

National Organization of Mothers Of Twins Clubs, Inc.	SUBJECT: RESEARCHER: DATE:	Multiples and Technology National Organization of Mothers of Twins Clubs, Inc. May – November 2011
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PURPOSE: The purpose of this survey was to gather data regarding multiple birth children and their use of technology.

METHOD: A survey consisting of 31 questions was made available online via Survey Monkey. The survey was to be completed by parents of multiple birth children.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Two hundred thirty nine surveys consisting of 31 questions were tabulated with 92.5 percent (221) of multiple type for twins, 5.4 percent (13) for triplets and 0.8 percent (2) for multiple sets of multiples. Three respondents skipped this question.
2. Zygosity of multiples was reported as follows: Monozygotic (identical) 23.4 percent (56), dizygotic (fraternal) 73.6 percent (176), unknown zygosity 0.8 percent (2) and 0.8 percent for mixed zygosity (both fraternal and identical) (2) in higher order multiples. Three respondents skipped this question.
3. Gender of multiples was reported as follows: Boy multiples 33.5 percent (80), girl multiples 30.5 percent (73), mixed gender (boy/girl) multiples 33.5 percent (80). Six respondents skipped this question.
4. Marital status of respondents was reported as follows: Single 4.2 percent (10), married 90.0 percent (215), divorced 2.9 percent (7), separated 1.3 percent (3) and widowed 0.4 percent (1). Three respondents skipped this question.
5. Respondents were asked to report the number of children that they had. Just over half of respondents (53.1 percent; 127) reported having two children, 30.5 percent (73) reported having three children, 13.0 percent (31) reported having four children and 2.1 percent (5) reported having five children. Three respondents skipped this question.

RESULTS

1. Respondents were asked which technology items they had in their home for use by their multiple birth children and were instructed to select all that applied. The most frequently reported technology item was television (73.6 percent; 176), followed by computers/laptops (55.2 percent; 132), video games such as Wii or Playstation or Xbox (38.9 percent; 93), toddler games such as Leap Pad (36.0 percent; 86), cell phones (34.3 percent; 82), i-Touch or i-Pod (24.3 percent; 58), handheld games (22.2 percent; 53), iPad or tablet computer (14.2 percent; 34) and e-readers such as Kindle or Nook (10.5 percent; 25).

Respondents were asked to report at what age they first allowed their multiples to begin using each technology item. A majority of respondents reported allowing their multiples to use television (61%), iPad/tablet (5.4%) and toddler games (21.8%) between the ages of birth to 2, while most respondents reported allowing their multiples to use computers/laptops starting at the ages of 3 to 5 (23%). Most families allowed their children to use the remainder of technology types between the ages of 6 to 12, for example iTouch/iPod (10.5%), video games (16.3%) handheld games (14.6%), cell phones (7.1%) and ereaders (4.2%).

Respondents were asked to report how much time their multiples spent on technology items per week. The most frequently reported times used per technology were less than 5 hours per week – 25.5% each for televisions and computer/laptops, 15.9% for iTouch/iPod, 10.9% for iPad/tablets, 23.0% for video games, 16.7% for handheld games, 22.6% for toddler games, 18.8% for cell phones and 5% for ereaders.

2. Respondents were asked how they divided the technology usage by their multiple birth children if they had to share any of the above items. Time was evenly split among the children nearly half of the time (49.8%). Parents based time on the multiple's behavior 17.6% of the time, or the multiples "earned" time via doing chores or completing homework 9.2% of the time.
3. Nearly half of families (46.9%) reported that their children did not use a computer/laptop for academic use. For those families who did use computers or laptops, most (22.0%) reported that their school did not provide one for their children and 23.0% reported that they had to share with their multiple.
4. When asked how they divided time for shared laptops/computers, most respondents (12.1%) reported that it varied by the children's homework, 10.0% reported that the time was divided evenly and 0.8% reported another method, such as it depended on how well each child was doing with activities or interest, or that computers were only used as supplements but not for actually doing homework.
5. Nearly half of families (46.9%) reported that computer time at home was monitored and reported a variety of ways in which this occurred such as the computer was only used in a shared space such as the family room, computer was only used together, computer was only used for educational purposes, the use of software to set time limits and website blocks, time limits set by parents, children must ask first before using or teaching internet awareness and safety.
6. Respondents were asked if their multiples were allowed to visit social networking sites. Most (61.5 percent; 147) said no, while 12.1 percent (29) reported yes. Sixty three respondents skipped this question.
7. Families whose multiples did use social networking reported the following use times the most frequently – Facebook/less than 5 hours per week (5.0%), Twitter/less than 5 hours per week/between 5 to 10 hours per week (0.8% each) or MySpace/less than 5 hours per week/between 5 to 10 hours per week (0.4% each). Families also reported using Xbox Live, Roblox and a local church program website.
8. Most families (7.9%) reported they monitored the social networking sites that their multiples used at home, and did so using a variety of methods, such as content monitoring, parents must be "friend" on network, only allowed to use parent's page, only allowed to use while directly supervised and shared passwords.
9. Most respondents (41.0%) reported that they allowed their multiples to play video games. Most families also reported that their multiples used the video games for less than 5 hours per week – 13.8% for Nintendo DS, 20.5% for Nintendo Wii, 5.4% for Playstation, 5.0% for Xbox, 8.8% for toddler games and 2.1% for other video games such as MobiGo, application based games for the iPad or iPhone, Clickstart, Vtech Reader, and computer games. Nearly one third of families (32.2%) reported that they monitored their children's video game use by monitoring the amount of time used, content viewed, games purchased must be approved by parents first, used only in shared living area such as family room and only educational games are allowed.
10. The most frequently reported technology item was email (66.1%), followed by texting (59.0%), social networking (56.1%), instant messaging (29.3%), Skype (28.9%) and blogs (10.9%). The most frequently reported issue was spending too much time using technology (44.4%), followed by sharing issues (20.1%), negative effects on family relationships (7.9%), interfering with homework and negative effects on attention span (6.3% each), accessing adult material (3.8%) and bullying (0.4%).
11. The most frequently reported rule was setting a certain amount of time each day or week for technology (37.2%), followed by behavior/grade based usage (27.2%) and have family blackouts where they unplug each week for family time (6.7%).
12. Most respondents (37.7%) also reported that they restricted technology use as a disciplinary tool. Most families (63.3%) also reported they did not allow texting or playing of electronics at the dinner table. Most families (57.7%) reported they did not allow their multiples to have a tv/dvd player in their bedroom or any technology in their bedroom (45.6%).
13. Some of the reported benefits to technology use were easier access to information (47.3%), saved time/quicker responses (34.3%) and improved communications (33.5%). Nearly half of families (48.1%) reported that they had not spoken to their multiples about the dangers of texting while driving because they

were too young. Most respondents (57.7%) also reported they were very familiar with technology themselves.

CONCLUSION

The effort to collect data regarding the use of technology by multiple birth children yielded 239 surveys comprised of 31 questions each. Twins accounted for the highest percentage of multiple types at 92.5%, followed by 5.4% for triplets and 0.8% for multiple sets of multiples. The most commonly reported zygosity of multiples was dizygotic/fraternal at 73.6%, followed by monozygotic/identical at 23.4% and 0.8% each for unknown or mixed zygosity. The gender of multiple sets was most frequently reported as boy multiples or mixed gender multiples, both at 33.5%, and girl multiples at 30.5%. Nearly all of the sample, 90%, reported being married. Just over half of the sample (53.1%) reported having two children, 30.5% reported having three children, 13.0% reported having four children, and 2.1% reported having five children.

The most frequently reported technology item used was television (73.6%), followed by computers/laptops (55.2%), video games such as Wii or Playstation or Xbox (38.9%), toddler games such as Leap Pad (36.0%), cell phones (34.3%), i-Touch or i-Pod (24.3%), handheld games (22.2%), iPad or tablet computer (14.2%) and e-readers such as Kindle or Nook (10.5%). Respondents were asked to report at what age they first allowed their multiples to begin using each technology item. A majority of respondents reported allowing their multiples to use television (61%), iPad/tablet (5.4%) and toddler games (21.8%) between the ages of birth to 2, while most respondents reported allowing their multiples to use computers/laptops starting at the ages of 3 to 5 (23%). Most families allowed their children to use the remainder of technology types between the ages of 6 to 12, for example iTouch/iPod (10.5%), video games (16.3%) handheld games (14.6%), cell phones (7.1%) and ereaders (4.2%).

The most frequently reported times used per technology were less than 5 hours per week – 25.5% each for televisions and computer/laptops, 15.9% for iTouch/iPod, 10.9% for iPad/tablets, 23.0% for video games, 16.7% for handheld games, 22.6% for toddler games, 18.8% for cell phones and 5.0% for ereaders.

When asked how families split time on technology, time was evenly split among the children 49.8% of the time, based on behavior (17.6%) and time is earned via doing chores or completing homework (9.2%). Twenty seven respondents selected “other” and reported a variety of other ways in which time was decided upon, such as the children’s preference (one likes a particular game more than the other), just taking turns, limiting technology only to communications with family or the children have their own as they will not share. Several respondents also reported here that their children were too young (such as under the age of 2) and it was not an issue yet.

Most families (46.9%) reported that their children did not use a computer/laptop for academic use. Respondents were asked if their children used a computer or laptop for academic use. For those families who did use computers or laptops, most (22.0%) reported that their school did not provide one for their children and 23.0% reported that they had to share with their multiple. When asked how they divided time for shared laptops/computers, most respondents (12.1%) reported that it varied by the children’s homework, 10.0% reported that the time was divided evenly and 0.8% reported another method, such as it depended on how well each child was doing with activities or interest, or that computers were only used as supplements but not for actually doing homework.

Nearly half of families (46.9%) reported that computer time at home was monitored and reported a variety of ways in which this occurred such as the computer was only used in a shared space such as the family room, computer was only used together, computer was only used for educational purposes, the use of software to set time limits and website blocks, time limits set by parents, children must ask first before using or teaching internet awareness and safety.

Most families (61.5%) also reported that their multiples were not allowed to visit social networking sites. Those families whose multiples did use social networking reported the following use times the most frequently – Facebook/less than 5 hours per week (5.0%), Twitter/less than 5 hours per week/between 5 to 10 hours per week (0.8% each) or MySpace/less than 5 hours per week/between 5 to 10 hours per week (0.4% each). When asked what other social networking sites were used, respondents reported Xbox Live, Roblox and a local church program website. Most families (7.9%) reported they monitored the social networking sites that their multiples used at home, and did so using a variety of methods, such as content monitoring, parents must be “friend” on network, only allowed to use parent’s page, only allowed to use while directly supervised and shared passwords.

Most respondents (41.0%) reported that they allowed their multiples to play video games. Most families also reported that their multiples used the video games for less than 5 hours per week – 13.8% for Nintendo DS, 20.5%

for Nintendo Wii, 5.4% for Playstation, 5.0% for Xbox, 8.8% for toddler games and 2.1% for other video games such as MobiGo, application based games for the iPad or iPhone, Clickstart, Vtech Reader, and computer games.

Most respondents (32.2%) reported that they monitored their children's video game use by monitoring the amount of time used, content viewed, games purchased must be approved by parents first, used only in shared living area such as family room and only educational games are allowed. Several respondents reported that handheld games are used only in the car or in waiting rooms, etc.

Families reported a using a variety of technologies to communicate with each other. The most frequently reported technology item was email (66.1%), followed by texting (59.0%), social networking (56.1%), instant messaging (29.3%), Skype (28.9%) and blogs (10.9%).

Families reported a variety of family issues related to technology use. The most frequently reported issue was spending too much time using technology (44.4%), followed by sharing issues (20.1%), negative effects on family relationships (7.9%), interfering with homework and negative effects on attention span (6.3% each), accessing adult material (3.8%) and bullying (0.4%). Other issues, such as not wanting to share fairly, name calling while playing games and they choose tv or games over outside or other creative forms of play, which makes them bored easily and irritable were also reported.

Families reported a variety of rules they had for limiting technology. The most frequently reported rule was setting a certain amount of time each day or week for technology (37.2%), followed by behavior/grade based usage (27.2%) and have family blackouts where they unplug each week for family time (6.7%). Other rules, such as daily time usage depending on the family schedule, younger children are limited on the amount of time, homework must be completed first, no access to technology during the week when in school and no texting or phone calls after 9p on school nights were also reported. Most respondents (37.7%) also reported that they restricted technology use as a disciplinary tool. Most families (63.3%) also reported they did not allow texting or playing of electronics at the dinner table.

Families also reported a variety of benefits their family gained from technology use, such as easier access to information (47.3%), saved time/quicker responses (34.3%) and improved communications (33.5%), along with other benefits, such as use as a learning aid, prepared them for school which uses a lot of technology in the classroom, improved sharing and social skills and gives parents time to get other things (cooking, cleaning) done.

Most respondents (48.1%) reported that they had not spoken to their multiples about the dangers of texting while driving because they were too young, while 16.3% of respondents reported they had. Most respondents (57.7%) also reported they were very familiar with technology themselves.

Most families (57.7%) reported they did not allow their multiples to have a tv/dvd player in their bedroom or any technology in their bedroom (45.6%).

Most respondents (50.2%) reported they were a member of a local NOMOTC club, 12.1% reported they were not a member, 7.1% reported they were a member of more than one club and 0.4% reported being either an individual or professional affiliate member.

Finally, respondents had a number of additional comments, such as the fact that the survey never asked the age of their multiples. Many of the respondents had very young multiples, so they felt that the questions were not applicable. A few respondents reported that their multiples were older (late teens/early 20's) so also did not apply. One respondent reported that she has a media free home and welcomed a survey or additional information on free play.