

Pair of Twins



When I found out I was expecting twins, family and friends were overjoyed. This was my first pregnancy, so I was fearful of the responsibilities of being a new parent, let alone raising two at once!

The gifts started pouring in. We received matching cribs, matching blankets, matching clothes, and even a dual breast pump. The babies were referred to as "Baby A" and "Baby B." The day they were born, it was difficult for folks to tell them apart. I, on the other hand, felt differently. These two baby girls had distinct features, different premie health issues, different feeding preferences, different sleeping habits, and noticeably different dispositions.

My girls are fraternal twins. They look nothing alike, and they have opposite personality traits. At the age of 9, they have really come into their own as individuals. Despite the efforts of our social circle to lump them together as "the twins," their cute, matching outfits did not influence the development of their unique personalities and interests.

We did not give them "twinny" names with alliteration or rhyme. Zoe & Skylar have grown into two very different little girls. Zoe is very much left-brained and logical, with minimal sense of humor. She is a math genius and computer whiz. Skylar is my right-brain dominant child who consumes her time with arts and crafts, and has an artistic perspective of everyday objects. She is brilliant with jokes, and sees things in her surroundings that most people would not notice.

Zoe is a "fashion plate" at school, adopting the latest clothing trends. Skylar has a very unique sense of style, not succumbing to the mainstream fashion influences. Zoe is a typical kid, craving junk food at every juncture. I could leave Skylar alone in a grocery store, and she would choose balanced meals. Zoe will be mischievous and cunning and Skylar will serve as the "tattle-tale" to ensure that justice is served. Zoe hides her feelings and will rarely cry, even when hurt. Skylar cries and laughs openly and faithfully pours out her daily emotions in her diary.

There are some strategies for ensuring that twins' individual needs are met to nurture them as two separate developing human beings:

- (1) Do not put them in the same classroom at school. Most public schools have a policy against twins being placed in the same class. If not, it is wise to request this separation to encourage different social circles and individual academic achievement.
- (2) Spend one-on-one time with each twin. Take notice of different learning styles and preferences for reinforcing and rewarding good behavior.
- (3) When age-appropriate, allow for each twin to choose personal expressions: clothes, extra-curricular activities, room décor, etc. (4) Allow for unique birthday celebrations: choice of cake, different friends invited, party activity planning by both children.

Common sense approaches to raising siblings apply to raising multiples, yet are even more important to employ. All children are distinctive souls with their own purpose

and destiny. All devoted parents recognize this in their children. Twins and multiples just need extra attention to their discrete needs.