

CoParents.co.uk

Survey Results

Connection Services: Relationships
Between Donors And Parents To
Be

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Introduction

CoParents specialise in introducing and connecting couples as well as individuals who are looking to create a family or help others to create one.

In order to find out more about the relationship between sperm donors and parents to be, CoParents conducted a survey, which was uploaded and promoted online. The survey was designed to find out more about the perceived and actual relationships between sperm donors and their recipients.

The questionnaire went live between July 2014 and August 2014 and received 134 complete responses. The following information detailed below highlights the key findings.

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About The Respondents

The first section of the questionnaire asked respondents to answer questions about themselves, including their gender, location, and whether they have received or donated sperm in the past.

Key findings

Respondents:

- The majority of respondents were female (53.7%), compared to 42.5% males, whilst 3.8% preferred not to state their gender
- The most popular age of respondents to complete the survey were aged 42 or over (60.2%), with those aged 18-21 being the least popular (0.75%)
- 71.43% of respondents were based in England, 15% from Scotland, 6.7% from Wales and 1.5% from Canada

Sperm recipient/donation overview:

Females:

- 5.55% of females between the full age range (18-42+) have previously been a recipient of sperm donation
- Reasons for receiving sperm donations included being part of a heterosexual couple with male fertility issues (half of respondents) and single females who wanted a baby (half of respondents)
- In contrast, 93.05% of females between the ages 22-42+ have never received a sperm donation
- Reasons provided for the above include not needed to, not agreeing with the process, or stating that they would prefer to adopt

Males:

- 12.28% of males between the ages 22 - 42+ have donated sperm previously
- Reasons provided for the above actions included to help others start a family and to earn money whilst studying
- In contrast, 84.21% of males between the ages 26 – 42+ have never donated sperm
- Reasons for the above include 73.68% indicating that they have never felt the need to donate in the past, and 5.26% stating that they don't agree due to moral, ethical or religious reasons

Sperm Recipient & Donation Responses

The questionnaire was split into four sections to look at females who have received or never received a sperm donation and also males who have donated or never donated sperm.

Here is an in-depth look at the major findings from these four categories.

Females - Received Sperm

- Of the females who have been a recipient of sperm donation (5.55%), half of them have used a sperm donor before
- 100% of this sample would be happy to use a sperm donor again in the future, which shows that females feel comfortable with the process of sperm donation in making a difference to their lives

Characteristics and locating a donor

- The primary characteristics recipients looked for when choosing a suitable donor broke down into the following:
 - ½ chose health (mental or physical)
 - ¼ chose wealth
 - ¼ chose intelligence

This indicates that health is a top priority when choosing a sperm donor.

- Three quarters of the representative sample found a sperm donor through a sperm bank, whilst a quarter found a donor through an online connection service. This highlights that traditional sperm banks are the preferred choice for women, however, they might not be aware of online connection services as a legitimate option.

Perceptions and donor involvement

- Half of this sample believe that there is no stigma attached to using a sperm donor, whilst the other half preferred not to answer the question

- The same statistics apply to how involved respondents feel the sperm donor should be during the pregnancy stage; half stating they shouldn't be at all, and half choosing not to answer the question
- Interestingly, half of the respondents stated that they would like the donor to be involved in the upbringing of the child
- Also, three quarters of the sample also said that they would want to know the donor as a person

This highlights recipients of sperm, whilst not conclusively, are tentative to the idea of the donor being involved during the pregnancy stage. This is the stage where the relationship between the recipient and their partner or between the recipient and their unborn child is at its strongest, and shows that any third party involvement could potentially be disruptive.

However, this is different when the child is born. From the statistics above, you can see that more recipients are keen for the donor to be involved in the child's upbringing, and even more would like to know the donor as a person – this highlights the growing need for online connection services such as CoParents.

Females - Never Received Sperm

- 93.05% of females between the ages 22-42+ have never received a sperm donation
- Reasons for the above include 4.47% not agreeing with donation, 82.08% claiming they don't need it, and 4.47% stating they would rather adopt – there is a possibility that these figures would change if someone who has never received needed sperm in the future

Perceptions and donor involvement

- 17.91% of those who have never received sperm believe that there is a stigma attached to those who donate or receive sperm, in contrast to 70.14% who feel there is no stigma attached
- 41.79% of those who have never received a sperm donation believe that the donor should have no involvement in the child's upbringing
- In context, 76.11% of respondents in this category don't think that recipients should be able to request support from the donor

- 37.31% of respondents would prefer to meet their donor if they ever needed sperm in the future, compared to 50.75% who would prefer not to meet their donor

The majority of those who have never received sperm would not want to meet their donor if they ever needed sperm in the future.

This further highlights the attitude between those that do receive sperm and those that do not and the relationship and involvement they'd like to have with their donor.

Males - Donated Sperm

- Those aged 42+ (57.14%) are the largest group to have stated that they have donated sperm
- Out of the 12.28% of males between the ages 22 - 42+ who have donated sperm, six out of seven respondents stated that they have donated more than once before.

This highlights that a donor is likely to donate sperm on more than one occasion, which is further emphasised in the following statistics:

- 85.71% of this sample have donated sperm 1-3 times previously, whilst 14.29% have donated 4-6 times
- 71.43% would be happy to donate again in the future, in contrast to 28.57% who would not be willing to

Perceptions and donor involvement

- Just under half of this sample stated that they feel there is no stigma attached to donating sperm, whereas just over half did not answer the question
- Although the overall sample is relatively small, none of the respondents stated that there was a stigma attached to donating, which shows that male donors are comfortable to provide sperm and help others start a family
- 85.71% of males stated that they would not expect to meet the recipient before they donate

- 85.71% of donors stated that they did not feel as though they should be expected to support the mother-to-be in their pregnancy plan as well as during the child's upbringing
- When asked if the recipient requested that the donor was involved with the child's life from birth, 42.86% of donors said they would oblige, compared to 57.14% who stated that they would not
- Responses for the above question included, donors preferring not to be known, and because they feel they have helped with conception as opposed to the wellbeing of the child

The statistics highlight that there are still issues with regards to the role of the donor and their involvement during the donation, pregnancy and upbringing stages. Both parties come into the equation in this instance, because even if the donor would like to be a part of the child's life, the recipient might not want this to be the case.

This is where connection services can help to build these relationships so that each party is more likely to gain what they want out of the situation.

Males - Never Donated Sperm

- Those aged 42+ (72.92%) are the largest age group to have never donated sperm
- The main reason males stated as to why they have not donated sperm before is because they have never felt the need to (87.5%), whilst 6.25% stated that they don't agree with it
- Interestingly, half of those who have never provided sperm before said that they would donate if donations were low in their local area, compared to just under half who would not donate under these circumstances

This highlights that if sperm banks or connection services marketed or advertised more regarding a dearth in samples, then it's likely that men who have never donated before will be more inclined to do so in future.

Perceptions and donor involvement

- Nearly three quarters of those who have never given sperm believe that if they did donate, they should not be involved in the child's life from birth

- Three quarters of those who stated that they would provide sperm if donations were low in their local area also stated that they would not expect to be involved in the child's life from birth
- Those who have never donated before, but said they would do so if donations were low in their area where asked if they would expect to meet the recipient beforehand - 100% said they would not expect to meet them
- The majority of males in this category did not have negative perceptions towards those that have donated sperm in the past and overall they view this as a positive process in helping others

This reflects a different mindset between those who want to donate and those that don't in relation to their overall involvement with the recipient.

Those giving sperm are more inclined to be involved with the child at the request of the recipient, whereas those who have never donated before feel more strongly about not being a part of the child's life.

This is where more could be done to help educate and explain the process of sperm donation, so that people's attitudes and perceptions who have not donated before can change.

Key Takeaways

From the survey's findings that CoParents have uncovered, here are some of the most relevant statistics to take note of:

Females

- 100% of females who have received sperm from a donor would be happy to use a donor again in the future - which shows that females value the process of sperm donation in making a difference to their lives
- There are different options available for those looking to receive sperm donation - three quarters of females found a donor through a sperm bank, whilst a quarter found a donor through an online connection service - this highlights that traditional sperm banks are the favourable preference for women, however, they might not be aware of online connection services as a legitimate option

- The primary characteristics recipients looked for when choosing a suitable donor broke down into the following:
 - ½ chose health (mental or physical)
 - ¼ chose wealth
 - ¼ chose intelligence

This shows that health is the most dominant aspect for recipients looking for a suitable donor.

- Based on the statistics, 50% of recipients who have received sperm before are keen for the donor to be involved in the child's upbringing, and even more (75%) would like to know the donor as a person – this highlights the growing need for online connection services such as CoParents.
- 70.14% of those who have never received sperm believe that there is no stigma attached to those who donate or receive sperm, in contrast to 17.91% who believe that there is a stigma attached – overall the process of sperm donation is perceived as positive by those who have and have not received a donation before
- 37.31% of respondents who have never received sperm would prefer to meet their donor if they ever needed sperm in the future, compared to 50.75% who would prefer not to meet their donor - this highlights the attitude and difference between those that have received sperm and those that have not and the relationship and involvement they'd like to have with a donor.
- Perceptions and attitudes towards donor involvement vary based on whether the female has received or has not received a sperm donation before.

Males

- Out of the 12.28% of males between the ages 22 - 42+ who have donated sperm, six out of seven respondents stated that they have donated more than once before. This gives a clear indication that the experience of donating is perceived as positive overall.
- 71.43% of males who have donated would be happy to donate again in the future with the majority of this sample donating sperm 1-3 times previously – this highlights that males value the importance of helping other's start a family and they are comfortable with the process of donating.
- Just under half of the sample of those who have donated before stated that they feel there is no stigma attached to donating sperm, whereas just over half did not answer the

question – this shows that male donors are comfortable to provide sperm and help others start a family

- 85.71% of males stated that they would not expect to meet the recipient before they donate.
- The main reason males stated as to why they have not donated sperm before is because they have never felt the need to (87.5%), whilst 6.25% stated that they don't agree with it – more could be done to educate and explain the importance and value of male sperm donation so that the level of donations increase in future
- Half of those who have never provided sperm before said that they would donate if donations were low in their local area - This highlights that if sperm banks or connection services marketed or advertised more regarding a dearth in samples, then it's likely that men who have never donated before will be more inclined to do so in future.
- The majority of males who have not previously donated did not have negative perceptions towards those that have donated, and overall they view this as a positive process in helping others
- Those giving sperm are more inclined to be involved with the child at the request of the recipient, whereas those who have never donated before feel more strongly about not being a part of the child's life - more could be done to help educate and explain the process of sperm donation, so that people's attitudes and perceptions who have not donated before can change.

Contact

If you wish to contact CoParents directly, please get in touch:

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