

Lesson: 8

Key messages:

- Our family plays a role in helping a person develop their identity.
- There are positive ways to communicate important information which can affect our identity.

Activity Details

Victorian Curriculum

Health & PE Evaluate strategies to manage personal, physical and social changes that occur as they grow older VCHPEP124,

Analyse factors that influence emotions, and develop strategies to demonstrate empathy and sensitivity VCHPEP128

Time 2 hours

Levels 7 & 8

Equipment

- *Telling it your way, a guide for parents of donor-conceived adolescents*
- copies of *Quotes from children and young people conceived by ART* handout
- films of donor-conceived people
- families who have used a donor/surrogate

All the resources listed above are available at www.varta.org.au/resources

Telling it your way

Purpose

- To develop students' understanding of the role family plays in developing identity.
- To develop students' empathy, respect and acknowledgement of the diversity of individuals.

Teaching Notes

- Teachers need to be aware that there may be students in the class who have been conceived via ART. Teachers may need to discuss the session with the school counsellor or welfare officer in order to give notice that there is a possibility a student would need to talk to someone after the lesson.
- This activity can be divided into two or three sessions depending on the school timetable.

Procedure

Part one

- Refer to the previous lesson and revise the key factors that can affect fertility. Briefly describe different types of ART and list types on the board (e.g. surrogacy, using donor sperm, using donor egg, using donor embryo).
- Ask students to think about the people who would be affected by the disclosure of conception/birth via ART.
- Draw up a table on the board and list all the people that would be affected by disclosure of ART conception.

The child	Parent/s of the child	The donor/surrogate	The extended family

- Brainstorm what the students think might be the issues for all people involved in the ART process. Write these into the table. Link this to issues of identity as covered in AusVELS.
- Provide the students with the handout, "Quotes from children and young people conceived by ART" or show students selected video clips (as listed above).

- Explain that the class will work in groups reading through the quotes or watching the films. The aim is to find out what the main issues were for the children/young people and how the behaviour of others when disclosing the truth of their conception/birth affected them.
- Once they have listed these issues the class can report back and compare them to the brainstorm list they made.
- The following questions can be used to direct discussion:
- What were the main issues for the children/young people? What were the issues for the parents?
- What are some of the ways the children/young people reacted to finding out the truth about their conception/birth?
- In most cases who told them the truth?
- When did it happen successfully?
- What seemed to be common amongst the most positive stories?
- What was common amongst the more ne.g.ative stories?
- If you had to give advice to parent/s wanting to reveal the truth about ART to a child/young person what would it be?
- List the advice on the board. Come up with a 'How-to plan' for parents wanting to reveal the truth to their child.
- Have students return to their previous groups to write a small role play of this event and present to the class.

Kirkman, M, Rosenthal, D
and Johnson, L 2007,
Telling it your way: A
guide for parents of
donor-conceived
adolescents, Infertility
Treatment Authority
Victoria, Melbourne,
[www.varta.org.au/
resources](http://www.varta.org.au/resources)