



## Scholarships for Twins!

- Eastern Michigan University in Ypsilanti, Michigan - The Furlotte Twins Endowed Scholarship is for upperclassmen enrolled in the College of Education Elementary Education Program.
- Sterling College in Sterling, Kansas - Each twin receives a 50% tuition scholarship.
- North-Eastern Oklahoma A&M College - Miami, Oklahoma. This scholarship covers semi-private living expenses for twins who attend.
- The Twins day Festival in Twinsburg, Ohio offers a \$1,000 scholarship to high

## Introduction

Welcome to the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the Michigan State University Twin Registry (MSUTR) Newsletter! Your participation in our research is invaluable to understanding genetic and environmental influences on a range of behaviors. Thank you for being a part of this important research!

The 6<sup>th</sup> edition of our newsletter has many exciting features. First, we describe some recent results from our child twin study. Next, we discuss the Twins Day Festival. You will also notice a section about college

As always, please feel free to contact us about anything in the newsletter or about our studies in general. We are always eager to hear from past participants and welcome any suggestions for improving our work.

Sincerely,

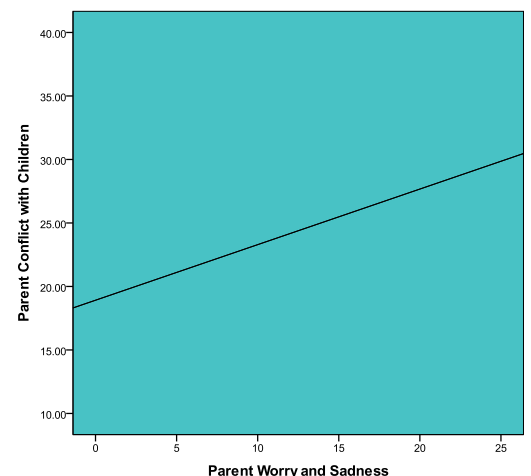
Drs. Alex Burt and Kelly Klump

(Directors of the MSUTR)

## Research Findings from Our Studies!

The MSUTR researchers were interested in exploring some of the factors that influence parenting and used data from the child twin study (which involves twin pairs between the ages of 6 and 10) to investigate. In particular, they examined how a parent's feelings of sadness and worry may be related to parenting. The data used came from parents' reports about their feelings of sadness and worry, and also parents' reports about their relationship with their children. As seen in Figure 1, there is a significant association between feelings of sadness and worry and the parent-child relationship. Parents who reported feeling more sad and worried also reported higher levels of conflict in their relationships with their children. In addition, parents who felt increased levels of sadness or worry reported that they are less involved with their children. The same pattern of results was found for both mothers and fathers

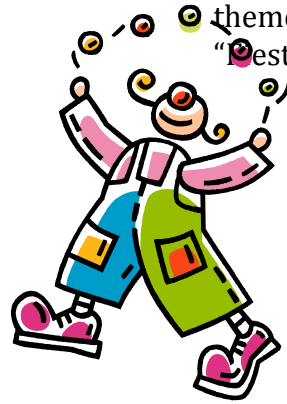
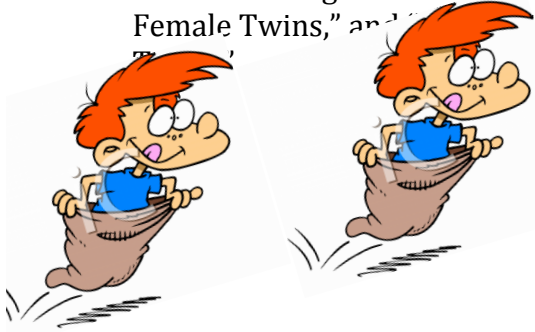
that there is an important association between the way that parents are feeling and the relationship that they have with their children. Parents are often juggling many competing demands, which may increase stress. Our results suggest that parents who are feeling less stressed may have a more positive relationship with their children; therefore, it's important for parents to take care of their own emotional wellbeing. One way parents can take care of their children is by taking good care of



# The Twins Days Festival!

The Twins Days Festival takes place the first weekend of August in Twinsburg, Ohio. The Festival is welcome to all multiples – identical, fraternal, twins, triplets, quadruplets, of any ages! The weekend is filled with field games, raffles, a parade, dancing, karaoke, fireworks, and talent shows!

- Twins Contests are held on Saturday and Sunday of the festival! The contests recognize registered twins, triplets, and quadruplets on a number of categories, such as "Youngest Twins," "Most Alike Female Twins," and "Most Like Male



- The Twins Days 5K run/walk takes place on Sunday morning. Over 300 runners and walkers participated in the event in 2008! Prizes are awarded for the top three twin teams, individual males, and individual females.
- This year the Festival takes place August 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>. The theme for 2011 is "Circus." Past themes include "Western," "The 50's," and "Fiesta!"

Spotlight on...

## Mirror Image Twins!

Mirror image twins are monozygotic (identical) twins that form from a single fertilized egg. When the split occurs late - more than a week after conception - the twins can develop reverse asymmetric features. This term is not really a type of twin, just a way to describe their physical



For example, they may be right and left handed, have birthmarks on opposite sides of their body, or have hair whorls that swirl in opposite directions. In theory, if the twins faced each other, they would appear to be exact reflections of each other. About 25% of identical twins are mirror image twins!

## Our Current Studies

1 Female Twin Study of Hormones and Behavior: This project investigates changes in ovarian hormone levels and behavior across the menstrual cycle, and whether these associations are influenced by genes, in female twins ages 16-22.

2 Michigan Twins Project: This is a twin registry for twins between the ages of 3 and 25 living within lower Michigan. Families complete a brief questionnaire that assesses family composition and the health status of both parents and twins. The study can be completed online or via a mail-in questionnaire.

3 Twin Study of Behavioral and Emotional Development - Child: This study examines relationships among genes, mood, peers, family relationships and acting out behaviors in same-sex and opposite sex twins ages 6-10 years old.

4 Twin Study of Mood, Behavior, and Hormones During Puberty: This project investigates the influence of hormonal, genetic, and environmental factors on a range of psychological characteristics

If you are interested in study 1 or know someone who is, please contact us at:

[msutr@msu.edu](mailto:msutr@msu.edu) or call (517) 432-3665

If you are interested in study 2 or know someone who is, please contact us at:

[msutr@msu.edu](mailto:msutr@msu.edu) or call (517) 432-5604

If you are interested in study 3 or know someone who is, please contact us at:

[burtlab@msu.edu](mailto:burtlab@msu.edu) or call: (517) 355-6878

If you are interested in study 4 or know someone who is, please contact us at: