



# Nestwärme



OPEN AND HONEST  
PRACTISES

WHEN WORKING  
WITH CHILDREN

OPEN AND HONEST PRACTISES WHEN  
WORKING WITH CHILDREN



1. Foundation of kindergarten Nestwärme
2. What does open and honest practice mean?
3. Time of disclosure

## OPEN AND HONEST PRACTISES WHEN WORKING WITH CHILDREN



### **Foundation of kindergarten Nestwärme**

The foundation of kindergarten Nestwärme took place in 1992 within the framework of a private nonprofit association. This association was primarily responsible for women and families affected by HIV.

The association was founded as a result of the societal discrimination of families living with HIV. These young families had many problems because of their use of drugs, their social situation (no job, single mother, being stigmatized).

It was also a self-help project for affected people who couldn't find a kindergarten-place. We often changed the address, because we were afraid of being assaulted by neighbors or people with hostile feelings towards HIV.

## OPEN AND HONEST PRACTISES WHEN WORKING WITH CHILDREN



### **What does open and honest practice mean?**

The Berlin kindergarten Nestwärme is the only one in Germany consciously taking HIV-infected children. It started as a self-help project for affected children and families - now many parents are giving their children to the kindergarten, even though they do not have HIV.

In our family center, we are doing public relations, with the aim of further reducing the public fears and prejudices against HIV infected people.

## OPEN AND HONEST PRACTISES WHEN WORKING WITH CHILDREN



### A Situation in the kindergarten:

Twelve children sit at a low, elongated table. There are plates with fruit. Sonja puts nina a piece of banana in her mouth. A young mother watches the two. She takes her daughter a little earlier today, because she is just sickly. She only has a cold, no HIV, she says and smiles. Of course, she and her husband had previously researched the ways in which HIV can be transmitted. They chose the kindergarten, because they liked the integrative concept so well.

OPEN AND HONEST PRACTISES WHEN  
WORKING WITH CHILDREN



## Time of disclosure

Parents are always discussing the right time for disclosing the infection to their kids. The opinions are very varying. There were differences between foster parents and parents

If it is necessary, for example, if the kid has to take medicine in the kindergarten, we tell the kid, that it has a seldom illness and that's why it has to take the medicine. There is no reason to tell them of HIV, because they can't understand this at that age.

I will tell you three different examples:

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- A woman, 22 years old, born with HIV:

She told me, that she asked her doctor, why she had to take medicine, when she was 12 years old. Her father didn't tell her the truth, probably because of cultural reasons. The girl started to find out more about HIV and her situation. She had a good girlfriend with whom she could talk to about HIV and who helped her to cope with her situation. Today she is training as an educator in a kindergarten.

## OPEN AND HONEST PRACTISES WHEN WORKING WITH CHILDREN



- A woman, 21 years old, born with HIV:

This woman asked her mother, when she was 8 years old: Mama, why do I take the medicine? Do I have AIDS? The mother gave her the correct answer. The moment, when she got this information, she tried to get more informations about her situation. It was very important for her, that she had friends, with whom she could speak about it. She asked her doctor, when she had to die. And she thought that it had to be in the next moment or in the next time. So the doctor gave her the accurate informations about her situation and she understood, that she would live for a long time, because of the medical treatments. Today she studies cultural study.

## OPEN AND HONEST PRACTISES WHEN WORKING WITH CHILDREN



- A man, 20 years old, born with HIV:

This man's parents by adoption were in the same parents group like the girl I told you before. The parents of him didn't tell him anything about his HIV infection. The other parents and children couldn't tell him either, because the parents forbade it. They revealed to him his HIV pre-eminence before he entered puberty. He had no idea with whom he could talk about it. He had no confidence anymore in his foster parents.

## OPEN AND HONEST PRACTISES WHEN WORKING WITH CHILDREN



- In my opinion the right time for disclosure is, when the children can understand this information. It should be in the period between 8 and 12 years before the children come into puberty. In any case, if the child asks in this period.
- A mother told me that her feeling was that her daughter knew very well that there is something different with her.
- The woman, who got the correct answer to her question with eight years, has now a good and stable relationship with her mother.
- This is what we can tell the parents. Give your child confidence. And also speak with them about friendship and give them tools to find their own way in live.

OPEN AND HONEST PRACTISES WHEN  
WORKING WITH CHILDREN



Playing isn't contagious



THANK YOU FOR  
YOUR ATTENTION

