

Abstract

This thesis describes the life of a family with a dying child. The objective of the thesis is to describe the experience of its members after the diagnosis has been decided, during treatment and after the child's decease. It discusses the phases of going through the disease and death of one's own child for the parents and other close persons and how such a critical event in a family's life changes its values and attitudes.

The theoretical part of this thesis deals with experiencing of all stages of the child's disease by their closest persons and with the psychology of the ill child. In this context, it briefly describes the history and idea of care of the incurably ill and the possibility of family support provided by non-governmental organizations.

The practical part of the thesis contains the findings of the qualitative research conducted using the phenomenology approach on how the parents supported the child in the terminal stage of their disease, what they went through during this difficult time of life and how they remember that time after certain time has elapsed. Respondents include the parents or closest persons of children aged over one year that deceased as a result of a malignant disease.