

PILOT PROJECT IN CHR-LIEGE: INVITING SIBLINGS OF CHILDREN WITH
CANCER TO A CREATIVE AND EXPRESSIVE WEEK-END WITH
PSYCHOLOGISTS AND ONCOLOGIST.

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Purpose/Objective

To evaluate the siblings and their parents interest in a week-end presented as an opportunity

- to feel the consideration of the psycho-medical team for their distress
- to develop friendly relations and possible exchange of views with children in the same situation and concerned adults
- to spend a recreational time in a nature soothing spot were no usual (due to treatments) restrictions are requested

Materials and Methods

-Were invited : 18 siblings (age: 5-11; 7 boys/11 girls) of 11 patients (age: 2-14; 7 boys/4 girls; 5 Acute Lymphoblastic leukemia, 1 Acute Myeloblastic leukemia, 2 Medulloblastoma, 1 Wilms tumor, 1 Ewing tumor and 1 Ependymoma)

Exclusion criteria for the siblings: age < 5, diagnosis delay of the sick child <1 month, sick child out of any treatment

-Schedule: saturday 9 AM to sunday 4 PM

-Transport: assured by the parents who were invited with the sick child for teatime

-Place: an old house with animals in the countryside by a river

-Proposed activities: walks in nature, games, moments to express themselves through artistic creations

- Accompanying persons: 3 psychologists and 1 oncologist concerned by the siblings

Results

None of the 18 siblings refused the invitation

12/18 participated to the w-e (3 were abroad, 2 were moving, and 1 finally preferred another option)

This 12 (age: 5-11; 8 girls/4boys) were the siblings of 8 /11 patients

All children were fully enthusiastic

They found moments to discuss and express their suffering

The parents supported the project and joined us for teatime on sunday with 7 of the 8 sick children

Conclusions

The siblings week end with the psycho-medical team was highly successful

It opens another way to improve the care of the siblings

Questionnaire forms should be developed in the future to evaluate the real psychological impact

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