

*National
Organization of
Mothers
Of
Twins
Clubs, Inc.*

SUBJECT:

MULTIPLES IN SCHOOL

RESEARCHER:

National Organization of Mothers of Twins Clubs, Inc.

DATE:

1988

PURPOSE: An issue that often concerns mothers of multiples is whether their multiple birth children should be separated or placed together in school. NOMOTC designed a survey on the experiences and feelings of mothers of multiple birth children.

METHOD: Survey distributed to all affiliated clubs across the country.

Of the 638 mothers who completed and returned the surveys, 22% had identical girl twins, 18% had identical boy twins, 19% had fraternal girl twins, 18% had fraternal boy twins, 19% had boy/girl twins, and 3% had triplets or quadruplets.

Most of the multiples were currently in nursery school or day care (34%), kindergarten (12%) or elementary school (36%). Ten percent of the multiples were in junior high, middle school or high school.

Almost all of the multiples (95%) were currently in the same school, and (90%) were in the same grade. Forty-three percent of the multiples were together, 13% had some classes together, and 40% were separated. Four percent of the multiples were at different colleges.

Sixty-six percent of the mothers indicated that their multiples had been separated at some time. Most separations occurred at the kindergarten level (35%) or the elementary school level (26%).

Of the multiples currently together, 37% were separated in the past. Most mothers (63%) had never requested having their multiples placed in the same class. Of the mothers who had requested placement together, most were made in nursery school or kindergarten (79%). The reasons given for this request were mostly that children were young and wanted to be together, only one class was available, or the children already seemed independent of each other. Requests for placement together were granted 88% of the time.

Slightly more than half of the mothers surveyed had never requested to have multiples placed in separate classrooms. Of those mothers who had requested separation, most made the request at the nursery school (33%) or kindergarten (37%) level. Nineteen percent requested separation of multiples beginning in elementary school. Some of the reasons given for separating multiples were to avoid or decrease competition between multiples, to separate a dominant or overly shy multiple, or to allow each child to develop their own identity.

Most separations of multiples were due to parental requests (42%) or school policy (27%). Only rarely did multiples themselves request to be placed in separate classes (4%). About one-half of the parents whose multiples were in the same classes made the decision themselves not to separate. About one-fifth of the time this decision was due to class availability, and one-fifth of the time due to the teacher, principal, or school policy. Only 3% of the multiples requested not to be separated. Most mothers reported that they felt happy and satisfied about the decisions to either separate or place multiples together.

RESEARCH REPORT #6

Although mothers responded differently to the question of whether they thought there should be a school policy, they really expressed the same sentiment. There seemed to be a majority of mothers who believed it is best to separate multiples in school. However, many tended to answer "Yes, there should be a policy, and it should be flexible and allow parents and teachers to make a decision together" or "No, there should not be a policy, decisions should be made individually through parent-teacher discussions." Some mothers responded that all twins are different and there is not one decision that is best for all of them.

CONCLUSION:

In summary, slightly more than half of the multiples of mothers surveyed are currently together in the same class or have some classes together. This high percentage may be influenced by the large number of mothers surveyed who had preschool-aged children, where separation is less likely. Most separations of multiples occur in kindergarten or elementary school. Most mothers are currently satisfied with the situation involving their multiples, whether they are separated or together, had never requested a change in their children's placement, and felt the schools were cooperative.

When placement discussions have arisen, most requests have been made by parents and most of the time these requests are honored. Parents and schools appear to be cooperating in making decisions. Most parents agree that rules should be flexible and each individual set of multiples should be considered separately.
