

July 2010

We are the parents of 2 children born using donor conception. Our son is 22 years old, and our daughter is 19. The children know about their conception, but unfortunately we can tell them nothing about their genetic heritage, as we know nothing ourselves.

We would ask that you try to imagine what it must be like for us, not being able to answer any questions that our children have about their biological parents. The Sydney gynaecologist who helped us to have children gave us the gift of being able to be a family with 2 wonderful children, but unfortunately was of the 'old school' and told us no details about the donors except that they were 'white Caucasian' – no physical characteristics, no career details, and most importantly, no medical history. He also advised us to tell no-one, including our children, and pretend that we were both the biological parents – in effect, to live a lie. We could not do this, and it would have been detrimental to our children to even try to lie to them throughout their lives. Children are highly perceptive, and it would also be highly likely to come unstuck at some stage due to increased use of DNA, etc. The other unfortunate aspect is that this doctor has since retired, and has informed us that he has destroyed all the records relating to the donor insemination. Our one and only hope of accessing information which is considered to be a fundamental right for all other groups of people in Australian society is therefore a voluntary register.

We ask that the Committee recommends that the Federal Government enacts legislation to give all Australian Donor Conceived People the right to have access to all available information on their donors.