

The Fertio Manifesto

Let's talk about *family,* *donors &* *the future*



EUROPEAN
SPERM·BANK

We're becoming **Fertio** —
because we are more
than a sperm bank.
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It's time to change the conversation

In today's world, more and more people need help in creating the family they dream of. Whether their reasons are choosing solo motherhood, being a same-sex couple, or facing declining fertility, we know how life-changing it can be to get help from a sperm or egg donor or preserve their own fertility.

We believe this needs to be talked about more openly.

With our 20+ years of experience in donor conception and fertility preservation, and our commitment to the UN Global Compact, this manifesto is our contribution to starting more conversations.

We hope that you will join us in speaking up and fostering a better understanding of different ways of creating families today and in the future.

Best,

Annemette Arndal-Lauritzen


CEO, European Sperm Bank

Soon to become Fertio

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All
family
forms
are equal



Families come in all shapes and sizes – whether it's single parents, hetero couples, or LGBTQ+ couples. Every family deserves equal dignity and respect.



What we believe

Embracing diversity is the bedrock of an open society. Every family is unique and should have the same opportunities and recognition, no matter its structure. We believe that love, care, and support are the essential elements that make a family strong and healthy.

Why it matters

People may still raise eyebrows in some places over donor-conceived families. In certain parts of the world, this lack of acceptance can lead to discrimination. This is why we speak up for the right to form exactly the kind of family you dream of.

Embracing all family types fosters inclusivity, reduces stigma, and promotes equality, ensuring that every family can thrive without fear of judgment or exclusion. By advocating for equal respect, recognition and opportunities we help create a society where all families can flourish and contribute to a more compassionate world - now and in the future.

It's a donation, — *not* a relation

Deciding to donate is about giving the gift of life - not becoming a parent. Clear boundaries set the stage for healthy, straightforward expectations.

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What we believe

Donors help families, but they are not father figures or extended family to the children they help bring into the world. This distinction is important to avoid misunderstandings and unrealistic expectations.

Why it matters

Donors contribute to families worldwide without obligations or rights concerning the children. Likewise, parents and children have no obligations or legal rights toward the donor. This principle is fundamental to donor banks and protects everyone involved.

Some donors are concerned that the donor-conceived family may regard them as father figures, leading to unrealistic expectations never intended by the act of donation. Donors also often have their own families, which need to be respected.

Therefore, donors have an important choice to make. As an ID release donor, they agree to have their identity disclosed to donor-conceived children once they reach legal age. Choosing to be a No ID release donor means that we don't disclose their identity. Either way, there are no commitments.

We help both donors and families understand this relationship and navigate accordingly. We also commit to being available for the children in the long run, should they seek more information.

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Whether you are one, two or more parents, you're a family. We stand with the many strong and independent people who choose to start a family on their own.

*One
parent,
two
parents,
or more*

What we believe

Single women or men who choose parenthood on their own deserve recognition, support and equal rights. One loving parent supported by their community is a great foundation for raising a child.

Why it matters

Many people long to start a family when they either haven't found a partner yet or choose not to have one. In a world where blended families are increasingly common, this has become more usual.

Studies show that children who grow up with a single parent are just as well-functioning as those with two parents. What matters to a child's well-being is not the number of parents or their gender, but that the parents are loving, supportive, and responsible.

Openness fosters *healthy children*

Openness is essential to the well-being of donor-conceived children. Talking about the donation as a natural part of their life story helps them thrive in life.

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What we believe

The question "where do I come from?" is a universal theme for everyone - donor-conceived or not. Typically, the older we get, the more we wonder about our heritage. Donor children will naturally wonder about this, too. That's why it is so important to be open with the child about their donor conception.

Why it matters

Research shows that it is crucial for the well-being of children to be informed early that they are donor-conceived. This applies to children from both ID release and No ID release donors. We believe that telling the child about its conception shouldn't be a one-time, life-changing event, but a continual and ever-evolving conversation. Parents should start at the age of three or even earlier. However, this practice has not always been common. In the past, families were advised not to talk about it, so many still keep donor conception a secret. As a result, many donor-conceived people have grown up unaware of their origins, leading to psychological trauma and conflicts.

Same-donor
children
are *genetic
relations*
— not half
siblings

A donor may help several women and couples around the world create their own unique families. Although the children are genetically related, they are not part of the same family.

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What we believe

We don't see children from the same donor as half-siblings. In our view, interpreting donor conception this way can create unnecessary worries or disappointment.

Why it matters

Most donor-conceived children will be genetically related to other children conceived with the same donor. For some, these genetic connections are valuable for understanding their identity and origins, while for others, they carry less importance.

We believe these connections should be viewed as genetic relations, not as half-siblings or part of a large family. Recognizing that there are other children from the same donor is a natural aspect of being donor-conceived, but framing it as part of a family can create unrealistic expectations or worries for those involved.

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Our commitment doesn't end when a child is born or a donor stops donating with us. We're here to support families, donor-conceived individuals, and donors at every life stage.

Lifelong
support and
commitment

What we believe

Our services have a life-long impact on the donor-conceived person, their family, and the donor. We see it as our responsibility to support and offer resources - not just at the time of the donation and conception, but throughout the lives of everyone involved.

Why it matters

We live in a world where more and more people choose donor conception or choose to become a donor. For everyone involved, it is a journey and a process that raises different types of questions and dilemmas compared to traditional family setups. Choosing donor conception and being a donor is a choice for life. As the child grows up, or the donor starts a family of his own, new questions may arise. With our 20+ years of experience, we have the extensive knowledge and experience to support all those involved in donor conception.

Fertility *preservation* — is part of the solution for many

**In a world of declining fertility rates,
we must create better conditions for
people to have the family they dream
of, whenever they are ready.**

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What we believe

We believe everyone should have the chance to have children when they are ready. Fertility preservation can make this more likely. While it offers hope, it doesn't guarantee outcomes; it provides a chance to overcome barriers to parenthood.

We need to educate future generations about how age affects fertility, with fertility starting to decline in the mid-20s. We also suggest more support for young people who want to have children while studying or early in their careers.

Why it matters

The global decline in fertility rates requires diverse strategies. Providing information and creating better conditions for fertility preservation should be part of the solution. This approach empowers women and couples by expanding their options and enhancing their chances of having the number of children they dream of. It also has the potential to reduce the need for fertility treatments and the challenges they bring. Most importantly, it increases the chances of having healthy children.



Join the conversation

Different paths to family-making need more discussion and understanding. Join us in starting conversations to raise awareness.

Discover more at fertio.com

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create healthy
children and
speak up for an
*open-minded
society.*

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