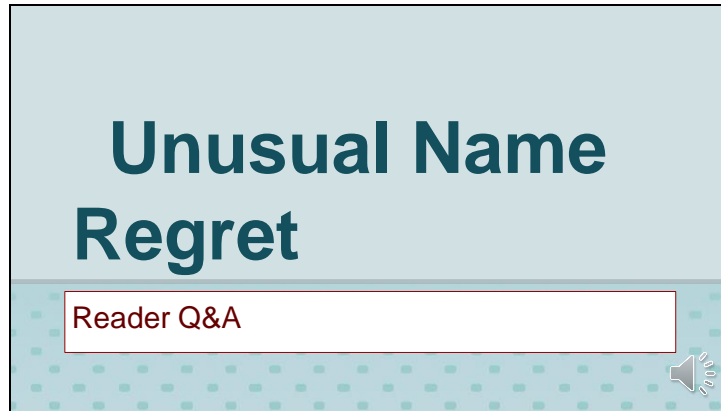



Slide 1



**Unusual Name  
Regret**

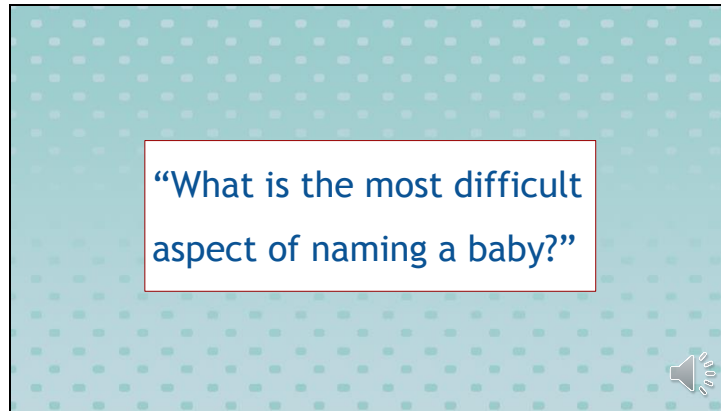
Reader Q&A



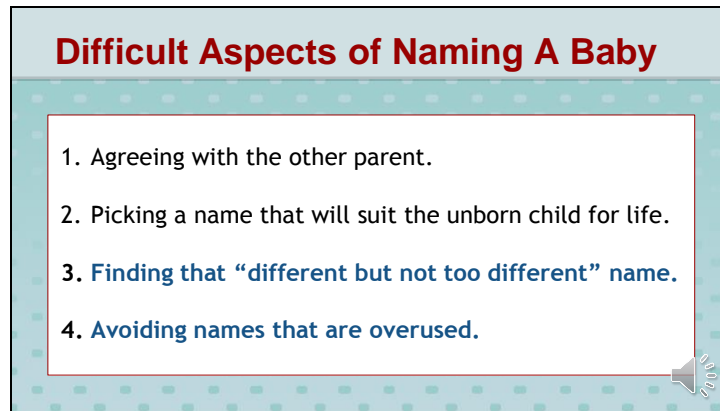
The slide features a light blue background with a darker blue patterned border at the bottom. The title 'Unusual Name Regret' is centered in a large, bold, dark blue font. Below the title is a white rectangular box with a thin red border containing the text 'Reader Q&A' in a dark red font. A small speaker icon is located in the bottom right corner of the slide.

So many parents say they want a name that is different for their child. Today I am going to talk about when a parent regrets an unusual name.

Slide 2



One question I like to ask Upswing Baby Names email followers is this: “What is the most difficult aspect of naming a baby?” I am fascinated by the responses, and recently I got an answer that would resonate with many of you. Before we get to that...



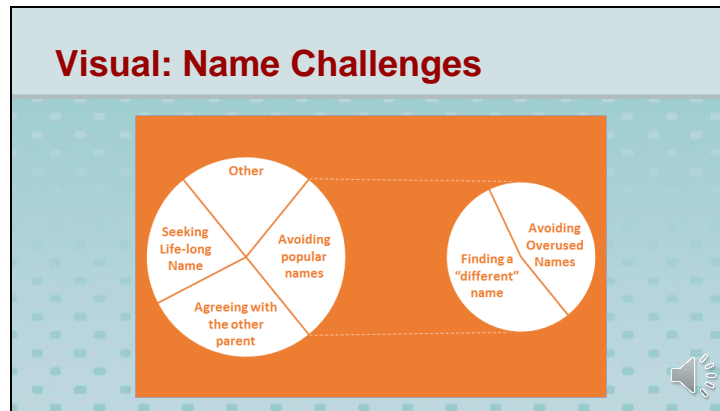
### Difficult Aspects of Naming A Baby

1. Agreeing with the other parent.
2. Picking a name that will suit the unborn child for life.
3. Finding that “different but not too different” name.
4. Avoiding names that are overused.

Let's review readers' top responses to this question (this at the time I'm recording this in May 2014).

Please note that this is a question I ask of all new email followers and the order of these could change slightly as more readers respond over time.

The top responses were agreeing with the other parents and picking a name that will suit the unborn child for life, but at a close third and fourth were finding a different but not too different name and avoiding names that are overused.



Here you can see there isn't a huge variation among readers' top name challenges. What is really telling is when those looking for the different but not too different name are added to those concerned with overused names. I felt there was a subtle distinction and therefore differentiated between the two, but both groups were concerned with popularity. While there may be disagreement among the two groups over how unusual a name should be, I combined these groups to create a new group of readers who wish to avoid popular names. Here's what's really fascinating... The group of readers wishing to avoid popular names, is about equal to readers who cited the top challenge: agreeing with the other parent. And one of the readers who tried to avoid a popular name, has regrets... She has graciously agreed to share her story.

Slide 5

The most difficult aspect for me is finding an attractive unique name that doesn't sound contrived. I have 5 kids and two have common names...


Caleb was not common when I named him 16 years ago, but became so later.

Jaiden was named by his father. I only agreed to it because it was the least awful of all his choices lol. It wasn't common where we lived at the time, but since moving states we've discovered he often has friends in his classes with the same name... Something I strove to avoid!

Joelle is unique. I love it.

Kyan was unique when we chose it 9 years ago, but is gaining popularity. Urgh.

*Continued...*



Here's what a reader, Maddie said in response to the question: What's the most difficult aspect of naming a baby. [Read slide]

## Slide 6

...Continued

Cheyra is unique, but it borders on contrived to me, as I altered the spelling so it wouldn't be like a town we live near.


I've since found it to be just as common as Jaiden, which I swore I'd avoid.

My favourite name was Mia when she was born, but there were 5 babies named Mia on the maternity ward, and one in special care nursery where we were, so I decided against it.

I regretted my decision and now she goes by two names...

Hubby can't come to Mia, (though that was his one choice throughout the pregnancy) because for three days we called her Cheyra before I said, nope, I don't care, I still like Mia...

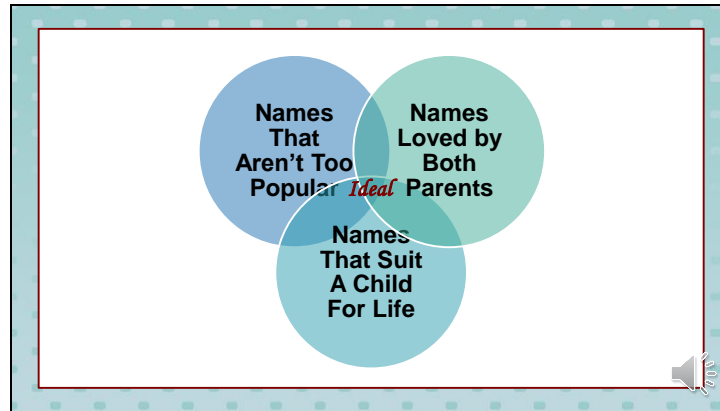
5 years on he can't get past it. She is both Cheyra and Mia at school and answers to both. We are afraid we are creating an identity crisis for her!



Read slide



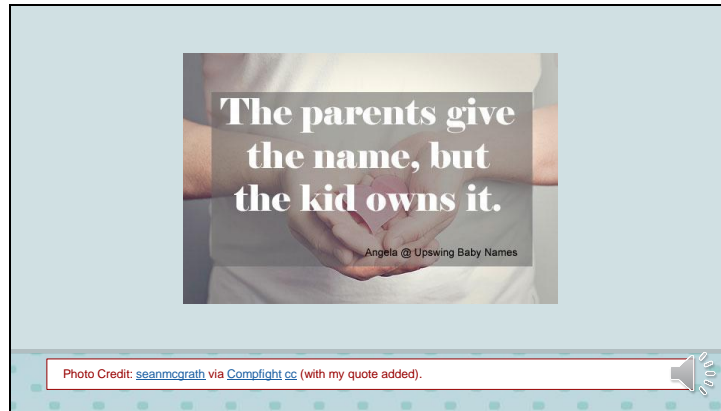
I asked Maddie for her daughter's full birth certificate name and learned it is: Cheyla Mia Cate [and then the last name which I omitted for privacy]. Mia Cate is what Maddie wanted to call her before she realized there were too many Mia's out there and Cate is a variation on a family name, Catherine.



From Maddie's' letter, I've noted that she also struggles with other top reader challenges: agreeing with her partner and finding a name that will suit her child for life. There are only a small number of names that meet all of the top three criteria: meaning they aren't popular, they suit the child for life, and are loved by both parents. And here is where there can be some conflict. In an effort to avoid a popular name, this reader regrets that she picked a name that may not suit her daughter for life.



Slide 9




Chey-la-Mia's age is an important consideration here... I have said this before... "The parents give the name, but the kid owns it." And I feel this is true by age 5. With that in mind, my opinion is that a 5 year-old's feelings should be considered. Next I'm going to suggest some options, but Cheyla-Mia should buy into one of these options.

**Option 1**

**Status Quo:**

*Continue calling the child Cheyla and Mia interchangeably.*



There are so many options, but I want to start with options that involve the least amount of change and then introduce increasing levels of change. The first option is the status quo. The advantage to this is that it requires no effort of course, but the disadvantage is that this might be disappointing to Maddie. Before we dismiss this option outright though, I would like to add my impression of the name Cheyla. I don't feel it's an unbearable name. It's not one of those extremely odd names that causes double-takes. And the nickname, Chey, is really cute. The only downside is the spelling. If someone was considering this name for an unborn child, I would encourage using a more conventional spelling, but I wouldn't change the spelling now that the child is 5, especially if she has started writing her name. What makes Cheyla wearable is that it has something in common with many other stylish names...

**-yla Names**

- **Lyla:** 2,210 births (all birth numbers are for 2012 in the US)
- **Kyla:** 1,110 births
- **Nyla:** 945 births
- **Myla:** 773 births
- **Skyla:** 596 births




That is the -yla ending. There are several names like this in the US top 1000, such as: Myla, Kyla, Lyla, Nyla, and Skyla. This is based on the most recent year for name statistics, which was 2012 when this was recorded. Note that the top ranking names, Lyla, Kyla, and Nyla have been holding steady while Myla and Skyla have been going up in popularity the past few years. This suggests that Cheyla would fit in...

**Option 2**

**Drop the First Name:**


*Stop calling the child Cheyla and call her Mia exclusively.*



... of course this might be more disappointing to Maddie. This reinforces what Maddie mentioned in her letter about Chelya feeling just as common as her son's name, Jaiden. That leads us to option 2, which is dropping Chelya and calling her daughter Mia exclusively. Based on what Maddie wrote, I think this would be her first choice, however, it doesn't sound like her husband would be on board with this.

**Option 3**


**Stop Using the Middle Name:**  
*Call the child Cheyla exclusively.*



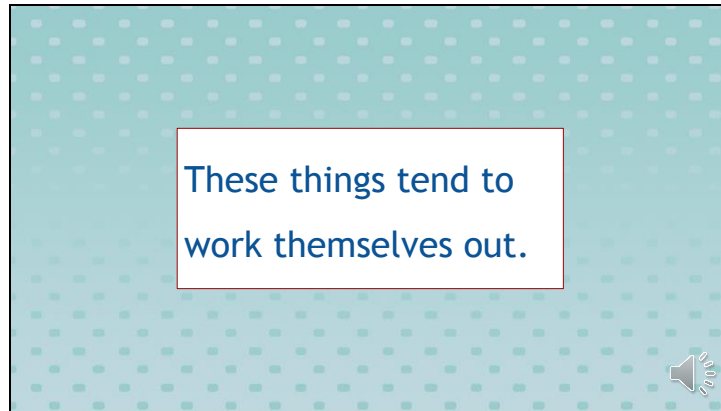
The most conventional option would be to simply call the child by her first name and stop calling her Mia. This would be almost as easy as the status quo, but might be disappointing to Maddie. However, now that the child has been living with her name for 5 years, the child's feelings are just as important as Maddie's.

### Unrealistic Options

- Always using both names together (Cheyla-Mia)
- Changing the spelling of Cheyla.
- Using the second middle name: Cate.
- Making an official name change.



The following options would be too much of a disruption for a 5 year-old, in my opinion. I've considered the first option, consistently using both names, but as I say them together in this presentation, I don't feel they roll off the tongue well. If Maddie disagrees, then this might be the ideal solution, but if she finds it awkward, I would avoid it. A spelling change might be possible, if Cheyla-Mia isn't writing her name, then, but since she's in school, there is a good chance she is learning to spell her name. Mia Cate is very pretty, but now that her daughter is 5, I don't think it will stick. And since it's hard to predict which name will stick, I wouldn't make an official name change. With an official name change, there's disagreement among those who have gone through it over how much hassle is involved. I've heard from people who say it's no big deal once the paperwork is filed, and other people say it's a huge inconvenience because they are required to provide paperwork for their old and new names in some situations, such as getting a passport.



I can understand Maddie's concern about her daughter having an identity crisis. But until her daughter starts to complain or express her name preferences, I would stick with the status quo for now. Most likely, what will happen is that one of the names will get dropped in time, based on what sticks. Which name sticks is up to Cheyla-Mia but she will be influenced by family, friends, and peers, which leads to my next point.

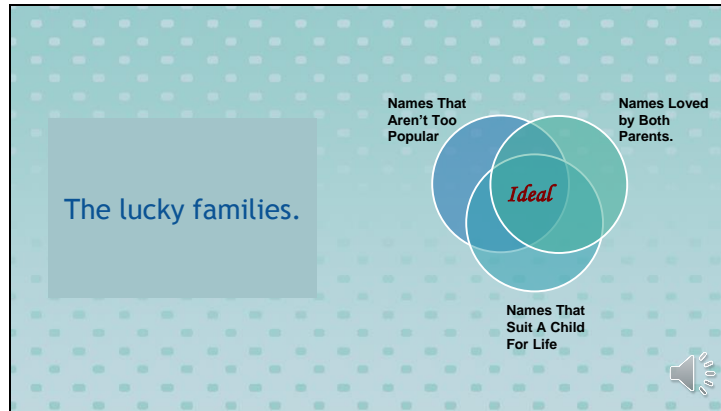
“At school, when teachers & kids ask for your name, what name do you give them?”



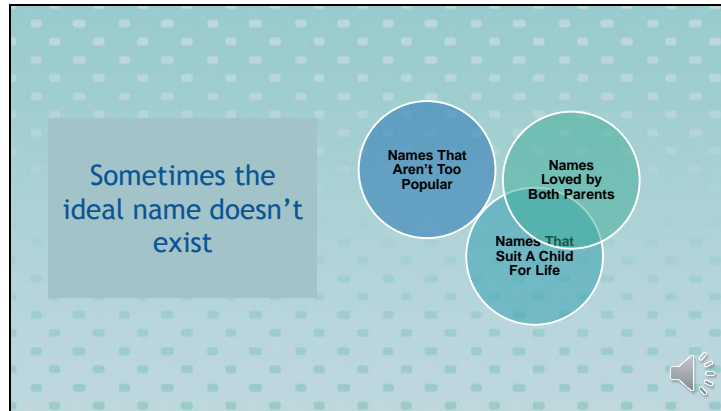
Photo Credit: Shutterstock (The girl in the photo is not Cheyla-Mia)

Cheyla-Mia’s identity might accommodate both names or it might not, but now that she has started school I suggest simply asking Cheyla-Mia what name she uses to introduce herself to classmates and teachers. I would gently suggest that using one name might be less confusing to her classmates. This might give some insight into whether or not Cheyla-Mia prefers one name over the other. Her teacher may have some insight into whether or not using both names has caused confusion at school. If she is using both names at school without any problems, then I wouldn’t worry about it. By the way, that little girl in the school bus is NOT Maddie’s daughter. It’s a Shutterstock image.

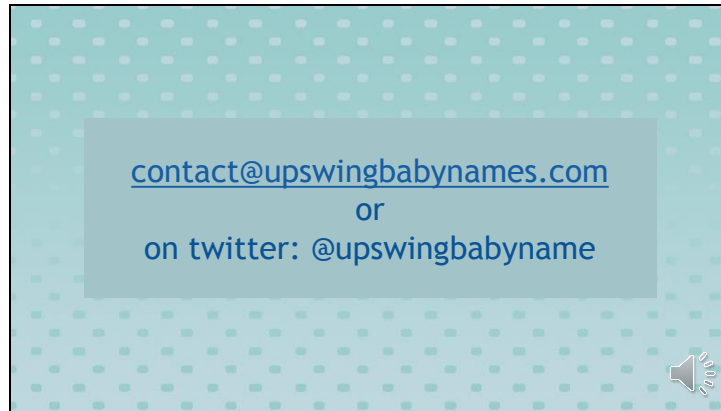




Some of us are lucky and have open-minded partners. But most expectant parents aren't so lucky.



I've learned from working with families to solve their name dilemmas that usually the ideal doesn't exist. The ideal being a name that meets all of these criteria: they aren't popular, they suit the child for life, and are loved by both parents. The names that are loved by both parents and suit a child for life, often end up becoming popular names for those very reasons. Unique names are appealing, but common names have their selling points too.



I would love to hear other's comments on unusual name regret. If you have experienced unusual name regret feel free to share your story in the comments. If you want to contact me, you can use email or twitter. And if you liked this video, please share it with your friends. Thanks for joining me.