

INTERNATIONAL MULTIPLE BIRTH AWARENESS WEEK:

The mission of the multi-national membership of the International Council of Multiple Birth Organisations (ICOMBO) is to promote awareness of the unique needs of multiple-birth infants, children, and adults.

To address specific issues, ICOMBO utilizes Multiple Birth Awareness Week to draw attention to benchmarks from the **Declaration of Rights and Statement of Needs of Twins and Higher Order Multiples** to stimulate international discussion and action on a specific theme. For 2012 ICOMBO has chosen the following topic: "School placement of multiples, and issues regarding separation or not is best."

AS DOCUMENTED IN THE DECLARATION OF RIGHTS:

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

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

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

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

AS DOCUMENTED IN THE STATEMENT OF NEEDS:

Twins and higher order multiples need:

Health care, education, counseling, and flexible public policies which address their unique developmental norms, individualization processes, and relationship. For example by permitting and/or fostering:

- the annual review of the classroom placement of co-multiples, and facilitation of their co-placement or separate placement according to the particular needs of multiple-birth children and their families;
- to pursue their own and unique interests including simultaneously participating on sports teams and in other group activities and/or to pursue individual sports, group or hobby interests.

(References listed on page 2)

In short, ICOMBO encourages all countries to adopt policies that allow for annual assessment of what is best for each year of a student's school life. To follow a specific practice within an educational setting without regard to the multiple bond or the individualization process does not allow for decisions that are in the best interest of each child within the multiple-birth set.

DOWNLOADS: Public Education and Professional Development

Model for Relationships:

The [downloadable checklist](#) may be used to assess the nature of the multiple birth relationship. For more information visit - <http://www.twinsandmultiples.org/wmm/wmm5cc.cfm>

Speech and Language Checklist:

This [downloadable checklist](#) can be used as basic guide to a child's speech development. For more information visit - <http://www.twinsandmultiples.org/preschool/p2b.cfm>

School Readiness Questionnaire:

This [downloadable questionnaire](#) can be used to find out about the needs of multiple birth children when they start school. For more information visit - <http://www.twinsandmultiples.org/preschool/p3a.cfm>

Checklist for parent/teacher discussion of twin separation:

This [downloadable checklist](#) can be used as an aid to deciding whether to separate children into separate classes. For more information visit - <http://www.twinsandmultiples.org/school/sy2.cfm>

School Policy:

This [downloadable questionnaire](#) can be used by teachers for an initial assessment of new multiples entering their school. For more information visit - <http://www.twinsandmultiples.org/school/sy7a.cfm>

ADHD checklist:

This [downloadable checklist](#) can be used as a guide to whether more thorough assessment of the child for ADHD may be needed. For more information visit – <http://www.twinsandmultiples.org/sn/sn4d.cfm>

These tools have been developed and shared through the generosity of the following professionals:

[David A. Hay](#): Retired Professor of Psychology; Curtin University, Western Australia. Former national patron of the Australian Multiple Birth Association (AMBA)

[Pat Preedy](#): Adjunct Professor at Curtin University, Chief Education Officer for GEMS UK, Executive Principal of GEMS Sherfield School, UK; Director of Training and Research GEMS, UK; Education Research Consultant for the Twins and Multiple Births Association (Tamba)

[John Mascazine](#): Associate Professor of Education at Ohio Dominican University

[Nancy Segal](#): B.A. degree in psychology (with distinction) and English literature from Boston University (1973), and M.A. (1974) and Ph.D. (1982) degrees in Social Sciences and Behavioral Sciences from the University of Chicago

ICOMBO thanks these professionals for their continued involvement in promoting awareness of the unique needs of multiple-birth infants, children, and adults.