

ATT VARA SYSKON TILL ETT BARN ELLER UNGDOM MED CANCERSJUKDOM

- Tankar, behov, problem och stöd

Akademisk avhandling

som för avläggande av filosofie doktorsexamen vid Sahlgrenska akademien
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av

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Avhandlingen baseras på följande delarbeten:

I Nolbris, M., Hellström, A-L. (2005). Siblings' needs and issues when a brother or sister dies of cancer. *Journal of Pediatric Oncology Nursing*, 22, 4, 227-233.

II Nolbris, M., Enskär, K., Hellström, A-L. (2007). Experience of siblings of children treated for cancer. *European Journal of Oncology Nursing*, 11, 106–112.

III Nolbris, M., Enskär, K., Hellström, A-L. (2008). Thoughts related to the experience of being the sibling of a child with cancer.
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IV Nolbris, M., Olofsson, L., Abrahamsson, J., Hellström, A-L., Enskär, K. (2008)

The experience of therapeutic support group by siblings of children with cancer

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ABSTRACT

The overall aim was to describe the siblings' thoughts on and experiences of needs, problems and supports when their brother or sister is being treated or undergoing follow-ups for or has died of cancer.

The thesis uses a life-world perspective with open interviews (Papers I-IV). It describes the siblings' needs and issues when a brother or sister dies of cancer n=10 (Paper I), and it develops an understanding of the everyday experiences of siblings with a brother or sister who is receiving or has completed treatment for a cancer disease n=10 (Paper II). The thesis looks at the siblings' thoughts on their experiences of being a sibling of a brother or sister during his or her treatment or who has been treated for or has died from cancer n=20 (Paper III). The thesis also describes the siblings' experiences of being involved in a therapeutic support group when the family had or had had a child with cancer n=15 (Paper IV). The methods used to analyse the interview texts were qualitative content analysis (I, III, IV) and phenomenological hermeneutic analysis (II).

The findings show that the sibling relationships strengthened. The siblings lacked support and felt they were not being given information. There was underlying anxiety and loneliness. There was a new consideration in their daily life with the sick brother or sister constantly at the centre. It was very important that the family felt well. Thoughts about death were not allowed and they tried to repress them. Anticipatory grief started already with the diagnosis. The grief when a brother or sister dies varies over time and in how it manifests itself, and there are short breaks. Therapeutic support groups with tools such as pictures and paintings validated the siblings' feelings and gave them support regardless of their age and sex.

The results demonstrate a need to preserve the sibling's health. Consideration and respect for all family members may lessen suffering. Regular and appropriate information about the disease, treatment and the patient's condition is needed, as well as the offer of therapeutic support, individually or in groups.