

**Through our Eyes:  
A Photovoice Intervention for Adolescents  
on Active Cancer Treatment**



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**Special Thanks**

**Garron Family Cancer Centre**

Clinical Advisory Council

GFCC Nursing & Allied Health Summer Student Program  
Mark Niepage & George Georgievski, Research Assistants

Jennifer Mingori, Parent Group Social Worker



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**Outline of the Presentation**

- Issues for Adolescents on Cancer Treatment
- Photovoice Methodology
- 7-week therapeutic Photovoice Group
- Exhibition



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## Teenagers in a Children's Hospital



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## Adolescence

### World Health Organization (1980)

10-19 years of age combined with the arrival of reproductive maturity and a rapid acceleration in skeletal growth

### Erickson (1968)

Achieve a sense of identity by going through 'crisis' periods in which they explore and question values, beliefs, and goals previously accepted by parents and others. This is then followed by the development and commitment to their own personal set of goals, values, and beliefs



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## Background

On average, 140 new cancer diagnoses have been made each year over the last 10 years among teenagers (aged 13-19 years) in hospitals across Ontario. 60% of those are seen at SickKids.

### Clinical Issues for Teens with Cancer

- Need for Independence
- Loss of Control
- Physical Difference/Self-Image
- Self-Esteem
- Fear of Death and Loss of Future



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### Photovoice Methodology

- Public health literature mid 1990s
- Empower participants, actively involved them in shaping research
- Facilitate better communication between teens and their healthcare team
- Promote dialogue, encourage action, influence policy



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### Photovoice Methodology

Core elements:

- i) the selection and discussion of themes of interest
- ii) the distribution of cameras for participant photography
- iii) the selection of salient and important photos for discussion in the group
- iv) a written narrative of what each photo illustrates, means, and what steps can be taken to address the concern or enhance the strengths that have been identified
- v) the presentation of participants' photos to stakeholders in order to involve them in the policy process and enhance community capacity



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### Goals of Photovoice Therapeutic Group

- Provide an environment for peer support
- Bring a stronger voice to the experience of teens
- Facilitate better communication between teens and their healthcare team
- Influence change in how health care teams and hospital environments interface with teenagers



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## Concurrent Parent Group

Facilitated by Jennifer Mingori

\*Provide parents an opportunity to connect and discuss issues

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## Photovoice Therapeutic Group

- 7 week closed group (March – May 2017)
- 13-18 years on active cancer treatment (varying diagnoses)
- Recruitment
- 6 participants; 2 males, 4 females
- Each week began with 'settling in', music, colouring sheets, snacks



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## Week 1

- ▶ **Group goals & consents**
- ▶ **Basic camera training**
  - ▶ **Schedule**
- ▶ **Theme Selection**



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### Week 2 - STRENGTH

This is a picture of me going back on the bar for the second time after surgery. I was really determined to go back... physical strength and mental strength are both combined in this picture... I was like really happy. I hadn't been on that bar for over a year. And yea...it was fun. Like I didn't realize I could still do that stuff



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### Week 3 - TRUE FRIENDS

I thought I was gonna be taking pictures of more friends than family but some family I consider as my best friends. So...ya it just ended up being majority of my family than my friends. My mom became close to me and we always just talk about everything... spending a lot of time together. Because I feel like dads are kind of there for like your fun activities and moms are...your sweet spot.



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### Week 4 - STRUGGLE

I took this picture of my stairs... of the basement and of the main floor going up...treatment went on and I came home very weak and I couldn't come up the stairs.



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### Week 5 - FEARS

I have a fear that I may never be a mom. Everything happened so quickly for me...I was too overwhelmed by it. We didn't have time to talk about options.



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### Week 6 - HOPES

Praying, honestly brings ease into my heart and gives me hope because I feel like once you have that connection...that direct connection to God, like you're literally talking to God, something positive will always come out of it.



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### Week 7 - Wrap Up

- Last session focused on reviewing participants journey through group process
- Relationships fostered
- Photovoice Gallery Discussion/Selection



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## Analysis & Results

- Sessions were recorded and later transcribed
- Narrative content analysis was conducted to identify themes
- 2 papers submitted for publication:
  - Niepage, M, Georgievski, G, Shama, W, Lucchetta, S. Exploring Adolescents' Cancer Journey through Photovoice: A Narrative Synthesis. (Feb 2018) Journal of Adolescent & Young Adult Oncology. 7(1): 15-21.
  - Georgievski, G, Shama, W, Lucchetta, S, Niepage, M. Through our Eyes: A Photovoice Intervention for Adolescents on Active Cancer Treatment. Journal of Psychosocial Oncology. 2018. (submitted)



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## Influencing Change

- Informed about diagnosis
- Sharing information about diagnosis
- Opportunities to connect with other teens with cancer



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## Lessons Learned

- Recruitment
- Use of Camera & Taking Photographs
- Confidentiality
- Group Expectations



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### Magic of Groupwork

- Unique way to connect with teens
- Honestly, candidness of participants
- Replenished, exciting work
- Incredible feedback from teens & families about the program
- Significant recognition from team, department, hospital, larger community
- Radio, television, and print media exposure from across Canada



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**Through the Eyes of  
Teens with Cancer**  
A Photovoice Exhibition

2-4 p.m. • Monday September 25, 2017  
Garden Patio, SickKids  
Opening Remarks: 2:15 p.m.

RSVP by September 20:  
photovoice@sickkids.ca@sickkids.ca  
Media kits: team@sickkids.ca

Division of Haematology/Oncology | SickKids | Garron Family Cancer Centre

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