

The Impact of Transplantation on Siblings



Gráinne M. Walsh, MSc, BSc, RN, RSCN
Advanced Nurse Practitioner, Paediatric Transplantation

Why siblings?

Siblings of chronically sick children?

Are renal siblings different?

Renal Siblings

- Korsch et al (1973) Kidney transplantation in children: Psychosocial follow-up study on child & family, *Journal of Pediatrics*, 83, 3, 399-407
- Fielding et al (1985) Children With End-stage Renal Failure: Psychological Effects On Patients, Siblings & Parents *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*, 29, 5, 457-465
- Batte S, Watson A, Amess K (2006) The effects of chronic renal failure on siblings *Pediatr Nephrol*, 21: 246-50

The Roller Coaster of Transplantation



The Lived Experience of Siblings

5 Themes

- We're your child too
- We need to know
- Maturity beyond their years
- The invisible bond of siblingship
- Enrichment of lives

Giving the Siblings a voice!

We're your child too!

*but when I was eight I
thought it was really
unfair, I didn't
understand'*

(11yr old)

*'they just thought
everything was fine
with me'*

(17yr old)

*'when I was younger I
didn't really get to see
my mum'*

(11yr old)

*'mentally, the sibling is
always trying to think well,
why are they getting
more attention why don't
I be treated the same'*

(16yr old)

We Need to Know!

*'sort of, sent out of the
room'*

(13yr old)

*'they didn't feel we
needed to be there'*

(15yr old)

*'but they were all using
their big medical words,
so I couldn't really
understand'*

(11yr old)

*“It wouldn't have been
so scary, I just thought
they were dying”*

(12yr old)

Maturity beyond their years!

*‘people complaining
because they haven’t got
the new phone, you see
just how stupid those
things are, this makes you
realise it doesn’t really
matter’*

(13yr old)

'mums & dads go through so much more than siblings, they have to support both the sibling & the child'

(15yr old)

*'I think they had it much
harder to be honest'*

(14yr old)

'You can't let this sibling thing or whatever, you can't let that become you as such'

(14yr old)

The invisible bond of siblingship!

'the fact they could have died, kind of, makes you think wow they're still here, they're still alive'

(14yr old)

*'the good thing about
them getting ill is you
kind of, appreciate them
more'*

(15yr old)

‘I think I’ m a bit lucky
really, there a lot of
people out there like lost
their kids and stuff and
I’ m lucky to still have my
sibling’
(10yr old)

*'when I was younger I
wished it was me not
them'*

(13yr old)

Enrichment!

*‘because of the
transplant, they’ve
made us into better
people’*

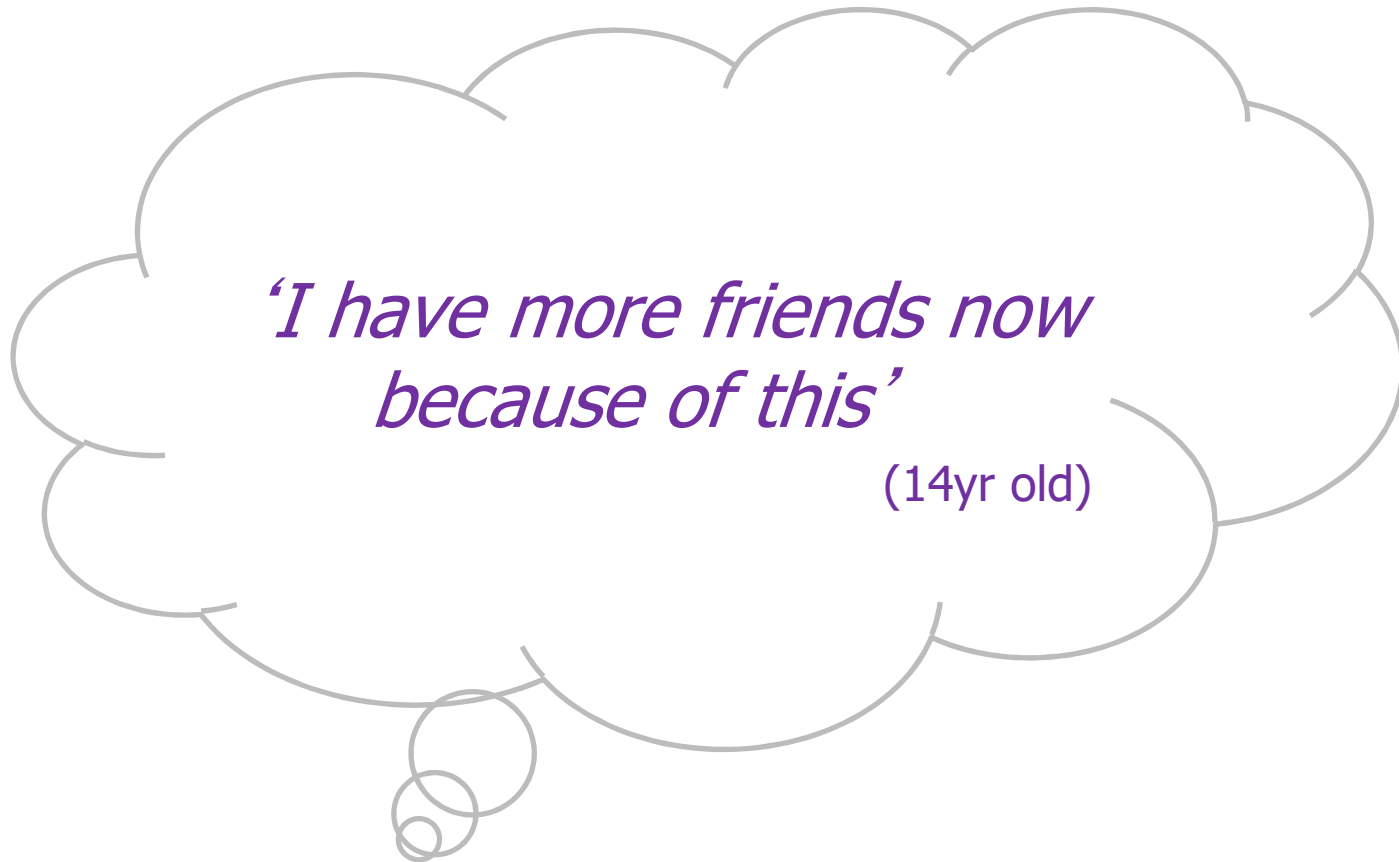
(13yr old)

*'I feel more confident
with my friends now'*

(13yr old)

*‘nurses & doctors &
people & the like could
inspire you to become a
nurse or doctor or
something’*

(11yr old)



*'I have more friends now
because of this'*

(14yr old)

Advice for other Siblings

Advice for other Siblings

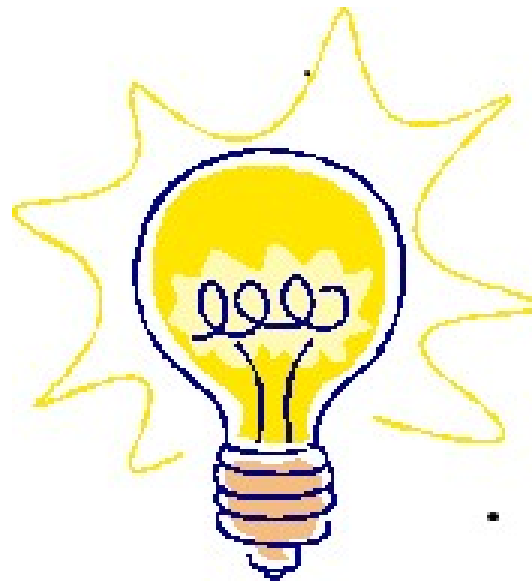
'it only gets bad if you let it get bad' (14yr old)

'it's gonna be tough sometimes but it doesn't mean it's the end of the world' (13yr old)

'you can't let this sibling thing or whatever; you can't let that become you, as such' (14yr old)

Do Siblings want support?

The Future



Thank you

- The Participant Siblings and their families
- The Fabulous Evelina London Renal Team
- Prof Mignon McCulloch, Cape Town