

Multiples

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Lisa Mollenkamp of Redford and McGinty both had taken fertility drugs because of prior miscarriages.

Parenting twins is hard, but "a wonderful experience," Palalan said. "I wouldn't change it for the world."

Twins have 'little mother'

Mollenkamp and her husband, Brian, have four children, the oldest of which are 8-year-old twins, Andrea and Brandon.

"Because they are boy and girl, many people don't know they are twins," said Lisa Mollenkamp, 32. "Sometimes I forget they were both born the same day."

"Andrea is the little mother. She likes to plan things for them. She keeps an eye out." Brandon is easy going, a bit shy and fond of sports. They are devoted to each other, but have many separate friends.

At Vandenberg Elementary School in Redford, Andrea and Brandon are in the third grade and are assigned to different classrooms.

"Every one of their teachers have been just exactly what they needed," Mollenkamp said.

To help keep track of permission slips, notes, projects and special school days, Mollenkamp purchased bulletin boards for each child.

Other Mollenkamp siblings are Jordan, 6, a first-grader, and infant brother, Evan.

Brian Mollenkamp is an executive at a home medical equipment company. Lisa is a homemaker. Both are active in their church and Lisa also volunteers at a homeless shelter for women and children.

Both try to make special time for each of their children. Family members have been helpful.

"There were always arms available," Lisa said. "I do treasure those times."

Becoming individuals

As children get older, they want to assert their individuality. Andrea and Brandon don't like "together" birthday parties.

Palalan, too, has encouraged her twin daughters to develop their own tastes. They don't dress the same. And, like the Mollenkamps, they have blossomed by being in different classrooms. Palalan makes sure Lisa doesn't get overlooked. All three girls attend Eagle Elementary School in West Bloomfield.

Mollenkamp and Palalan look for ways to economize. Both have traded used clothing. Mollenkamp shops at the Eastern Market in Detroit for bargains on fruits and vegetables and spaces out shopping trips for back-to-school supplies. She takes her children to Wayne County Health Department clinics, where immunizations are free.

Both Palalan and Mollenkamp receive discounts from their pediatricians for their twins.

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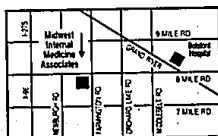


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Open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Dr. Cykiert is a graduate of the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, and Dr. Katzman, a graduate of the University of Osteopathic Medicine and Health Sciences, Des Moines, Iowa. Dr. Cykiert and Dr. Katzman completed their internships and Internal medicine residencies at Botsford General Hospital.



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