



Adoption Council of Canada
Conseil d'adoption du Canada

Position Statement

Access to Information by Donor Conceived Adults and Donors

(October 18, 2010). The Adoption Council of Canada (ACC) believes that all individuals have the right to know their genetic and biological origins, and that all individuals have the right to know adult children to whom they are genetically or biologically connected. This includes individuals created through the donation or sale of egg, sperm, or embryo along with people born of gestational surrogates, or created via any other reproductive technology. Likewise, it includes individuals who have donated or sold eggs, sperm, or embryos, or acted as a gestational surrogate. Failure to recognize these relationships can cause psychological and physical harm to human beings created through both donor conception and surrogacy, and their genetic family members.

While recognizing the complexities surrounding third-party conception and assisted reproduction, the ACC will use the term donor conceived adult or individual in this document in reference to any individual created through donated or sold eggs, sperm, or embryos, and those created by gestational surrogates. Similarly, the ACC will use the term donor parent to refer to those who have donated or sold their sperm, eggs embryos, or uterus for the sole purpose of creating a child for another individual with whom s/he is not in a relationship.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child recognizes in Part 1, Article 8 the right of the child to preserve his or her identity, including nationality, name and family relations. In accordance with the UN position, the ACC believes that every donor conceived individual has the right to his/her original identity including his/her medical and ancestral history. Furthermore, every donor parent has the right to know the name of his/her donor conceived adult child. The ACC recognizes that every individual has the right to search for and approach genetic and biological relatives free from government interference. Should both parties agree, the ACC supports the rights of donor conceived individuals and their donor parents and other genetic and/or biological relatives to associate freely and without restriction.

The ACC holds that:

- Every donor conceived adult has an unqualified right to truthful information about his/her conception and biological and/or genetic donor parent(s.) This includes the name(s) of the genetic and/or biological donor parents and any social and medical background information on file with the fertility clinic/doctor or government registry.
- Every donor parent has an unqualified right to know truthful information about his/her genetic/biological child. This includes the name of the adult child and any

social and medical information about the adult child on file with the fertility clinic/doctor or government registry.

- Genetic siblings and grandparents have an unqualified right to truthful information about a donor conceived adult to whom they are related. This includes the name of the adult donor conceived individual.
- Adult direct descendants of donor conceived individuals have an unqualified right to truthful information about their genetic and biological ancestors. This includes the name(s) of the original donor and social and medical information on file with the fertility clinic/doctor or government registry.

The ACC recognizes that while donor conceived adults, their descendants, and donor parents have an unqualified right to identifying information about family members, they also have a right to maintain privacy. No individual has the right to meet or form a relationship with another individual without that individual's consent.

The ACC believes it is the responsibility of the Canadian government, in cooperation with all fertility clinics, to create, support and adequately fund a national registry for donor conceived adults, legal parents of donor conceived children, donor parents or, genetic and biological siblings and grandparents of donor conceived individuals, and direct descendants of donor conceived individuals. It is further the responsibility of all fertility clinics to save in perpetuity all records pertaining to donor conception that identify donor parents and connect them with their genetic and biological children. Fertility clinics must make this information available to donor conceived adults, donor parents of donor conceived adults, or a government-appointed body upon request.

The ACC believes that families built on openness are more healthy than those maintaining secrets. To this end, the ACC believes that all donor conceived individuals have the right to truthful knowledge about their conception and birth, and to learn this information as children from their legal parents in an age-appropriate manner.

Questions?

Should you have any questions about the ACC's position, please do not hesitate to contact us via email: info@adoption.ca