

Christie Mewis and Carol Franklin are mirror twins, meaning they developed reverse asymmetrical features





The Twin Connection

An inside look at
the bond between
identical twins.

Katy twins share
their inspirational
stories.

Written by Kirsten Cornell | Photography by Lindsey Shelburne

As the crowd cheered and the dust settled, 8-year-old Christie Mewis stepped up to the plate and readied her bat wanting to win another hometown softball game. Back in the dugout, her twin sister Carol suddenly grabbed her cheek, jumped to her feet, and shrieked, “Ouch!” Seconds later, Christie was struck in the eye by the pitch.

The connection between twins is unique and undeniable. Stories about twins feeling emotional and physical pain even though they were separated by miles, states, or even oceans, are quite common. They enjoy a type of closeness beyond what most siblings experience. “We get closer each year that passes,” shares Christie. “I appreciate that she is always there for me. No matter the situation or the time of day, I can always depend on her support.”

A Special Bond

For 9-year-old twin sisters Amorie and Mackenzy Meadows, being in tune with each other’s feelings is nothing new. “Once when Amorie was in Mexico and I was in Texas, I knew she did not feel well and was crying, so I asked my mom to call and check on her. I was about 4 years old,” recalls Mackenzy. “She was so sure that something was wrong, so I called and sure enough, she was crying,” confirms mother Bethany Geiman. “It was strange because she had not spoken to her at all that day, yet she knew.”

Deanna Wygal, mother of 13-year-old twins Devin and Dylan, remembers an instance when she was downstairs with Devin watching a TV program about twin telepathy, which prompted her to ask Devin if

he knew what Dylan was thinking who was upstairs. When he replied no, she asked him what he was thinking about. “He told me ‘donuts,’ and we just laughed about it,” Deanna says. A few minutes later when Dylan came downstairs they told him about the program and asked him what his brother Devin had been thinking about. “He just said I was crazy,” laughs Deanna. “When I asked him to just guess he replied, ‘I don’t know mom, donuts.’ Devin’s eyes just went wide, donuts was such a random word and had no meaning to him.” Devin had been sitting with his mom the entire time and had no contact with his brother prior to the conversation.

“We can tell what each other wants to do or say without speaking a word. It is actually weird sometimes - I can just give her a head nod and she knows exactly what I’m talking about.”

- Christie Mewis

Some twins often experience Idioglossia, more commonly referred to as “twin talk” - a seemingly secret language understood only by the twins themselves. “When we were younger, we made up code words and a secret language just to pick on my mom,” shares Carol Franklin with a laugh. “The more confused she got, the more fun we had with it.” Even when mirror twins Carol and Christie tried to let their mom in on their conversation, she still found it difficult to understand and was unable to participate.

“We are always on the same brain wave,” shares Christie. “We can tell what each other wants to do or say without speaking a word. It is actually weird sometimes - I can just give her a head nod and she knows exactly what I’m talking about.” Carol agrees, saying that with simple eye contact, she can understand exactly what Christie is feeling in that exact moment. “Now we have a sort of unspoken twin language. We can read each other from a pause in conversation, a tiny sigh, or a sarcastic comment. It drives my husband crazy when we’re together,” she says.

Deanna also remembers when her boys were younger, they would babble back and forth in intense conversation, understanding perfectly what the other was saying. “They are very close, and we can see that they have a special bond,” she shares.

Double the Fun

In addition to double the toys and a person to share closets with, identical twins relish the fact that they

Devin and Dylan Wygal both play football for Cinco Ranch High School



Amorie and Mackenzy Meadows love playing outside together



always have a pal they can count on nearby. "I always have someone to hang out with. We are best friends," shares Dylan. Both students at Cinco Ranch Junior High School, the boys enjoy football, basketball, fishing, and paintball, share the same tastes in music, and run with the same circle of friends.

"Being a twin is awesome. There are more clothes, more candy, and less work," says Mackenzy. "We both love to play outside, visit our grandparents, and play with our baby brother Coby," Amorie adds.

Being look-alikes can certainly pose its advantages, especially when it comes to sharing in a good-natured prank. "We tricked our teachers one year on April Fool's Day by switching classes," Dylan says with a grin. "They didn't even notice until they were told what we had done."

For Christie and Carol, their hands-down favorite thing about being a twin was being born with their best friend already in place. "I always have a partner in crime," shares Christie. "She always has my back and is my number one protector." Besides having someone she could depend on, Carol appreciates the fact that her sister inspired her to be a better person. "She pushed me to go outside of my comfort zone and to accomplish things that I was scared of doing."

Challenging Comparisons

Being treated as an individual is often a challenge for twins. People often compare them and lose sight of the fact that they are not a match set but a pair of individuals defining their own paths. "Many times, I would have to really sit back and contemplate if I wanted to do something because I really wanted to or because Christie did," recalls Carol.

"It can be difficult when one of us does better at something than the other," says Devin. "And when people compare us," adds Dylan.

Carol remembers being asked questions such as "Are you the pretty one or the ugly one?" "Are you the smart one or the dumb one?" "Are you the good twin or the evil twin?" "I would politely answer that I was the smart, good twin," she says. "Christie would say that she was the pretty smart, evil, athletically gifted twin."

Competition between them, while somewhat healthy, often proved stressful at times. "We turned everything into a competition," says Carol, admitting that they still contend although it is much friendlier now. "It helped us excel in sports, but it was also very tiring. No matter what I accomplished, I always felt like she outperformed me. It was difficult to handle at times."

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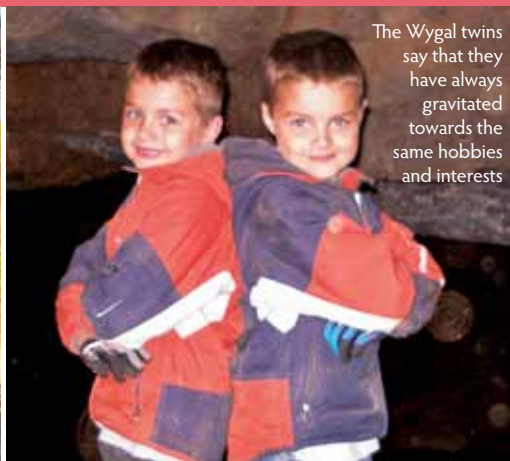
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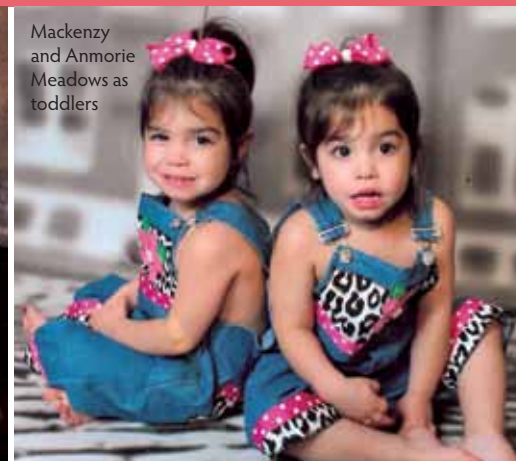
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One of Christie and Carol's favorite things to do together is run adventure races



The Wygal twins say that they have always gravitated towards the same hobbies and interests



Mackenzey and Anmore Meadows as toddlers



Amorie and Mackenzey love combining their birthday into one huge party



Christie and Carol, named after A Christmas Carol, were born on Christmas day

“As a twin it is a challenge to make sure that we are both happy and equal,” shares Christie. “Although I always know that she would be happy for me, I also want her to feel like we have the same opportunities to be successful in our lives.”

Unbreakable Bond

Beyond the built-in playmate and despite double the clothing to put away on laundry day, all agree that growing up as a twin is a unique experience providing tremendous benefits. “We appreciate that we are always there for each other,” Devin and Dylan agree. “If one of us is having a bad day or has a problem, we are always there to help each other get through it.”

“My sister is willing to stop whatever she is doing in my time of need. But I most appreciate the fact that she just lets me be me,” says Carol. “I am always there to defend her, protect her, cheer for her, and love her.”

“I can always make her laugh when she is having a bad day,” Christie says with a smile. “And she would drive around the world and back just to make sure that I am happy.” **KM**



KIRSTEN CORNELL is the associate editor for Katy Magazine and has always been fascinated by twins, especially her fraternal twin cousins, Rebekah and Courtney.

Twin Trivia

Fun facts you may not have known about twins!

- 22% of twins are left-handed while the general population is only 10%.
- There are actually seven different types of twins: identical, fraternal, half-identical, mirror image, conjoined, superfecundation, and superfetation.
- Identical twins do not have identical fingerprints.
- Only about 25% of twins are mirror twins, meaning that they reflect each other's physical attributes.
- Twin language happens when one twin models the disordered or incorrect speech of the other, leading to both twins using the same grammatical or speech sound errors.