

# PRESS RELEASE



Multiple Birth Awareness Week  
4th - 11th November 2012

'School placement of multiples, and issues regarding whether separation or not is best.'



## International Multiple Birth Awareness Week – 4-11 November 2012

**DATE/TIME:** 13 October 2012, 7.30pm

**RELEASE DATE:** for immediate release

**LOCATION:** nationwide

The International Council of Multiple Birth Organizations (ICOMBO) promotes awareness of the unique needs of multiple-birth infants, children, and adults. ICOMBO are the lead organiser of International Multiple Birth Awareness Week (IMBAW). This event is held on the first week of November, bi-annually.

**For 2012 the theme is "School placement of multiples, and issues regarding whether separation or not is best".**

As parents of multiples come out of the baby years, they start to turn their minds to schooling and one of the decisions that needs to be made is "Should we put the multiples in the same or different classes?" As multiples reach school age, families need to think about putting their children into the same class or separating them, the dependency of the multiples on one another and how they'd cope if they were separated. The opposite of that is whether they need the space to express their individuality or to not be ruled by a dominant sibling. There is no right or wrong answer, the decision needs to be made on a case-by-case basis and it depends on the children, the family unit and the options available at the school.

Parents need to talk to their children and be prepared to re-evaluate the situation each year, and potentially during the year if the arrangement isn't working. Engaging with the school and teachers is a great way to get an idea about their experience/views on the subject. Connecting with your local multiple birth association and talking to other



parents who are already on the journey. Their experience will be unique to the family/school but they may have relevant thoughts/idea for you to process.

Ali Mountifield, Communications Director of the Australian Multiple Birth Association is a mother of five-year old triplets. They started preschool this year and when asked about schooling Ali said:

*“We’ve kept them together this year, it was quite a process to make the decision but we don’t regret it, they are independent and social children, so that keeping them together was a balance for us as a family, with the benefit of only one classroom drop-off and one teacher. It was a three-way decision with the children, teacher/school and parents making a decision; we were always open to separating them during the year if it wasn’t working.”*

The Australian Multiple Birth Association (AMBA) is a not-for-profit organisation comprising of multiple birth families. The organisation provides support, resources and education to multiple birth families from “those who know”. Primarily, AMBA’s member base are families with children of preschool age and under, however the school-aged and over numbers are growing due to the Association’s and clubs’ recognition that challenges of parenting multiples do not end when children start school. In many respects they are just beginning!

AMBA has grown to a membership of over 4,000 families Australia-wide, ranging from expectant parents to parents of adult multiples.

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