



Heidi Schleider, working mother of three-year-old twins, Owen and Noelle

# Multiple Reasons to Appreciate Kindred Spirits

by Libby Carty McNamee

**N**o one ever said motherhood is easy, but for mothers of multiples it can be doubly or even triply more difficult. A reliable support system of people who truly understand the stresses can make all the difference in the world for such overwhelmed mothers. And who could possibly understand better than other women in the same situation?

The desire to share the challenge of having multiples led to the birth of Southside Area Mothers of Multiples, better known as "SAMOM," and its sister organization, Richmond Area Mothers of Multiples, "RAMOM." SAMOM's President Heidi Schleider, working mother of three-year-old twins, comments, "Once I had Owen and Noelle, I was excited to try to attend a SAMOM meeting to meet some other multiple mommies. SAMOM has meant friendship and countless hours of support without being judged, since we're all pretty much going through the same thing." She continues with a smile, "I also love

knowing that now I'm doing something in SAMOM that is helping new moms get the same support that I was so happy to get almost four years ago."

Joy Prickett of SAMOM publicity and stay-at-home mother to twin three-year-olds Bradley and Hannah stresses, "It's not easy to have more than one baby at a time! We love to reach other moms who are looking for the type of support we offer." She notes, "Even though those early days are really tough, the need for support doesn't stop as your children grow older. I know I'll be able to count on support from experienced moms in the future. We have members who are expecting multiples and members with multiples in college!"

Latonya Humphrey, working mother of two-and-a-half-year-old twins Grant and Cayman raves, "SAMOM is great! I used belong to an organization with annual dues over \$300, but for a tenth of that I get so much more from SAMOM. The daily listserv e-mails, semi-annual sales, lovely June picnics,

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Latonya Humphrey, working mother of two-and-a-half-year-old twins Grant and Cayman

working mom happy hours, and the friendships are priceless!"

Even if you don't have multiples, nothing can top SAMOM's semi-annual "Everything for Kids" yard sale. The next one is scheduled for Saturday, September 27, from 8-11am at Manchester Middle School, located at 7401 Hull Street Road in Richmond. This gigantic yard sale features gently used infant/children's clothing, shoes, maternity clothing, equipment, bedding, toys, books/CDs, and more. The merchandise is organized by size, gender, and type of item. Over 50 families sell items, and SAMOM members get to shop the night before the sale. President Schleider adds, "I'm very excited to shop at the fall yard sale because I need to stock up on baby supplies again. We're having a baby. Yes, it's just one this time!"

Please refer to SAMOM's Web site at [www.samom.com](http://www.samom.com) for details on membership, monthly meetings, various support groups, online resources, and yard sales. Everyone with multiples is welcome to join the club—expectant mothers, those with kids anywhere from birth through the teen years, as well as both working and stay-at-home mothers. Just come and be understood. **V**

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