

PARENTAL CANCER & DEATH IN DIVORCED FAMILIES

Double bereavement & interventions targeting child mental health

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DISTINCTIVE BY DESIGN



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DOUBLE BEREAVEMENT

definition

- The double loss & bereavement experienced as a consequence of parental divorce in combination with the subsequent parental death or critical illness with imminent death

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BACKGROUND

- Divorced families with children experiencing parental critical cancer and death
- An unseen challenge in health care
- Children at risk

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RESULTS FROM THE SURVEY – RISK OF OVERLOAD AND MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

DEATH STUDIES
<https://doi.org/10.1080/07481187.2019.1648337>





Parental death in young adults with divorced compared to non-divorced parents: The effect on prolonged grief and mental health

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ABSTRACT
This cross-sectional survey compares the risk of mental health problems like poor well-being, complicated and prolonged grief, and mental disorders between young adults experiencing a divorced or non-divorced parent's death. 190 participants were recruited from Facebook via the Danish National Center for Grief. Well-being was measured using WHO-5, prolonged grief using PG-13 and complicated grief using BCG, and common mental disorders using CMOQ. Findings confirmed deleterious effects on mental health in young adults experiencing parental death, but higher risk, when losing a divorced parent compared to a non-divorced parent, was associated to prolonged grief, complicated grief, bodily distress syndrome, and alcohol misuse.

Parental death in young adults with divorced compared to non-divorced parents: The effect on prolonged grief and mental health (Death Studies, 2019) J. Marcussen, L. Hounsgaard, S. Möller, M. O'Connor, R. Wilson, F. Thuen)

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NURSING SUPPORT AND INTERVENTIONS ARE CRUCIAL

- Family support program
- Therapeutic relationship
- Multidisciplinary support
- Individual and in groups
- Parental support

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PURPOSE OF STUDY

“to identify nursing interventions suitable to support children, and their divorced families, following their combined experiences of parental divorce, and parental cancer and death.”

Research

**The Divorced
Family-Focused Care
Model: A Nursing Model
to Enhance Child and
Family Mental Health
and Well-Being of Doubly
Bereaved Children
Following Parental
Divorce and Subsequent
Parental Cancer and
Death**

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Abstract

The experience of parental death concomitant with parental divorce occurs for 46% of Danish children and 50% of American children who lose a parent to death. This experience of loss and double bereavement compounds increased risk of mental health problems. The aim of this study was to explore nursing interventions for double bereaved children that promoted their well-being. A phenomenological-hermeneutic approach was used to conduct 20 interviews with nurses in family cancer care. Ricoeur's theoretical framework was followed with naive reading, structural analysis, and critical

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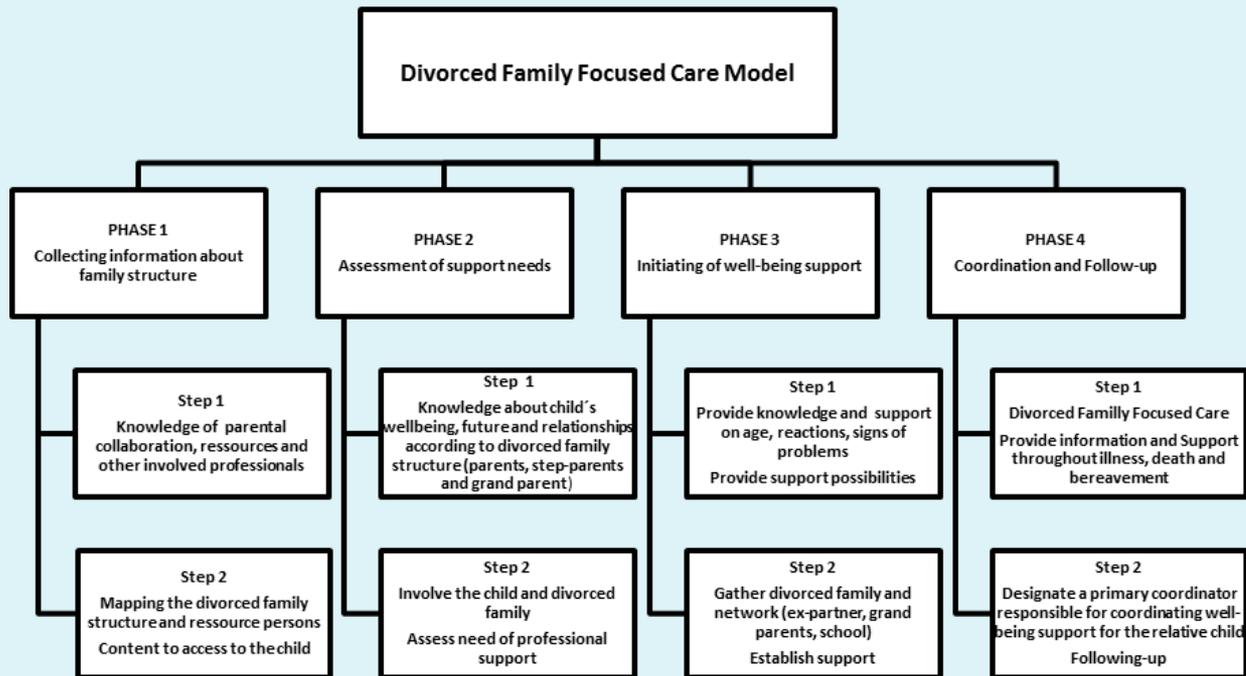

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CLINICAL REASONING FOR NURSING INTERVENTIONS TARGETING THE DOUBLE BEREAVED CHILD

Themes	Subthemes
1. Collecting information about family structure	1.1 Knowledge about family structure 1.2 Getting access through parents' and child
2. Assessment of support needs	2.1 Children's double bereavement in a future perspective 2.2 Estimate need of professional support 2.3 Create access and involve the child
3. Initiation of well-being support	3.1 Gather family to cooperate on children's future 3.2 Support parents through knowledge
4. Coordination and follow-up	4.1 Coordination throughout progress and transitions 4.2 Being guided, or not, by guidelines 4.3 Target support on children's future and well-being

DIVORCED FAMILY FOCUSED MODEL



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PHASE 1 - COLLECTING INFORMATION ABOUT FAMILY STRUCTURE

Knowledge about

- Parental collaboration
- Family resources
- Mapping the family structure

Include

- Family members
- Know children's name, age
- Consent and contact information

RESULTS

Table 2. Examples From the Structural Analysis.

Units of meaning (what is said)	↔ Units of significance (what the text speaks about) ↔	Themes
“You have in mind the whole time, this mother she could die . . . and those two kids that actually live with her . . . and you do not have any contact with the father . . . We ask about the co-work between the parents” (district nurse D2).	The importance of knowing the family structure in a divorced family	Collecting information of family structure

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PHASE 2 - ASSESSMENT OF SUPPORT NEEDS

Knowledge about

- Child and young adults well-being
- Current and future living arrangements
- Important relationships in the family system

Actions

- Create contact and involve the child and divorced family
- Estimate the need for professional support

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PHASE 3 - INITIATION OF WELL-BEING SUPPORT

Knowledge

- age, reactions, support possibilities, problem signs

Actions

- Gather the families
- Cooperation of the child's future

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PHASE 4 - COORDINATION AND FOLLOW-UP

Knowledge

- Ongoing role of providing knowledge throughout progress and transitions

Actions

- Ongoing role of providing support
- Strategic role of coordination of divorced family focused care
- Include interdisciplinary professionals

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IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Collect information about the family structure

Early prevention

Designate a coordinator

Policy and evidence-based guidelines

Policy supporting the model

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