

# Australian HOM Connection

Issue No. 27  
March 2012

THE  
RELAUNCH  
ISSUE



*Olivia, Willow and Mackenzie O'Connor*



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 Email: [secretary@amba.org.au](mailto:secretary@amba.org.au) Website: [www.amba.org.au](http://www.amba.org.au)

Founded 1974

Chairperson: Caroline Hutchison

Life Members: Pat Stewart (dec.) OAM, Joan Walden, Lyndy Booth OAM,  
 Anne Corrigan (dec.), Jenny Noonan, Judy O'Rourke

**AIMS OF THE AUSTRALIAN MULTIPLE BIRTH ASSOCIATION**

AMBA is a self-help organisation for multiple birth families, providing exchange of information, practical assistance and mutual support. It is committed to increasing awareness of the special needs of multiple birth families and to improving the resources available to them. AMBA is a non-profit, non-political and non-sectarian organisation, co-operating with organisations having related interests.

**THE ROLE OF AMBA**

- undertakes tasks beyond the resources of the local member-clubs, as requested by members
- produces, purchases and sells relevant literature
- provides government representation for multiple birth families
- initiates and oversees research projects
- organises a national convention each year
- develops resources and information
- liaises with international researchers and related organisations
- publicises AMBA and the needs of multiple birth families
- provides support and information for bereaved and special needs families
- publishes and distributes a bimonthly newsletter (the AMBA e-Journal) to member-clubs and related organisations.

**THE ROLE OF THE STATE COMMITTEES**

- act as a liaison between the local member-clubs and AMBA board
- co-ordinate state programs and research
- provide an information exchange for local member-clubs, through seminars and State Committees
- publicise AMBA's services in the community
- assist in the establishment of new local support groups
- provide advice and support for the parents of higher order multiples.

**LOCAL MEMBER-CLUB ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES**

Local clubs offer a selection of services depending on their size and resources. Examples of services include: pram/equipment hire, library, information, newsletter, practical assistance, antenatal information evenings, clothing exchange, sale of equipment. Activities include: regular meetings, coffee mornings, discussion evenings, new mothers' luncheons, playgroups, family picnics and other social activities.

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## Note from the Editor

*Australian Higher Order Multiple Connection* is a publication that is dear to my heart.

When I was expecting my three musketeers, I was an avid reader of the issues that Amy Brasher put together, and I got glimpses of what life might be like once they arrived. It helped to ease some of the anxiety I was feeling, not knowing anyone that had HOMs, and gave me a feeling of connection to a broader community of support.

After Beatrix, Harper and Lily were born, I read with interest the issues that Jodie Turner edited, taking the benefit of the lessons that other HOM families had learnt, and sharing in the joys and challenges of parenting multiples with families from around Australia.

The world is now moving at a frenetic pace. I thought that my world had changed dramatically when email arrived after I left university (I know, admitting my age). However, in the past two years, since the previous issue of AHC last hit out mailbox, there has been further change in the way that people communicate, with Facebook now providing a fantastic new way to share experiences, adding to the AMBA HOM forum and the long-running Yahoo email group as ways of connecting with other HOM families.

That said, I think that there is still an important place for the written word, especially when it comes to sharing and reflecting upon intensely personal experiences. There is something about the feel of paper between fingertips, and allowing yourself the time to sit down and devote time to yourself by reading, that is intensely satisfying. I hope that you agree, and enjoy reading this issue and those that follow.

This relaunch issue is an opportunity to introduce you to the wonderful people that volunteer as HOM advisors in the different states and territories, provide you with the results of the HOM survey that we conducted late last year, and give you a hint of what is to come in future editions.

We are also lucky enough to have AMBA Chairperson [Caroline Hutchison](#) provide a report on a recent convention she attended and ACT HOM advisor [Ali Mountifield](#) give an update on all the HOM social media options, while [Michelle Pratt](#) provides some statistics on HOM births based on her work as HOM Donations Officer.

I see this issue as the start of a new conversation between HOM families, and look forward to hearing from as many of you as possible.

Happy reading!

*Peta*

[homahc@amba.org.au](mailto:homahc@amba.org.au)



Beatrix, Harper and Lily on their first day back at preschool, February 2012

## A welcome from our leader

My name is Kathleen Chandler, and I, along with my husband Paul, am the proud parent of fraternal triplet girls – Tessa, Melody & Imogen (5).

I have been actively involved with AMBA for the past 5 years, and I have held various roles on the committees, at club, state, and now national level. This year I have reduced my roles within the association, and now try to fulfill the roles of HOM Contact for Queensland, and now Working Group Manager.

Here is a bit about me: my husband and I were planning our wedding when we decided to go and see a doctor about fertility problems I was having. After speaking to the doctor, we started a course of Pregmol, and waited.

As the first month came to the end, the doctor told us that I was releasing 3 eggs. With this, we would have a less than 1% chance of triplets, about a 10% chance of twins, and a 25% chance of falling pregnant. We thought that these odds were fairly good, as it was our first cycle, and some people spend years trying to fall pregnant. So we went ahead, thinking that we were preparing my body for what could be months and months of these cycles.

Four weeks later, we found out we were having triplets. That, as they say, is history. Our wedding was postponed, and my body grew bigger than I ever thought possible. I wasn't able to drive from 5 months, and by 6 months, I couldn't even put on the seatbelt.

At 32 weeks, the girls were born, weighing between 1490gm and 1890gm. I have been told that these are good weights for triplets at 32 weeks, so I believe it!

The girls have grown and developed so quickly. Even just last year, when they started prep, I was amazed not only at the knowledge that they gained, but at how quickly they grasp any ideas.



*Tessa, Melody & Imogen*



*Imogen, Melody & Tessa*

The past 6 years have been an emotional rollercoaster, of which I would not miss a minute, and even today when I look at photos of my babies I still get emotional, and some days, I even wish that they were babies again.

I know that all parents of multiples enjoy taking the ride of their lives, and if your babies are still waiting to be born, or 18 years old, the message is still the same. Live each day to the fullest because not one day will ever be the same again. I hope that you enjoy reading this

new magazine we are putting out, and please remember that any stories, photos, or hints and tips that you have, are greatly appreciated.

*Kathleen*

Secretary, AMBAQ – HOM Contact, AMBAQ – HOM Working Group Manager – 0416 509 726

## The nation's capital... and beyond

### Canberra and Region Multiple Birth Association

I'm so excited to see our HOM magazine getting off the ground again, many thanks to the driving forces behind it.

Since having triplets four years ago, I never thought I'd have time/energy to expend on volunteering but here I am doing my version of it. As the HOM Contact for CARMBA for a few years I've had the absolute joy of helping other HOMmies on their journey through pregnancy and the early years. I love the thanks that I get and I'm more than happy to help as it's my way of giving back to CARMBA for supporting me.

Recently I took on the role of Vice-President and I loooooove it, I'm working with a fabulous president and the committee really rocks. We love working together to assist families with multiples. I'm busy, yes, but loving it and feeling more energised. It has been proven that volunteering is good for your longevity and health – I agree.

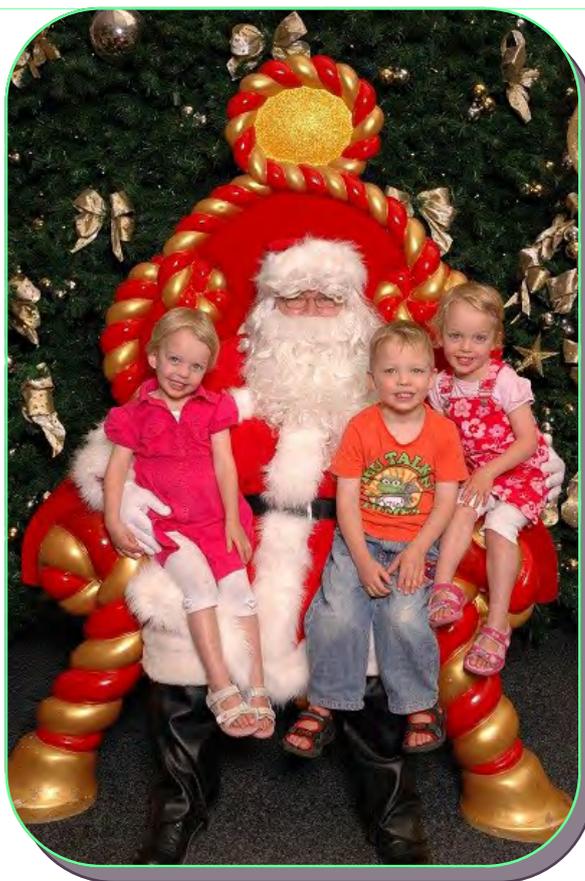
I was talking to our most recent HOM mum as they are preparing for the first birthday of their sons, it's such an exciting time and I remember that milestone for us. I don't have any HOMs expecting at the moment but I'm keeping tabs on a mum who moved from Canberra to Rockhampton.

We've had a lovely addition to our HOM families in Canberra with the addition of a South African family, the kids are fabulous and we have enjoyed some social catch ups.

Times have changed or maybe I have caught up with them and I'm enjoying connecting with other HOM families on Facebook, we are a very lucky bunch of people and while there are times when it's hard, I am forever grateful that I managed to get the family I always wanted with one pregnancy!

*Ali Mountifield*

0411 250 758 – [homact@amba.org.au](mailto:homact@amba.org.au)



# So much more than the numbers

My name is Michelle Pratt and I am the Donations Officer for AMBA. I am also Mummy to Jade, Sophie and Olivia who are 3-½ years old. I work three days a week in Employee Relations in order to keep me sane. We have just moved to Lake Macquarie from the Central Coast in NSW.

I am passionate about helping other HOM parents and that is why I took on the role of Donations Officer, as when I was expecting mine there was such a consistent lack of information. I still find that there is a lack of information for HOM families and love the recent gathering of HOMs on Facebook and hopefully soon communicating through the HOM Connection.

I am also passionate about assisting other parents who are diagnosed with monoamniotic twins. 2 of my 3 triplets were born at 31.2 weeks. My little Sophie had her sister Jade's cord around her neck, arm and foot. My girls are very lucky to be here after all I have heard about the mortality rates. Please look at this link for further info on MoMo's [www.monoamniotic.org/public/welcome.html](http://www.monoamniotic.org/public/welcome.html).



*These are my girls at the start of February at their 1st day at the Early Learning Centre. They love it!*

I am looking forward to getting to know everyone more. Please feel free to contact me at [homdonations@amba.org.au](mailto:homdonations@amba.org.au) for further information about the donation process.

*Michelle*



*Toilet training on the move!*

# My family in pictures



The Williams triplets from "Whoah!" to Go



Information recorded on this form will be used to request one-off donations on behalf of the family and to compile statistics used within the HOM Working Group Annual Report. No personal details shall be linked with the statistics reported by the HOM Working Group.

Donation requests will only be made once a completed form is returned. Please **do not** leave any answer boxes blank, record either 'do not disclose' if you do not wish to answer, or 'unknown' as the response if relevant.

AMBA State:		AMBA Club: (Name in full)	
Parent One: (Name in Full)			
Parent Two: (Name in Full)			
Children's Surname:			
If all surnames are the same, please indicate 'SAME'			
Parents Relationship:	Married / De facto / Separated / Other:		
Street Address:			
Town/Suburb:		Postcode:	State:
Telephone:		Email:	
Mother's Year of Birth:			

HOM Pregnancy: (Please circle)	Triplet / Quadruplet / Quintuplet / Sextuplet
Diagnosed at: (Number of weeks)	
Diagnosed by: (Please circle or provide details)	Scan / Undiagnosed / Other:
Conception by: (Please circle or provide details)	Natural / Fertility Drugs / IVF / IVF Donor Insemination / Other:
Enforced bed rest: (Please circle or provide details)	Yes / No - If yes, how long?
Other pregnancy-relevant information:	

List birth details of HOMs below:						
Name	Gender M/F	Date of Birth	Gestation (Weeks and days)	Delivery (Caesarean or vaginal)	Weight in grams	Hospital

Number of and age of other children in care: (please list)		
Zygoty	Identical – all	Fraternal – all
Identical and Fraternal mix: (detail)	Unsure	

Huggies Nappy Size: (Please circle <b>one</b> size)	Newborn / Infant / Crawler / Toddler / Walker / Junior
--------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------

Do you consent for your name, city, HOM given names, D.O.B, weights, gestation & sex to be used in	Yes / No
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------

## Making the most of social media

In this day and age we're really lucky to have a number of options as to how we connect with other families with Higher Order Multiples: from picking up the phone to checking a group on Facebook, there is a way that suits you. Here's a list of the resources that I know about.

- ⇒ Connect with your local Multiple Birth Association and give the HOM Support Person/ Contact a phone call, email them or go along to an event.
- ⇒ Go to the Australian Multiple Birth Association's website [www.amba.org.au](http://www.amba.org.au) and get details about Expecting HOMs and contact details for your HOM State Contact or the HOM Working Group Manager.
- ⇒ Join the AMBA forum which has many great topics including a HOM forum.
- ⇒ Join the Yahoo HOM Families group at: [http://au.groups.yahoo.com/group/HOM\\_Families/](http://au.groups.yahoo.com/group/HOM_Families/). The moderator is Kayley Simeon – [kayleysimeon@iinet.net.au](mailto:kayleysimeon@iinet.net.au).
- ⇒ The newest resource is a closed group on Facebook called HOM Families of Australia, it reached 100 families within two weeks and it's proving to be a great support network. Please request access to join this group and email Ali on [homact@amba.org.au](mailto:homact@amba.org.au) to help her understand that you are a bona fide HOM parent as it's not always easy for the admins to tell.

*Ali Mountifield*

### Australian Bureau of Statistics—"Births, 2010", October 2011

ABS found that the number of confinements resulting in a multiple birth has increased consistently since the 1970s. In 2010, there were 4,500 confinements resulting in a multiple birth; of these, 65 were triplets and 4 were quads or higher order. This was 43% higher than the number recorded in 1990 (3,200 confinements), and 2% higher than the number recorded in 2009 (4,400 confinements).

#### 2.9 Multiple births, States and territories - 2010

State or territory of usual residence	Single no.	Twins no.	Triplets and higher order no.	Total multiple confine- ments no.	Total confinements no.
New South Wales	93 048	1 398	26	1 424	94 472
Victoria	68 299	1 109	19	1 128	69 427
Queensland	62 462	988	14	1 002	63 464
South Australia	19 437	np	np	317	19 754
Western Australia	30 581	422	4	426	31 007
Tasmania	6 185	93	-	93	6 278
Northern Territory	3 787	55	-	55	3 842
Australian Capital Territory	4 985	np	np	82	5 067
<b>Australia(a)</b>	<b>288 801</b>	<b>4 458</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>4 527</b>	<b>293 328</b>

# Keeping track of us all

Hi, my name is Belinda Eshman, and I have GGB Triplets, Shayna, Tameka and Corbin who will be turning three in January.

They were born at 34 weeks 5 days gestation by c-section at Liverpool Hospital, Shayna weighing 1865g, Tameka 1835g and Corbin 2125g. I cannot believe how quickly time has gone by, and wish that I sometimes had a pause button!

I am currently the HOM Coordinator for Southern Sydney Multiple Births Association and look forward to continuing in this role next year as well. I was very excited to hear that Peta Stevenson was trying to get the HOM magazine up and running again. I received a couple of issues before the publication stopped and used to love reading it.

So when Peta asked me if I could help out, I was more than pleased to, and I hope to meet some more HOM parents along the way, and read some wonderful stories again.

*Belinda Eshman*

HOM Database Manager



*With Aaron, Corbin, Tameka and Shayna on out first family holiday (12 months old)*



*Shayna, Tameka and Corbin, 3 months\**



*At the SSMBBA disco, September 2011*



## South of the border

Hello, my name is Deb and I am the Victorian HOM contact.

I am a mother of four – Zak (4.5 years old) and triplets, Liam, Allegra and Gus (3 years old). Five years ago my husband and I took a year off and travelled the world; if someone had said that within 5 years we would be living in the burbs (close to both sets of parents) and have four kids under the age of 5, I would have said that their crystal ball was cracked!

Life with Zak was a joy. Apart from his bad sleep habits, he was a great baby: I could tuck him under my arm and pretty much continue on with life. I had two hands and one baby, life was a breeze.

Zak wasn't even one year old when I found out I was pregnant, the joy of another baby! We went to see my OB for our first eight-week check and after a delayed scanning of my belly he said, 'I'm not sure how I can say this (*long pause...*) but I can definitely see two heart beats, but (*another long pause*) I'm sure I can see three there'. This is where our lives changed forever.

Our lives for the first two years since the trips arrived have been intense to say the least, some days we were on top of the moon and others we could do nothing but cry. We are now coming up to the triplets' third birthday and I can say that there IS light at the end of this long tunnel.

With this role, I have been lucky enough to chat to so many expectant HOM parents and pass on my experiences but it has also put me in touch with HOM parents with older kids and gives me a chance to learn from them.

In terms of information, I can supply Victorian families with contact information to their nearest AMBA club, donation request forms, information relating to discounted and donation formula and contact information to the Multiple Births Volunteer Program (that will help arrange in-home help).

I am open to people getting in touch, so please email me.

*Deb*

Victorian HOM Advisor



# Higher Order Multiples Report

## Background

Each year, the HOM Donations Officer prepares a report for the AMBA Board on HOMs, based on data collated from questionnaires voluntarily completed and returned by families across Australia. This is a summary of the key findings in the report.

Many thanks to Michelle Pratt for collating the data and preparing the report.

She notes:

*So far there have been 43 reported HOM pregnancies during the period 1 January 2011 to 31 December 2011.*

*Other HOMs may have been born, however I am yet to receive the completed questionnaires.*

*All information has been reported as accurately and as confidentially as possible.*

## Number of HOM births 2011

There were 43 reported Higher Order Multiple births in Australia in 2011.

By state, there were:

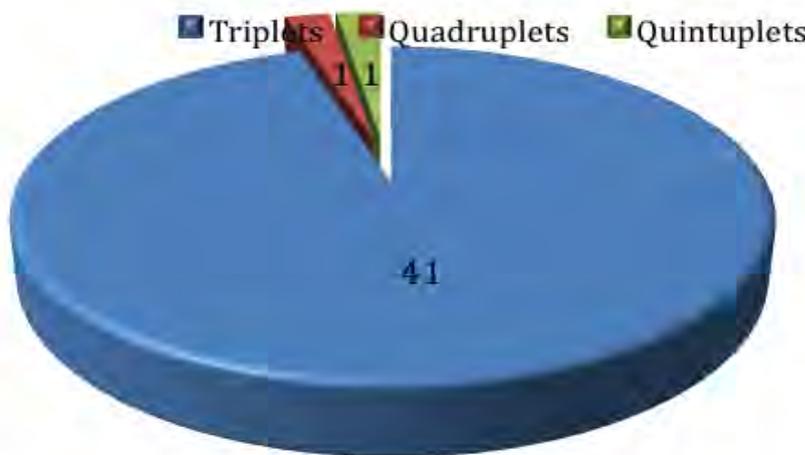
- QLD – 18 sets
- TAS – No HOM births
- ACT – 1 set
- NSW – 9 sets
- SA – 2 sets
- NT – No HOM births
- VIC – 5 sets
- WA – 8 sets

## Gestation

The average gestation for triplets in 2011 was 31.2 weeks.

The earliest gestational age of a HOM was 25 weeks for a set of triplets.

### Higher Order Multiple Births Reported 1 January to 31 December 2011



The longest gestational age of a HOM was **35.1 weeks** for a set of triplets.

The only reported gestation for quadruplets was **29.6 weeks** (only one set in 2011)

The only reported gestation for quintuplets was **26.4 weeks** (only one set in 2011)

### Birth weights

The **lightest** birth weight for a triplet was **540 grams**, the combined weights of the 3 babies in this set was 1753 grams, born at 25 weeks gestation.

The **heaviest** triplet birth weight was **2690 grams**, the combined weights of the 3 babies in this set was 5876g, born at 34 weeks gestation.

The birth weights of the quadruplets born are unknown.

The **average** weight of a triplet baby is 1659 grams.

The **average** weight of a quadruplet baby is unknown due to not disclosing.

The **average** weight of a quintuplet baby is 867 grams.

### Delivery

41/43 reported that multiples were delivered by caesarean.

1/43 women delivered triplets vaginally.

1/43 did not disclose.

### Zygoty

4 sets of triplets born were fraternal.

14 sets of triplets were made up of a set of identical twins and a fraternal sibling.

7 sets of triplets were identical.

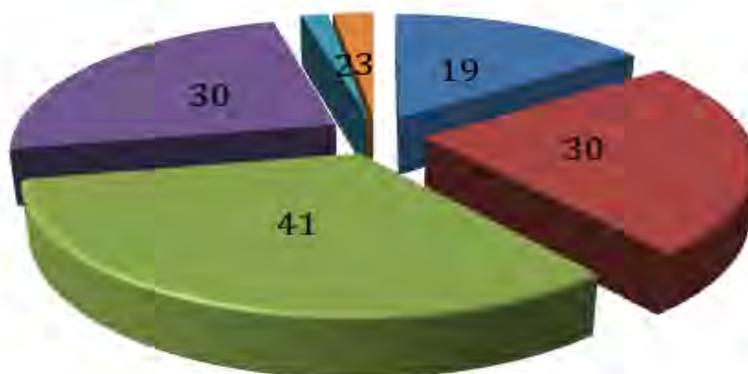
7 families were unsure of their babies' zygoty.

1 family did not disclose this information.

### Family structure

Of the 43 families, 30 were married, 9 living in a de facto relationship, 1 single parent and 3 families were a same-sex couple.

**Birth Weight Distribution**



## Gender

Gender of Triplets	Details
Male, Male, Male	6 sets
Female, Female, Female	15 sets
Male, Male, Female	10 sets
Female, Female, Male	10 sets
Gender of Quadruplets	
Male, Male, Male, Male	1 set
Gender of Quintuplets	
Female, Female, Female, Male, Male	1 set

## Other children in parents' care

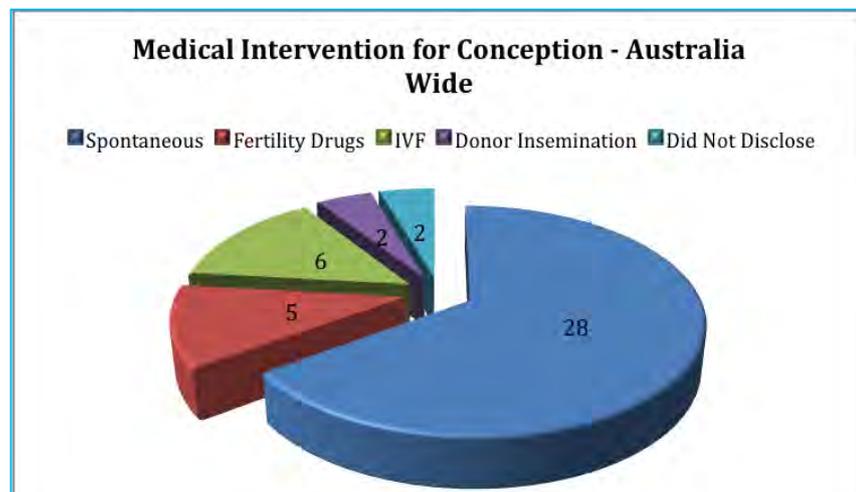
Number of children already in parents' care	Number of families
0 children	22 new families
1 child	9 families with 1 child
2 children	8 families with 2 children
3 children	3 families with 3 children
Did not disclose	1 family

Contribute to Australian HOM Connection!

Photos, tips, experiences, questions, learnings: all are valued.

Please send contributions for the Australian HOM Connection to:  
 Peta Stevenson  
[homahc@amba.org.au](mailto:homahc@amba.org.au)  
 0438 289 743

We would love to hear from you!!

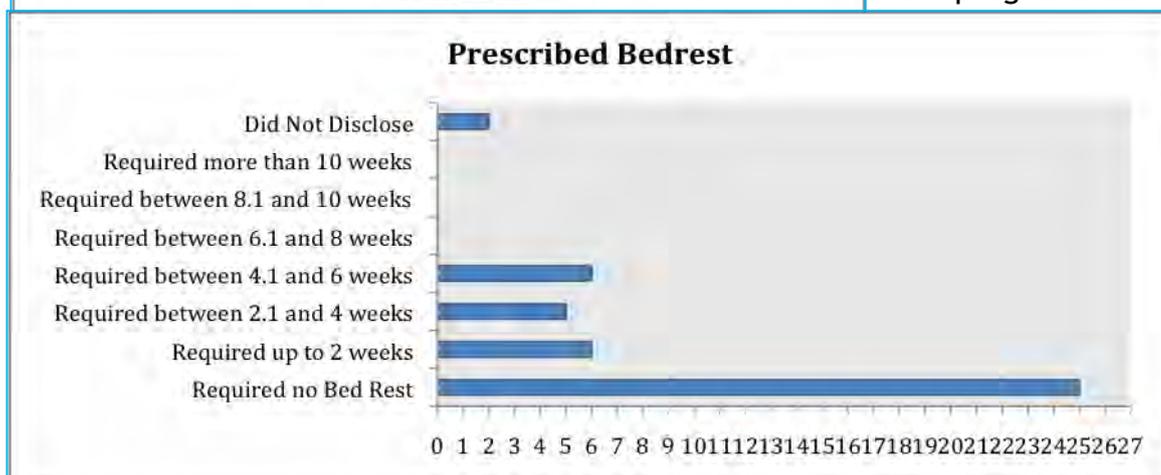


## Medical intervention

Contrary to popular belief, the majority of HOM conceptions were spontaneous.

## Bed rest

The report contains interesting results on bed rest, reflecting the differing experiences of HOM pregnancies.





Jade, Olivia & Sophie Pratt



Iden, Sophie & Thea Price

Make some new friends!

Jake, Lucy & Logan Pearce

### Quirky facts for 2011

- The average birth weight of a triplet in 2011 is 1603 grams, down 63 grams from 2010.
- The average gestation has increased from 32.2 weeks in 2010 to 34.2 weeks in 2011.
- 2011 has delivered the first set of HOMs born vaginally in the past two years.
- There were 43 HOM sets in 2011, up from 38 HOM sets in 2010.
- Isabella & Jasmine are the most popular names.





Grace, Isabella & Amelia Dunn—28 weeks



Tilly, Margot & Rosa Leanfore



Hannah, Oscar and Lucy Mountifield

## Meet the Lawlers

My name is Suzy and I'm a mum to five beautiful children.

My children are Harry, Priyah, Baxter & Ruby who turned seven in February and my precious little man Archer who is five. People thought my life was busy when I had 5 babies under 19 months but can I say it's nothing in comparison to how crazy life is now!! :)

They are a joy but it's busy busy busy.

*Suzy Lawler*



## What you said – HOM survey results

In August 2011, the AMBA Board decided to relaunch the *Australian HOM Connection* newsletter. So as to understand what subscribers were interested in hearing about, the Board ran a survey of the HOM families of Australia, which was posted on the AMBA forum and to the Yahoo mailing group.

50 families responded to the survey, which was a great result.

We were very pleased to see that 62% of respondents continued to be members of their local AMBA club. Reasons for not renewing membership included that:

- As their children became older they no longer felt the need for further assistance, or the assistance provided by their local club was less relevant (being focussed on babies and toddlers).
- There was not enough support for HOM as distinguished from twins.
- Their club was too far away, or there was no local club in the area.

These reasons reflect the challenges experienced by all clubs.

We are pleased however that the *Connection* will be available to both AMBA club members and non-members, with a differential subscription price.

64% of respondents indicated that they would be happy to receive the *Connection* by email only. The Board is considering a pricing model that would accommodate electronic-only subscriptions, which we hope to announce in the next issue.

Three quarters of respondents indicated that they would prefer to have a quarterly newsletter, with no one preferring an annual publication.

People expressed an interest in seeing a broad range of content included in the *Connection*. The most popular types of article were:

- ⇒ Stories of other parents' experiences
- ⇒ Parenting three plus – behavioural issues, sleeping, cooking, feeding, toilet training and playing tips
- ⇒ Routine ideas
- ⇒ HOMs in school
- ⇒ Holiday and travel ideas
- ⇒ Updates on resources – information and financial assistance
- ⇒ New products and product tips for HOMs
- ⇒ Returning to work after HOMs
- ⇒ Topics for all HOM ages including pre-teen, teenagers and adults
- ⇒ Family stories and photos
- ⇒ Updates on research affecting HOMs
- ⇒ Health – premmie, TTTS etc.

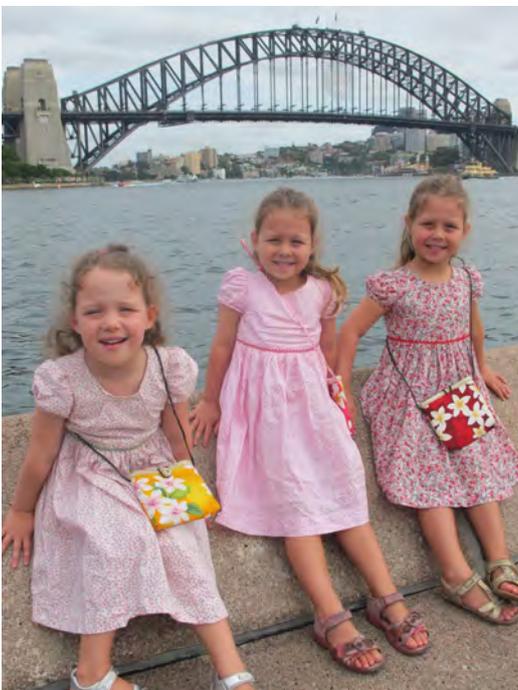
And everyone was keen to see birth notices, birthday messages, a for-sale section and other useful information.

This type of content requires the involvement of other HOM families, and the courage to share our stories. Luckily, when asked whether they were willing to contribute to the *Connection*, whether by writing articles or contributing photos, we were excited to see that two thirds of respondents were happy to participate (or at least have their arm twisted to do so).

We hope to be able to meet these expectations, and look forward to seeing contributions start to come in!

Please send any tips, photos or stories to [homahc@amba.org.au](mailto:homahc@amba.org.au).

In the next issue of *AHC*, we will be presenting the demographic results of the survey.



*Harper, Lily and Beatrix on a day out in the city*

## Congratulations!

Congratulations to Claire and Josse O'Connor on the birth of their identical triplet daughters

*Olivia Freda, Willow Louise  
& Mackenzie Grace*

Born at 26w5d at RPA on 9 December 2011. Weighing 716g, 750g and 764g, they are now safely home after 90 days

## Help is here: breast or bottle

If you are breastfeeding and would like some advice please don't hesitate to contact your club's breastfeeding contact or the Australian Breastfeeding Association.

If you need to use formula please talk to your club so they can provide details about a discount that may be available.

## Find us on Facebook

A private group has been set up on Facebook to connect "HOM Families of Australia."

The group hit 100 members in two weeks and continues to grow, with more than 150 families now involved.

It is proving to be a great resource raising awareness of the support available from HOM Contacts, like-minded parents and the donations/discounts that people are accessing.

We have a number of triplet parents, a few quad parents and one fabulous quintuplet family. If you'd like access to the group, please email Ali [homact@amba.org.au](mailto:homact@amba.org.au) for the link.

At the 2011 AMBA Convention in October 2011, we were fortunate enough to have a strong board elected that is committed to building on the good work that has been done in respect of higher order multiple related issues.

The AMBA Board for 2011/12 is:

- Chairperson* Caroline Hutchison - [chairperson@amba.org.au](mailto:chairperson@amba.org.au)
- State Liaison* Lorna Barrett - [state@amba.org.au](mailto:state@amba.org.au)
- Secretary* Jackie MacKenzie - [secretary@amba.org.au](mailto:secretary@amba.org.au)
- Finance* Lynette McGuinness - [finance@amba.org.au](mailto:finance@amba.org.au)
- Business Development* Melanie Fasham - [busdev@amba.org.au](mailto:busdev@amba.org.au)
- Membership Services* Karen Willetts - [membership@amba.org.au](mailto:membership@amba.org.au)
- Publications* Marion Gevers - [publications@amba.org.au](mailto:publications@amba.org.au)
- Association Services* Naomi De Wit - [services@amba.org.au](mailto:services@amba.org.au)

Our Board

As part of her Association Services portfolio, Naomi has taken up the baton for AMBA’s HOM families and has quickly assimilated a vast amount of information. Naomi has been a great support for the relaunch of the *Australian HOM Connection*, and we all look forward to working with her through 2012.

### Have you registered with the AUSTRALIAN TWIN REGISTRY?

The Australian Twin Registry is a volunteer registry of twins and higher order multiples who are willing to consider participating in approved studies. It is funded by the federal government through the National Health and Medical Research Council.

Your multiples could play an important role in the worldwide fight against disease, the expansion of knowledge about twins and multiple births and the search for answers to the profound questions posed by genetic research.

To obtain a registration form, make a donation or find out more about the registry and its projects, contact:

**The Australian Twin Registry**  
 Level 2, 723 Swanston Street, Carlton VIC 3053 Freecall 1800 037 021  
 Email: [dph-twins@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:dph-twins@unimelb.edu.au) [www.twins.org.au](http://www.twins.org.au)

### Australian Bureau of Statistics—“Births, 2010”, October 2011

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
	no.										
Single	241,795	238,312	242,668	243,022	245,861	251,256	257,238	276,419	287,399	286,796	288,801
Twins	3,800	3,938	4,070	3,990	4,105	4,134	4,213	4,287	4,514	4,358	4,458
Triplets and higher	102	90	83	77	79	91	98	75	61	86	69
Total multiple confine-	3,902	4,028	4,153	4,067	4,184	4,225	4,311	4,362	4,575	4,444	4,527
<b>Total confinements</b>	<b>245,697</b>	<b>242,340</b>	<b>246,821</b>	<b>247,089</b>	<b>250,045</b>	<b>255,481</b>	<b>261,550</b>	<b>280,781</b>	<b>291,974</b>	<b>291,240</b>	<b>293,328</b>

## Multiple Pregnancy Symposium, 2011

AMBA was lucky enough to be invited to present at our Patron Mark Umstad's Multiple Pregnancy Symposium in late November, as a precursor to the Royal Australian & New Zealand College of Gynaecologists' annual scientific meeting. It was a great opportunity for me to present to obstetricians about life with multiples. It was fairly medical in nature

### Zygoty

Mark's presentation covered the incidence of twin and HOM pregnancies, and discussed the East Flanders Prospective Twin survey that has data of every multiple birth since 1964, born in East Flanders Belgium. Interesting for me was the zygoty distribution for triplets as outlined in the below table, with three

Food Group	Serves per Day	One serve is: -
Meat and meat alternative	2-3	100g meat or chicken (palm size) 150g fish 2 eggs ½ cup nuts/seeds/legumes ½ cup tofu
Dairy or calcium fortified soy	3-4	1 cup (250ml) milk 1 slice (35g) cheese 1 tub (200g) yoghurt
Fruit and vegetables	4-8	½ cup vegetables 1 cup salad 1 medium fruit 2 smaller fruit
Breads and cereals (preferably wholegrain)	6-8	1 slice bread ½ bread roll ¾ cup cereal ½ cup cooked pasta/rice/noodles
Fluids	8-10	1 glass (250ml) eg water, juice, cordial, tea, broth

as you'd expect, however there was some information useful to pregnant mothers.

### Diet for multiple birth mums

Amelia Lee is a practicing dietician who talked about the nutritional requirements for multiple pregnancies and she provided the useful table above.

She also discussed weight gain for triplets, and recommended:

- A gain of at least 16kg by 24 weeks is associated with improved foetal growth
- A gain of at least 16-21kg by 32 weeks is associated with fewer complications

This information probably isn't that useful to readers of this publication as you've already had your babies, but as part of the HOM community it is a message that can be spread to expectant mothers.

identical triplets being a lot more common than I expected. These dads can truly say they have super sperm!

It was a brilliant day, with a focus on more rare and complicated conditions and the adverse outcomes that can occur, however the chance for me to say how wonderful it is with twins or more really gave the day a positive slant, and explaining that it's not doubly as hard or triply as hard all the time. I mean, pureeing three serves of pumpkin doesn't take three times as long as one serve! Hopefully our presence at the symposium gave the doctors a positive message to take back to their patients.

*Caroline Hutchison*

Chairperson, AMBA

Before and after

Our triplets Mia, Lilly and Chloe were born 3rd of November 2011.  
Lucia Staykov



34.5 weeks



First day home!



Deb Trela with son Zak



Allegra, Gus, Liam Trela

Zygoty	Spontaneous	Assisted Reproductive Technology
Trizygoty	24%	84%
Dizygoty	60%	7%
Monozygoty	16%	2%
Unknown	0%	7%

# FOR SALE

## Better late than never!

Our girls have turned four, and we are finally coming to terms with the fact our babies are growing up! For sale:

- King Parrot white 3 level change table. Good condition.
- Maclaren Twin Techno Stroller (2008), slate grey. Used as second pram. Foot muffs, rain cover and sun shade. Fair condition.
- Maclaren Techno Single Stroller (2009), slate grey. Used as second pram. Rain cover and sun shade. Fair condition.

Please email [peta.stevenson@au.kwm.com](mailto:peta.stevenson@au.kwm.com) for photos and to discuss price. Pick up Southern Sydney.

## IMPORTANT - PLEASE READ!

### GUIDELINES FOR ADVERTISEMENTS - FOR SALE ITEMS

Subscribers to the Australian HOM Connection may place non-commercial ads in the For Sale section for FREE.

Non-subscribers may advertise in the For Sale section by paying a fee of \$5. Payments may be made by direct deposit as follows: AMBA, Westpac, BSB 032257, Account No. 137121, Banking Reference is "*Your surname – AHC Ad*". Please send a confirmation email containing your details, date of deposit, receipt / reference number and ad content to [hom@amba.org.au](mailto:hom@amba.org.au).

PLEASE READ the guidelines below before sending your ad.

Please ensure that the condition of advertised items is adequately and accurately described, particularly for **triplet/quad strollers** which are often purchased without prior viewing.

It may not be possible to describe all goods in detail due to space restrictions, but where known, the approximate age or year model of strollers should be shown. *Please use the following guidelines when describing your stroller:*

**Excellent condition** – essentially 'as new', less than approx. 2-3 yrs old or, if older, used on relatively few occasions. No cleaning or repairs required.

**Good condition** – may be more than 2-3 years old but still in good working order with only minor cleaning or very minor non-essential repairs required (if any).

**Fair condition** – in basic working order but with obvious signs of age (e.g. rust, stains, worn parts) and may require cleaning and/or minor repairs before use.

**Poor condition** – requires substantial/essential repairs and/or major clean-up before it can be used.

**Prices** – It is not possible to give a suggested price range for second-hand strollers as there is such a restricted market. Prices may be based on factors such as original purchase price, availability of the particular brand/model, the age, condition and location of the stroller and urgency of sale.

Remember, *it is the responsibility of both seller and purchaser* to ensure that the condition of goods is accurately described, that any necessary repairs/maintenance are noted and that a fair price is negotiated. If in any doubt and you can't view the stroller in person, it is recommended that you obtain a recent photo of the stroller (unfortunately there is insufficient space for photos in the magazine, but sellers may note the availability of a photo in their ad).

**When you sell your items**, please let the Editor know as soon as possible, as ad space is limited.

**Ads will be run for a maximum 2 consecutive issues and then removed;** you are welcome to re-run your ad again, after it has been removed for an issue, if the items have not been sold.

## Subscriptions

Australian HOM Connection is currently being relaunched. Issues 27 and 28 are intended to be provided free of charge. However, from August 2012, it will be a subscription-only publication once again.

Subscriptions are due to be renewed by 31st August each year. For further information, please refer to the subscription form printed on the outside back cover of each issue. If you wish to advise of any **CHANGE OF DETAILS**, or have any **QUERIES** about your subscription, contact: **Belinda Eshman**, 37 Kilmarnock Road Engadine NSW 2233, [homdb@amba.org.au](mailto:homdb@amba.org.au)

### HOW TO SUBSCRIBE

**PAYMENTS** can be made by **Cheque or Money Order** made payable to AMBA and posted together with the completed subscription form to Belinda Eshman, 37 Kilmarnock Road Engadine NSW 2233.

**Direct deposit into AMBA's bank account:** Westpac BSB 032257 Account number 137121. Banking reference is your SURNAME – AHC SUBSCRIPTION (or version thereof). *Please send a confirmation email containing the details listed on the subscription form to:* [hom@amba.org.au](mailto:hom@amba.org.au).

**SUBSCRIPTIONS COMMENCE** once payment has been received and a copy of the current issue will be forwarded. If there are no copies of the current issue available, then the subscription will commence with the next available issue. Your expiry issue will be noted on the mailing label.

**NB.** To be entitled to the lower subscription rate, you must provide details of the AMBA club of which you are a member. If you wish to become a member of an AMBA club, contact your State HOM Co-ordinator for further information or visit AMBA's website [www.amba.org.au](http://www.amba.org.au) to find out the location of your nearest club.

**Expectant HOM families:** A complimentary newsletter is included in Expectant Parent Information Kits. Families are encouraged to subscribe before the birth of their babies to ensure continuity of newsletters.

### Annual subscription costs

**AMBA members: \$16**

**Non-members:**

- Australian residents \$20
- Overseas resident: \$28

### CAN WE HELP?

Although the statistics show that most HOM pregnancies and births are relatively problem-free (apart from the need for extra obstetric care and rest), unfortunately a small number of pregnancies will result in the death of one or more babies, or babies born with special needs. If this happens to you, AMBA *can* provide much needed emotional support.

AMBA has a bereavement sanctuary as part of its online forum. The site is strictly password-protected for those families who have suffered the loss of one or more of their multiples: [bereavement@amba.org.au](mailto:bereavement@amba.org.au).

If undeliverable return to:  
Belinda Eshman  
37 Kilmarnock Road  
ENGADINE NSW 2233

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A quarterly publication of the  
Australian Multiple Birth Association



### SUBSCRIPTION to *AUSTRALIAN HOM CONNECTION*



While in the relaunch phase, please register your interest in subscribing by completing the form below and emailing it to our fantastic HOM Database Manager Belinda on [homdb@amba.org.au](mailto:homdb@amba.org.au).

**12 month subscription costs:** AMBA members (i.e. local club or associate members) - \$16.00 pa  
Non-members - Australian residents: \$20.00 pa – Overseas residents: \$28.00 pa

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ P/Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Prefer to receive as: Electronic / hard copy

AMBA Member? Yes / No. Club Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Only financial AMBA members are entitled to reduced subscription fees.

Family details (optional)

Partner's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Children's names and DOB (for birthday greetings): \_\_\_\_\_

Please note that your details are for AMBA use only and are NOT passed to third parties without your consent

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