

**Twins  
trust.**

We support  
twins, triplets  
and more...

# Resource pack for **TWINS AND MULTIPLES CLUBS**



# Resource pack for twins and multiples clubs

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# The benefits of being a Twins Trust registered club

- ▶ At Twins Trust we understand the importance of multiples clubs. Clubs provide invaluable support to local families and offer them a dedicated place to chat to other parents with multiples about the amazing joys and the challenges that come with parenting twins, triplets or more. We really do appreciate all the work that goes into running a club and we want to make this as easy as possible for you and support you in any way that we can. This resource pack includes a variety of information designed to help you run a successful club, we hope you find it useful.
- ▶ The Twins Trust Membership Team are here to support the work of multiples clubs. If you would like any advice or support regarding your club and/or if you need to update any of your club details such as venue, date of meetings, email addresses, websites, Facebook club pages etc please contact us at [clubs@twinstrust.org](mailto:clubs@twinstrust.org) or on Tel no: 01252 332 344.
- ▶ As a Twins Trust registered club you will have your own designated page on our website that will display all of the relevant details about your club, including links to your website and Facebook page if you have them. The clubs pages are viewed 74,000 times per year so these pages are great publicity for your club. Please let us know if any of your details change so we can ensure we are advertising your club correctly.
- ▶ Committee members can join a Twins Trust Registered Clubs Private Facebook page. Just search Facebook for 'twinstrustregisteredclubs'. It's a great way of chatting to other club committee members and discussing ideas, tips and questions. Upon requesting to join the group, committee members will be asked to answer two questions; the name of the club they belong to and the role they hold within the club. The Twins Trust membership team will review the request and the answers to the questions before approving access to the group.
- ▶ As part of your clubs membership, you will receive e-newsletters from Twins Trust twice a year that will include information on what's happening at Twins Trust together with other pieces that may be relevant to your members. We also like to include updates and news from clubs themselves, it's a great way to share events and ideas. If you've had a successful event or have anything to share then we would love to hear from you at [clubs@twinstrust.org](mailto:clubs@twinstrust.org).





- ▶ Twins Trust are able to provide you with resources for your club including booklets on breastfeeding, neonatal, healthy multiple pregnancy, practical preparing for parenthood and leaflets on weaning, potty training, individuality, Postnatal Depression (PND) and sleep. If you require any booklets or leaflets please just contact us by emailing [clubs@twinstrust.org](mailto:clubs@twinstrust.org).
- ▶ As a Twins Trust registered club you can benefit from discounted rates on our Multiple Behaviour and Sleep Webinars when completing a group booking of a minimum of 10 places. This is a brilliant opportunity for club members to get some great information at a reduced price. For more information on this please visit our courses web page [here](#). To enquire about a group booking for your club please contact the Support Team via [clubs@twinstrust.org](mailto:clubs@twinstrust.org) or give us a call on 01252 332 344.
- ▶ Each quarter you will be sent the latest copy of our Multiple Matters magazine for you to share with your members. Please ensure Twins Trust have the up to date correspondence address for your club to ensure you receive your copy. To update any of your club's information simply email [clubs@twinstrust.org](mailto:clubs@twinstrust.org).
- ▶ Once a year we hold our Grand Annual Raffle and this is fantastic chance for you to make some money for your club while also supporting Twins Trust. As a registered club you will receive books of tickets to sell on behalf of Twins Trust and your club will get to keep 50% commission of any tickets you sell.
- ▶ We provide a set of Best Practice Principles for clubs so there is a guideline for clubs to agree and adhere to. There is more information on the principles in the sections below and you can find a copy of the full list of Best Practice Principles in the appendix of this document.



# Setting up your club and best practice guidelines

In this section we cover all the essentials for setting up and running a club including publicity, insurance, finances and more.

## Publicising your club and making contacts

One of the most important parts of running a club is making sure relevant people know who you are and where to find you. Below we have included some suggestions on how you can advertise your club and increase attendance.

### Facebook

Consider making a Facebook page for your club if you don't have one already. Many multiples groups have Facebook pages where they post updates of what's happening at their clubs and encourage people to attend. If you're unsure what to put on a Facebook page why not check on the Twins Trust website for clubs with Facebook links to see the content they have, you might just be inspired to start your own page.

### Website

You may wish to set up a website. This could contain things such as information on the group, events and dates of meetings and items for sale. It may help to publicise the group and act as a reminder of meeting dates. You can include your website address on our Twins Club pages. If you do not have the expertise

to set up a website try reaching out to your members to see if any members have the skill to help or if they know someone who can assist your club.

### Posters

If you are able to, print some posters advertising your club. You don't have to have anything fancy, just a simple document with basic details of who you are and when and where you meet. Try to display these in places that parents of multiples might attend such as local GP Surgeries, children's centres, community centres and church noticeboards. We have a poster template available to use in the appendix section at the back of this document.

### Health professionals

Make contact with your local Health visiting Team and let them know about your club so they can encourage any families with multiples that they support to attend your club.

Try visiting local Maternity Units or hospitals to see if they would be prepared to let you display a poster

or leave some Twins Trust leaflets (or your own clubs leaflets if you have them).

Check if your local Maternity Units/hospitals run any multiple specific antenatal or parenting courses. They may be happy for a member of your club to pop along to chat to expectant parents about the club and your experiences of having multiples.

If your club has a newsletter (more on this later in the pack) you could try and pass this on to health visitors

or maternity unit's etc to give them an idea of what your club does.

## Network

Network with other clubs in your local area to see what they are doing. They may also have members who want to attend more than one club if they run on different days and are local to both. A great way to do this may be on our 'Twins Trust Registered Clubs Support' Facebook Page. Just search Facebook for 'twinstrustedregisteredclubs'.

## Club venue

You have your venue; it's available, it's affordable, you're excited to get started! Before you get going, we have a few recommendations so you can ensure your venue is as safe as it can possibly be.

Your venue will need to be risk assessed prior to your club starting and regularly thereafter. You will need to check for high, medium and low risks using basic common sense, to ensure it is a safe space for families to attend. This check could be as simple as a checklist which is completed at pre agreed intervals such as once per month.

You should consider the safety of your car parking facilities, the entrance, steps, stairs, kitchen, furniture, electric sockets, radiators, any sharp table corners and temperature of water in the cloakroom.

Fire exits should be clearly marked and easy to open and access. Ideally they would be able to accommodate a double buggy but we appreciate this may not always be possible.

Check the entrance/exit to the venue to ensure children cannot gain access, for example a high handle out of reach of children.

It is advisable that children do not have access to the kitchen; you could consider putting a stair gate on the doorway to keep children out of the kitchen. Where possible select a venue with a separate kitchen.

There should be a designated and qualified First Aider present at meet ups and special events and there should be access to a fully equipped First Aid Box. Check if your venue provides a first aid box

and if so familiarise yourselves with its location and contents.

A signing in/out book is advisable so you know how many people/children are in the premises in case of an emergency. This may also prove useful in monitoring attendance levels. A signing in sheet template is included in the appendix at the back of this document, this can be adapted and used by your club at regular and special events.

All toys should be checked regularly, cleaned when necessary and thrown away if they are damaged. Sometimes more than one group will run from the same venue, they may have a supply of toys that they are prepared to share or they may be happy to come to an arrangement regarding purchasing and sharing new toys.





# Insurance

It is very important to get adequate public liability insurance for your club to protect you in the event of any accidents or incidents involving your club members whilst they are at one of your meet ups or events.

Many venue hirers will now ask to see evidence that your club has sufficient public liability insurance cover before they will let you use their venue even if they have their own public liability insurance for the building you are planning to hire.

Twins Trust offer an insurance grant to help those clubs who may not be able to afford some or all of the insurance costs, as we want to make sure you are adequately covered. Further information on the grant and the eligibility criteria can be found on the Twins Trust website [here](#).

**Below we have provided some further information and things to consider regarding insurance.**

## Getting a Quote

The easiest way to get insurance quotes is to search online. Alternatively, you can approach a local insurance broker and ask them to get quotes on your behalf.

Make sure you get at least three quotes so that you can do a comparison of both the cover offered and the price.

Ensure you read each quote carefully to make sure that it covers anything you do as a club and covers



the age range of children attending. Some policies will only cover up to 5 year olds so if you have older children attending during school holidays or to special events ensure the insurance you choose covers this.

## Making sure you're prepared in the event of a claim

If an accident occurs at your club or one of your events it is possible it may result in someone making a claim against the club. For this reason, it is important that the club properly record the details of any accidents that occur, whether the club is at fault or not.

You should purchase an accident record book (available at a low cost online) in which you can record details of any incidents. Venues you are hiring should also have an accident record book and would record details of accidents or any incidents involving their building or property. We have included an Accident/Incident Form template in the appendix at the back of this document. This can be adapted and used by your club as an alternative to a purchasing an accident book.

Twins Trust recommends that you nominate someone to be in charge of health and safety. This person would be responsible for ensuring any incidents are recorded in the appropriate manner and for carrying out a risk assessment for any event you hold.

It is important to make sure that club members are aware that they remain responsible for the welfare and well-being of their children whilst they are at a club meet up or event. It is worth putting this as a disclaimer on any information relating to club activities or individual events.

For more information on risk assessments for community groups please see this: [www.resourcecentre.org.uk/information/risk-assessments](http://www.resourcecentre.org.uk/information/risk-assessments). We have included a risk assessment template in the appendix at the end of this document.

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# Creating a constitution

A constitution is a set of guidelines for your club, outlining what you do, how you do it and who you do it for. It can help to prevent disagreements within the club and focus the group on the needs you are trying to meet.

An informal constitution with the basic aims and objectives of the club will be sufficient as a tool to show what your club does.

A constitution template has been included in the appendix at the back of this document for you to use as a guide. This model can be adapted for your own club's use allowing you to change the frequency of meetings and any of the other details as long as it is an informal constitution and you do not have charity status.

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## Finances

The topic no one likes discussing, money! However, in order for your club to run smoothly and successfully you will need to nominate someone to take charge of the clubs finances and keep track of what money you have coming in and what you are spending.

The easiest way to do this is to open a 'clubs and societies' bank account in the name of the club. The bank or building society you use will usually ask for two signatories for the account. It is advisable to have at least two people within the club who have responsibility over the finances, even if you decide not to have a bank account.

The advantages of having a bank account are that if you want to apply for money to help your club run you might be asked for a copy of your accounts, this

will be much easier if you can provide bank statements. It is also beneficial to have a record of finances in case of any complaints on financial matters.

As well as a club bank account, it is also advisable to keep your own records so you know why monies have been paid in and what any outgoings have been spent on. You do not need to use a complex computer package to keep a track of finances, a simple record either hand written or on something such as excel will be suitable.

Keep an eye on your bank balance to ensure you can cover the day-to-day running of your club or any events you have planned. Never expect someone to foot the bills from their own pocket.

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## Generating income for your club

All clubs need some form of income in order to survive. There are a number of ways you can generate income for your club, below we have included some suggestions to help get you started.

### Session fee

Most clubs charge a fee to attend their play sessions. On average, this ranges from £2 to £5 per family. It's a good idea to check some of the other play groups in your area and then decide on your price

in alignment with these. The fee generally goes towards the running of the session, ie hall costs, snacks, drinks etc.

### Member fee

Some clubs have a membership scheme that they charge families to join and then pay to renew annually. For example, one of our clubs charges £15 per year for membership but members pay a reduced play session fee of £2, rather than the



standard fee of £3 for non-members, and they also get to attend special events and days out which are subsidised by the club.

## Local business support

You can approach local businesses to see if they are willing to support your cause, some of our clubs have had great success approaching local soft plays and farms etc. When asking for support you should be clear about what your club does and how you will be using the donation. Local businesses will be more likely to offer products or services as a prize for a raffle or event rather than donating money to you. You should send thank you letters, often local businesses who donate are run by the owner so they will appreciate your thanks and this may make them more prepared to help you again in the future.

Local businesses often appreciate being recognised particularly if you are able to secure any publicity. Be sure to check how they would like to be mentioned and never reproduce their logos unless they expressly ask you to.

## Grants

You may be able to apply to organisations that give grants for particular work. Grant making bodies will usually have strict guidelines about who can apply and what they can apply for.

They will usually have quite detailed application forms that you will need to fill in, these can take a lot of work so make sure you fulfil the criteria before completing the form otherwise your work will be wasted.

They may want to visit the person who has signed the application to discuss the bid.

You may need to provide additional documentation such as your constitution, safeguarding children and young people policies and your insurance. Please see our Safeguarding section and insurance section for more information on these.

If you receive money from a funding body you will be asked to provide proof that the money is going where you said it would go, bear this in mind and collect the evidence they ask for. Do not spend the money in any other way than the way you said you would spend it. If you are unable to fulfil any part of the agreement let them know, they may let you use the money for something else.

If you get turned down for a grant you should be informed of the reason your application was denied. If you're not told why and you fulfil the criteria apply again next time there is an opportunity to do so.

## Club community grant

Did any of your club members put their child trust fund vouchers into an investment fund, which is now called 'One Family' - it used to be called Family Investments. As customers, they are eligible to apply for a community grant for a project in the local community and could apply for funding for activities/equipment for their own twin clubs. This is the website: [www.foundation.onefamily.com/community-awards](http://www.foundation.onefamily.com/community-awards)

## Lottery funding

The Big Lottery Fund is offering grants of between £300 and £10,000 to support what matters to people and communities. Your multiples group might be eligible for funding under this scheme. Take a look and apply if you can!

[www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/national-lottery-awards-for-all-england](http://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/national-lottery-awards-for-all-england)

[www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/national-lottery-awards-for-all-scotland](http://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/national-lottery-awards-for-all-scotland)

## Local supermarkets

Take a look at your local supermarkets, many now have ways they support local groups.

Waitrose have made twins groups a chosen charity for a month. Tesco have a community champion, and if you email them they can give a gift voucher to spend in store, to go towards party snacks etc. Morrison's also have a community champion where you can apply for vouchers.

## Other fundraising ideas

**MEMBERS EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES:** Children's events such as toddler groups, parties and outings seldom yield much profit once you have settled the outgoings, so these are best seen as purely for pleasure (or as a thank you to your supporters). However, some ideas that might be useful are as follows:

**Nearly-new sales** - children's clothes, toys, equipment etc. You can charge per table so that

setting up and disposal is someone else's problem. These sales also provide a useful service for members.

**Car boot sales** - your local supermarket will sometimes allocate spaces for these.

**Raffles** - best conducted at social events such as Christmas parties or summer fayres/picnics, using 'cloakroom tickets'. If you sell the tickets & make the draw on the same day then you don't need a licence. Prizes can be obtained by contacting local businesses, more information can be found on this above.

**Social events** - BBQs, picnics, walks, coffee mornings, 'Tea for Twins Trust', Gala Dinners/Dances/Balls etc. Pay to participate. The list is endless.

**Sponsored events** - walks, crawls, toddles, bike rides, pram pushes, swims, silences, giving-up smoking, head shaves, etc. Fun for all the family. We can supply you with information and generic sponsorship forms.

**Promise auctions** - use the skills of your members, their family, partners and contacts. You can auction babysitting, cake making, plumbing, a weekend away or any other service or goods that people can donate.

**Christmas Fayres/Summer Fetes** - or other seasonal occasions. Hard work, but very rewarding. Encourage local retailers or specialists to pay for stalls, e.g. home-made cards, home-baking stalls, games for children, jewellery sales etc.

**Fundraising catalogues/trading companies** - contact your local direct selling consultants for companies such as Stella and Dot, Partylite, The Body Shop, Usborne Books, Avon lady, etc. and find out how they can help you raise money for your club and Twins Trust.

**Fundraising websites** - You could consider creating an events page with Just Giving or a similar site.

## Obtaining charitable status for your club

Some clubs have found it beneficial to apply for charitable status. This is something that will need to be investigated thoroughly and may take a lot of work so ensure your club has the resources to take this on. Before considering becoming a charity you will need to consider if the benefits are likely to apply to your club.

The main benefits of registering as a charity are:

- ▶ It can be easier to obtain grants, many funders give grants only to registered charities.
- ▶ Registration lets the public know that your group is a legitimate organisation and is monitored by the Charity Commission.
- ▶ You are entitled to tax relief on several taxes, reduced business rates on your premises and you may reclaim the tax on donations from individuals through Gift Aid.

To register as a charity there are certain eligibility criteria that have to be met. These include, but are not limited to the following:

- ▶ You will need to appoint Trustees, a minimum of three is recommended.
- ▶ You must have a charitable purpose.
- ▶ Your annual income must be over £5000.

If you decide you do wish to register as a charity you will need a formal constitution rather than an informal one like the one mentioned earlier in this document. For more information on writing a formal constitution please visit:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/setting-up-a-charity-model-governing-documents](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/setting-up-a-charity-model-governing-documents)

For more information on applying for charity status please visit: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission)

# Complaints

Occasionally you may get complaints from individuals. We have included a draft complaints and grievance policy template in the appendix. This

can be adapted for your club and you may wish to hand out if necessary.

# Succession planning

Most multiples clubs are run by volunteers; usually parents of multiples who also attend the club with their children. Have you considered what will happen to your club if these parents opt to go back to work, or when their children reach school age and can no longer attend the group? In order for your club to survive long term this is something that you need to consider before it actually happens and succession planning is the key to this.

Simply put, succession planning is creating a plan so that you know who will be taking over certain roles in your club in the future. By deciding who is going to take over certain duties, you can prepare in advance for the day when the current volunteers take a step back from the club.

You will need to consider the key roles within the club and start by trying to recruit volunteers to take over these roles when the time comes. We recommend a minimum of a Chairperson, Treasurer and a Secretary but appreciate it is not always possible. If these committee members are not people who are able to attend/run the actual playgroup you will need to ensure you have a committee member who can such as a playgroup coordinator.

Recruiting volunteers can be tough. Some attendees will just want to come along to the group and will have no desire to get involved any further, which is fine. However others may be willing to help, but may be unsure what they could do and what is involved. There are a few things you can do to encourage attendees to volunteer;

- ▶ Frequently mention that your club is looking for people to help with the club and make sure attendees know that they don't have to immediately take on a huge role. Make sure people know that making drinks, supervising craft activities or planning special events are all things that they can help with. These smaller

things may then gradually lead to them taking on more responsibility of a club committee role.

- ▶ Always encourage attendees to come along to any of your committee meetings. If you can get more people to attend, they might decide they'd like to get more involved with the club.
- ▶ You may be able to tempt people to volunteer by setting up a rota for attending/running the playgroup. This way volunteers do not feel they have to commit to attending every week/fortnight etc.
- ▶ Make people aware of the roles and what each one entails, they may be under the impression a lot more work is involved than there actually is.
- ▶ Encourage parents to get involved when their children are still quite young. Although a parent of babies may not be able to help at the playgroup, they may be interested in helping out in other ways and they may appreciate attending committee meetings; it's almost a night out! If they feel involved early on they may be happy to take on further responsibility once their children are older and slightly more independent.





# Safeguarding children and young people

- ▶ All clubs should have safeguarding measures in place, including a written safeguarding policy which outlines the procedure for what to do if there are concerns about a child/young person.
- ▶ Clubs should nominate one person to be the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) for the club, this person would deal with safeguarding children & young people. It is usually one of the leaders of the club such as the chairperson. Everyone in the club should be aware of who this person is.
- ▶ Safeguarding and Child Protection training is not required but you may decide your clubs Designated Safeguarding Officer requires training. If this is the case ensure you shop around and compare the content and costs of the courses. Courses can often be completed online in a few hours.
- ▶ More information on safeguarding and training can be found here: [learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/for-voluntary-and-community-groups](https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/for-voluntary-and-community-groups)
- ▶ All children at regular or special events should be accompanied by a known carer e.g. Parent, grandparent, childminder etc. Parents/Carers are responsible for their own children's safety and everyone who attends should be made aware of this.
- ▶ If children are to be left unattended by their parents/carers for any reason you will need to ensure that you have the correct adult to child ratio and that the correct number of adults are DBS checked. Further information on the requirements can be found here [learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/briefings/recommended-adult-child-ratios-working-with-children](https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/briefings/recommended-adult-child-ratios-working-with-children)
- ▶ It is important to remember that different people and different cultures may have differing standards and values of parenting. However if

you feel you may have witnessed something that relates to the safety of a child at a club meet up or event you should report this immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) within the club.

- ▶ A Safeguarding Policy template has been included in the appendix at the back of this document for you to use as a guide, this can be adapted for your own clubs use.

## Use of images of children and young people

- ▶ Anyone attending regular meet ups or a club event must be notified if photography is taking place and signed consent must be obtained prior to photography commencing. A disclaimer must be available for those parents who do not want their children photographed etc.
- ▶ The attendees should be made aware of where the imagery may be used, such as the clubs website, social media sites, on promotional material or by Twins Trust.
- ▶ Children should not be named in any published images.
- ▶ A photography, video and digital imagery form template has been included in the appendix at the back of this document for you to use as a guide, this can be adapted for your own clubs use.
- ▶ A Twins Trust video and photography consent form is also included in the appendix. If you wish to send any photographs to Twins Trust for us to use you will need to ensure you have signed permission from anyone in the photographs and send this to us along with the completed consent form.

# General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

As a club you are bound to hold personal information on people but you must ensure that you are complying with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) that came into force in May 2018. If you would like more information on GDPR please visit [www.gov.uk/government/publications/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation)

We have included some tips below to make complying as easy as possible for you. Keep these principles in mind and you are likely to be respecting people's privacy and meeting the fundamental requirements of the GDPR.

- ▶ Make sure you know what personal data is
- ▶ Only collect, store or use personal data if your group needs to do so for a clear, specific purpose.
- ▶ Only collect, store and use the minimum amount of data you need for your purpose. Don't keep extra data if you don't know why you need it, and don't keep data that is no longer needed for a clear purpose.
- ▶ Never give out information about your members, even to other members. Never pass information to third parties.
- ▶ If you have a contacts sheet that is circulated amongst members make sure that there is an opportunity for new members to opt out of this. Also ensure you have a known process for current participants to opt out.
- ▶ Notify your members of who will have access to their information eg Membership Secretary, Chair etc
- ▶ Ensure people know who to contact if they want to remove their data from your records.
- ▶ Tell people what data you have about them if they ask and remove it if requested.
- ▶ Store data securely. Make sure you don't have pieces of paper with data on laying around and

ensure any electronic devices that hold personal details are password protected.

- ▶ Be clear whether data belongs to your group or to you personally. Just because you have access to contact details held by the group, doesn't mean they are your personal contacts.
- ▶ Have a process in place for the handover of data when a committee member steps down from their position.

Your club may wish to have a Privacy Notice that tells people why you have their data and what it will be used for. This could be on your clubs website or pinned on a Facebook Group. We have included a Privacy Notice template in the appendix, this can be adapted for use by your group.

Some examples of the information you may wish to ask attendees/members and possible reasons for storing this information are below. Think about what information your club may need and if the reason for holding this is legitimate:

- ▶ Name and (if relevant) partners name
- ▶ Postal Address - for sending newsletters
- ▶ Email - for sending newsletters, updates and information from your club
- ▶ Phone number - to call about changes to meetings etc
- ▶ Children's names and dates of birth - for sending birthday cards or so you know their ages and can plan events appropriate for the ages of children visiting the club.

# Working with the media

So you've set up your club and you're ready to tell the world! Or perhaps you've been going a while but you're holding an event which would make fantastic pictures?

The local press can be a great way to spread your message. Don't be daunted, local journalists and photographers are there to serve their community and love it when people bring them fun news stories to cover. Plus, who doesn't like a cute photograph of twins, triplets or more!

The launch of a new club is a great news story for your local area and events like sponsored walks and Christmas/Easter/Halloween parties can also make adorable pictures for a newspaper too.

Getting coverage in newspapers is great exposure for the club, it may encourage people to attend the club or it may help you secure a new building to meet in etc.

We've put together some draft press releases for you to use and tweak, these can be found in the appendix of this document. Below we have included some "top tips" for working with the media. If you have any questions at all about speaking to media or asking them to an event, please do get in touch with the Twins Trust Press Office on 01252 332 344 or email [pressoffice@twinstrust.org](mailto:pressoffice@twinstrust.org).

Even if you don't need our support, please do drop us a quick note if you're going to be in the paper. We love hearing about your achievements and often share them on our own social media pages too.

Here are a few little pointers to guide you...

## Contacting media

- ▶ Google your town/village and news eg "Oxgate News", as there may be more than one newspaper or website that covers the area. New online publications are being set up all the time so it's worth getting in touch with all of them.
- ▶ Many newspaper websites have a "Contact Us" section right at the bottom of their website page. Look for editorial contacts and if possible try to email a named person such as the News Editor

or Community News Reporter. If you can't find a named person, the general newsdesk email will be fine.

- ▶ Newsrooms are incredibly busy places, so keep your email brief and to the point. They'll be reading it fast! Don't forget to include a name and contact number in your email.
- ▶ Try to contact newspapers about 7-10-days before you'd like them to take pictures/attend an event. Emailing them the day before an event/photo-call means their photographers will more than likely be booked up and you may be disappointed. Emailing them too early means you might be forgotten.
- ▶ Don't be disappointed if they don't get back to you straight away. If you don't hear anything, wait a few days and then email the release again, but remember to remain friendly. Try something like "Hi, I was just wondering if you received my email the other day about our new Twins Club? We'd love you to come along and take pictures next Monday. I've attached a release we've written about the club, please do let me know if you have any questions."
- ▶ In the appendix we've written a draft press release about a new club setting up and a club hosting an event to help you on your way. This is only a guide - if you have any quirky details add them in. For example, if your founder is also a twin, if you have cousins in your club who both have multiples, if the event is being held to mark your 10th anniversary etc.
- ▶ Anyone who is named in the press release MUST be asked first and must read it before it is sent out. It's very important that everyone is happy to be quoted and has given permission for their name to be used.

## Speaking to Media

- ▶ Try to think of speaking to media as a friendly chat rather than an interview. If you'd like to do some practice questions, contact the Twins Trust Press Office for advice.



- ▶ Have a think about what messages you'd like to get across before you speak to the media. If you're looking for more members or you'd like sponsorship for a fundraising event, talk about these things in your chat with the reporter. Don't be afraid to mention them just because the journalist didn't ask a direct question about them.
- ▶ The best quotes that journalists want to use are the ones that come from the heart. Use your own language and way of speaking and you'll sound warm and sincere. For example, the time the club meets is something they'll write down as a fact and include in the article, but they won't quote you on it. But if you say things like: "I really love how welcoming the club is - we're good friends and we support each other whatever life throws at us" they're more likely to quote you as saying it. Good quotes make a lovely story!
- ▶ Never talk "off the record" or talk about other members of your club in specific terms. For example "We have a wide variety of members, including 12 twin mums" is okay but don't say "Gill Collins and her children Charlie and Eva love coming every week".
- ▶ If they ask you a question you don't know the answer to, be honest and say you don't know. Don't try to answer or guess as a wrong answer is much worse than no answer. You can say: "I don't know the answer to that but the Twins Trust Press Office may be able to help."

## Photography

- ▶ If you're hosting an event which would make good photographs like an Easter party or a sponsored Welly Waddle it is a nice idea to invite the media along to take pictures.
- ▶ Let families know that they're more than welcome to attend the event and not be included in pictures - you can point out families that don't want to be in pictures and ensure they're not included in group shots. It's important everyone in the group is aware the media is potentially attending, so a group text message or Facebook post is a good idea. However, it's also important people don't feel excluded just because they don't want to be in the newspaper. Invite them

along and point out it's okay not to be involved in the media part of the day.

- ▶ Think of interesting pictures the photographer might like to take and get prepared in advance. If the story is for the launch of a new club can you get lots of toys out so the children are happy and smiley? Is there a nice colourful background? Or if it's sunny, is there a nice (and safe) place to stand outside in the sunshine?
- ▶ The photographer may be rushing to another event and time will be precious for them - think carefully about what time you'd like them to come. For example, if you're making Easter Bonnets, invite them at the end of the event when the Easter bonnets are finished. This way they can take a lovely picture of the children wearing their hats rather than a photo of glue and cardboard on the table. If you're holding a sponsored walk have photos at either the beginning or the end of the walk. Don't expect the photographer to "just find you" halfway along the route.
- ▶ If your event is outdoors or in an area difficult to find, make sure you have your mobile on "loud" at the time they're due to arrive. They may struggle to get parked or find you and will need you to answer your phone.
- ▶ It may just be a single photographer who comes along or it may be a photographer and a reporter who come along. Each newspaper will have different resources available on different days.
- ▶ There are very few occasions when a photographer will come out to a cheque presentation. A picture of someone holding a giant cheque doesn't tell a story and isn't very interesting. But if you raise money doing a Welly Waddle, and the photographer can get a photo of twins splashing in puddles, this makes an excellent picture.

## And finally...

- ▶ Please don't be disappointed if the media promise to come but fail to turn up. News is unpredictable so they may have been called to an urgent job elsewhere.

- ▶ Be prepared for this happening and take along your own digital camera. You can still email them the photographs after the event and they may still wish to publish them.
- ▶ If you take your own photographs, don't forget to tell people you are sending them to a newspaper. Always ask permission to take pictures of children and adults.
- ▶ Local newspapers and radio stations love local people who have knowledge on a national issue. For example, we had lots of requests of local people willing to speak on local radio

when Beyonce announced she was having twins! It's possible the media will keep a note of your club's details and contact you in future. If you're happy to speak about the subject they're proposing, then take part! It can be another opportunity to promote your club. If you're too busy or don't feel comfortable talking about the subject they had in mind, politely decline but say you're happy to be approached again in future (if you are). Always tell them that Twins Trust has lots of statistics, information and resources for media and a team of spokespeople willing to talk to journalists.



# Making your club the best it can be

## Your club's purpose and supporting your attendees

A twins club can be a place, like no other, that families of multiples can reach out to for reassurance, support and a friendly face. There are so many benefits of attending a twins club; from meeting new friends and getting tips on what not to buy, to preventing social isolation and reducing the likelihood of PND. Below we have covered a few areas to consider, making sure your club is the best it can be for your members.

- ▶ Take yourself back to the moment you found out you were expecting twins, triplets or more and the huge range of emotions you went through and the enormous number of questions running through your mind. Lots of mums will attend your club when expecting their multiples and are likely to have many questions to ask and will love hearing everyone's experiences (unless it was terrible, maybe keep that one for another time!) If these mums have a positive experience at your club they are far more likely to feel comfortable coming back once their babies have arrived.
- ▶ It's great to share your experiences but always remember the group should not provide specific medical advice and should instead advise speaking to a medical expert.
- ▶ Those early days with your babies may be a blur now but I'm sure everyone can remember a moment where you could have used a supportive and friendly face making you a well-deserved cup of tea. Some mums may come to your club for a drink and a natter without a care in the world, but for others it may be that your club is first place they have visited for weeks as they may not have felt able to get out of the house before now. Remember to support your members, take the time to ask how they are getting on and how they are feeling and please refer them to any of our support services if you feel they could benefit.
- ▶ When expectant or new parents get in touch or attend the club for the first time take down their details. They may not be able to attend the club again straight away or regularly but they may appreciate some form of contact or a reminder about group once their babies have arrived or are a little older.
- ▶ Be supportive of whichever method parents choose to feed their baby, breast or bottle. Parents may have had negative advice regarding breastfeeding multiples. Encourage breastfeeding, let your attendees know that this is possible with multiples and that Twins Trust has



a lot of information about breastfeeding on the website [here](#). However, never pressurise your attendees to feed in a certain way or offer your own personal opinion on others feeding choices.

- ▶ Encourage expectant or new parents to bring any older pre-school age siblings to visit the group too. If the babies have not arrived yet this may help siblings understand further what is going to happen and it's also helpful if siblings are comfortable at the group and the location prior to the arrival of the babies so it makes it easier to attend once the babies are born. If the babies have already arrived it's a great safe place for siblings to play with other children whilst there are other adults to lend a hand with the babies if needed.
- ▶ Consider if you have anyone at the club (maybe a volunteer without children) that may be able to offer lifts to other families. Some new mothers may have had a caesarean and will not be able

to drive for some time so may appreciate the offer of a lift to the club.

- ▶ The club could consider keeping a stock of tiny baby clothes to lend out if people have very small babies - this saves families having to spend money on things they may not need but means they have access to them if they do need them.
- ▶ Twins, triplets or more are often born prematurely and some may need to spend some time in special care. The club may be able to help the family by offering support with older children or going into the hospital to visit. It can be very lonely and often worrying being in hospital for a number of weeks before or after having twins, triplets or more and the family may appreciate some friendly faces who understand and can offer support. Twins Trust booklet on Neonatal may be useful and answer some questions if this situation arises, the booklet can be found [here](#).

## Tips for your regular meetups

- ▶ Provide name badges to attendees. This can be as simple as writing names on a sticky label but it gives people more confidence to approach others that they don't already know.
- ▶ Introduce new members to others in the group that may have things in common with such as similar age multiples, other singleton children as well as multiples or even more than one set of multiples.
- ▶ If you have enough volunteers offer to make drinks for your attendees. All parents of multiples appreciate someone making them a drink and allowing them to drink it whilst it's hot, first time round with no reheating!
- ▶ If possible, try to have a dedicated area for those with young babies. This could be anything from comfy sofas with playgyms for the babies to a couple of chairs with a blanket laid on the floor. The important thing is to make it a safe area where new parents are comfortable putting their babies down without fear of them being trodden on by the older children playing around them.
- ▶ As well as toys to play with you could also consider having a quiet area where children can sit and look at books or a craft table with colouring or stickers etc.
- ▶ Encourage 'tidy up time', this way the children and some parents will help to clear the toys away leaving less work at the end.
- ▶ You may wish to include song or story time into your session, it's a great way to bring the group to a close and it also gives a perfect opportunity to make announcements to everyone whilst their sitting down about upcoming groups or events.
- ▶ Encourage parents to bring their childrens drinks bottles with them. This will save you washing up lots of little cups or throwing away plastic ones (think of the environment!) You can have a supply of washable cups for those occasions where parents don't bring them.
- ▶ Speak to local churches and see if they have any attendees that would like to volunteer and help at your club.

# Club newsletters

Club Newsletters can be really useful in keeping members up to date with what's going on in the club.

By having a newsletter members with younger children who can't get to every meeting and parents who used to be involved in the club and have less involvement now their children are older can keep up with what's happening.

It's an opportunity to ask for volunteers within the club to help with any upcoming events.

Newsletters can be a lot of work but if you are short of time you can keep them short and be flexible with the regularity with which they are sent.

If you opt to print your newsletter they can be expensive to produce with postage and photocopying - find out if anyone can help you with copying and try and get people who come regularly to meet ups to collect their copy.

The alternative is to produce an e-newsletter, which you can email to members. Many clubs send out their newsletters in this way now.

As when choosing a club name, the name of the newsletter should not be likely to cause offence and should reflect the area the club covers and the work the club does.

A disclaimer about the information content will stop people taking the information in the newsletter as advice from the club:

" \_\_\_\_\_ twins and multiple births group would like to point out that the items in the newsletter are collected from individuals and excerpts from newsletters etc. The views and suggestions are taken in good faith and are not necessarily endorsed by \_\_\_\_\_ twins and multiple births group. Likewise advertising or the use of a product name does not constitute a recommendation or endorsement by the group."



# Twins Trust

## support services

At Twins Trust we have a whole team dedicated to providing support for multiple birth families. Please familiarise yourself with all these services so that you can tell your members about them so they know where to find the appropriate support should they need it.

## Twinline

Twinline is a free service for anybody that is involved with the care of multiples. It is manned by trained volunteers who are all parents of multiples themselves. Whether you would like to chat about expecting twins, triplets or more, feeding, sleeping, crying, behaviour, starting school, embarking on the teenage years and beyond, or anything else multiples related - Twinline can provide the support families need. Sometimes just a listening ear from somebody that can empathise with your situation is all that is needed.

Twins trust.

**Twinline**

**0800 138 0509**

**Monday to Friday**

**10am to 1pm and 7pm to 10pm**

Or email [asktwinline@twintrust.org](mailto:asktwinline@twintrust.org)

## Courses

Twins Trust runs a range of courses for expectant multiple birth parents such as antenatal courses, preparing for parenthood courses and breastfeeding courses. We also run a number of online webinars to help on the parenting journey such as: preparing for parenthood, breastfeeding, weaning, parenting and behaviour, sleep, individuality and school appeals.

Please contact [support@twintrust.org](mailto:support@twintrust.org) for more information. A list of current courses and venues can be found [here](#).

As mentioned earlier in the document, clubs can benefit from group discounts on selected webinars when making group bookings of 10 or more. For more information please visit our clubs webinar web page [here](#).



# Breastfeeding peer support

Twins Trust has a team of NCT accredited peer supporters who have all breastfed twins and can offer mother-to-mother information and support to families who wish to breastfeed their twins, triplets or higher multiples. They have all completed the NCT's accredited peer support training. To have contact with a Peer Supporter, please email [breastfeedingsupport@twinstrust.org](mailto:breastfeedingsupport@twinstrust.org) and one of the team will contact you as soon as they are able to. The team are happy to contact you by phone, email or text.

This is a free service and all Peer Supporters are volunteers, they will aim to get back to you within 48 hours. If you need to speak to someone urgently please contact Twinline using the details above. This is a confidential service, and peer supporters will not share any of your personal details with anyone. To find out more about the scheme visit our breastfeeding peer support page [here](#).

## Honorary consultants

Twins Trust has a team of volunteer Honorary Consultants who are all qualified in specific areas: Teachers, Speech and Language Therapists, Educational Psychologists, Psychotherapists, Clinical Psychologists and Midwives.

They can provide free support and advice to families that are struggling with specific problems relating to these areas:

**Education** - together or apart, summer born, school admissions and appeals

**Speech and language** - expressive language, slow to start talking/unclear and difficulty forming sounds

**Educational psychology** - special educational needs and Education, Care and Health (EHC) Plans, severe learning difficulties and autistic spectrum disorders

**Family therapy** - severe behaviour problems including aggression, psychological issues between twins and parents including adolescence and parents suffering after the birth of their twins

**Midwifery** - specific queries regarding antenatal care.

The Honorary Consultants provide one off telephone support and advice and signposting to other resources. In some circumstances such as education they can also write letters of support on behalf of families to professional bodies such as local education authorities. Families requiring the support of an Honorary Consultant need to fill out the honorary consultants referral form, which can be found [here](#).



# 'Helping Hands'

Helping Hands aims to provide short term practical support in the home to families with twins, triplets or more that are in severe need or crisis. This crisis could have occurred as a result of parental bereavement or bereavement of a multiple, medical conditions, severe postnatal depression or mental health issue, or very serious behavioural problems.

Helping Hands supports families in many ways. For those that are eligible this may take the form of short term practical help and support by a Twins Trust

support practitioner. This service is run in conjunction with Norland Agency.

Qualified childcare professionals trained by Norland College kindly volunteer their time to help families in crisis. To be eligible families need to fit certain criteria and fill out a referral form which can be found [here](#).

## Support groups

Twins Trust provides support for specific families through its support groups. There are support groups for: special needs, lone parents, triplets plus,

grandparents and bereavement. Further information on how to join these support groups can be found [here](#).

## Twins Trust Bereavement Support Group (BSG)

Twins Trust Bereavement Support Group exists to support all parents/carers of multiples and their families who have experienced loss, whether it was during pregnancy, at birth or at any point afterwards.

Our support group offers parent-to-parent support via our befriending service, online resources and our private Facebook group.

If you have a family at your club that you think could benefit from bereavement support or you would like any further information so you are prepared and able to help a bereaved family, please visit our Bereavement Support Group web page [here](#) or contact [bereavementsupport@twinstrust.org](mailto:bereavementsupport@twinstrust.org).



**Twins Trust Bereavement Support Group**

**We're here for bereaved families**

**Bereavement booklet**  
Written together with bereaved families, our booklet includes information on the unique loss of one or more multiples, subsequent pregnancies and how to remember babies who have been lost.

**Newsletter**  
Families can sign up to the Bereavement Support Group newsletter, sent by email four times a year. These feature personal stories, details of our memorial meet-ups and fundraising news.

**Online support group**  
A special place where families are supported by others who understand the unique grief and challenges of losing one or more of their babies.

**Befriending service**  
Peer-to-peer support from parents and grandparents who have lost babies or children who are twins, triplets or higher multiples.

**For health professionals**  
For healthcare news and information about twins, triplets and more please register at [twinstrust.org/health-professionals](http://twinstrust.org/health-professionals).

[twinstrust.org/bereavement](http://twinstrust.org/bereavement)  
[bereavementsupport@twinstrust.org](mailto:bereavementsupport@twinstrust.org)  
01252 332344



**Twins Trust Bereavement Support Group**

**Support for bereaved families**

We support families and carers of twins, triplets and more who have experienced loss during pregnancy, at birth or any time after.

[twinstrust.org/bereavement](http://twinstrust.org/bereavement)  
[bereavementsupport@twinstrust.org](mailto:bereavementsupport@twinstrust.org)

# How your club can support Twins Trust

We've outlined above the ways in which Twins Trust can support your club, we'd love it if you could support us too! We've listed a few simple things you can do to help us at Twins Trust.

- ▶ Make sure your attendees are aware of Twins Trust. Let them know about the amazing work we do improving the lives of multiples and their families.
  - ▶ Encourage your attendees to use our services; whether they call Twinline, download a booklet or book onto a course, it all helps us.
  - ▶ Rave about our membership and the amazing savings you have made with our discount scheme.
  - ▶ Take the clubs copy of the Multiple Matters magazine to group and share it around.
  - ▶ Sell raffle tickets when it comes to the Twins Trust grand annual raffle.
- ▶ Fundraise for Twins Trust or consider splitting the proceeds of any fundraising you do for your club (if you can afford to).
  - ▶ Send us photos and updates about what your club is up to.
  - ▶ Follow us on social media and interact with our pages.
  - ▶ Tag us in your social media updates.
  - ▶ If you attend maternity units or hospitals hand out some Twins Trust flyers or put up a poster (we'd be happy to provide you with some).

**Twins  
trust.** We support  
twins, triplets  
and more...

**REGISTERED CLUB**

Twins Trust: Registered Charity Numbers:1076478 and SC041055. Registered Company Number:3688825.