

Gay families

Discussion

What legal rights do gays have in your country?

1. Can they get married?
2. Can they inherit from a partner?
3. Can they adopt children?
4. Can they get a mortgage on a house together?

Reading

Read the article below and choose the best headline.

US ALLOWS ADOPTION BY GAYS
GAY FATHERS FACE DISCRIMINATION
OUTRAGE AS GAYS PLAN THIRD CHILD

A few months ago millionaire couple Tony Barlow and Barrie Drewitt shocked many people when they became the first gay couple to father children. The couple had twin girls, Aspen and Saffron, using eggs donated by a woman who wished to help the men have their own family. Adoption agencies in Britain had decided the couple were unsuitable parents, but the men went to the United States where they had more success. They had no problem finding a surrogate mother and the girls were born in Los Angeles the following year. After complex legal arguments,

the US Supreme Court ruled that the men could be named as the parents on the twins' birth certificates.

When the children were brought back to Britain, the men faced further legal difficulties as the British authorities refused to grant automatic entry rights to the twins. Despite all these problems, the men have now provoked further outrage from those who claim to defend traditional family values as they have announced that they intend to have a third child.

The men currently have 24 embryos which were frozen before the birth of their twin daughters,

and although they have fallen out with the surrogate mother who carried the twins, they have now found another woman who has agreed to carry a child for them.

"We adore having children," Mr Drewitt said yesterday, "and if it turns out to be twins again it will be even more wonderful. The new baby will be a biological brother or sister to Aspen and Saffron. The only difference will be the surrogate mother." In contrast, an official church spokesman said, "We would still argue that the best place for children to grow up would be within a traditional family context."

True or false?

Read the article again and mark these sentences true (T), false (F) or don't know (?):

1. Barrie and Tony couldn't adopt a child in Britain.
2. The British authorities did not want to let the men back in the country.
3. Barrie and Tony and the twins live with the twins' mother.
4. Not everyone is happy about Barrie and Tony's plans.

Discussion

1. How do you feel about Barrie and Tony being parents?
2. Do you agree that 'the best place for children to grow up is within a traditional family context'?
3. What is a traditional family? Is it the same as 20 years ago?
4. Do you agree with the following statements?

There are good and bad parents. Gay parents aren't automatically bad - or good.

Two women could raise a family but not two men. They would be useless without a woman.

A lot of people grow up in a single-parent family - two parents must be better than that!