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Ella's son and his twin sisters. Photo courtesy of Dr Ella Rachamim.

Double trouble? Help is at hand

By Cathy Young

We are all aware of the recent baby boom but is East Finchley in the grip of an increase in multiple births? It's said that there are four sets of twins in Creighton Avenue alone.

"I used to be a celeb in the park for having twins," says Dr Ella Rachamim, "but now it's rare for me not to see another set of twins whilst out and about."

Ella, a local paediatrician, is aware of the joys and pitfalls of having twins; for a start there is twice the likelihood that the mother may suffer from post-natal depression. She runs antenatal classes for prospective parents tailored to both single and multiple births. These include advice and support from a midwife, physiotherapist, breastfeeding counsellor and a maternity nurse.

Parenting in the round "We focus on more than just the birth," she says. "We cover topics like practical parenting, basic first aid, dealing with crying babies and issues around emotional support and post-natal depression. We look at all aspects of feeding, not just breast feeding."

As well as these courses, Ella offers free online resources about local health and childcare professionals, support groups and organisations.

Her own experiences as a mother of a toddler and twin girls led her to set up her courses, supporting all prospective parents whether expecting single or multiple births. She has strong links with the Whittington, Royal Free and Barnet hospitals and is on the committee of the Finchley Twins Club.

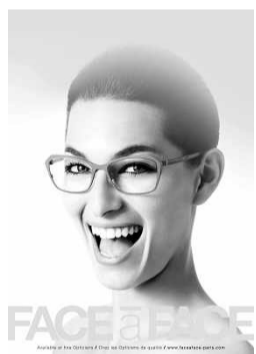
Her next set of courses starts on Sunday 13 October (two Sundays and two weekday evenings) and cost £290 per couple. And if you happen to be another set of parents-to-be of twins, there is a special full day programme for you on Saturday 21 September. For further details see www.bereadytoparent.com or contact ella@bereadytoparent.com or 07977 939721.

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Be part of this year's Christmas Festival

By Diana Cormack

Last December East Finchley's first Christmas Festival took place on the High Road and it was a resounding success. Some stallholders ran out of stock, shops and eating places saw an increase in trade and the many seasonal activities and entertainment provided were much enjoyed. In addition, £1,500 was raised for local charities.

Even the weather was perfect, bringing a holiday atmosphere to the thousands who came. In fact, it was the weather which brought about this new festival, since the annual East Finchley Community Festival had been cancelled in the summer because Cherry Tree Wood field was waterlogged.

It was hard to believe that such a successful event had been organised in only a few weeks by the East Finchley Community Trust and a group of volunteers.

Now you have the chance to get involved in this year's

Christmas Festival, due to take place on Saturday 7 December. Bring your ideas and suggestions to the Barracuda Café, 118 High Road at 6.30pm on Wednesdays. Local businesses are especially welcome to come along and contribute to something which could well help their Christmas trade. The next meeting is on Wednesday 4 September and thereafter fortnightly. Fund raising this year will be in aid of children's charities yet to be chosen.

Call 07983 360 834 or visit www.iloven2.co.uk/ for more information.

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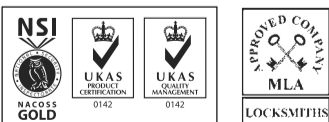
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