

National
Organization of
Mothers
Of
Twins
Clubs, Inc.

SUBJECT: SINGLE PARENT SURVEY (DIVORCE)

RESEARCHER: National Organization of Mothers of Twins Clubs, Inc.

DATE: 1991 - 1992

PURPOSE: The purpose of this survey was to gather information about divorced and separated mothers of multiples.

METHOD: This interorganizational survey was completed only by those mothers of multiples who are currently or who have been in the past a SINGLE PARENT due to divorce or separation. The sample consisted of 41 respondents.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. Status of moms responding to this survey.

A. 66% - divorced	C. 10% - divorced, now remarried
B. 17% - separated	D. 7% - never married
2. Number of years respondents were married before becoming single parents:

A. 10% - less than two years	C. 34% - 6--10 years
B. 24% - 2--5 years	D. 15% - 11--16 years
3. More than 50% had multiples as a result of her first pregnancy.
4. Twelve percent had additional children after the birth of her multiples.
5. Twin types were evenly distributed and none of the respondents had higher order multiples.

SUPPORT SYSTEMS AVAILABLE:

6. Twenty-four percent of the respondents attended her first local mothers of twins club meeting as a single parent.
7. Of the remaining respondents, 10% said they noticed a change in the local club's welcome to them AFTER they became single parents.
8. Fifty-one percent received emotional support from local club members.
9. Ten percent said that "single parenting" materials were available from local clubs.
10. Only 20% were aware of "Single Parent Support Services" available through NOMOTC.

11. More than 50% read the "Single Parents" column in *MOTC's Notebook*.
12. Joint professional counseling results were the following:
A. 33% - tried B. 33% - husband refused C. 33% - wasn't considered
13. Thirty-three percent of moms had mental health counseling.
14. Twelve percent joined a "single parent study group" offered in the community.
15. Ninety percent of the single moms had strong family support systems.

DEALING WITH A NEW FINANCIAL SITUATION:

16. About 50% of the respondents worked full-time and 12% worked part-time before the birth of their multiples.
17. Having multiples made it necessary for 29% to quit their jobs. Seventeen percent of these quit only for a short period of time at first.
18. Forty-six percent said having multiples made it financially necessary for them to go to work, and 12% also had a second job.
19. Twenty-two percent of the husbands got a second job.
20. After becoming a single parent, 71% had to go to work, and 12% also had a second job.
21. Respondents received help from the following assistance programs:
A. 17% - welfare E. 17% - reduced/free school lunch
B. 25% - food stamps F. 6% - ADC
C. 15% - WIC G. 2% - reduced/free book rental
D. 10% - fuel assistance
22. Forty-two percent received regular child support payments, while 39% received NONE.
23. Ten percent received alimony.
24. About 50% received financial support from other family members.
25. Forty-two percent said that finances kept them from dating.

STRESS:

26. Seventy-five said the marriage began to deteriorate when the multiples were 3 years of age or younger.
27. Twenty-four percent said the marriage began to deteriorate before the birth of multiples.
28. Divorce proceedings came about 1 - 2 years after the marriage began to deteriorate.
29. Forty-six percent said both parties agreed to the dissolution of the marriage.

- 30. Divorce proceedings were initiated by:
A. 58% - wife B. 20% - husband C. 15% - both
- 31. Either the mother or both parents together told the kids about the divorce.
- 32. Thirty-nine percent felt the added emotional stress of having multiples contributed to the breakup of the marriage.
- 33. Twenty-two percent felt the added financial stress of having multiples contributed to the breakup of the marriage.
- 34. Sixty-nine percent felt parenting multiples alone was occasionally overwhelming.
- 35. Eighty-three percent felt that multiples occasionally reacted to mother's stress.
- 36. Fifty percent felt the multiples became more difficult to handle or discipline after the divorce.

CUSTODY:

- 37. Custody arrangements of the respondents were the following:
A. 54% - with mother B. 2% - with father C. 32% - joint custody
- 38. Seventy-nine percent of the respondents had physical custody.
- 39. Multiples were rarely separated--one with each parent.
- 40. Time spent with non-custodial parent (usually the father):
A. 20% - every weekend B. 17% - every other weekend
C. 38% - irregular D. 5% - none by choice
E. 5% - one month a year, usually summer
F. 5% - none-don't know the whereabouts of father

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Single mothers of multiples often have more than their share of the financial and emotional burdens of being a single parent.
- 2. Family support and the concern of other mothers of multiples are very important to single mothers of multiples.
