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I'm Out Numbered; How do I Cope with Two Young Children

by HEATHER on FEBRUARY 7, 2011 · [VIEW COMMENTS](#) · in [FAMILY LIFE](#)



Early Days

What do you do when you feel outnumbered? How do you cope? How do you make life easier when two young children are clamouring for your attention?

Janice Howe* asked these exact questions. After a gruelling 12 hours of labour and a night in the hospital, she brought home daughter number two. As she walked through her front door, Howe stared into her newborn daughter's face, remembering the fun she had caring for her first child. What she hadn't yet realized was this time she would be doing it with a three-year-old tornado tearing around her house.

"I knew how to handle Abigail and I remembered how to look after a newborn; but I had no clue how to do both at the same time," says Howe, mother to Abigail aged three and Angelina aged one. "I was completely ill-equipped. The exhaustion. The constant need to be on. The demands of a baby and a toddler. I felt lost. And I had no idea where to turn for information."

When pregnant for her first time Howe read books with titles as varied as *"What to Expect When Expecting"* to the *"Girlfriend's Guide to Pregnancy"*. After her first daughter was born she attended parent/infant drop-in groups and read many pamphlets and brochures that explain stages. All of these helped Howe negotiate those critical first few months of motherhood.

However, what is in abundance and convenient for first time parents is lacking for those with more than one child. Information with practical tips on how to care for two children is missing. Parents, while familiar with infant care, have new situations that must be negotiated.



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