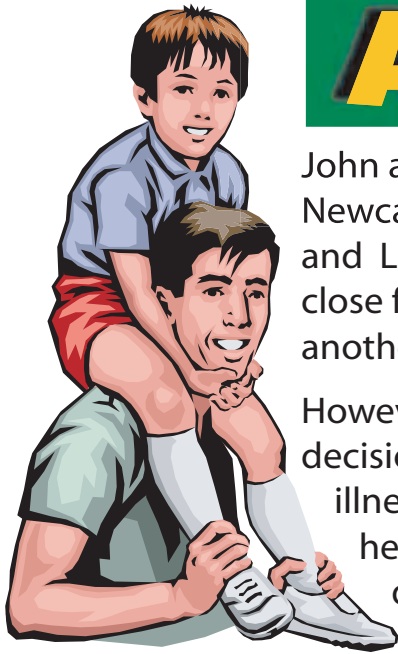


A life for a life?



John and Sarah Robertson, who live in Newcastle, have two children, Ben aged 3 and Lucy aged 6. They are a very happy and close family and are now planning to have another child.

However, the family face a very difficult decision because Ben has a serious illness. He has a disease which means that he has to have painful injections each day, just to keep him alive.

Scientists and doctors have now found a cure for Ben. Using the latest DNA technology, he could be given a transplant of cells from someone matching his 'tissue type'. This would mean that he could be free to live a normal, healthy life.

Should we or shouldn't we?



Dilemma

The Robertsons want permission to create a baby to save Ben's life. Do you think it is right to bring a child into the world to save another life?

You will debate this question and come to a decision. Our experts will help you consider all the issues involved:

Science

... the techniques used and how they work

Ethics

... thinking about rights and wrongs, benefits and costs

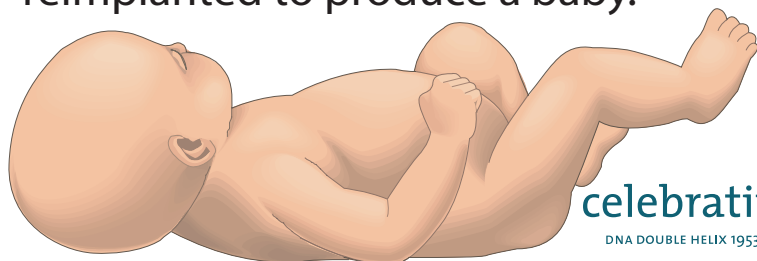
Law

... what are the laws in this area

The Science

In order to save Ben, scientists need to take cells from the umbilical cord of a newborn baby who has the same 'tissue type' as Ben.

To improve the odds of the new baby being a match, Sarah has to have IVF treatment to produce a number of embryos. These embryos would then be screened using a technique called 'preimplantation genetic diagnosis'. A matching embryo would then be reimplanted to produce a baby.



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