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The Everyday Lives of Adolescent Girls with Epilepsy: A Qualitative Description

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Abstract:

This study is a qualitative description of the everyday lives of adolescent girls with epilepsy. The primary purpose of the research was to determine whether or not elements of stigma were present in narratives about participants' day-to-day living. The researcher used open-ended and semi-structured interview techniques in a series of interviews with four adolescent girls with epilepsy. Elements of stigma were present in some of the constructed themes; however, the researcher also uncovered other unexpected themes. Themes constructed by the researcher included: 1) I Am Like Everyone Else (Except for my Seizures); 2) There are Worse Things than Epilepsy; 3) My Parents Trust Me; 4) Am I Having a Seizure?; 5) Bullying Because of Seizures; 6) Bullying Because of Something other than Seizures; 7) Coping with Bullying; 8) Academic Difficulties; 9) Disclosure Management; 10) Seizures are Scary to Have and to See; and 11) If I have a Seizure, Don't Attract Attention to Me! The researcher considers topics thought to be important to adolescents with epilepsy about which the participants kept silent. The researcher makes suggestions about how the research can be used to improve health care practice and guide educational policies for adolescent students with epilepsy. Based on the findings, the

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researcher suggests areas for future research in nursing and educational policy.

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