

Is designing babies moral duty, or line that shouldn't be crossed?

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis.

The phrase “designer babies” has been bandied around for decades, but parents seeking to design a baby currently have limited options. They can seek to avoid the birth of a baby with a specific genetic condition, or of an undesired sex, through pre-implantation genetic diagnoses (PGD) which involves IVF and embryo selection.

But they can only select from the available embryos, and, in the UK, only for specified health related conditions. Currently around 360 genetic conditions are licensed for PGD, and 24 are under consideration. Sex selection in UK is only permitted for sex-linked diseases, although sex selection for non-medical reasons is available commercially, [mostly outside Europe](#).

While parents may say they just want their child to be happy, they are bombarded with advice and guidance from pre-conception onwards and held responsible for their children's health and happiness into adulthood. Parents are encouraged to optimise their child's development through control of their environment, diet and toys, and by structured activities from babyhood, on everything from opera to [forest skills](#). Control of a (future) child's genes would offer more opportunities for parental intervention.

Some [bioethicists have argued](#) that parents have the right, or even the duty to seek the child most likely to have the best life, based on the available genetic information, including information on non-disease traits. Leaving aside the problem that behavioural and personality traits are not simply genetic, a trait, like intelligence, may be seen as good but does that mean that more of it will necessarily be even better?

Read full, original post: [Would you edit your unborn child's genes so they were successful?](#)