

LGBTQ Families - Research Article Summaries**19. Children's Contact with Grandparents:
The Extended Social Support Networks of Children with Lesbian or Heterosexual Mothers**

Fulcher, M., Chan, R. W., Raboy, B., & Patterson, C. J. (2002). Contact with grandparents among children conceived via donor insemination by lesbian and heterosexual mothers. *Parenting: Science and Practice*, 2, 61-76.

This study compared the networks of extended family and friend relationships of 80 children conceived by donor insemination through interviews with 55 lesbian versus 25 heterosexual mothers. The majority of children had regular contact with grandparents, other relatives, and adult nonrelatives outside their immediate household. There were no significant differences regarding contact with family and friends between children with lesbian mothers and children with heterosexual mothers. Children had more frequent contact with the parents of their biological mother than with the parents of their other mother or father. Additionally, there were no significant differences in the number of male adults with whom children of lesbian and heterosexual mothers had contact.

Contact with adult relatives or nonrelatives was defined as including visits, telephone calls, and letters. The results suggest that children of lesbian parents are not isolated from members of their extended families or from other adult role models. The adult networks that were described to surround children of lesbian mothers were very similar to those described to surround children of heterosexual mothers.

Participants were drawn from a pool of former clients of The Sperm Bank of California. On average, children were 7 years old and mothers were 42 years old. Of the 55 lesbian mothers, 49 were partnered and 6 were single. Of the 25 heterosexual mothers, 17 were partnered and 8 were single. All families had household incomes above the national average. All were well-educated, but lesbian mothers were generally more educated than heterosexual mothers.