

## Brisbane donor dad reaches out to unknown children

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Suellen Hinde  
July 27, 2008 12:00am

**A BRISBANE man who anonymously donated sperm on a weekly basis nearly 30 years ago says his children may never know their natural father.**

The 50-year-old man, who works in the medical profession, says he is happy to be contacted by any of his biological offspring, but he believes any records that would link him to the then pioneering pregnancies have been lost.

[Doubting dads caught out](http://www.news.com.au/couriermail/story/0,,24061864-23272,00.html) (<http://www.news.com.au/couriermail/story/0,,24061864-23272,00.html>)

The State Government is considering a central contact register for [IVF](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/IVF) (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/IVF>) or artificial insemination parents or children seeking genetic information.

Queensland IVF clinics have been keeping records on private registers since 2004 but there are no laws governing artificial reproductive technology information.

The man has told his wife about his sperm donations in 1979 and 1980, but is yet to explain the situation to his teenage daughter.

"I will let her know when it is the appropriate time," said the man, who prefers to be known only as Hector.

"I will probably be a bit concerned when she starts dating and will be careful to check them out. I have quite distinctive physical characteristics.

"But it will come to the stage where I will tell her so she is fully aware."

He said it was unlikely his daughter could meet one of her half-siblings but "stranger things do happen".

Hector's story reveals the hidden world of artificial insemination in the early days of the science in Queensland.

"On Saturday mornings I would drive with my deposit in a sterile container to a car park underneath the doctor's surgery on Wickham Terrace," he said.

"I would leave the (container) in a hollow concrete brick. There would be an envelope there with a small payment – about \$10 – and another container.

"I would do it pretty regularly. Sometimes they would call me for emergency cases and I would get paid a little overtime."

He said he never met anyone involved, neither the recipients nor the doctors.

"The consensus among parents and the medical profession was to keep these things secret."

Hector said had no idea how many children might have been conceived through the artificial insemination of his donated sperm, which is believed to have been done by a gynaecologist at the clinic.

"My wife and I had no problem conceiving so I don't think there would have been any problem with my sperm," he said.

"I'm not sure how many children I could have – two, four, eight, a dozen. I'm not sure. I probably didn't fully understand what I was doing. I was in my early 20s and didn't really think of the ramifications."

He was working as a university researcher at the time.

"We were doing research into fertility and they said they needed donors.

"I thought it would be a good way to help childless couples and saw it as doing a wonderful thing."

After reading a story about donor-conceived children trying to find their fathers a few years ago, he decided to contact the clinic he had dealt with to give permission for his identity to be revealed to any potential children.

He isn't worried about offspring making contact with him.

"I started thinking seriously about what I did – should I put my head in the sand or should I do something to help?"

"I gave them life and now I have a responsibility. These children who are searching for their identity can feel lost and alienated just like some adopted children. If I can help with answers, so be it."

Hector has listed his personal details on the [Australian Donor Conception Support Group](http://members.optushome.com.au/dcsg/) (<http://members.optushome.com.au/dcsg/>) website and with the US Donor Sibling Registry. He has yet to be contacted.

Reporter: [hindes@qnp.newsltd.com.au](mailto:hindes@qnp.newsltd.com.au) (<mailto:hindes@qnp.newsltd.com.au>)

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