

B.C. female couple sues sperm donor 'dad'

Man treats child as his, women allege

BY KEITH FRASER, THE PROVINCE JANUARY 5, 2010

A Terrace female couple is suing a good friend over a dispute arising from a donor-insemination agreement.

The women, who have a foster son, decided they wanted to have a child of their own and wanted a sperm donor who was known, according to a statement of claim filed in B.C. Supreme Court.

A "good friend," named Glen Saunders, agreed to contribute semen for the purpose of insemination and also agreed that the plaintiffs would be the parents of the child, says the lawsuit.

One of the women became pregnant with Saunders' donated sperm, and the couple and Saunders signed an agreement in June 2006, with Saunders consenting to the adoption of the child.

A boy was born on Oct. 3, 2006, and Saunders signed an order, that was later affirmed by the B.C. Supreme Court, declaring the couple to be the only parents of the boy.

But since the birth, Saunders has behaved as though he were a parent of the child, says the lawsuit.

Saunders permitted his own family and friends to send congratulations and gifts on the birth, insisted on visiting the couple's home with a frequency the plaintiffs found intrusive, and refers to the boy as his son, it says.

"The plaintiffs have suffered severe emotional distress because of the actions of the defendant, who has persistently disregarded that their children are a family and that they are [the boy's] only parents."

The plaintiffs claim damages for alleged wilful infliction of mental suffering and for breach of the agreement. They are also seeking an order restraining Saunders from contacting them.

Saunders could not be reached. No statement of defence has been filed. A statement of claim contains allegations that have not been proven in court.

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