

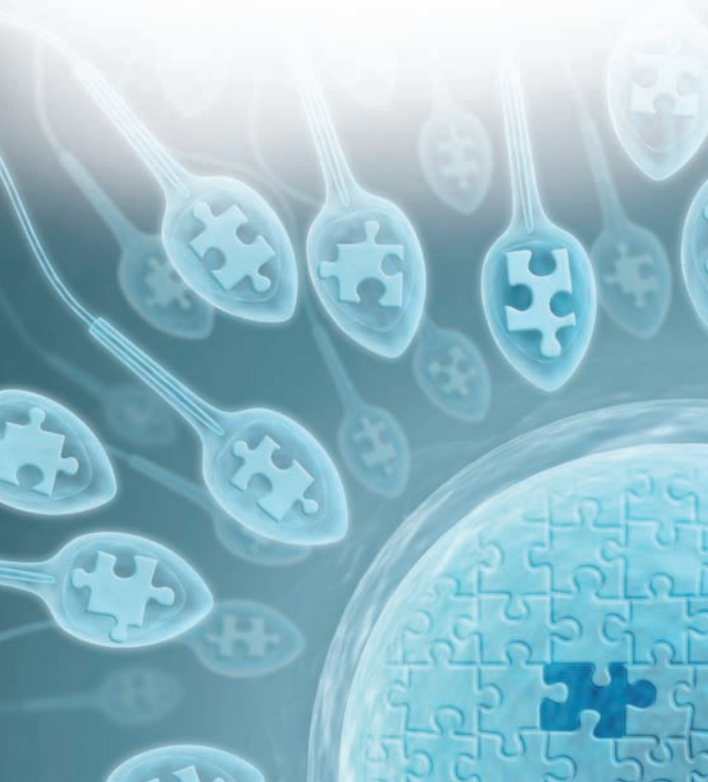


THE DONOR SIBLING REGISTRY

EDUCATING, CONNECTING AND
SUPPORTING DONOR FAMILIES

A Guide to the World of Donor Conception.

Information for Donors, Parents
and Donor-Conceived People.





www.donorsiblingregistry.org - homepage

THE DONOR SIBLING REGISTRY

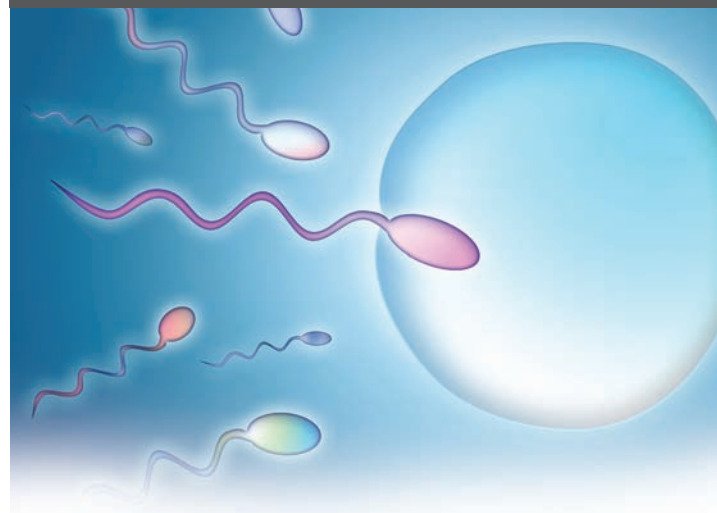
EDUCATING, CONNECTING AND SUPPORTING
DONOR FAMILIES

The DSR Provides:

- Donor-conceived people the opportunity to locate critical medical and health information from their biological donors
- Donors the chance to anonymously or openly share family, ancestral and genetic details with their offspring
- A place for mutually desired communication to begin for donors and their donor-conceived offspring
- A site for donor-conceived half-siblings to connect and extend their family ties
- A comprehensive, secure, and positive environment of information, studies, support, and resources for parents and their children
- Advocacy for the rights of donor-conceived people and education about the issues, and challenges of their community
- The opportunity to connect even without having a donor ID or number

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YOUR DONATION IS ONLY THE START

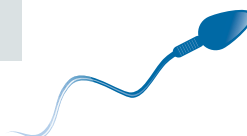
Your donation is more than the sharing of some of your cells. Your decision is one that will allow a family to grow or give a childless couple the chance to realize the dream of an infant in their lives.

There are other even bigger possibilities, some you may not have considered.

Did you know:

- For sperm donors: your donation could be sold to many families over the course of several years?
- All these offspring will share your DNA, medical and personality traits, even your genetic makeup?
- These offspring will be genetic half-siblings to any children you may have in the future?
- It is possible for curious offspring to locate you using Internet search engines and/or DNA testing?
- For egg donors: health risks of donating eggs are still unknown.

Knowing these things is why the Donor Sibling Registry exists. The DSR provides you the opportunity to share your medical, genetic and ancestral history with donor offspring and their families. It's also strictly confidential and you can remain anonymous if you choose.



Sharing Your Health and Genetic History Helps Another Family

Most facilities only test for limited health issues upon intake, leaving very critical medical conditions possibly undetected or unreported. Donors aren't always aware of their entire family's health history at the time, so only provide what information they have. In addition, some medical conditions might not even present until later in your own life, well after you've made your donation. The DSR provides a place for you to share these changes and conditions so that your offspring and their families will have a more complete picture of their child's genetic and biological history.

The DSR serves as both a registry and a community, so once a part of it, you'll be able to:

- Get information and support, read studies, articles and find resources
- List your cryobank and donor number so that donor-conceived offspring and their families are able to get critical genetic and family ancestry details you've provided
- Connect with others who have experienced a situation similar to your own
- Should you wish, you can permit donor-conceived children and their families to communicate with you



THINGS TO KNOW IF YOU'RE BRINGING A DONOR-CONCEIVED CHILD INTO YOUR LIFE

Your Role as a Parent is One of a Kind

So much goes into having a child. You shelter, teach and nurture and it's a lifelong commitment. As the most important people in their lives, your child looks to you for love, guidance, honesty, and answers. Your job in parenting is weighted with great responsibility, and this includes deciding how to let your children know how they came to be such a tremendous part of your life.

More than Just Curiosity

Donor-conceived children are just like other children; they can become curious about their origin, nationality, even family history. And just like other children, they will sometimes have medical and health concerns or even crisis that only their biological donor can help explain. Because of this, it is critical that they are made aware of things early on, so you can reinforce their importance and reassure them of their place in your life.

A DONOR'S PERSPECTIVE

"I am interested in being open and available to any offspring that were born who want to know about their beginnings and genetic history."





- The possibility for your child to get the background they need when completing family health history forms or even intake forms when a medical emergency is at hand
- Your child might want to seek half-siblings, if they too are part of the DSR
- Licensed therapist “Question and Answer” section who has specialized experience with donor-conceived individuals

For all your questions or concerns - the DSR provides discussion forums and support sections, tailored to get you the answers you need.

The Choice to Tell

While some parents are reluctant to tell their donor-conceived child of their origin, the longer the wait, the more resentment, insecurity and shame can build. Joyfully sharing the story of your child’s journey at an earlier age provides them the stability and support they need, plus provides for a transparent discussion about their life, strengthening the bond and trust between parent and child.

How the DSR Works as a Resource for You and Your Family

You might have questions about the best way to begin the discussion of your child’s origin and you could even be afraid or concerned about how they might react; you’re not alone and the DSR offers you:

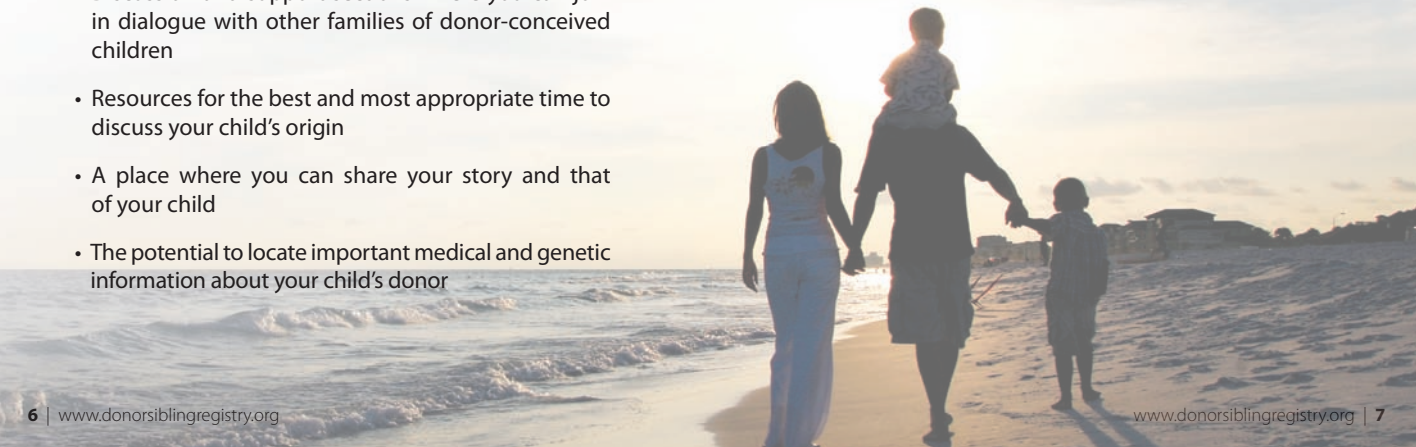
- A resource of information, educational materials and books on donor-conceived issues, including studies and articles
- Success stories about other families just like yours
- Discussion and support sections where you can join in dialogue with other families of donor-conceived children
- Resources for the best and most appropriate time to discuss your child’s origin
- A place where you can share your story and that of your child
- The potential to locate important medical and genetic information about your child’s donor

Content, but Curious: A Parent’s Story

“My partner and I have two beautiful daughters from an anonymous donor. While we are very content with our family, we have always wanted our daughters to have the option of exploring their biological siblings/donor; plus we are so curious about traits, behaviors, and medical issues of other half-siblings out there.

Thanks to Oprah, we were reminded about the DSR website. Within days of posting we were connected with two half-siblings of our daughters, and now we know of more. It has been amazing comparing notes on the kids. We are now meeting one half-sibling for the first time.

We are thankful that our daughters have this resource available to them for the day when we have “the talk.” This is a wonderful service that brings together a community of people that often feel stigmatized or outside of “mainstream” America. Individuals can control their anonymity and can pursue whatever level of involvement they choose and do so comfortably. It also provides people an avenue to answer and explore all those questions about the “who” and “what ifs” that are associated with anonymous donors.”



ARE YOU A DONOR-CONCEIVED PERSON WITH QUESTIONS?

Searching for biological identity is a journey and it's completely normal. For many donor-conceived people, part of defining yourselves is about understanding who you are and where you came from. Discovering the answers might be extremely important to you and you might want to learn more about your donor, your half-siblings, even your genetic and family ancestry. We understand and honor, acknowledge and support this curiosity, and we are here to help your parents and families to support you.

The DSR ensures that all donor-conceived people have a safe place to search for your biological identities and to make these connections with your half-siblings, and in some cases, your donor. Allow yourself and your family enough time to figure out what you are seeking at this point and ask yourself:

- Are you interested in a simple exchange of information?
- Are there questions you want to ask of your donor and or half-siblings?
- Would you like to share medical information?
- Do you hope to meet your donor and/or half-siblings in person?

For some individuals and families, matching on the DSR may bring up unexpected feelings and even confusion as to what the next step should be. It is for this reason that the DSR offers a free phone counseling session with a licensed therapist.



Stacy and Chris meet for the first time. Read story below.

THE DSR IS HELPING TO REDEFINE THE MEANING OF “FAMILY”

For many families in our community, connections made through the DSR can be extremely profound. Where a child thought they had no siblings outside their family, they might establish connections to half-siblings and their families, and in some cases, to donors and their families. When the feelings, concerns and desires of the donor-conceived are acknowledged and honored, the healthier, happier and more fulfilling these connections can be for all involved.

At the DSR, it's not only possible to make these connections, but you're encouraged to be an active part of the DSR community, a resource that is working to expand, redefine and support our families.

Visit the DSR today and join the discussion and the community. It's a celebration of family.

A Story of Half-Siblings

“At 27 years old, finding a brother has been both exciting and a little scary at first... I'm already a “grown up,” with opinions and likes/dislikes fully formed, who now has someone else out there with similar traits, that has my same DNA coursing through his body! After four months of talking and emailing from Seattle to Togo, West Africa where he is a Peace-Corps Volunteer, we finally met in person a week ago. It was truly AMAZING. Like looking in a mirror but better, because there was a three-dimensional, living, breathing person standing in front of me, with my eyes and nose and smile and posture and hands, and big toe...the list goes on and on. (More than one stranger has asked if we are twins!)

We've spent a week together now, meeting each other's friends and family, and have to remind ourselves every once in a while that we're not just good friends, but SIBLINGS. We'll all of a sudden catch ourselves staring at each other in disbelief, then laugh, then go bowling or on a walk and become just good friends again. It's quite the roller coaster of emotions, sudden tweaks of realization that this person is my sibling (always has been and always will be), and a sudden feeling of comfort having him there... I can't fully put into words what having a brother out there means to me. I'm just so thrilled and anxious for the wonderful times we'll have together now, the wonderful family gatherings that have now grown with the inclusion of each other's families and friends, who somehow all seem to already get along so well!

Thank you for making this possible. I'm not an only child anymore. I'm a big sister!"



The Denver Teens Story

Half-brothers and sisters find amazing bonds with each other, even though they may have just met. Tyler Gibson, pictured here with his sister and 4 half-siblings from three other families, says "there is more than friendship there because of the kind of bond we have." Half-brother Justin Senk describes himself as "an only child who also has brothers and sisters."

"There are only two lasting bequests we can hope to give our children. One is roots; the other wings."

- Hodding Carter



HISTORY OF THE DSR AND WHY IT EXISTS

The DSR was founded in 2000 outside of Boulder Colorado. We are a 501(c)3 that focuses on assisting offspring conceived as a result of sperm, oocyte (eggs), or embryo donation. Today, with a membership of more than 30,000, the DSR has helped unite thousands of families and they continue to unite families and fill in the gap of information that exists for many donor-conceived people and their parents. The DSR has listings of more than 500 donor facilities in the United States, and more than 125 in many other countries around the world. The DSR is devoted to the open and honest acknowledgment of all family connections as it relates to the donor-conceived. We value the diversity of all families and are home to heterosexual, GLBT and single parent families.

Prior to the development of the DSR, there was no place for donors, parents or the donor-conceived to turn to either provide or retrieve such critical, confidential information. To complicate things, the process of donation of sperm, oocytes, or embryo is generally kept anonymous. Currently, most sperm banks and clinics do not perform specific testing for certain conditions that carry serious genetic components, some of which might not be present in a person for many years or later in life. Additionally, the clinics facilitating the donation only provide cursory health evaluations and interviews.

Because anonymity is so protected, little is provided to families receiving these gametes and precious little information has been available when they might need at critical junctures in their lives - that is until now.



"The DSR is doing critically necessary work in providing information to the donor-conceived community. From helping donor-conceived offspring learn about their genetic backgrounds to helping prospective parents learn about the world of donor eggs and sperm, the DSR has the answers."

- Naomi Cahn, John Theodore Fey Research Professor,
George Washington University Law School and
Author of *Test Tube Families*

"I have been collaborating with the DSR on a research project designed to examine the feelings and experiences of donors, donor offspring and their parents. I have found DSR to be a highly professional organization run by extremely committed people."

- Dr. Susan Golombok, University of Cambridge, UK

The Donor Sibling Registry provides invaluable access to families and children whose lives have been shaped by donor insemination. The DSR is a pathway to knowledge providing direct contact with siblings, donors, educational materials, research based studies, public forums and an opportunity to change the nature of how reproductive technology is implemented and considered. Not unlike the adoption reform movement, Wendy and Ryan Kramer have developed a system for families to connect and question the decisions around access and secrecy. Most importantly, the DSR offers a child/adult a chance to embrace a sibling or donor, see a familiar turn in a smile, laugh with a curly haired sister or get answers to a million unanswered questions.

- Susan Frankel, MFT (Marriage and Family Therapist)



THE DONOR SIBLING REGISTRY

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