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

Lisa Johnson, PhD, RN, CPN

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### Faculty Disclosure

- Lisa Johnson, PhD, RN, CPN
  - No conflict of interest
  - Employer: Community College of Philadelphia Nemours/A.I. duPont Hospital for Children Drexel University
  - No sponsorship or commercial support

### 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

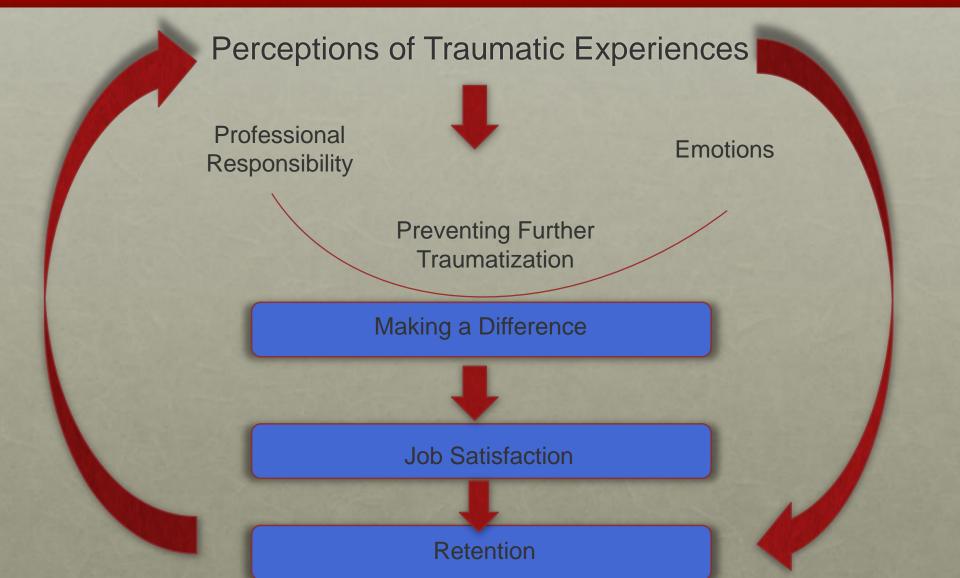
- Demographics
- Semi-structured interviews
- 45 60 minutes
- Transcribed by Verbal Ink
- Field notes



## Findings

Balancing the Needs of the Child, Parent, and Nurse	
Defining Traumatic Experiences	<ul> <li>Bearing Witness to the Pain</li> <li>Coping with Unexpected Events and Self-Doubt</li> <li>Feeling Powerless to Make it Better</li> </ul>
Managing the Burden of Professional Responsibility & Other Conflicting Emotions	
Preventing Further Traumatization	<ul> <li>Meeting the Needs of Parents</li> <li>Being Strong for the Child and Parent</li> <li>Protecting Oneself from the Trauma</li> </ul>
Making a Difference	<ul> <li>Making Difficult Situations a Little Better</li> <li>Fulfilling the Nurse's Emotional Needs</li> <li>Reframing the Nurse's Worldview</li> <li>Growing Professionally as a Nurse</li> </ul>

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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?