

What impact does Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) have on siblings?

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Introduction

Sudden and unexpected death, particularly Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) - an unexpected, inexplicable, and unacceptable event - has significant psychological implications for all members of the family, especially parents but also siblings.

It is important to improve our understanding of this specific situation, as it is impossible to react rationally in the face of such grief and have a clear understanding of the timing and ways to provide the necessary support.

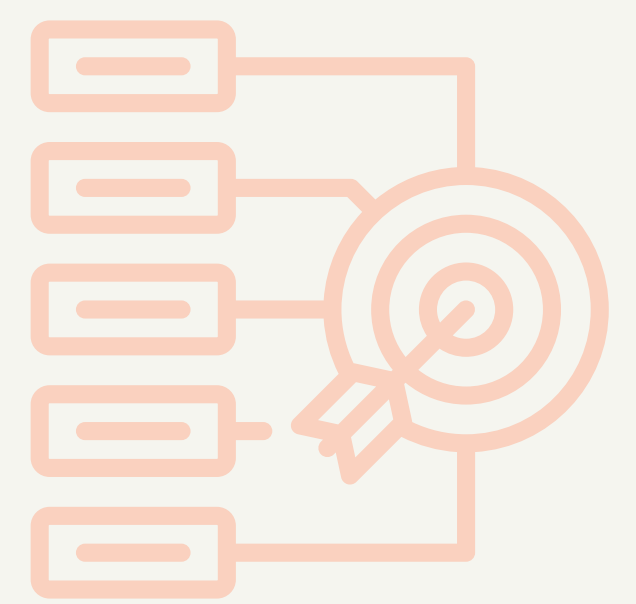
Objects

Existing studies on siblings of children who died from SIDS are insufficient, leading to high uncertainty regarding appropriate psychological support. It is important to identify the feelings of distress experienced both in anticipation of the event and over time, particularly due to the influence it can have on the parents' perceived experience.

Materials and Methods

The investigation involved parents, siblings present at the time of the loss, and siblings born after a SIDS event. The investigation was conducted through testimonies and/or interviews.

A total of 30 parents and 15 siblings were interviewed, and 20 testimonies from parents and 10 testimonies from siblings were collected.



Results

The difficulties parents face in providing explanations for the sibling's death are evident. In the testimonies/interviews with the siblings, the difference in the perception of the event's timing is particularly noticeable between those who experienced it during adolescence and those who experienced it during preschool age. Strong distress is also evident in the testimonies of siblings born after a SIDS event.



Conclusions

It is essential to expand studies on the grieving process in siblings, as feelings of distress are likely to be observable even long after the event. There is a clear need for in-depth studies to better understand the psychological distress experienced by siblings born after a SIDS event."