

## Publication

### In the name of the family? Against parents' refusal to disclose prognostic information to children

#### **JournalArticle (Originalarbeit in einer wissenschaftlichen Zeitschrift)**

**ID** 4618920

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**Year** 2021

**Title** In the name of the family? Against parents' refusal to disclose prognostic information to children

**Journal** Medicine, health care, and philosophy

**Volume** 24

**Number** 3

**Pages / Article-Number** 421-432

Parents frequently attempt to shield their children from distressing prognostic information. Pediatric oncology providers sometimes follow parental request for non-disclosure of prognostic information to children, invoking what we call the stability of the family argument. They believe that if they inform the child about terminal prognosis despite parental wishes, cohesion and family structure will be severely hampered. In this paper, we argue against parental request for non-disclosure. Firstly, we present the stability of the family argument in more detail. We, then, set out the (conceptual, legal, systemic) entitativity of the family and the kind of value the stability of the family argument assumes, before we set on to critically evaluate the argument. Our analysis shows that disclosure of prognostic information to children does not necessarily destabilize the family to a greater extent than non-disclosure. In fact, a systemic perspective suggests that mediated disclosure is more likely to result in a (long-term) stability of the family than non-disclosure. It is in the interest of the family to resist the initial aversive reaction to delivering bad news. In the final part, we draw a set of recommendations on how to facilitate decision-making in face of parental request for non-disclosure.

**Publisher** Springer

**ISSN/ISBN** 1386-7423 ; 1572-8633

**edoc-URL** <https://edoc.unibas.ch/82953/>

**Full Text on edoc** No;

**Digital Object Identifier DOI** 10.1007/s11019-021-10017-4

**PubMed ID** <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/33847853>

**ISI-Number** WOS:000639764100001

**Document type (ISI)** Article