

European Patient Organisation Fertility Europe launches the Special Families Campaign

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Couples with fertility problems need hope and reliable information. In order to provide them with both, in June 2011 Fertility Europe launched in 19 European countries the first Special Families Campaign online.

The campaign sends a multiplied message of hope for fertility in form of postcards with stories, including the key message on prevention and treatment. Thousands of postcards with moving stories are expected to cross Europe until October 2011.

The goals of the Special Families Campaign are to raise awareness of fertility issues and give a voice and a face to those concerned. Members of Fertility Europe are in contact with many families who had their dream of a family come true - either with the help of Medically Assisted Reproduction (MAR); or families with children conceived naturally; or with the help of donor gametes; or have adopted; or remained childless and are leading a fulfilled life without children. Those who successfully travelled the bumpy road to a family life are a source of hope for millions of others. Sharing their dramatic and emotional stories with others is a great way to share hope.

About 10 million EU citizens need help and assistance in order to have a child. It often takes years of MAR, a huge emotional, physical and financial effort to build a Special Family. Fertility Europe is an independent umbrella organisation of European associations, involved

with fertility issues and providing support and advice to those affected by difficulties in conceiving. Established in 2007 Fertility Europe currently has 20 Full Members from 18 countries, 1 Associated Member and 5 Candidate Members.

The Special Families Campaign is a collection and dissemination of postcards made of pictures and stories of Special Families, sent from Fertility Europe member countries. The postcards will be created at www.fertilityeurope.eu/specialfamiliescards and sent by [e-mail](#) to [family planning couples](#) facing difficulties in conceiving and collected in the National Galleries on the internet.

A selection of Special Families postcards will also be displayed at the annual congress of ESHRE (European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology) at a special Wall of Hope on the premises of the congress in Stockholm in July 2011, and in various other places. This will also be the first opportunity to present the best stories, and the numbers of postcards sent from various countries.

An invitation banner of Special Families is displayed in the local language on the homepage of the participating members of Fertility Europe as well as on www.fertilityeurope.eu for a period of 6 months. The family will be given instructions on how to insert a family picture (or the picture of a child, its handprints, or a drawing – in case the family wishes to remain anonymous) together with a short story and sending the card to their friends, and relatives if they wish to and to the National Gallery. The stories - in many languages, yet with one common message of wished parenthood - will also be spread much further by co-operation with other partners, internet portals, local networks on pregnancy, adoption, endometriosis, twins, IVF children, male fertility, healthcare, babies, Facebook and other social networks.

Provided by European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology

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