

How to Proceed After Hospital Treatment? Integration of Children Living With Serious Illness Into the School Environment – Method of a School Intervention Program



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Integration of a child after the diagnoses or longer hospitalization is a challenge not only for the sick child but for the classroom community and the teachers. Chronic illness may come with restricted social activities and a more submissive behavior toward peers that may make the child more exposed to bullying (Meijer et al, 2000). Bátor Tábor Foundation established a School-based Program which tries to help children affected by a disease re-integrate themselves into their school-life. The program aims to help the sick children and their classmates to have a deeper connection and open communication about the illness. The goal is to embolden the participants to overcome their fears, worries and stereotypes while improving self-efficacy and quality of life with using a combination of therapeutic recreation and solution-focused brief therapy (SFBT). The approach of the program helps the involvement of healthy and sick children into personalized and team challenges while they are encouraged to support each other. The innovation of the program lies in the fact that previously the SFBT method was mainly applied to children living with an illness or suffering from behavioral problems (Franklin et al., 2008), but in the School program we extended the intervention to the entire class community – head teacher included.

Biography:

Borbála Gácsig-Somogyi has a degree in Psychology and is currently a PhD Student at Semmelweis University in Budapest. With a background in couple and family therapy and passion in improving the mental health and wellbeing of ill children and their families, she is determined to understand the mechanism of therapeutic recreation camps and programs. Her research is closely connected to the Bátor Tábor (camp of courage) Foundation, which provides life-changing experiences to seriously ill children and their families, and also to those families who have suffered the loss of a child.