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## **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 2014 ICOMBO has chosen the following topic: "Helping our Multiples Shine as Individuals".

### **AS DOCUMENTED IN THE DECLARATION OF RIGHTS:**

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:**

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

**Families expecting and rearing multiples need access to information and guidance in optimal parenting practices regarding the unique developmental aspects of multiple birth children, including the processes of: socialization, individuation, and language acquisition.**

In short, ICOMBO encourages all countries to adopt policies that allow for parents, caregivers, educators and professionals to encourage the treatment of multiples as individuals.

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

- Dr Joan Friedman PhD, psychotherapist and author
- Dr 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

The complete **Declaration of Rights and Statement of Needs of Twins and Higher Order Multiples** can be found at:

<http://icombo.org/international-awareness-week-2014/>

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