

Canadian Donor Conception Coalition Launches Website and Fundraising Campaign to Support First Ever Lawsuit

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URL: <http://www.canadiandonoroffspring.ca/>

Today marks the start of an initiative to fundraise for the first ever lawsuit filed by sperm and egg donor offspring in Canada. The lawsuit was filed by Olivia Pratten on October 28, 2008, and will directly benefit all people in the province of British Columbia conceived via anonymous sperm, egg and embryo donation, or what is called "gamete donation". Details of the suit can be read here: <http://www.arvayfinlay.com/news/news-oct28-2008.html>

Under provincial laws currently in effect, persons conceived by way of gamete donation - unlike adopted people - are denied access to information about their medical, genetic and social histories. The legislature's failure to extend the legislative regime with respect to creation, storage and accessing of records unfairly discriminates against them contrary to their equality rights as guaranteed under s.15 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. The lawsuit also seeks to establish for all persons conceived by gamete donation their fundamental right to have an opportunity to know the most basic information about themselves, which is guaranteed by the right to liberty and security of the person in section 7 of the *Charter*.

The lawsuit has national implications as the situation in British Columbia is similar in all other provinces and territories and the *Charter* applies to everyone in Canada.

A lobby group called *Canadian Donor Conception Coalition* (CDCC) has formed in support of the lawsuit. The CDCC is an organization comprised of donor conceived offspring, parents, health care professionals, gamete donors and other interested persons. With the launch of their website, the CDCC hopes to raise awareness of the legal and ethical issues surrounding assisted human reproduction and to raise money to cover the significant legal costs of the lawsuit.

All media enquiries and requests for interviews should be directed to Olivia Pratten at opratten@gmail.com. For other information, please contact Joseph Arvay Q.C. at jarvay@arvayfinlay.com, who is counsel for Ms. Pratten.