

KADET: AN INTERGENERATIONAL SUPPORT TOOL FOR GRANDPARENTS WITH A SICK GRANDCHILD IN THEIR ROLE TOWARDS SIBLINGS

Background

When a child is diagnosed with a serious or long-term illness, a difficult period begins for families and relatives. Parents' attention is mostly focused on the sick child^[1]. Therefore, grandparents often have a supportive role regarding siblings and provide practical and emotional help^{[2][3]}. However, research on grandparents' needs is rather limited. Therefore, the KADET-project investigated their needs and developed an intergenerational tool, the KADET-book, to support grandparents. This tool was tested and evaluated among grandparents in a pilot-study.

Aim

Support grandparents in their role regarding the siblings of a sick grandchild.

Methods

Participants were recruited through convenience and snowball sampling in order to evaluate the intergenerational tool. Qualitative research was used by conducting semi-structured interviews. These were recorded and transcribed, followed by thematic analyses. In addition, a questionnaire was developed in case an interview could not take place, using a 5-point Likert scale. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Results

Recruitment and testing phase is running until the end of August. Currently, 18 participants are testing the KADET-book. Five interviews have been conducted, showing that the KADET-book is a valuable tool, bringing grandparent and sibling closer to each other. In addition, the KADET-book also provides an opportunity to talk about topics that are often not discussed. Both the grandparents and the grandchild experience the activities in the KADET-book as nice to do together. In addition, it was interesting for the grandparents to know what the grandchildren are thinking about the themes. It was a way to have extra attention for them. Grandparents suggested to make the drawings more playful.

Discussion

The KADET research showed that it is important to pay attention to the needs and support of grandparents with a sick grandchild, particularly in their role towards siblings. These needs were addressed by the KADET-book, supporting grandparents to talk with siblings about their emotions in combination with activities.

Implications and future perspectives

The KADET-book will be reworked with feedback from grandparents with the goal of implementing it in Flanders and reaching grandparents of sick grandchildren.

References

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