

National  
Organization of  
Mothers  
Of  
Twins  
Clubs, Inc.

SUBJECT: **DISCIPLINE AND YOUR MULTIPLES**  
RESEARCHER: National Organization of Mothers of Twins Clubs, Inc.

DATE: 2002

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**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this study was to examine the types of discipline used with multiples and their frequency of use.

**METHOD:** A questionnaire was printed in MOTC's *Notebook* and a National Mailing. This survey was to be filled out by parents whose multiples were born between birth and 16 years of age.

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### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

For the purpose of this study, the word discipline was defined as the act of correcting inappropriate behavior.

A total of 860 surveys were received, broken down by age of multiples as follows: 50 aged 0 to 6 months; 85 aged 1-2 years; 145 aged 2-3 years; 125 aged 4-5 years; 227 aged 4-7 years; 53 aged 8-12 years; and 17 aged 13-16 years. Respondents' ages ranged from under 24 to over 50, with the majority between 31 and 40.

### RESULTS

(Percentages were calculated based on the number of responses of "frequently" or "sometimes" for each type of discipline used.)

1. No discipline was used with children under 6 months.
2. Distraction was the most commonly used technique with children aged 7 months to 2 years (82%)
3. Parents who had multiples between the ages of 2 and 4 years used a variety of methods including praising positive behavior (94%), explaining (89%), distraction (84%), taking away toy/object (80%), rewarding positive behavior (78%), time out (74%), and expressing disapproval of negative behavior (74%).
4. Parents of multiple toddlers were the most likely to include a comment about feeling overwhelmed, exhausted, stressed, and to be seeking advice on discipline.
5. The most frequently reported techniques used with multiples aged 4-7 were praising positive behavior (95%), explaining (92%), expressing disapproval of negative behavior (86%), rewarding positive behavior (85%), and yelling (81%). Time out (78%) and taking away toy/object (72%) were still often used with this age group.
6. With the 8-12 age group the most frequently used methods were praising positive behavior (96%), expressing disapprovals of negative behavior (92%), explaining (87%), rewarding positive behavior (83%), and taking away privileges (81%). Grounding was used by 53%.

7. Praising positive behavior, expressing disapproval of negative behavior, taking away privileges, and yelling were all used equally (94%) with teenagers, followed by explaining (88%), and rewarding positive behavior (76%). Grounding was used by 41%.
8. Most of the respondents reported that they usually are consistent with discipline. The reason cited most often for any inconsistency was the parent feeling tired or ill.
9. Respondents reported that they were spanked as children much more often (56%) than they spank their own children (15%). They use time out much more often (53%) than it was used with them as children (17%).
10. Consistently, “choosing your battles wisely”, setting limits, saying what you mean, and following through were cited as essential for discipline to be effective.

## CONCLUSION

The types of discipline used varied with the ages of the children. Disciplining multiple children is much more challenging and complex than disciplining a single child.