

"To me my
special needs sibling
is still quite ordinary."

"I'm worried about
my sibling's future."

"Sometimes
I would like to be
the centre
of attention!"



SIBLING CARDS

AS A TOOL FOR SUPPORTING SIBLINGS

BACKGROUND

Rare disease affects the whole family. Siblings of children with rare disease or disability may be at risk of developing emotional and behavioral problems. Siblings should have more opportunities for help, support and getting information. They need more tools to help them communicate how they feel and what kind of feelings and questions they have in their minds.

SUMMARY

There has been a project (2015-2019) in Finland aiming to raise awareness about the wellbeing, risks and strengths of siblings of children with special needs. During the project we have developed tools to help siblings in different ages to express their feelings and thoughts. Especially one tool has been a success: Sibling cards.

RESULTS

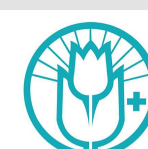
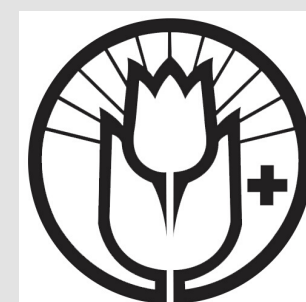
Sibling cards are a deck of cards in which each card has a sentence expressing a thought or a feeling based on real experiences from siblings. The cards have been used individually and in peer support groups with siblings but also to awaken parents and professionals. The recommendable age to use the cards is above nine years. For siblings under 9 there is also an illustrated version of the cards. The cards are available also in Swedish and English.

CONCLUSION

We can acknowledge that since the sibling project started, and the cards have been in use, special siblinghood has achieved more awareness amongst families and professionals all over Finland. Different organizations arrange support for siblings and families. Sibling cards are already used in many occasions and we are aiming further to increase their use and promote siblings' wellbeing.



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