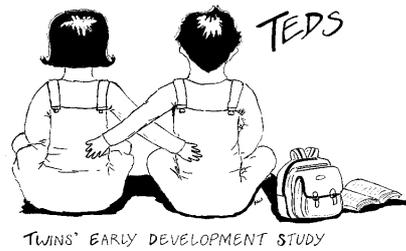


TEDS



NEWS

TEDS Research Centre, 113 Denmark Hill, FREEPOST LON7567 London SE5 8YZ FREEFONE 0800 317029

TEDS: the early years

In September TEDS reached a milestone as its first five years came to an end. *Your response has been fantastic - thank you all for your help and interest.* Over this period we have been in regular contact with over 16,000 families whose twins were born between 1994 and 1996. We have taken over 9000 phone calls, received over 76,000 completed booklets, made over 700 home visits and we're still going strong! We are still receiving the four-year booklets for the youngest children, and expect to be busy visiting a sample of families well into 2001. We are proud to tell you that in a recent review of research into children's development in language and thinking, TEDS was identified as the premier of its kind. It is by far the largest study of twin early development ever undertaken.

Results....Results....Results....

Learning Language: TEDS is helping discover how children learn new words and grammar. TEDS has discovered many links between the two, and also that language learning influences non-verbal development (for instance doing jigsaw puzzles).

General progress: One of the most interesting aspects of development is the way that children's language, thinking and behaviour mature at the same time. The picture that seems to be emerging in TEDS is that the development of language and thinking skills

are closely related. We are now exploring the idea that some behaviour problems may arise from a child's difficulties with language and thought.

Parents' questions: We are collaborating with the Multiple Birth Foundation to find out the things parents often want to know such as 'Should my twins be in different classes when they go to school?' or 'Does it matter if my twins are dressed alike?' We don't know the answer to the first question because the younger TEDS twins are only just beginning school. However if you are wondering about this, both TAMBA and the MBF publish a useful booklet called *Twins in School* which may help you in making this decision. In terms of dressing alike, with our big sample we are able to look at tiny differences.

The overall message is that it does not seem to make much difference in the early years. Our next step will be to see if dressing twins alike as they grow older has greater impact on their development.

POPULAR NAMES

BOYS

1. Thomas
2. James
3. Daniel
4. Jack
5. Matthew

GIRLS

1. Hannah
2. Charlotte
3. Rebecca
4. Sophie
5. Emily

We have over 30,000 twins' names on our data base. We thought that you would like to see some of the most popular.

Stop Press!

Parents with twins born in 1994 who are also in Year 2 at school will hear from us soon. We will tell you more about the seven-year study and invite you to take part. Meanwhile, if you want to ask us about it, give us a call.



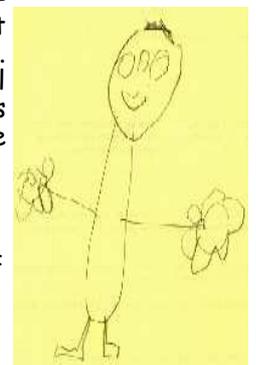
TEDS: the school years

As our new logo suggests, school is an increasingly important influence in the lives of the TEDS twins - and their parents! Adjusting to school is one of the biggest challenges children ever face so we are delighted to have been given funding from the Medical Research Council to extend the study into these interesting years. We hope to follow up all twins in the study around their seventh birthday when they are in Year 2 at school. This time round we plan to gather our information over the telephone and give parents a well-earned rest from filling in booklets. We plan to interview both twins and a parent. This will give us an overall picture of the twins' development in language, thinking, and social behaviour now that they are older. We will

also be asking parents' permission to contact their teachers for information about how they are getting on in their education. Teachers' reports are vital in getting a full picture of children's achievements. Also, as some of you may be finding, children can be very different at home and at school!

Younger Siblings:

We need your help for an important part of TEDS. We would like to be able to look at the twins and their younger brothers and sisters at the same age. We already have more than 800 younger siblings taking part but we would love to have more. You will be invited to complete the same booklets as you did with the twins - but only once! **If you would like your younger children to take part, please call our freefone line.**



More findings.....

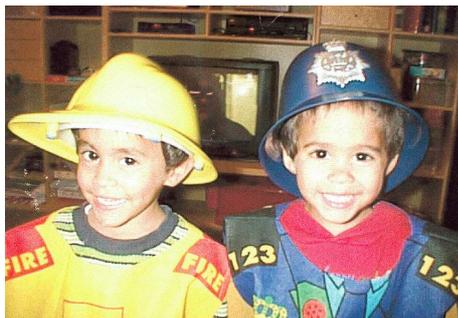
Other studies: TEDS also includes several smaller studies looking at particular aspects of children's development. Our environment study looks at how children's behaviour is influenced by home, school and the neighbourhood they live in. A wealth of information has been gathered in from twins and their parents at four years. Reception class teachers are completing forms with an incredible 90% response rate so far! Key areas include levels of support from family and friends and tracking the health and experiences of the parents and twins across time by filling in a life history calendar.

We also have other projects looking in greater depth at children's emotional maturation, nutrition and language development, as well as ones focusing on twins with a range of special needs.

What do all these findings have to do with me?

The information that you have given us has been well used and is changing the way that we think about early childhood. A lot of research tells us how children grow and change on average. We want to understand how and why some children differ in their development and why some have difficulties that make life hard for them and worry their parents. The focus of TEDS is the issue of nature (the characteristics we inherit from our parents) and nurture (our environments such as home or school). Looking at twins means that we can begin to tease out the different contributions made by inherited and environmental factors. We need a big sample of twins to make sure that our results are reliable and that we represent the whole range of development. TEDS is also one of the few major twins studies to include non-identical boy and girl twin pairs. This is important for us in learning about the ways that boys and girls develop differently. TEDS has published eight papers in some of the most prestigious scientific journals and there are twelve more to come out soon. TEDS is a basic science research project that asks big questions about the causes of common problems in child development. Some problems do seem to be influenced by our biological inheritance, but our research suggests that this does not mean that difficulties will definitely occur. Environment and genes work in close co-operation, each affecting the other. If we can understand what happens in more detail, it will help us all to understand ourselves and our children better. We will all gain too if TEDS research leads to us being able to prevent problems from happening in our children's development.

This is just a small sample of our results. If you want to know more, do ask to go on to our publications mailing list.



USEFUL CONTACTS

Multiple Births Foundation (MBF):

020 8383 3519 (Day) -

<http://www.multiplebirths.org.uk>

Twins and Multiple Births Association (TAMBA):

Twin Line: 01732 868000 (Eves/wknds)

<http://www.tamba.org.uk>

Twins Club:

This club has been set up by parents of twins and multiples and aims to build an on line community for such families. Unlike many twins web sites, it provides UK specific information

[Http:// www. twinsclub.co.uk](http://www.twinsclub.co.uk)

Parent Line: 0808800 2222 (9 - 9pm wkds, Sat 9.30 - 5, Sun 10 - 3) - offers support for all those looking after children

<http://www.parentlineplus.org.uk>

And now that the twins are in school:-

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE): 0207 354 8321

(wkds 2 - 5) - helps parents in dealing with the education system.

Department of Education Parents' website:

<http://www.parents.dfee.gov.uk> - gives information about your child's education and how you can help.

The **International Society for Twins Studies** can be found at: www.ists.qimr.edu.au - lots of really good links to twins-related websites.

The **10th International Congress on Twins Studies** will be held in London on 4 - 7th July 2001. Further information from: jwgowing@netcom.co.uk

And finally, **Adult twins** sometimes ask us if there is any way that they can get involved in research. Volunteer twins for adults registers run from: St Thomas' Hospital: 0990 77 00 99

Institute of Psychiatry: 020 7848 0890

It is very important to us that we stay in touch with you. Please let us know if you have changed your address or phone number by filling in this slip and returning it to us at our FREEPOST address, or by ringing us on our FREEPHONE number. (Both at top of newsletter)

----- CUT HERE ----- CUT HERE -----

Your name.....Your twins' names.....&.....

Your old address.....

Your new address.....

Postcode.....Telephone.....