

Impacts of an ill child on the family



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

A2 Essay

In this essay I will be writing about potential effects of an ill health child on parents/carers and siblings by considering and summarising variety of family-centred issues faced when ill health child.

There are many potential effect of having an ill health child for parents/carers and also for the siblings. Having a child in the family who has serious or chronic illness can have an influence on the whole family. For example, dealing with the changes in the family may be a potential effect on the family." A chronic childhood illness can be defined as a medical condition that is long term or permanent, and is rarely able to be completely cured."- (<https://www.cyh.com/HealthTopics/>) (11/12/18). There are many impacts of chronic childhood illness because depending on the illness that the child has, the child may experience symptoms of discomfort and pain and this may affect the parents/carers of the child as they may feel upset when they see their in this position where the is child is in pain and suffering. All families are different and it is important to know that they may act differently to their child's illness. John Dewey (1859-1952) was a philosopher who believed that humans learn through a ' hands-on' approach." Dewey believed that change brings new opportunities and that we need to embrace these and think of new ways to help our children become socially responsible people"-(<https://study.com/>) (14/12/18). This means that changes in a family may influence the family in a good way. Parents/carers of ill health or chronic child may react in several ways and it is known as the grieving process.

A potential effect of ill health of a child on parents/carers is that parents/carers may feel isolated and feel like they have loss of control to their child's illness and life. The parents/carers feel that they are hopeless about the fact they are not able to do anything for their children and make them better again. The parents/carers will feel like no one understands what and how they are feeling and they may feel lonely, however, it is important to remember that " While the child is being treated in hospital it is best for everyone if life continues as normally as possible"-(Carolyn Meggitt. Tina Bruce. Cache level 3 Childcare & Education.) (Page 226). It is important to remember that every amount of support given to the child and parents/carers are family-centred. So that the child's parents/carers have a role in decision making of their child's care while the child is in hospital. The professionals for example, the doctors, nurses and EYP's that works with the child while the child is in hospital, they will need to make sure that the child's interests and needs are supported and the professionals work in partnership with parents/carers to get a better understanding of the child while the child is in the hospital. This will show to the child's parents/carers that their child is taken care of in the hospital and this will give parents/carers assurance that their child will be fine and make them feel less anxious about the child's time in the hospital. John Bowlby (1907-1990) was a psychologist who believed that babies came in to this world with attachments with a motherly figure. He believed that children develop secure relationships with a motherly figure starting from birth. This is why parents/carers of the child is reacting different way because they do not want anything to happen to their child.

A potential effect of ill health of a child on parents/carers is that parents/carers feel guilt because they may feel that they are the reason why their child is in this situation as they may feel that they have done something wrong. The parents/carers of the child may feel like they could have prevented the illness that their child are currently dealing with by doing things differently and this can be very common. Parents/carers may feel like that it is their fault that their child are in this position today and this may lead them to doubting themselves. Parents/carers may feel like things would have been different if they had noticed something was wrong earlier. This family centred issue can be supported by involving the parents/carers in every aspects of their child's illness while they are in the hospital and this will make parents/carers feel a part of their child's well-being and this may make the parents/carers doubt themselves. The child's parents/carers should be given the opportunity to make the decision about the sort of care the child receives while the child is in hospital. Parents/carers should be offered the opportunity for them to take on tasks such as, changing their child so that the parents/carers does not feel isolated from their child completely because they are in hospital. This is related to the point about parents/carers feeling guilty because they feel that their child is ill because of them. This is important that parents/carers understands that their child will be given support from the hospital to cure the illness as soon as possible.

A potential effect of ill health of a child on siblings is that siblings may feel neglected as they may feel left uncared and unloved. This may be because the siblings may not get much attention as they are used to before their sibling fell ill. The sibling may react differently than usual and this may be

because they may see and feel the change in the family when they see/know that their sibling are in the hospital and they are ill. The siblings may understand that their sibling now requires a lot of attention because they are ill and this may want them to act up and throw tantrums to get the attention of their parents/carers on them. The siblings may automatically understand that their parents/carers will need to give their sibling time in the hospital until they are better. This family centred issue can be supported by involving the family as much as possible. This is important because this way, the child and the child's family will feel like they are not alone and they have their family next to them throughout. While having a child ill in the hospital means that parents/carers will need to be travelling to and from the hospital very regularly. This can be an issue for some parents/carers as this may affect the child's parents/carers financially. The hospital will make sure that parents/carers of children that are chronically ill receives financial help and this is important because this way, parents/carers of the child can financially support the child's well-being. The financial help will be provided to parents/carers for extra costs that may include for example, transport cost, household bills and telephone bills." The Benefit Agency can advise parents about the different allowances payable in individual circumstances"- (Carolyn Meggitt. Tina Bruce. Cache level 3 Childcare & Education.) (Page 227).

A potential effect of ill health of a child on siblings is that siblings may feel grief as they may be upset about their siblings going through the illness. They may get a feeling of sadness and loss when they see their sibling in the hospital with an illness. The siblings may react in many ways in grief to their sibling being ill, they may become less hungry and loss appetite on food and

this may lead them to lack energy. They may also show signs of mood swings and tantrums out of nowhere because they understand that their sibling are getting all the attention because they are ill. The sibling may have difficulty with sleeping at night and this may affect the sibling as lack of sleep will trouble the child's social life. The child will feel sleepy and will lack energy in school. Their brain will not fully be awake when they are in school, they are most likely to fall asleep during lesson. This family centred issue can be supported by planning a care plan with parents/carers where the whole families account is taken in consideration to support their physical, emotional and social needs. This is important because this will allows parents/carers to locate their time with their ill child and the rest of the family as parents/carers may feel stressed through these times, it is important to plan a care plan and express their feeling with other people who are in the same situation as them so that they do not feel that they are lonely and are the only people going through the illness.

In conclusion, I think that having a child who is dealing with chronic illness can have a very big influence in a family because it may bring changes in the family for example, the family may not get time together as much as they used to. There are many big changes that may occur when a child gets ill in the family. Parents/carers and siblings may go through many phases while their child/sibling are ill in the hospital. Parents/carers may feel pain, anger, guilt and maybe have confusion about what may be happening to their child. Parents/carers may question and doubt themselves about their child's illness. This is very common however, it is important to stay positive and set a good role model for the child, assuring them that everything will be fine.

Siblings may feel neglect and grief when they see their sibling in the hospital with their parents/carers full attention on them. This may show on the siblings when they throw mood swings to get attention from their parents/carers. It is important to remember that all families are unique and they may react differently to other families. Every family do things differently and that should be acknowledged so that people are not isolated and everyone feels welcomed and loved.

References

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