

# Double Take

By Deborah Goldman

**T**he first time I took the twins to Tanglin Mall, it was a major event. Gracie screamed all the way there before finally quieting down in the car park, while Jessica let rip the second we stepped into Cold Storage.

The sight of a screaming baby clinging to a harrassed mother *should* be enough to keep even the boldest intruder at bay, but the interested parties we encountered appeared completely undeterred.

"Coochee coochee coo" they whinnied at my distressed and now puce daughter.

I smiled through gritted teeth and patiently answered each of their questions. "Yes, they are twins. Yes, they are both girls. No, I don't think she is hungry – why, are you supposed to feed them?"

Now, whenever I leave the house, every baby-obsessed aunty we encounter sees fit to manhandle my children, pepper me with questions and offer unsolicited pearls of wisdom.

On such occasions I've conjured up all manner of obscenities in my head, from the mildly offensive to the downright vulgar, but good manners have thus far prevented me from actually expressing them.

When my husband took the girls to Vivo City (by himself), however, it was quite a different story when he ran into a gaggle of salivating aunts.

"Where's Mummy?" one of the gaggle shot at him.

"In rehab," he responded.

"They look hungry," opined another.


"It's okay we're just on our way to Burger King," James replied.

"Coochee coochee coo" said the third, while jamming her podgy fingers inside the pram to prod a wailing Jessica.

"Sod off!" blurted James, causing the astonished aunts to beat a hasty retreat. That's what having only two hour of sleep will do to a man. In retrospect, he feels he may have been a little harsh. I, on the other hand secretly applauded his victory. Parents: One. Aunts: Zero.

Given the large number of multiples born in Singapore – in part (apparently) due to the large number of embryos being implanted during IVF treatment – it's a constant wonder that my girls are such a source of interest to other people. It's hard

enough raising twins, without the constant attention they attract. Thankfully there is a haven for mums of multiples. Twins Plus get-togethers are where we mums (and sometimes dads) come together to share our experiences; for example, comparing the number of minutes we managed to sleep the previous night, or the number of nappies we've changed, or the number of aunts we swore at that week.

Meetings are held every last Wednesday of the month at Camden Medical Centre and you can always guarantee double or even – on occasion – triple trouble. 



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