asked my doctor for a 'green prescription' which was really helpful - it gives you a free consultation with a health/nutrition/exercise expert, and they can help you to put together a plan to best meet your needs (in my case vegetarian, EBF twins, and needed some tips for my tummy area!!) They can also give out free gym/swimming trials and discounts. My plan includes pram walking three times a week, working out at home and targeted core muscle exercises.

Anna I've just started doing some

skipping-10minutess and my heart rate is up and I have a sweat on, and also Tabata workouts. You can find them on YouTube and they only take four or ten minutes. I find them easy to do when the kids are sleeping or its a rainy day!

Jacquelyn I love an app called SEVEN, which is seven minute interval training-based workouts, with very good diagrams and schematics to show you how to do the exercises, and a trainer voice counting you down for each interval and timing you. Because it's rapid intervals with short rest times, it's pretty knacker, and you can set it so you run through the seven minute workout two or three times in a row (or more, if you're really hardcore). It's nowhere near as good as actually taking part in a boot camp or a circuit class, but it's a pretty decent substitute.

Emily I used to do a lot of YouTube Pilates/yoga as that is an all round relaxation, workout, stretching and good for the back when carrying around two children all the time. I usually just pop on a video for 30 minutes twice a week. Also walking is really the best way to get out with the babies and get fit, I miss doing that as that was my only way to exercise but my girls are four now and too old and heavy to push around in the buggy.

Sharon Get a Fitbit too. I love mine. I walk everyday now and I'm quite competitive with my other Fitbit friends. Plus I do exercises at home, which the little ones love as they get down and give it a go too. It's quite funny.



Whichever way you choose to manage getting in your daily exercise, always remember whatever you do, you are improving your physical and mental wellbeing.

The Twin Dad Rollercoaster

Barnaby Haszard Morris (Kapi-Mana Multiples) shares his experience of being dad to 15 month old twins, Nora and June.

New baby, new house

After finding out Tara was pregnant in March 2017, we decided our damp, black-mould-infested, one-bedroom flat in Johnsonville wasn't fit to raise a child. (It probably wasn't fit for adults, either.) So Tara took a half-day off work, came up to Paraparaumu to look at a rental, and immediately fell in love with it: three bedrooms, decent insulation, a firebox, and a backyard with fruit trees. We moved up the coast at the start of April.

Are there twins in the family?

Just as we were getting to grips with the idea of being parents (helped in particular by our wonderful midwife Julie), we went in for Tara's 12-week scan and had a bigger bombshell when the sonographer said, "So... are there twins in the family?" We laughed, we cried, we freaked out a little bit. It was very exciting. The funny thing is, I'd been saying all along that I thought it was twins, only half joking. I think I'd been hoping we'd be lucky enough to make a fast start at growing our family.

Tara thought the nausea might finally end soon after that scan. People had been telling her 12 weeks, then 14, then 16. These milestones all passed without the slightest abatement in her queasy tummy. The nausea did eventually dissipate, but not until moments after the babies were delivered at 38

weeks plus two days. It had been a long nine months of food aversions, and holding it together on the long commute back home every evening.

Before we could meet our babies though, a couple of health-related obstacles had to be negotiated. First, Tara's heart started to play up at about the 35-week mark. She first noticed it during one of many long spells awake in the middle of the night; a kind of staccato, irregular rhythm and a general feeling that something wasn't right. A trip to A&E was followed by a few hours in the maternity unit at Wellington Hospital, after which Tara was found to be in atrial fibrillation. Her heart spontaneously reverted to normal rhythm, and there were no other obvious concerns, so we went on home. Tara made the brave decision to reduce her tea consumption to one cup a day, a regimen which she has impressively maintained in the months since.

Scrubs on, let's go!

The second obstacle was the limitations of the hospital itself. We went in on a Friday in early November 2017 for a scheduled caesarean section, full of nerves but very excited to meet our kids. But after a couple of hours sitting in a room on the maternity ward, we were told that because there were no beds free in NICU, we would have to return the following day and try again.

So we did, and were told the same thing, this time... come back Sunday.

The emotional rollercoaster of this on-again off-again routine had left us quite strung out. And of course, we were concerned about how long the kids would continue to thrive on placentas that were reaching the end of their lifespan. So when it wasn't looking good again on Sunday, the head of NICU made some calls and freed up a couple of beds so the caesarean section could go ahead. It went from: "Probably not today again sorry", to "Scrubs on, let's go", in a matter of minutes. After all that, we were extremely fortunate to discover that Tara had grown two perfectly healthy baby girls of identical weights. They breathed, cried and fed without drama. The NICU beds would not be required.

The first few days

The next few days in hospital are very hazy. I remember Nora and June draining all of Tara's pre-expressed colostrum on the first night and endless consultants streaming in to help her with breastfeeding. I remember the incessant 'ding' of the call bell on our understaffed wing of the maternity ward. I remember my creaky fold-out bed repeatedly waking the kids. Most of all, I remember marvelling at these two tiny humans gazing up at us with bright blue eyes.

Heading home

We left hospital after four nights and flailed around a bit once we got home, before eventually settling down into a routine.

It took a few weeks of experimenting to figure out what worked best for all of us in terms of feeding times/methods and sleep schedule.

I went back to work during that time and it felt like walking away from a running bath. But we grew in confidence.



Nora and June proved themselves open and receptive to pretty much all of their parents' whims, such that a long-planned weekend in Auckland at six weeks went ahead without a hitch and a big, loud, long Christmas Day celebration with family was taken in stride. Time to count our blessings again: our kids are quite happy to go out and meet the world, which has the added benefit of allowing us as their parents to maintain a broader map than our four walls.

New challenges

Of course, we've also learned that we can never get comfortable. Just when we think we've got a handle on all the aspects of their routine, it changes again. Solids need introducing, for example, or someone's decided they're going to start waking at midnight rather than 3am. They started crawling, then they started standing with support, then they started holding our hands and toddling around the room; now they are fully fledged and walking – practically running. Fortunately, Tara sees each new horizon as a challenge and is constantly coming up with subtle tweaks to improve everyone's

day from a slightly earlier wake-up time to rain sounds on the laptop at nap time. She has their routine pretty down now ... at least, until it changes again.

We survived the first year

Nora and June are now fifteen months old. They have ultra-blond hair that is long enough that we really need to do something about it. Like their dad, they are tall for their age, and most of the time they eat like soldiers (i.e. a

lot). They chatter constantly in the house but tend to clam up a bit if we take them out. They adore books, so much so that they have started eating their favourite stories.

Our days are long and hard, and we are lucky if we get five minutes to sit and drink a cup of tea. But it is all so, so worth it.

Barnaby Morris and Tara Dench are parents to Nora and June Dench (15 months, and live in Paraparaumu.



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Introducing Rosie

Rosie Ponifasio-Hughes (Whangarei Satellite of Multiples Auckland North) the start of her multiples journey.

Introducing Rosie

Hey everyone, Rosie here! I live in Whangarei with my lovely hubby Ben, who is a case manager for Work & Income. That was very handy when we were trying to organize our home help! He's an all-round super dad who gets up in the night to the kids, makes amazing waffles and spends time perfecting his secret recipe for blowing giant bubbles.

And her family

We have three beautiful children: Hughie (who has just turned six and is obsessed with volcanoes, basketball & bad 'knock-knock' jokes), and our B/G fraternal twins Ash & Lani who are nearly three (and couldn't be more opposite in every way, but simultaneously complimentary). I'm a Primary School teacher by trade, but am currently at home juggling all sorts of different creative things.

I am a lover of nature, gardening, enthusiastic people, bright colours and all things native to Aotearoa.

I'm primarily focusing on being a great mum, but also run my own small business ('Green Grubs') where I design and create educational resources for

kiwi teachers and do graphic design work for schools. I also volunteer for an amazing local initiative called 'Sandwiches for Schools' (we make around 700 sandwiches a week for local kids with no lunches) ... and I help to run our local satellite Multiples Club.

We're nearly three years into our multiples journey, and are just starting to feel like we might survive ha ha! Here's a wee snippet of our twinnny journey to date.

Two little babies onboard

After 15 years of living and teaching in Albany, Ben and I decided to move 'home' to Whangarei with two year old Hughie. We wanted to pursue our goal of buying our first home which had been unachievable for us in Auckland. We'd been back in Whangarei for two days when we found out we were pregnant (exciting) and then the bombshell news at our first scan that we had two little babes onboard! Apart from my mum, (who had fraternal boys) my family tree shows exactly

zero multiple births. So I guess maybe I inherited something from Mum.

We scrambled to quickly buy a home (a 1960's DIY with great 'potential' and a massive untamed jungle). After ripping up carpets and repainting the entire interior, we waddled into our new home about eight weeks before the twins were born. (Side note: I've only just finished unpacking the last of our moving boxes over the summer holidays and the babies will be three in March!!)

The babies arrive

After a really boring pregnancy (right through the full heat of summer) our didi duo Ash & Lani (Asher & Melani) were born in March at 39+2 weeks, weighing in at a healthy 7.3 & 7.5 pounds. I had a beautiful, relaxed and intervention free birthing experience at our local hospital. I had a magical three hours wandering around the dim hospital room nursing Ash while we waited for baby number two. Baby B had been breech the whole way through my pregnancy, but after Ash popped out, slowly flipped head down (supported by some gentle external pressure). I could sense our very patient and relaxed obstetrician getting a little uncomfortable around the two



hour mark, so we finally consented to having baby Bs waters broken to give her a hurry along!

We had chosen not to find out the sex of our babies, and after the arrival of my dark and handsome Ash, I was convinced I was destined to be the Mum to three handsome dark eyed/ haired boys .. what a surprise when a very pale and blonde Lani arrived! She arrived a few minutes shy of three hours after her brother.

Managing two babies

I was initially very worried about my ability to feed two. (I'd had a really rough beginning to my feeding journey with Hughie - you name the problem, we'd been through it!) and although we'd persevered through the initial tricky bit and continued feeding for two years, the idea of trying to feed two babies was overwhelming. Thank goodness we were in Whangarei with it's amazing FREE wrap around services. I visited our local lactation clinic twice before the babies were born, and their team was right there to offer support after the babies arrived. After some initial troubles latching with Ash, we were away - feeding individually, tandem feeding, pumping, cluster feeding - we managed and survived it all. The babies self-weaned at two and half, and I'm so glad we persevered through that initial crazy six weeks.



Surviving the first three years

The first three years have definitely been a roller coaster (for my sanity) – and I've found great comfort in having some other amazing twin mums around me to lend a listening ear and ask for advice. Ash & Lani were about one and half when we managed to get a more regular and organized coffee group going, and things have gradually expanded from there! We now have a great little support system set up for our local multiples families which includes monthly coffee group meet ups (with free lactation advice from our amazing twin-mum-lactation-consultant Helen down at Te Puawai Ora), a great Facebook group and a free lending library. It's been great to have had our little coffee group be formally recognized as a club and to be taken in under the wing of 'Multiples Auckland-North'.

Where ever you are on your Multiple journey, just remember: It's all a phase, you will survive, and tomorrow is a new day.

Editor's note

Multiples NZ are thrilled to have Rosie on board as our satellite coordinator for Whangarei. Rosie has whole heartedly thrown herself into supporting multiple families in her area.



Satellite Club of Multiples Auckland North

Rosie also appears on our cover this issue with Ash and Lani. This photo caught my eye on Rosie's Facebook page 'Green Grubs' and online at <https://greengrubsgardenclub.com/>

There you will find a heap of learning resources related to our New Zealand life and culture (and some of them are free!)



Rosie and Ben live in Whangarei and are parents to Hughie (6), and fraternal twins Ash and Lani (2). Rosie is the Whangarei contact for the NEW Whangarei satellite club of Multiples Auckland North, and manages her own graphic design and teaching resource business.

A Tricky Road to Travel

From the archives: Jenny-Lyn Wright's article on navigating special education services. (Multiple Matters, Autumn 2012).

Navigating Special Education Services

Follow-up, follow-up and follow-up, are the best words of advice I would offer any parents entering the world of special education services. My experience comes from our eldest son, who presents with an interesting but very uncommon set of challenges. He was diagnosed with a benign Essential Tremor, subtle dystonia, abnormal gait and low muscle tone. The tremor affects all muscle control throughout his body—even non-obvious movements, like tongue control, eye tracking and reaction time. It makes him very tired, as he had to work really hard just to stand, sit or maintain his chosen posture.

It did not really become evident until around the age of 21½, when expectations of gross motor and fine motor movements increased. He had met developmental milestones at age appropriate stages and had walked by 11 months. We struggled to establish what was actually going on. It was not that it was glaringly wrong, just not quite right. If you have a gut feeling that your child is presenting with issues, then pursue the situation until you are completely satisfied. We visited several medical professionals and had numerous testing, including MRI scans, lumbar punctures and diagnostic analysis of bloods and spinal fluid in Australia. All of which was going on as we embraced the arrival of our newborn twins. If we had accepted our first set of advice, of “within normal range”, his challenges today would be even greater.

A holistic approach

We have worked on all aspects of his life, starting with diet. The fuel that is put into children's systems affects the output, just like a car. Once we had overhauled that, we then started working on gross motor skills. Without gross motor movement, the foundations for fine motor skills cannot be laid in the developmental trail. He was often reluctant, as he tired so easily, but a little bit of work several times a

day, every day, was the key. The earlier you can put intervention/therapy in place, the better.

We sacrificed in other areas of life so as to be in a position to begin our journey privately, and later we were referred to the Ministry's services. We had a very long wait for assessment and even had the speech referral lost luckily, picked up with my regular, but polite, follow-up calls... but delayed again due to the therapist's private loss. During this time, we continued our private treatment and worked hard on developing our home-based programme alongside our delightful, yet full on, (I am sure I do not need to elaborate here), twins.

We have had interactions with Child Development Services (Albany), the Ministry of Education Early Intervention Coordinator, teacher aids based in kindergarten, and a Ministry of Education Speech Language Therapist.

My son is now reaching an age where he is being referred on to the next stage of Ministry of Education Services. This is another story again, the fight continues, made a little easier by already having a history. Having assistance in place for when he entered into school was part of the reason we fought so hard to be in the system at early childhood level.

Leave no stone unturned and follow-up

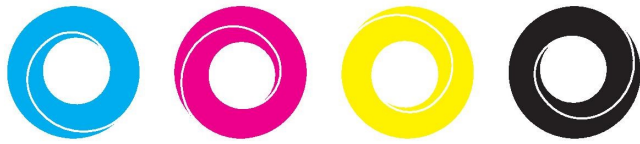
There is a raft of information and opinions that you as a parent have to listen to, process and digest. All the different professionals that you will interact with, will have an opinion—an opinion based on a short snapshot of your child's behaviour, abilities and challenges faced. This may be beneficial, i.e. for funding—if your child appears worse, more funding may be provided. It can be very hard to read some of the reports, and that does not get any easier, but do take time to read them over several times and if you disagree strongly with anything within the reports make sure that you are heard. These reports follow your child around, and it can be hard to shake

perceptions formed by others who receive copies, for example kindergarten teachers, other departments of special education, and schools.

The effort that you are able to invest in your child at this stage of their learning and developmental journey will be rewarded in years to come. Do not rely on the input of the MOE Special Education Services to be your sole vehicle of assistance. They are stretched very thin, trying to cater effectively for all children under their care. They are a good source of ideas and those who I have dealt with have responded well to providing extra information and activities for home-based therapy. The therapists we dealt with at child development services actually thanked me last week, as they were working on my son's discharge. They appreciated the fact that I had kept them on their toes and did not let them “miss” or “let slip” any aspects of his care. They have also stayed involved with him for longer, due to the effort that they could see we were investing in him at home.

Our son will be faced with his tremor and coordination challenges all his life, but due to the therapy to date, the degree of that impact on his day-to-day life has been reduced. There is no doubt that parents of children with challenges have been handed a tricky road to travel. The way we choose to travel down that road will ultimately have an impact on our child's progress, so leave no stone unturned and follow-up!





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Oops!

David Heffernan (Multiples Canterbury) shares his journey of welcoming his family through IVF. (Previously published in *Multiple Times*, 2018.)

Our IVF Journey

I first met Emi at university in Japan a long long time ago, and married in 2008. But it took us a while to have our first child. It wasn't until we were based in Wellington a few of years later, that we really got organised and started fertility treatment. After several unsuccessful rounds of treatment we ran out of funding in New Zealand, and Emi decided to have one last attempt at a self-funded round when she was visiting her parents in Japan. She was four months pregnant with our eldest daughter Michiko (Mitch) when we moved to Christchurch for my work, and Mitch was born here in 2015.

Around the time of Mitch's second birthday we started seriously discussing whether or not we should have one more go at IVF (In vitro fertilisation) to try and have another child. I was quite keen for a second child, and Emi was... not so keen. After a bit of deliberation Emi decided that she wasn't going to go through with it, so that was that.

We did, however have a couple of "low-quality" embryos from round number nine sitting in a freezer in Japan. When Emi flew home with Mitch to visit her family in 2017 she decided to just transfer both of them in one go, I think mostly because she didn't want to keep paying the monthly storage fees.

Opps!

Emi got a high HCG (human chorionic gonadotropin - produced in pregnancy) test result at about four weeks, and then we found out at the ultrasound scan a few days afterwards that both eggs had set up camp. Oops! I remember my first reaction was that we'd need to get a new house and car. Emi was hit by double-strength morning sickness and ended up extending her stay in Japan, so that left me on my own in Christchurch to hunt for a midwife and obstetrician, join Multiples Canterbury, organise the antenatal classes, and just generally get a bucket load of ducks in a row before she flew back. It was an interesting

experience that I guess a lot of new dads don't get to go through. How hard is it for a bloke to find a midwife nowadays?!

Our girls arrive

Like most twin pregnancies, Emi's was pretty busy, and she ended up being in and out of hospital with IUGR (Intrauterine growth restriction) from about 31 weeks. Her obstetrician kept trying to get her admitted, only to have the maternity ward discharge her again. Requests to induce were shot down due to a lack of space in NICU. In spite of everything she managed to hang on to 36 weeks, and our two girls were born in May weighing in at a bit over two kilograms each.



Home from hospital—Sara (L) and Clodagh (R).

Naming our girls proved to be a problem. We started with a huge long-list and then vetoed everything on it due to bilingual considerations. In a sleep deprived state several days post-birth we went with Sara Noel Heffernan, who will have to spend the rest of her life explaining that it is Japanese-Sara not English-Sara, and Clodagh Mio Heffernan, a beautiful Irish name which with the benefit of hindsight is going to be a bit of a problem for everybody to spell. We probably should have been a bit more organised.

Since then time has flown by. Emi and the girls had a two week stay in hospital, as Clodagh had minor feeding issues, and then we had six weeks while I was on parental leave to settle in and get a routine established. The biggest challenge during this time was probably trying to juggle older sister Mitch, who was a bit put out by the change

and insisted on "helping" with everything. It's hard now to even recall just how busy we were at the beginning, although I think it's getting easier?



Nana got three new granddaughters for her birthday in May. Sara (L), Clodagh (2L), big sister Mitch, and niece Elise (R) with the extended family.

Mostly things have been going fine, although we did have one particularly rough patch where Mitch brought a cold home from kindy. She infected the rest of the family, which then progressed to bronchiolitis for the twins. After Clodagh and I spent our first night in hospital, Sara also came down with the same symptoms about 24 hours behind her and we had a bit of a battle getting her admitted through A&E whilst taking care of Clodagh over the other side of the hospital. It was quite a challenge dealing with two babies who were waking up every 30 minutes because of runny noses, let alone finding time to look after a sick toddler and two sick parents as well.



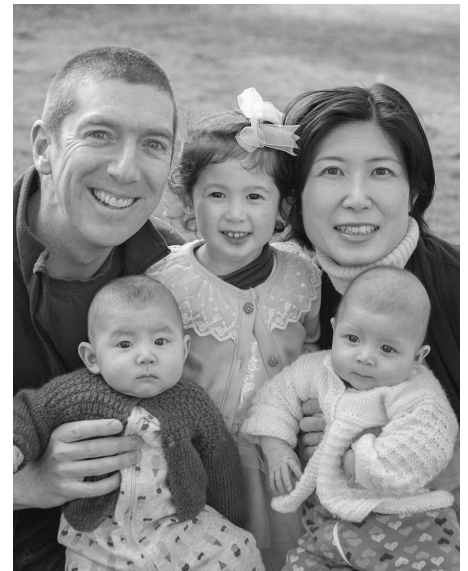
Expectations

Overall things haven't been quite as bad as expected, although we had low expectations and a lot of help. We've been very lucky that Nana and Granddad have moved down to Christchurch to assist. I don't know how we would have survived without them. Now that I'm back at work, our days involve me getting Mitch ready for kindy, dropping her off and then running in to work. Nana comes over and helps with the housework and morning feedings, then granddad picks Mitch up from kindy. Lots of complex scheduling but everybody is surviving so far.

Thank you

A big thanks everybody in the Multiples Canterbury for organising lots of great events over the last few months, especially the ladies at the Ilam Play Group. I attended a couple of times with Mitch before the twins were born, as well as Tumble Times and Karma Keg. It's really great to be part of such a fun group.

David and Emi live in Saint Albans, Christchurch and belong to Multiples Canterbury. They are parents to Michiko (3), Sara (9 months) and Clodagh (9 months).



Multiples NZ Facebook Pages

Along with our very popular **Multiples NZ** Facebook page, we also support the following specific needs groups:

- Multiples NZ
- Triplets Plus NZ
- Special Needs Multiples NZ
- Young Parents of Multiples NZ
- School Aged Multiples NZ
- Multiples NZ Public Page
- Multiples NZ National Conference Event page

In addition to these groups we also support the follow externally Administrated Pages:

- Single Parents of Multiples
- Dads of multiples
- NZ Multiple Birth Buy & Sell

To help provide support to our Committees we have also organised these role-specific pages:

In order to join these pages your Club President will need to confirm your position on your club committee.

- Multiples NZ for Committees
- Presidents
- Multiples NZ Discount Coordinators Group
- Multiples NZ Newsletter Editors



You can also follow us on Twitter using **@multiplesnz**
and Instagram—multiplesnz



Revised October 2015

Kiwibank Local Hero Award—Carolyn Lister

Carolyn Lister (Multiples Canterbury) Multiples NZ Volunteer Extraordinaire wins a prestigious award.

The Kiwibank Local Hero award recognises those whose selflessness and determination has made a difference in the community. It provides a special opportunity to all New Zealanders, who have witnessed or experienced the contributions made by this years medal recipients, to say thank you, we appreciate what you are doing to make our communities better.

Multiples NZ has 15 member organisations throughout the country, and these organisations represent around 1500 families, which roughly equates to 6000 people. In the 11 years that Carolyn has been involved as a volunteer within the New Zealand multiples community, she has done everything she can to support our parents, families, carers, volunteers and clubs. She does all this while supporting her own teenage twins, working in paid employment (often travelling the country and the globe), as well as volunteering for other organisations. Carolyn Lister is hardworking, committed, and always up to have some fun!

Carolyn's Commitment to Multiples NZ

- Multiples Canterbury Funding Officer: 2007-2008
- Multiples Canterbury Neonatal Support: 2007-2008 and 2011-2012
- Multiples Canterbury Library coordinator: 2009 - 2011
- Multiples Canterbury Equipment Hire: 2011 - 2012
- Multiples Canterbury President: 2009 - 2011 (Co President for 2012) Multiples NZ Conference Organising Team: 2008-2010
- Multiples NZ Vice President: 2011-2013
- Multiples NZ President: 2013 - 2016
- Multiples NZ Immediate Past President: 2016 - 2017
- Multiples Canterbury Membership Secretary: 2012 - Current

- Multiples NZ Facebook Group moderator: 2017 - Current
- International Council of Multiple Birth Organisations: 2017 - Current

Local Support

Impact within the Multiples Canterbury community

Carolyn has been described by past and present Multiples Canterbury committee members as extremely organised, professional, discreet, and genuine. Carolyn makes herself very available to support others in their roles. She is a go-to person for wide and varied information including but certainly not limited to, the website, events, spending information, members and membership. When necessary, she has coached committee members through conflict to reach an appropriate resolution.

Impact within the broader Multiples Canterbury Community

As membership secretary Carolyn is a warm, friendly and interested first contact for new members. She is very welcoming to all. She personally comments on and congratulates the parents of every set of multiples which are posted on the Multiples Canterbury Facebook page. She retains knowledge of each member, when their babies are due and their broader family situation. She uses this to match each mother with the buddy who can best assist. This includes families living in Christchurch as well as those families living in the satellite areas of Nelson/Marlborough and south down to Timaru.

In her Multiples Canterbury work, Carolyn has been an essential part of getting support out all areas supported by Multiples Canterbury. Carolyn was instrumental in the reestablishment of a support group in the Nelson/Marlborough region and made several visits to personally meet with Nelson/Marlborough contact people. The reestablishment of this support group

has become the template for other Multiples Clubs around the country to use and there are now a number of satellite groups in place as a result.

Education and Information Sharing

Carolyn is a Research Leader at Plant and Food Research. She willingly offers her expertise in the area of food and nutrition to Multiples Canterbury members. Carolyn has led seminars locally and nationally covering topics such as breakfast, lunch, dinner, meat, fruit, vegetables, portion sizes and strategies to get children eating nutritious food. She happily shares her knowledge in response to questions posted on the Multiples Canterbury Facebook page as well as the Multiples NZ Facebook page.

In addition to her commitment to her local community, Carolyn has stepped up to support the community at a national level as well.

National Support

Impact within Multiples NZ Community

When Carolyn joined the Multiples NZ Executive she brought with her a calm, strategic, well-organised approach. Her work with Multiples NZ has been varied, but there are some key areas she has focussed her attention on in that time.

Supporting Clubs

Carolyn has worked closely with many of the affiliated clubs throughout New Zealand. Drawing from her own Club-based experiences, Carolyn has been able to offer advice relating to a number of club related services. Of particular importance has been her support of Club Presidents', often simply as a soundboard for issues or new ideas.

The satellite group concept was initi-

ated in the time that Carolyn sat on the Multiples NZ Executive and she has led the way, successfully supporting Multiples Canterbury to integrate Nelson, Marlborough and most recently Timaru and Ashburton into the Multiples Canterbury network.

Multiples NZ Resources

In the time that Carolyn has been with Multiples NZ she has taken the time to ensure key processes are well documented, aiding a smooth transition between roles. She has developed some key policies for the organisation, including how to manage satellite groups, as well as maintaining and updating the constitution.

Carolyn has also spent the last few years working on the multiple-specific feeding resource. This has been a labour of love, complicated by the sheer volume of information available and the sensitivity of the material. We know that the final product will be well-researched, credible, informative and relevant. The success of this document will most likely be as a result of Carolyn's attention to detail and ability to read complex information and summarise it in plain English. Multiples NZ is now in the final stages of editing and designing the document ready for release at the end of this year.

Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) and Prematurity

Carolyn's own experiences formed her desire to see families with premature babies well cared for. Carolyn has forged a working relationship with The Neonatal Trust and worked alongside

the Trust in an effort to bring the Purple Butterfly initiative to New Zealand. Sadly, baby loss is a possible factor of premature birth, and Carolyn has created a library of support material for families who suffer loss. Carolyn has also worked closely with The Neonatal Trust in her time as President to ensure that the Purple Butterfly Initiative is implemented here in NZ. The purple butterfly is a symbol that indicates to other families in a NICU or a postnatal ward that a twin, triplet or quad has been lost from the family.

Social Media

Social Media is where Carolyn's support becomes truly visible. Her commitment to the Multiples NZ social media platforms has been truly exceptional. Regardless of the nature of a Facebook post, Carolyn is often one of the first respondents', with an objective, or informative response. She gathers material from around the country and the globe and shares this with the Multiples NZ community, whenever the need arises. Carolyn's profile is so visible on Facebook, that members often message her directly asking for advice or guidance on multiples-specific issues they are facing. Carolyn has been instrumental in the successful management of Facebook member requests since the arrival of preggophiles. Carolyn, working alongside an international group of Facebook users, has scrutinized member requests, as well as recorded and shared fake profile requests with Multiples Clubs to make sure preggophiles do not have access to our families.

International Support

International Council of Multiple Birth Organisations (ICOMBO)

In 2017 Carolyn was elected onto the ICOMBO Board to sit alongside representatives from other international organisations. In the short time on the Board, Carolyn has designed, coordinated and implemented the international survey "Multiples in Research" - gathering information, across 6 different languages, about how multiples (twins, triplets and quadruplets) want to be involved in research projects. She is now working on another research project for ICOMBO regarding trends in placement of multiple birth children in public and private schools. Carolyn has increased awareness of ICOMBO through the public Facebook profile of the organisation, consistently posting and sharing multiples-specific articles and research from around the world. Carolyn has also been invited to join the steering group for the Global Twins and Multiples Priority Setting Partnership. This research priority-setting initiative is being led collaboratively by TAMBA UK, St George's University of London and Twins Research Australia and aims to bring parents, carers, clinicians and scientists together to identify the top 5-10 priorities for research in twin and multiple health. This is acknowledgement of Carolyn's professional expertise and her unwavering commitment to improving outcomes for families with multiples throughout the world.

In the 11 years that Carolyn has been involved with Multiples Canterbury, she has walked beside many families



Kiwibank Local Hero Award (continued)

Carolyn Lister (Multiples Canterbury) Multiples NZ Volunteer Extraordinaire wins a prestigious award.

and supported and inspired many people. It wouldn't be difficult to fill a fair few pages with words of support for Carolyn's HLM nomination, but instead here are just a few (names have been removed for privacy reasons).

Multiples NZ President: Ainslee Jacobson

Coming into the role of President, following Carolyn Lister, was a daunting task. She works tirelessly for this organisation and its families both on the ground and at an administrative level. Two years on and she continues to be a great support to me in my role, making sure I stay on top of any issues, that I'm aware of what is happening internationally and how our organisation can be a part of that. I know that I can rely on Carolyn to provide a well rounded opinion on any subject and her ability to think strategically while also focussing on the detail is a real asset to our organisation, which is why we're not letting her leave any time soon!

Multiples Canterbury Past President:

Carolyn has been involved with Multiples Canterbury since her own children were babies, she has served as president for the club, and when this ended she has stayed on the committee in her membership secretary role. Carolyn is often the first contact for new members and makes sure they get access to our Facebook page and membership enrolments. This is a big role as Carolyn also keeps an eye on our statistics and how our membership fluctuates. Carolyn manages our buddy system and makes sure that all our members who would like buddies are paired up. Carolyn is also available as support for myself in the president role and the wider committee if they have any questions around processes. Carolyn has served our multiples community for many years and has often coupled this with parenting and her roles within Multiples NZ. Carolyn is a well-known support on our Facebook

page and we are very lucky to have her continue to work with our community. I think Carolyn is a very deserving recipient for life member and I am sure she will continue to be available to our members in whatever capacity she can offer in the future.

Past Nelson/Marlborough Satellite group coordinator:

Carolyn has been my biggest supporter as a volunteer and also such an inspiration (I still have no idea how she juggles family life, professional career and finds time to commit so much energy to the multiples community - I am in awe). When I took on this role I had no idea what I was in for and there had been no hand over as both previous contacts had left the area. Carolyn was my go-to person on some really sticky situations I encountered - a twin loss, complex CYFs case, and support for a fetal reduction decision. She is a wealth of information and will go to great lengths to find the information you need in order to best support a family. In the case of fetal reduction she tracked down through AMBA, and eventually found in Germany a woman who had set up a support system for families making this decision. I can't say enough how valuable Carolyn is to the multiples community, both on the local and national level. And a huge asset to other volunteers for her guidance and knowledge.

Multiples Auckland Central former NICU Support Coordinator:

Carolyn reached out to the Auckland clubs as Memberships co-ordinator for Multiples Canterbury earlier this year when she was made aware of a Christchurch based family struggling in Auckland Hospital's NICU. Mum was airlifted to Auckland in a critical condition with 23 week twins suffering from TTTS. Mum delivered the boys the following week and sadly one passed at birth and the other was fighting hard in NICU for survival. I worked closely with Carolyn to offer support to this family. In essence Carolyn became my support. She offered fantastic advice

to the Mum on bereavement support available and was a sounding board for me when I did need it. The family remained in Auckland for six months and Carolyn and I were in regular contact during this time. appreciate all she did for me and this family. I don't know where she finds the energy to do all she does but she always had passion and a huge heart.

In Summary

Despite the huge contribution Carolyn makes to the Multiples Canterbury and Multiples NZ through her various roles and the support she offers others, she still makes time to get involved at grassroots level - processing nappy orders, organising buddies and turning up at Multiples Canterbury events to assist. To her, every interaction that these roles involve is an opportunity to show warmth and to take a genuine interest. In her role processing nappy orders for newborns, she takes it upon herself to stay up-to-date with orders by watching the posts on Facebook rather than waiting to be contacted directly. Her time, energy and commitment are evident in her sheer number of roles and the very high standard she completes them to.

Carolyn has performed many official roles within the Multiples Canterbury and Multiples NZ but the biggest and most important role takes place beneath the surface and has no official title. Carolyn is a very supportive, interested and genuine person whose knowledge, personal qualities, passion for the cause and sheer hard work underpin a lot of work which goes on within the Multiples Canterbury committee. Her support and encouragement has enabled others in the Multiples Canterbury and in clubs around the country to perform their roles to a high standard. This combined with her genuine warmth and hard work at grassroots level has had a positive effect on multiples and clubs around the country.

A Giraffe Called Neo

Kate Clarke (Guest Contributor) reviews Allison Schlee's book, 'A Giraffe Called Neo'.



A Giraffe Called Neo is about Allison's personal struggle following the spontaneous birth of her son at just 28 weeks gestation and her battle with postnatal depression.

Allison believes her depression was a direct result of the ensuing emotional trauma that came with having a prematurely born baby. Spending the first 91 days of her son's life in a neonatal unit was the opposite of what she had been anticipating. *A Giraffe Called Neo* documents this time in honest detail. Allison hopes the book will provide a voice for all women and mothers, and help eradicate the social stigma that surrounds postnatal depression. She hopes to offer inspiration to those suffering from it - so that they might have the courage to accept, embrace and conquer their own depression without fear of reprisal.

"After a 4 hour labour, my son entered the world weighing 1350gm and measuring 40cm in length. He was able to take his first few breaths of air himself before he needed assistance. To see

your tiny, vulnerable baby being 'grown' in an artificial womb in an incubator at a high tech Neonatal Unit is a harsh reality check. After emergency air retrieval, my son and I spent a total of 91 days there, 500+km from our hometown, away from family and friends."

This book would be helpful for anyone who wanted to gain a better understanding of post natal depression or someone who has experienced it first hand. At times, it is heartbreakingly sad but Allison's journey is one of hope and recovery.

"Seeking help was the best thing I did, and it put me on the road to recovery. My message for all mother's/women who are not feeling right, is to seek help sooner rather than later. I lost the first 12 months of my son's infancy due to this debilitating illness - time I can never ever get back. You CAN recover from Post Natal Depression - but you cannot do it by yourself."

There is an independent Facebook group for multiple families in New Zealand coping with postnatal depression. Although not directly affiliated with Multiples NZ, it is a safe and caring closed group. The group's admin is Multiples Auckland member, Lauren Manson. Lauren says, "This group is a judgement free space for parents with multiples who are experiencing symptoms of depression, anxiety and post natal depression following birth. I suffered myself and decided more parents needed a space to be able to chat to others."

Facebook search:

**Multiple Birth PND
Support NZ**

There will be a book giveaway of 'A Giraffe Called Neo' coming up on our Multiples NZ Facebook group. Keep an eye out in April for your chance to win your own copy.

This book is available in paperback from Amazon Online for \$19.00.

Allison Schlee was born, raised and lives in South Australia. After twenty-three years of working in the hospitality industry as a chef, Allison is enjoying her new role of stay at home mum; which also now gives her time to indulge in her small hobby business 'Little Treasures By Allison'.



Guest contributor and book reviewer, **Kate Clarke**, is a holistic health coach and mama to baby Fenix and rescue pups Zeus and Tui. Kate lives in Ahipara in the Far North and runs her business through her Facebook and Instagram pages: Empowered Health Coaching with Kate Clarke.





multiplesnz

National Training Forum

Saturday 19th and Sunday 20th October 2019
Brentwood Hotel, Kilbirnie, Wellington

PURPOSE: To strengthen Clubs, Club Committees
and Club Volunteers so that they can better
support our families in their local communities.

AUDIENCE: Club Committee members and Volunteers

Saturday
Facilitated by
Kerri Tilby-Price, Exult
Gala Dinner & Volunteer Awards

Sunday
Annual General Meeting
Networking

Registration Fee: \$350

Information:

<http://multiples.org.nz/index.php/news-events/conference>





multiplesnz

**6th Annual
Volunteer Awards 2019**

Help us say

Thank You

**Nominate a volunteer who has made
a difference for our families**

**Nominations Open 16th June
New Zealand Volunteer Week**

**Awards will be presented at the
National Training Forum
Gala dinner
Sat 19th October**

Congratulations

**The Sixth Annual Multiples NZ
Volunteer Awards &**

Gala Dinner
A night of Celebration

Saturday 19 October 2019, 7 pm
Brentwood Hotel, Wellington

Tickets includes buffet dinner & complimentary drink
Register at: bit.ly/2GZJKvX



multiplesnz

Twin Etiquette

Dr. Joan Friedman (Guest Contributor) shares her own ideas to help educate the uninitiated about how to approach twins and their parents with sensitivity, emotional intelligence, and

Whenever I speak to parents of twins, inevitably someone in the audience feels compelled to share his/her most recent story about the most annoying, hurtful, outrageous, unbelievable, or exasperating twin comment they have experienced. A resounding groan of empathic understanding and laughter resonates throughout the audience. So, in light of these cosmic occurrences, I have decided to create my own etiquette post to help educate the uninitiated about how to approach twins and their parents with sensitivity, emotional intelligence, and tact.

Don't ask the expectable questions

(Not in any expectable order) Who is older? Is she (he) the shy one? Who walked first? Were they natural or did you have IVF? Which one is your favourite? Why is the redheaded twin more talkative than her sister? Why are they fighting with each other? Are you sure they are identical? Parents of twins do understand that these questions and inquiries are well-intentioned attempts (most of the time) to find a way to differentiate one twin from the other. Try the following approach and see what happens.

But do ask ...

What are their names? How shall I remember who is who? How are they different? What are their personalities like? What does each one like to do? What are their preferences? Tell me about each of them. Make your own observations about each twin just as you would if there were one baby – and do it twice. The goal is to help family, friends, and strangers focus on each twin's uniqueness and individuality. Approaching twins in these ways helps parents mitigate their concerns about how much their children are being labelled and compared. They will sincerely appreciate your efforts to relate to their children as two separate people. Don't make comparative or labelling statements in front of the twins themselves. Contrary to popular thought, even babies as young as toddlers understand these communications and take them to heart. Parents whose twins look remarkably alike

need to help outsiders identify each twin by dressing them in different colours, pointing out any distinguishing features, or styling different haircuts.

Don't feel compelled to share your feelings about raising twins

How do you tell them apart? Double trouble, right? Glad it's you and not me... How do you do it? I have kids that are close in age, and it's the same as having twins.

But do say ...

You are doing an amazing job. I admire how you are able to manage two babies at the same time. They are lucky to have such a patient and loving mom/dad.

Don't make idealised statements about being a twin:

They must be best friends. They won't ever have to worry about being alone. They are each other's soul mate. They probably never fight. It is a blessing on many levels to be a twin; however twins and their families are unduly influenced by our cultural fascination with twins. If twins grow up imbued with these sorts of twin myths, they may feel as if something is wrong with them if they don't feel this way about their twin relationship. Help your family and friends appreciate the twins' relationship rather than romanticize it.

But do say ...

It's wonderful that they have each other. If you want to add a bit more, say something along the lines that as in any partnership, there are ups and downs.

Don't confront a parents who is alone with one twin by asking:

Where is his twin? How can you take out one and leave the other alone? Aren't you going to ruin the twinship? Isn't he miserable and sad without his twin?

But do say ...

It's great that you are giving each twin alone time. I imagine it takes a bit of

creative juggling to make it happen. I admire you for making this a priority. It must be wonderful for you and each twin to have time alone together.

Don't pay attention to the twins first if they are with other siblings

Don't judge the sibling's behaviour as rude or impolite if he appears sullen or upset. Be empathic and understanding. Siblings of twins have it rough sometimes, and they deserve recognition and acknowledgment. Talk to them about the challenges of being a twin, such as having to share so many things and being compared so much of the time.

But do say ...

Ask the siblings their names, age, and preferences. Ask them about themselves, not about their relationship to the twins. If he/she seems does not feel like engaging with you, just acknowledge politely that he/she doesn't feel like talking. Then you can turn your attention to the parents and the twins. Keep this advice in mind. Parents of twins and the twins themselves will be forever grateful.

Dr. Friedman is a prominent and well-respected twin expert who shares her passionate views and insights about twins and their emotional needs with twins and their families throughout the world. Previously published on parental.guidanceguide.com



National Executive 2019

Introducing your national executive and support roles for 2019.



President Ainslee Jacobson - Multiples Wellington

Ainslee is our current president of Multiples NZ, and mum to eight year old boys Cameron and Hunter. Ainslee has also been involved with Multiples Canterbury, but relocated to Wellington in 2017. Ainslee also works part time at National Perinatal Pathology Service, and loves coffee!!



Vice President Beate Nolan—Kapi-Mana Multiples

Beate is returning as vice president but is open to mentoring someone new into this role. Beate lives in Porirua with husband Michael and children Olivia, Nicholas (13 years old) and Claudia (8 years old). Beate has worked in secondary education, tourism and business. She now works for the Playcentre Association and loves the beach.



Secretary Bron Dutton—Kapi-Mana Multiples

Bron lives with her partner Brent, is Mum to Lily (10), twin boys Lachlan & William (4.5), and is also step-mum to Bronwen (12) and Benjamin (14). She is immediate Past President of Kapi-Mana. She has a Bachelor of Management Studies Degree, and is about to launch her new business "Nurtured Beginnings" which includes birth and post partum support. Bron loves exercise and has walked many mara-



Treasurer Heather Ben—Multiples Counties Manukau

Heather is the immediate past president of Multiples Counties Manukau. She is wife to Kora, and mum to Amelia age 9, and Kaitlyn and Cameron age 5. Heather is new to the role of treasurer this year. She runs an exporting company and loves red wine.



Magazine Editor Kirsty Saxon—Multiples NZ

Kirsty is the Far North Multiples NZ contact and current editor of Multiple Matters; married to Jack, and mum to Ruby (7) and twinkles Lilian and Xavier (5). Kirsty lives in Ahipara, on 90 Mile Beach in the Far North; and also works as a photographer, graphic designer and teacher; and loves chocolate milkshakes.



Marketing & Promotion Michelle Kitney— Multiples Wellington

Michelle is the Marketing & Promotion Officer for Multiples NZ. She is married to Andy, and mum to Thomas (11) and Will and Alex (8). Michelle lives in Miramar. She also works with Volunteering NZ and is on the board for Bellyful NZ. She loves coffee and chocolate.



Website & Social Media Lizelle Lombard—Wellington

Lizelle is the webmaster, equipment and treasurer of Wellington Multiples. She lives in Tawa with husband Callan, 11 year old daughter Jordaine, and two and a half year old twin boys Morgan and Riley. Lizelle works as an Enterprise Resource Planning consultant and loves baby lambs.

Multiples Awareness Week 2019

This year our New Zealand Multiples Awareness Week had a new date (February) and now aligns with our partner organisations around the world. The theme was "Share the journey".

The journey of carrying, delivering and raising two or more babies at once is no easy feat and a task best shared with a trusted and supportive network. Those who actively 'share the journey' with their peers often develop strong bonds and lifelong friendships through the shared experience of parenting multiples and the many unique joys and challenges this brings. By getting involved in club activities such as information sessions and playgroups, parents will have the opportunity to share their stories, knowledge and skills as well as offering words of reassurance and encouragement that build confidence and a sense of belonging. We know that parenting multiples is a journey best shared.



When a Helping Hand Can Make All The Difference ...

Jule Scherer (Kapi-Mana Multiples) recalls a time when she shared the journey with a kind stranger. (Previously published *stuff.co.nz*, 2016 & *Kapi-Mana News*, February 2019.)

Some days I feel like supermum

Some days I feel like Supermum. My five-month-old twin girls wake up with a daz-zling smile, they take 90 minute naps and go down without protest because I judged their tired signs just right. And we make it to our antenatal coffee group without any dramas. This was not one of those days. Their usual napping routine wasn't working anymore and we were caught in an evil cycle. The girls weren't napping long enough, which meant they were grumpy about an hour after getting up, which in turn meant they couldn't stay up long enough to get tired enough to sleep longer. And repeat... (Thankfully we've since successfully moved from four to three naps. Bless!)

With all three of us crotchety and exhausted I thought a walk might help. Most babies settle when they're in the pram, right? So off we went. But when I was at my furthest point away from home on my circular walk, N started to pipe up. Her crying quickly escalated and within a couple of minutes she had screamed herself in a panicky state. Very soon after, her sister joined in with that crying that sounds like they're being tortured and haven't eaten for days. No buggy bouncing would calm them down.

Are you kiddin' me mama?

We played a short but very noisy game of taking N out of the buggy, calming her down, putting her back in the buggy where she immediately protests at the

top of her lungs again while I try to take her sister out. Not fun! I realised that we wouldn't make it home without a calming bottle (as they don't accept the breast when we're out and about). But you see, that's easier said than done with two very upset little mites.

At the nearby park I sat my girls up in the pram and got the milk bottles out of my bra. Yes, my bra! I'd tried to warm the milk up by popping them in there while walking in circles with a panicky expression in my face. But yeah nah! "Are you kiddin' me Mama? That's still waaaaaay too cold," my daughters seemed to cry. I took the most stressed one out and tried to feed her while jiggling her on my knees while offering the bottle to the other one in the buggy but it just didn't work. They were just getting louder and louder (if that was even possible) and I was close to tears. It was a Thursday afternoon and the park wasn't that busy. There was one elderly lady walking her dog who shot me a glance seemingly saying "Oh dear, you don't have your children under control, do you?" and kept on walking with her pooch.

My saviour

At that point I was close to panicking myself. I just couldn't see how I could calm both babies down enough to get them home. I needed help. Urgently! Then my saviour appeared. A mum who was at the playground with her six year old came over and asked if she could help. I wanted to shout "Praise the Lord" and "I love you!!!", but I just nodded,

stared wide-eyed and shoved one baby into her arm. With her help we managed to calm both babies down, feed them, pack them back into the buggy and I was eventually on my way home with two content daughters. Without her it would have been a terrible experience for my girls and me. I could hardly put into words how grateful I was.

Being a mum, and even more if you have twins, you'll sometimes find yourself in situations where you struggle. Your baby might be crying like a banshee at the supermarket checkout, or your five month olds lose it because they didn't sleep. Other days you can't squeeze your buggy through your favourite cafe's door, or you've hardly slept and then spilled your coffee. It can be tough not having anybody to talk to all day.

I'll survive another day

As a first time mum you learn as you go, and sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't. You feel tired, frazzled and insecure and sometimes close to breaking point. Having a stranger help you out, give you a smile or offer to load your shopping onto the supermarket conveyor belt while you're rocking your pram and trying to find that damned dummy, makes all the difference. Instead of despair you have a warm and fuzzy feeling that the world is a good place. And although I know I'm certainly no Supermum most days, with a little help from a mum (or dad, brother, sister, son, daughter, granny, granddad...) I'll survive another day.

A Simple Tool for Prioritizing Tasks

Emily Woolerton (Exult) delves into Exult's version of the Eisenhower Matrix for prioritising tasks. *This article was previously published online June 2018.*

Busy is the new black. In this world that never sleeps, the endless list of tasks can be quite overwhelming!

The Eisenhower Matrix is a system to help you decide on and prioritize tasks by urgency and importance. Instead of just leaping into the river of work, start each day with a good look at your to-do list, and organise each task into the relevant section.

What are the zones?

Impact Zone

Important but not urgent. Do these tasks first each day.

This quadrant is for the things that will have the biggest impact on your organisation for the long term eg. Funding applications, strategic planning, relationship development.

Many tasks start off in this quadrant and end up in the urgent category because of poor planning. Spend the first 30-60 minutes of every day working on important tasks before they become urgent, putting yourself in a much better place to manage a genuine crisis when it occurs.

Crisis Zone

Important and urgent. Respond as required (but exercise caution to what sits in this space).

The only things that should sit in this quadrant are things that happen without warning eg. Client crisis, health and safety emergency, or staff issues. Make sure you have a system for accurately determining what sits in this space – not every crisis is as urgent or as important as you might think!

Remember, while it is important that we are responsive to our client and

staff needs, sometimes being unavailable empowers people to find their own solutions.

Every Day Zone

Less important but still urgent. Do after 30-60 minutes in your impact zone.

This quadrant is where your day-to-day tasks sit. These are the tasks that are neither crisis nor will have a long-term impact. They are the things that simply need to be done to keep the wheels turning eg. attending meetings, responding to emails.

It's a good idea to prioritize tasks in this quadrant and consider which of them only you can do, which you can delegate to others, and which you can drop altogether. Of the tasks that are left, number them together in order of importance.

Slump Zone

Less important and less urgent. Do these tasks during your slump – if at all.

This quadrant is for tasks that will have little impact on the long-term sustain-

ability of your organisation and are not essential for day-to-day operations.

You need to ask yourself why you do these tasks. Are they tasks being imposed by others unnecessarily? Do you do them out of habit? If it is useful for these tasks to be continued, do them during your 'slump' time (the time of the day where you have the least amount of energy).

Emily works to support Exult's marketing and communications. She holds a deep appreciation for people and is passionate about them understanding both who they are, and what they have to say. www.exult.co.nz



The Eisenhower Decision Matrix

	Urgent	Not Urgent
Important	Do <i>Do it now.</i>	Decide <i>Schedule a time to do it</i>
Not Important	Delegate <i>Who can do it for you?</i>	Delete <i>Eliminate it</i>

Ways to Show Volunteers They're Appreciated

Volunteers loved to be appreciated. They love to know that they are a valued member of the team, regardless of their volunteer status. This poster from Exult can spark your imagination as you figure out the best way to spread the love. *This graphic was previously published in the Exult Tonic Club E-Letter #276 March 4 2019.*

22 WAYS TO SHOW VOLUNTEERS

THEY'RE APPRECIATED

Celebrate anniversaries and milestones.

Invite them to take part in extra training if they wish.

Have regular check-ins to see how they're enjoying their role.

Respond to their enquiries and concerns quickly.

Nominate them for Volunteer Awards.

Recognise their birthdays with a phone call, a card or some cake.

Say thank-you on Social Media.

Make mention of special efforts in your annual report and at your AGM.

Give each volunteer a photo book of highlights from the year. Make sure every volunteer is included in the book.

Share volunteer stories and profiles on your website.

Create a 'Things we love about you' board. Invite staff and clients to post notes about what makes your volunteers special.

Always have food available.

Find out what they hope to get out of volunteering...then give it to them.

Take a photo of them in action, then put it in the newsletter with a note of thanks.

Surprise them with an unexpected treat.

Ask them for feedback and act on it.

Learn about Languages of Appreciation. www.appreciationnetwork.com

Make time for social activities and regular catch-ups.

Write a personalised letter of thanks.

Invite your clients / service users / members to write a note of thanks. It's a great way for volunteers to hear how their effort is making a difference at the front lines.

Provide them with a uniform – even if it's just a cap and a name-badge.

Make life easy for them by providing carparks, lockers etc.

Tonic
magazine
fresh thinking for community

Volunteer Appreciation is more than thank-you cards and Christmas dinners. If you really want your volunteers to feel appreciated, you need to practice appreciation on a regular basis.

exult
HELPING NON-PROFITS GROW

Twin Zygosity Testing

Find out if your multiples are identical

Collection kit mailed on request. Follow the easy instructions to collect mouth swabs from your twins. Post completed forms, swabs and payment of \$250. (GST incl.).

Results provided within three weeks of receipt of payment and samples.

Contact: DNA Diagnostics Ltd
PO Box 106 542, Auckland 1143
Level 2 Quay Park Centre, 68-70 Beach Road, AKL 1010
Phone: (09) 571 0474 ▲ Fax: (09) 571 0475
Email: dna@dnadiagnostics.co.nz
www.dnadiagnostics.co.nz

DNA Diagnostics



twinlossnz

... is a nationwide support group for those who have suffered the loss of one or more of their twins, triplets or more in a multiple birth from **early pregnancy** through to **childhood** and beyond, including the loss of a twin sibling in **adulthood**.

www.twinloss.org.nz is where you will find more about us, and articles and information for those who have lost twins and those who care for them.

Rosemary Smart
twinlossnz.wordpress.com
Facebook.com/groups/twinlossnz

...surviving the loss of twins together...

ICOMBO Congress

Carolyn Lister from ICOMBO (icombo.org) shares some background on the ICOMBO International Congress to be held in Hong Kong in November 2019.

ICOMBO stands for the International Council of Multiple Birth Organisations. We are a voluntary organisation 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.

Twins 2019

Twins 2019, is the Joint 5th World Congress on Twin Pregnancy and 17th Congress of the ISTS (International Society on Twin Studies), is being held in Hong Kong, China from the 28th to the 30th of November 2019.

This is an important meeting because not only is this a chance for medical people to discuss the latest research and practice, but also representatives from multiples clubs around the world have a chance to get together. The three day meeting will be attended by Carolyn Lister as a member of the ICOMBO board and hopefully maybe a Multiples NZ Executive member if funds can be found.

Day 1 (28th November) will be a full day workshop for ICOMBO members. Topics are being looked at for this current-

ly. But one of the confirmed areas for discussion identified is parental leave situations in different countries. Are multiple birth families receiving better benefits than families with single births?

Day 2 & 3 (29 & 30th November) will have a series of themed sessions with presentations on a wide range of topics.

If you are interested, the programme can be found here:

<https://www.mcascientificevents.eu/twins/scientific-programme/>

During these two days, there will be presentations from ICOMBO Board members in a shared Session between ISTS and ICOMBO:

- Carolyn Lister will speak about the recent study that investigated the willingness of multiple birth families to participate in research (a number of you probably contributed to the Survey Monkey questionnaire circulated last year).
- Susan Griffith will speak about our study on placement of multiples in school classrooms – together or apart.

We will also hold the business meeting of ICOMBO in one of the sessions. There are going to be some very interesting panel discussions. Some of you may remember Joan Friedman, who

spoke at our conference in Hamilton some years ago. Joan is speaking on a panel moderated by Nancy Segal about the psychological issues related to parenting twins and being a twin. It is great that this congress will be giving consideration to the important social and emotional issues facing multiples and their families that are not habitually discussed at a scientific conference. All in all it looks like there is going to be a lot of valuable content to bring home and we will do our best to provide updates on social media during the meeting.



Dr Joan Friedman



Dr Nancy Segal



Global Twins and Multiples Priority Setting Partnership

Update on the Global Twins & Multiples Priority Setting Partnership (PSP)

Some of you may have contributed questions to a survey circulated last year around this project involving TAMBA UK, and St George's University of London. In this world-first initiative, we are giving twins and multiples the opportunity to steer future twin and multiple-birth health research in the direction that matters to you. This initiative seeks to identify the top 5-10 priorities for research into twins' and multiples' health.

Ultimately, our aims are to save lives and to improve long-term health outcomes for multiples. We believe there is insufficient attention given to the specific health needs of multiple-birth families, even though the number of multiple births has increased over time. It is important that decisions about future research priorities don't rest with researchers or government funding bodies alone.

Our partnership surveyed all stakeholders in multiple birth care – twins, higher-order multiples, their parents and families, GPs, obstetricians, paediatricians, midwives, maternal health

nurses and educators.

We have now completed the process of forming indicative research questions from those questions submitted by participants. The panel is currently working out a process to review those indicative research questions and refine the list.



The main categories of questions that came in are as follows:

- **Antenatal care:** antenatal care, TTTS, ultrasound monitoring, complications, IUGR, nutrition, stillbirth, professional development
- **Intrapartum/ Postpartum care:** Breastfeeding, NICU stay, labour complications, timing of delivery, recovery, professional development
- **Neonatal & Paediatric care:** Neonatal health, prematurity, paediatric health/development
- **Child psychiatry/ development:** Development (growth, psychology, speech), Autism / ADHD, psychology, behaviour, relationships, identity, separation, education, genetics, health impacts, discordance, bereavement
- **Parental health:** Fathers, preg-

nancy health, post-partum physical/mental health

- **Family dynamics:** Siblings, parenting, marital relationships, special conditions, bereavement, support (including financial)/ policy
- **Other: IVF/ ART:** The first step of the review process will look at the literature to determine if questions have already been answered or require more research. After that a workshop will be held in London in June to agree on the top ten unanswered research questions as a group. Following that the next steps will be to obtaining funding and implement research to answer those research questions.



Carolyn is mum to Rose and Finn (13) and the immediate past president of MNZ and current research director for ICOMBO. She works at Plant & Food Research and lives in Christchurch.



ICOMBO Congress



CONGRESS UPDATE



The 2019 Congress is being held at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Registration will cost €100 for ICOMBO Level One members, and €180 for Level Two members. Accommodation options are not yet available.

The Congress will be held over 3 days.

Day 1 – 28th November will be a full day workshop for ICOMBO members.

Do you have any topics you would like discussed at the ICOMBO workshop? The ICOMBO Board are putting together a program for the day and would like input from our members. Please let me know if you have any suggestions. You can reach me at chair@icombo.org

Day 2 & 3 – 29 & 30th November will have a series of themed sessions with presentations on a wide range of topics. During these 2 days, we will hear from 2 ICOMBO Board members:

- Carolyn Lister will speak about the recent study that investigated the willingness of multiple birth families to participate in research;
- Susan Griffith will speak about the current study on placement of multiples in school classrooms – together or apart.

We will also hold the Business meeting of ICOMBO in one of the sessions.

The Congress website can be found at <https://www.mcascientificevents.eu/twins/>
Here you will find a link to subscribe to regular newsletters regarding the congress.



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Multiple Matters

The official magazine of Multiples New Zealand



'HOW TO' LOGIN TO THE MULTIPLES NZ WEBSITE

- 1 Open up the Multiples NZ website (www.multiples.org.nz), then click on the 'Contact us' tab (depending on your screen resolution, these tabs may appear on one row, or two as shown here). Select 'Login/Logout' from the drop down list. Or click the Login button on the front screen of the website



- 2 When you click on 'Login/Logout' you will come to this screen. Here enter in:

UserName: MultiplesNZ_member

Password: (provided by a Club)

Click the Log In button (if you tick the Remember Me you won't need to enter the login details again).

User Name

Password

Remember Me ☐

[Forgot your password?](#)
[Forgot your username?](#)

3

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There will now be two new tabs on the website menu, 'Members Area' and 'Multiples NZ Magazine'. Clicking on 'Members Area' takes you to Member Discount information while clicking on 'Multiples NZ Magazine' takes you to current and back issue copies of 'Multiple Matters'.

Multiples Clubs	
NORTHLAND	
Far North	
Contact: Kirsty Saxon 021 128 4719 • kirstysaxon@hotmail.com	
Whangarei	
Contact: Terri-Lynn Mitchell (09) 434 0032 • 027 725 1131 bandtmitchell@xtra.co.nz	
AUCKLAND	
Multiples Auckland Central*	
Co-President: Hayley Lavender Co-President: Rachel Bovin president@multiples-ac.org.nz www.multiples-ac.org.nz	
Multiples Counties Manukau*	
President: Desiree Morgan • 09 299 9291 021 077 8062 president.multiplescm@gmail.com www.multiplescm.org	
Multiples Auckland North*	
President: Kim Metahysa 021 046 2398 president@multiplesaucklandnorth.org.nz www.multiplesaucklandnorth.org.nz	
Waitakere	
Refer to Auckland Central & North Shore Clubs	
WAIKATO	
Hamilton Multiple Birth Club*	
Co-President: Michelle Ericksen (07) 855 0373 michelleericksen@xtra.co.nz Co-President: Fiona Stokes-Rouse (07) 856 3330 • hamiltonmbc@hotmail.com www.hamiltonmbc.co.nz	
Matamata, Piako (Hamilton Club)	
BAY OF PLENTY	
Multiples Bay of Plenty*	
Jo Carswell president@multiplesbop.org www.multiplesbop.org.nz	
Rotorua Part of Multiples BOP	
Taupo Part of Multiples BOP	
HAWKES BAY	
Multiples Hawkes Bay *	
Ingrid Milnes president@multipleshb.org.nz www.multipleshb.org.nz Gisborne Part of Multiples Hawkes Bay	
TARANAKI	
Multiples Taranaki *	
President: Anne Llewellyn 021 059 7512 • multiplestaranaki@gmail.com	

MANAWATU-WANGANUI	
Manawatu Multiple Birth Club*	
Zelia Boyd manawatu.multiples@gmail.com Manawatutwins.org.nz	
Wanganui Part of the Manawatu Club	
WELLINGTON	
Multiples Hutt Valley*	
Zita Watson hvmbcpresident@gmail.com	
Kapi-Mana Multiples*	
President: Katy Muggeridge president@kapimanamultiples.org.nz www.kapimanamultiples.org.nz	
Wellington Multiples*	
President: Natalie James president@wellingtonmultiples.org.nz www.wmbc.org.nz	
NELSON	
Part of Multiples Canterbury	
MARLBOROUGH	
Part of Multiples Canterbury	
WEST COAST	
Part of Multiples Canterbury	
CANTERBURY	
Multiples Canterbury*	
(also covers Nelson, Marlborough & Canterbury)	
President : Aimee Johnston 021 143 4450 • mulcanpresident@gmail.com	
Ashburton Part of Multiples Canterbury	
Kaikoura Part of Multiples Canterbury	
South Canterbury Region (Timaru)	
Part of Multiples Canterbury Local contact: Kelly Thomas Kelly.thomas@outlook.co.nz	
OTAGO	
Multiples Otago*	
Liz Campbell president.multiplesotago@gmail.com www.multiplesotago.org.nz	
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Part of Multiples Otago Contact person: Anna Jameson	

OTAGO contd.	
Central Otago/Wanaka Region	
Part of Multiples Otago Contact person: Gwen Hendry 021 147 7380 gwendoloon@hotmail.com	
South Otago/Balclutha Region	
Part of Multiples Otago Contact person: Shelly Smith (03) 418 2285 • soss@slingshot.co.nz	
SOUTHLAND	
Southland Multiples	
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NZ Triplets Plus	
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Central	
(Waikato, BOP, Central Plateau—all 07 numbers)	
Jessica Zame (09) 528 0613 • 021 242 8201 0800UpperNth@multiples.org.nz	
Lower North	
(Taranaki, Hawkes Bay, Manawatu, Wairarapa, Wellington—all 04 & 06 numbers)	
Fiona Purchas • (04) 938 3933 0800LowerSth@multiples.org.nz	
South Island	
(All of South Island—all 03 numbers)	
Jacqui Newell (03) 347 4587 • 021 154 3141 0800Sthls@multiples.org.nz	
Our free phone number 0800 4 TWINS ETC (0800 489 467) is provided by Multiples NZ to assist people to contact their local multiples club. Manned by volunteers throughout the country, this number prevents clubs needing to reissue all their flyers when committee members move on. It is <u>your</u> number for <u>your</u> clubs, so please use it as often as you like!	



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Multiples NZ Mission Statement

To address the diverse needs of families with multiples through networking, education, support and advocacy. Working in partnership with local Multiple Clubs, community groups, health care providers and educators to ensure our values are upheld.

Nutrition with our multiples



Cleo & Stella Dillon, Auckland



Archer & Oscar Finlayson, Auckland



Charlie & Fred Lumsden, Nelson



Hannah & Logan Garnham, Hawke's Bay



Xander & Wyatt McBride, Auckland



Ruby & Sophie Gray, Auckland