

Balancing Needs: Pediatric Nurses' Experiences With Exposure to the Traumatic Events of Children

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Faculty Disclosure

- Lisa Johnson, PhD, RN, CPN
 - No conflict of interest
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Session Goal & Objectives

- Discuss the experiences of pediatric nurses' exposure to and participation in the traumatic events of children
 - Discuss work-related situations that may contribute to emotional stress and exhaustion in nurses.
 - Identify strategies that nurses utilize to prevent further traumatization.
 - Discuss the meaning associated with nurses' exposure to traumatic events and the benefits of being able to find meaning in our experiences

Research Problem

- Care for most vulnerable and innocent patients
- Work environment consists of intense emotions
- Stress can affect personal and professional lives
- Decrease productivity, work satisfaction, & patient satisfaction
- Recruitment & retention



Research Questions

1. What are the experiences of pediatric registered nurses who are exposed to and participate in the suffering and traumas of their patients?
2. What is the meaning of working with suffering and traumatized patients for the pediatric registered nurse?

Sample

- 17 Pediatric Registered Nurses
- Age 24 – 57
- 4 Males, 13 Females
- 2 – 33 years of Nursing Experience
- 2 – 31 years of Pediatric Nursing Experience
- Diverse Clinical Experiences



Data Collection

- Demographics
- Semi-structured interviews
- 45 – 60 minutes
- Transcribed by Verbal Ink
- Field notes



Findings

Balancing the Needs of the Child, Parent, and Nurse

Defining Traumatic Experiences

- Bearing Witness to the Pain
- Coping with Unexpected Events and Self-Doubt
- Feeling Powerless to Make it Better

Managing the Burden of Professional Responsibility & Other Conflicting Emotions

Preventing Further Traumatization

- Meeting the Needs of Parents
- Being Strong for the Child and Parent
- Protecting Oneself from the Trauma

Making a Difference

- Making Difficult Situations a Little Better
- Fulfilling the Nurse's Emotional Needs
- Reframing the Nurse's Worldview
- Growing Professionally as a Nurse

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Implications

- **Science and Research**

- Parse's Theory of Human Becoming
- Model Development
- Conceptual clarity

- **Education**

- Better prepare pediatric nurse
- Finding Meaning
- Perspective Taking

- **Practice and Administration**

- Perceptions of Making a Difference
- Job satisfaction and retention
- Improved work environments
- Increased patient satisfaction and improved outcomes

Future Research

- Emotional Contagion
- Professional Boundaries
- Family/Friends Perception of Nurse's ability to cope
- Perspective taking
- Test Model
- Better Preparation
- School Nurses



Questions?