

Why the Government's 3-Parent Baby Plan Is So Dangerous

Christian Concern has warned the British government of the serious health, social and ethical dangers posed by its plans to introduce a new IVF technique that will result in the creation of children with three parents.

In its response to a public consultation, which closed on Thursday, the campaign group said the proposals could lead to "lasting emotional damage" to children and submit them to serious, irreversible health risks, which would pass from generation to generation.

Ministers published draft regulations to allow the technique—known as "mitochondrial donation"—in February, saying the procedure will prevent mothers from passing mitochondrial diseases to their children. The technique involves transferring the nucleus of an egg from one woman who carries the disease to the egg of another woman with healthy mitochondria.

But Christian Concern warns that scientists have not yet shown that the technique is sufficiently safe for clinical use and could lead to health defects worse than mitochondrial disease itself.

Andrea Williams, CEO of Christian Concern, says, "The HFEA [Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority] itself has recommended that further research should be undertaken before proceeding with these proposals. The government should have waited for the conclusion of these further tests before publishing the Draft Regulations."

The response from Christian Concern emphasizes that the controversial technique would "lead to complex, legal and social conflicts and create the potential for lasting

emotional damage to both the child and the donor parent.”

It adds, “There are widespread concerns about the profound, adverse effects on a child’s physiological well-being, including the impact on his or her sense of identity, which could arise from a genetic, parental connection with three, instead of two, individuals.”

Additional concern was raised about the difficulty of preventing further genetic modification of children to “enhance” other traits such as intellect and appearance—in other words, the creation of “designer babies.”