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A qualitative evaluation of the Austrian's Youth-Red Cross „Juniorcamp“

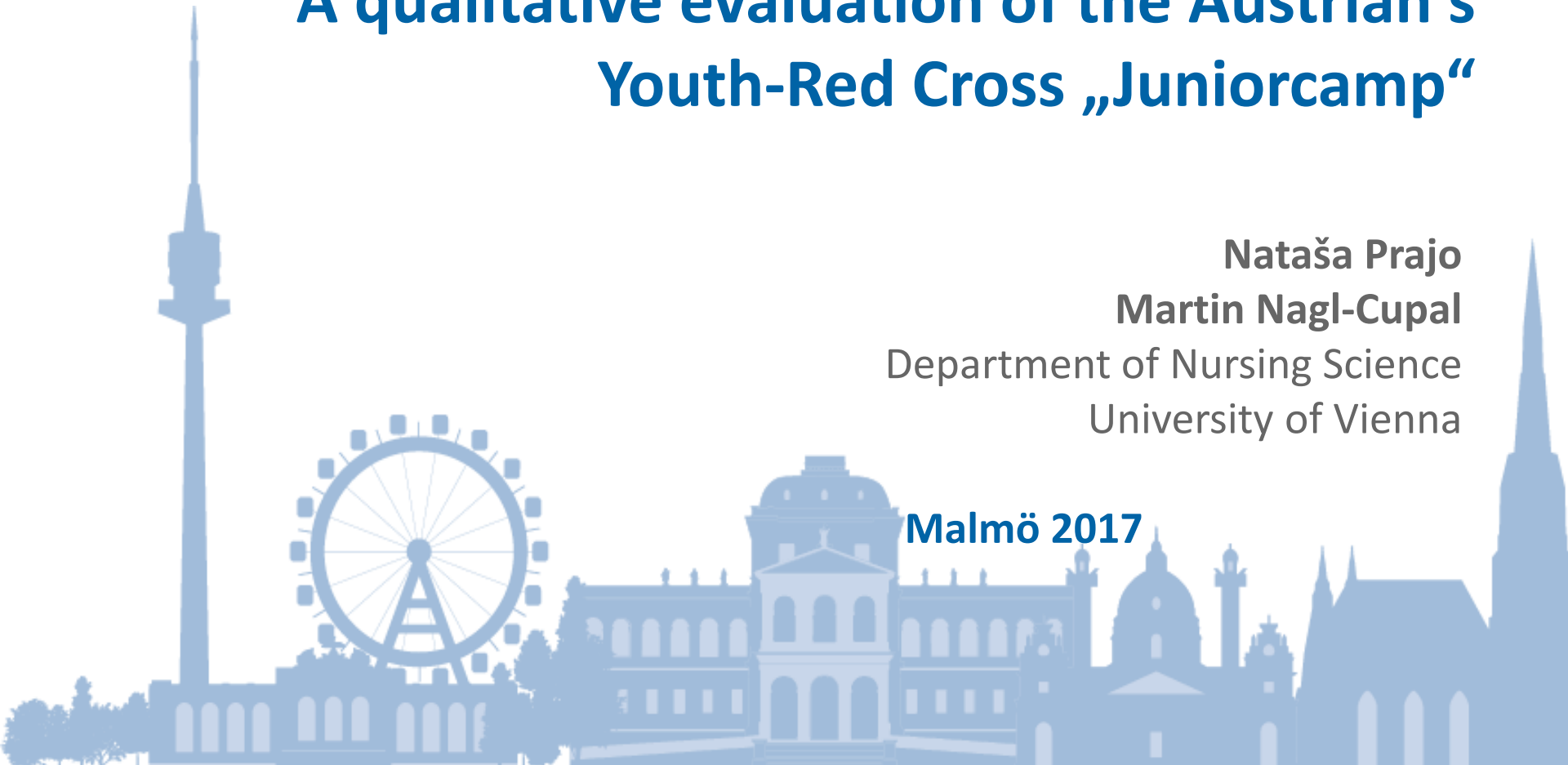
Nataša Prajo

Martin Nagl-Cupal

Department of Nursing Science

University of Vienna

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Background – effects of care responsibility



- Physical and psychosocial effects, as well as effects on school achievement (Metzing & Schnepf, 2007; Nagl-Cupal et al., 2014)
 - Altered parent-child relationship (Metzing & Schnepf, 2007; Nagl-Cupal et al., 2014)
 - Effects on adult life (Metzing & Schnepf, 2007; Nagl-Cupal et al., 2015)
- support for young carers , e.g. clubs, camps

Austrian's Youth-Red Cross „Juniorcamp“



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- Aim: providing distance to and relief from everyday life and responsibilities, as well as pleasure for two weeks (ÖJRK, 2014)
- Target group: young carers in the age group 10-14 years
- Offers:
 - a wide range of social and sports activities such as swimming, climbing, sailing, barbeque evenings
 - psychological support in form of individual or group meetings (ÖJRK, 2015)
 - 24 hours support (ÖJRK, 2014)





Research aim

Evaluation of the „Austrian’s Youth-Red Cross Juniorcamp”

- examine whether the „Juniorcamp“ is perceived as helpful in order to provide relief for children caring for an ill family member
- and the potential of improvement of the program addressing the specific needs of young carers.

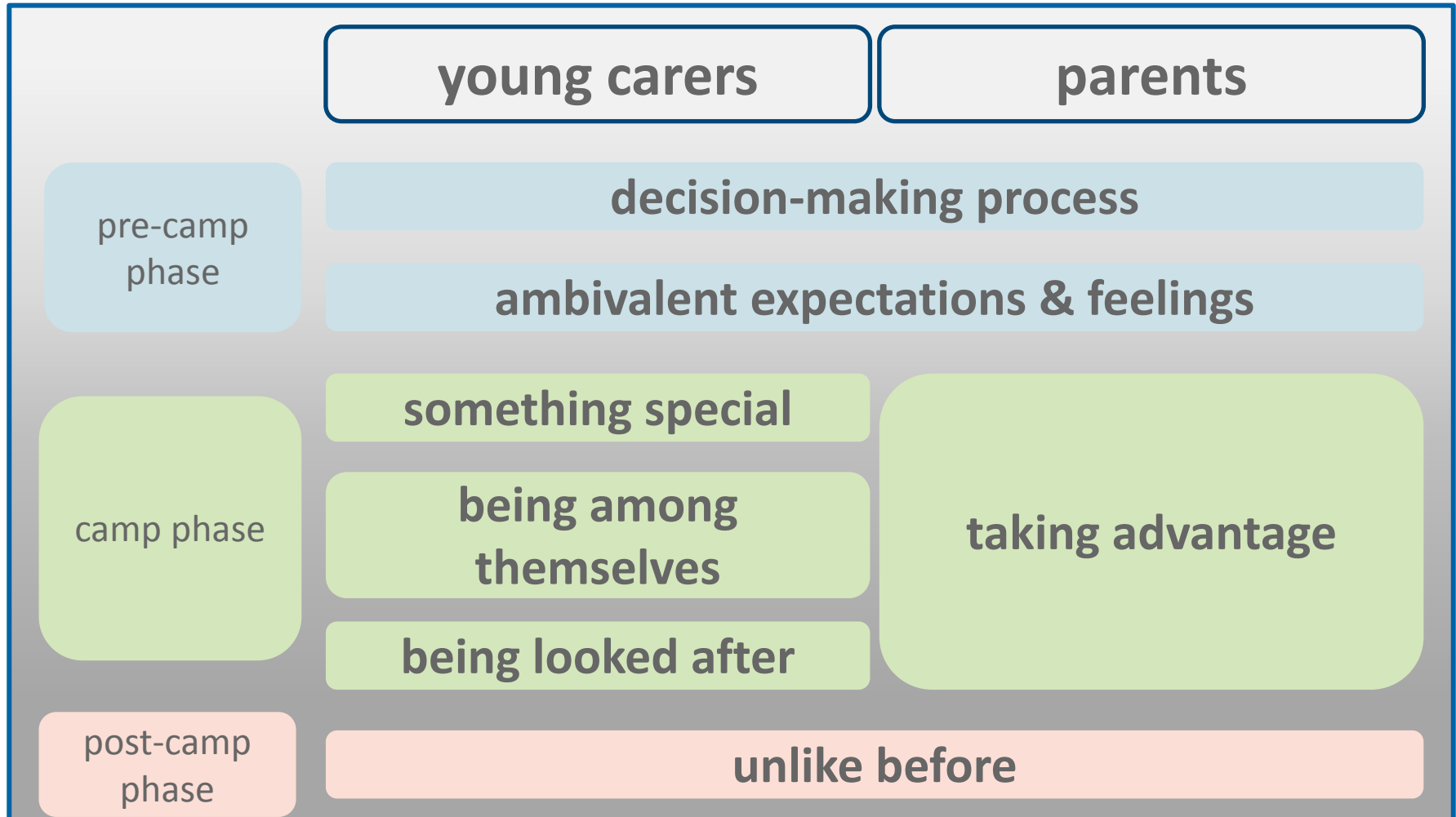


Method

- Qualitative evaluation
- Semi-structured interviews with **11 young carers and 8 family members**
- Data collection: July 2015 – October 2015
- Data analysis: qualitative content analysis Mayring, 2015
- Ethic approval



Results



Pre-camp phase



decision-making process

- To hear about the Juniorcamp
- Motivation for participation
- Joint decision

ambivalent expectations & feelings

- Anticipation
- Uncertainty
- Anxiety and worries

*„And we didn't
know what will
happen at home“
(IV 5b)*

Camp phase



something special

- Special experiences and adventures
- Having the choice

„Many of them simply went to the camp fire because it was so dark, so quiet, so you could talk there about the family“ (IV 5b)

being among themselves

- Relief from home
- Learning to deal with other kids
- Building new friendships
- Informal spaces

Camp phase



being looked after

- Regular daily routines
- Facing attention

PARENTS: taking advantage

Having time...

- for themselves
- for the partnership
- for the ill person
- for leisure activities

„We went out for dinner as a couple because it's easier as with the whole family. We were in the thermal bath, we have been around a lot“ (IV 4a)

Post-camp phase



unlike before

- Ambivalent feeling
- Initial problems in everyday life
- Behavioural changes
- Attitude towards the disease

„He lived withdrawn,
was in his own world
and since he's back, he
is completely different“
(IV 3a)

Conclusion

- The Austrian's Youth-Red Cross “Juniorcamp” is a helpful measure to provide relief for young carers.
- Young carers get a break from the caring responsibilities. The activities promote their social contacts and recreation. It enables them "to be a child”.

Implications for further development:

- Dissemination of information, creating informal spaces, recognizing the willingness to talk, increasing resilience.

Implications for further research:

- Single parents, longer-term effects of support programmes, impact of further measures on the whole family.



„They talked so much, over and over again. They have been relieved, happy, completely normal children“ (IV 1a).

contact:

natasa.prajo@univie.ac.at