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Talking to Family About Third-Party Reproduction: A Guide for Parents

Choosing donor conception or surrogacy is a deeply personal path to parenthood — one grounded in intention, love, and courage. Sharing this with family can bring closeness and support, but it may also raise questions, concerns, or misunderstandings.

This guide helps you talk to family about your decision *with clarity and confidence* and offers tools for setting healthy boundaries when needed.



Why Sharing Can Be Helpful

- It can invite family members into your story with honesty and trust.
- It helps normalize donor or surrogacy-assisted conception within your support system.
- It models openness and pride — the same values you'll want your child to grow up with.



How to Talk to Family Members

1. Start with Your Values

Begin by explaining the *why* behind your decision.

- “We/ I wanted to grow our family, and this was the best path for us — filled with love, care, and intention.”
- “This wasn’t a second choice for us. It was the right one.”

2. Educate Gently, if Needed

Many people have limited or outdated knowledge of third-party reproduction.

- Explain what egg/sperm/embryo donation or surrogacy is in simple terms.

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- Offer to answer questions, but only what you're comfortable sharing.

3. Reassure Them

Some relatives may worry about genetics or bonding.

- "We are the baby's real parents — we've loved them long before they were born."
- "Science helped, but love is what makes this a family."

Sample Scripts

- "We used an egg donor to conceive — a choice we made thoughtfully. We're excited to raise a child who knows they were wanted and loved from the beginning."
- "Our baby was carried by a surrogate. We're so grateful to her. We're the baby's parents in every way."
- "We'd love for you to be part of this journey, and to support us as we raise our child with pride and honesty about how they came into the world."

Setting Healthy Boundaries

You may encounter:

- Invasive questions
- Unsolicited opinions
- Insensitive comments
- Pressure to keep things secret

Tips for Setting Boundaries

1. Decide What You Want to Share

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You are not obligated to share medical or personal details — including the donor's identity or your fertility journey.

- “That part of the story is private — we’re focusing on the love that brought our child here.”

2. Set Clear Expectations

- “We’re raising our child to know and feel proud of their story — we’d love your support in that.”
- “Please don’t refer to the donor/surrogate as the ‘real’ parent. That’s not how we see it.”

3. Use a Firm but Kind Tone

- “We’re not discussing that.”
- “That’s not something we’re open to talking about.”
- “I know this is new for you, but this is our family, and we’re proud of our journey.”

4. Address Hurtful Comments Directly

- “That comment doesn’t reflect how we feel about our child or their story.”
- “I know you didn’t mean to hurt, but please don’t say that again.”



Your Child’s Story Is Theirs

While it’s your right to share with trusted family, your child’s conception story is also *their story*. Consider:

- Keeping identifying details private (especially about donors).
- Asking family members to respect your child’s privacy.



Final Encouragement

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Not everyone will understand your journey right away — and that's okay. What matters most is that *you* feel confident and proud in your choices, and that your child grows up surrounded by support, not secrecy.

Families are made in many ways. The one you're creating is built on something unshakable: love, intention, and truth.

With care,

Ellie