

# 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)

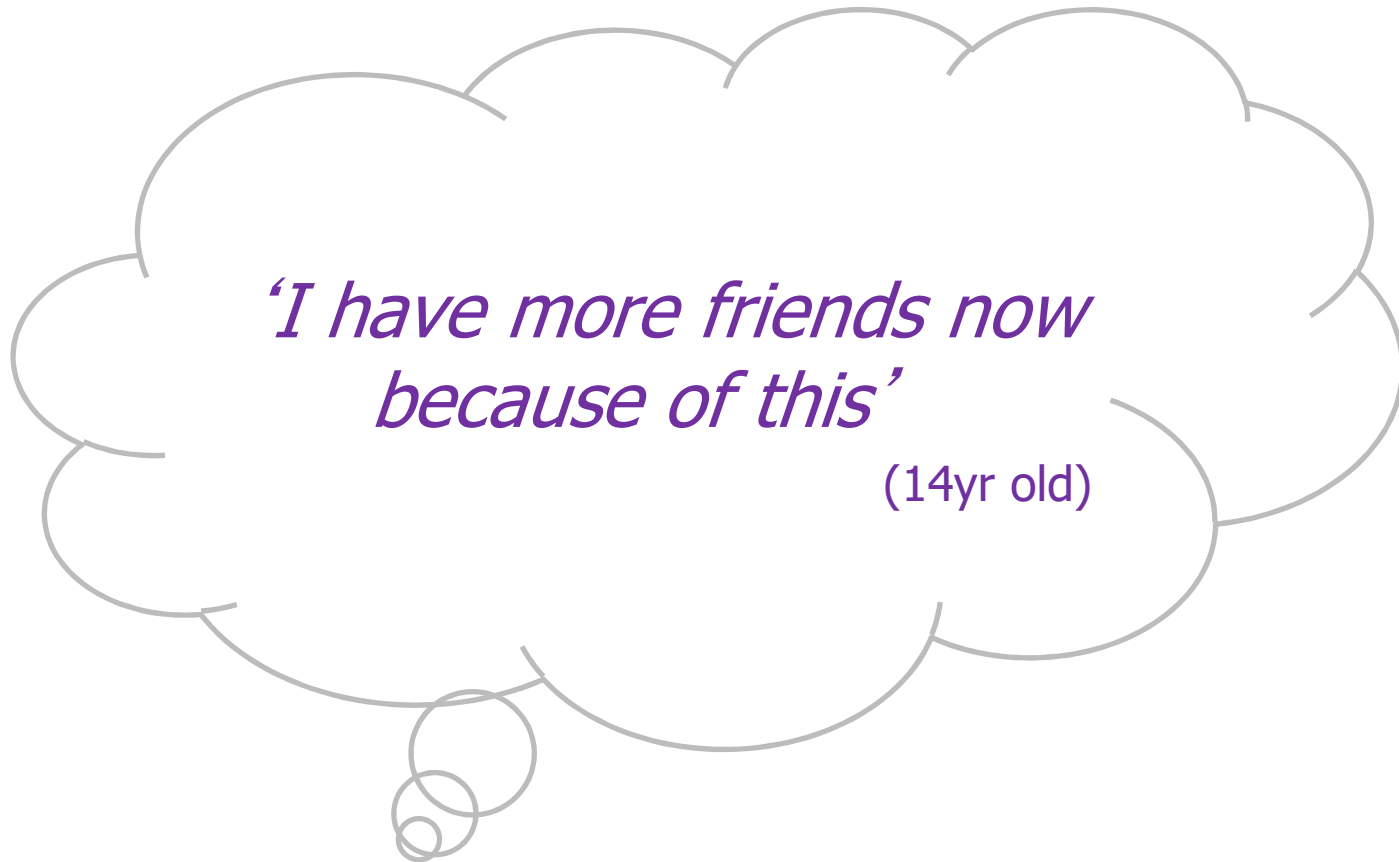
*'I feel more confident  
with my friends now'*

(13yr old)



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

(11yr old)



# Advice for other Siblings

# Advice for other Siblings

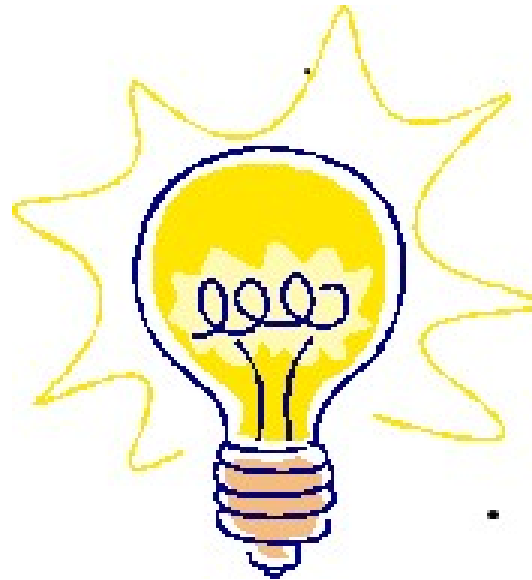
*'it only gets bad if you let it get bad'* (14yr old)

*'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