

Paper currently submitted for publication:

Sperm and Egg Donors' Experiences of Donating and of Being Contacted by Their Donor Offspring

Tabitha FREEMAN¹, Vasanti JADVA¹, Wendy KRAMER², Susan GOLOMBOK¹

¹ Centre for Family Research, University of Cambridge, UK, ² Donor Sibling Registry, USA

Abstract

Aim:

This study presents data on the donation experiences of a large sample of sperm and egg donors and is the first to include donors who have been contacted by children conceived using their gametes.

Method:

Online questionnaires were completed by 63 sperm donors and 11 egg donors recruited via the Donor Sibling Registry; a US-based international registry that facilitates contact between donor conception offspring and their donors.

Results:

Donors' main reasons for donating were financial payment and wanting to help others. The age of first donation ranged from 14-42 (mean=26). Although the majority (91%) felt very happy or content about having donated and were comfortable discussing this with others, several concerns were raised. In particular, 30% were concerned about the wellbeing of any children conceived using their gametes and 27% were concerned about not being able to make contact with them. 71% felt it was important to know how many offspring were conceived using their donation, and half wanted identifying information. 31% of donors had been in contact with their offspring, all of whom reported positive experiences.

Conclusion:

The donors in this sample had positive experiences of donating and wished to know about any children conceived using their gametes. Whilst the sample may not be representative of all donors, this study highlights the importance of donors having access to information about their donor offspring and the positive consequences that may arise when contact is made.