

Category: **Healthcare**

Project: **Talking in Symbols: Image-based card set for communication in pediatric oncology clinics**

**What was the challenge?**

Children have a very different way of understanding, perceiving and communicating than adults. That makes communication in pediatric oncology especially sensitive. Articulating yourself in this stressful environment is a challenge for children.

**What was the solution?**

The psychosocial team of the Department of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine at Vienna General Hospital started to work on a solution that led to a collaboration with the Austrian Children's Cancer Aid and eventually, the designers of buero bauer. As children were the target group, a user centered design process included workshops with kids to understand what they need. The content was collected, structured into categories and reduced to the most important dialogue situations in a clinic which were then illustrated. Several prototype testing rounds with children in clinics finally lead to the result: Talking in Symbols is an intuitively comprehensible, image-based card set for language-independent communication between young patients, the treatment team and family members. Each affected child can choose their own Talking in Symbols picture card set, which fits exactly in a child's hand, and personalize it with their name.

**What was the effect?**

The playful combination of illustrations creates positive dialogues. At the moment, 1.000 printed sets in Austrian, German and Swiss clinics help strengthen the positive self-concept and the competence of the young patients through clear, transparent communication and a better understanding of the entire therapy.

**Contact:**

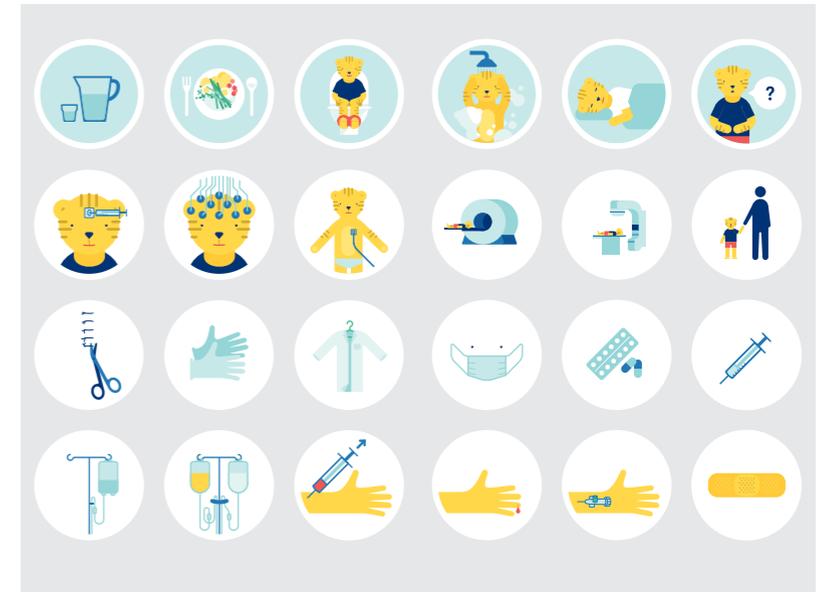
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User centered design focused on how children understand the treatment process and what they need in this situation.



A „tiger“, „boy“ and „girl“ are available personas from which kids can choose their preferred identity.



The illustrations in the fan-like card set can be combined to create sentences or situations through symbols.



Additional tools to the illustrations are a clock and calendar that help understand a time frame.



Category: XX

Project: XXX

### What was the challenge?

Communication in pediatric oncology requires sensitivity. Articulating yourself in this stressful situation is a challenge for children. Factors such as limitations due to neurological deficits and linguistic diversity make the dialogue in the clinics even harder.

### What was the solution?

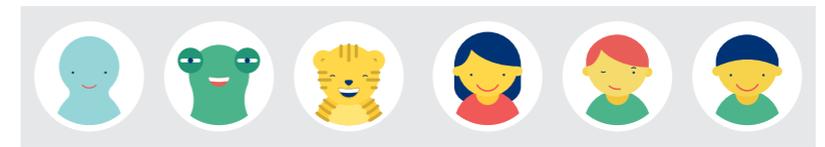
Finding a solution for this was the starting point of a cooperation with the psychosocial team of the pediatric neuro-oncology at the University Clinic for Children + Adolescent Medicine at Vienna General Hospital and the Austrian Children's Cancer Aid. In workshops with doctors, psychologists and children, communication content was collected, structured into categories and subsequently illustrated. The result: Talking in Symbols is an intuitively comprehensible, image-based card set for language-independent communication between young patients, the treatment team and family members. Each affected child receives their own Talking in Symbols picture card set, which is their personal helper towards a better understanding.

### What was the effect?

In practice, the tool, which consists of around 70 individual images, can be adapted in a playful way - situations or processes can be explained and a dialogue is created. The image-based tool helps through illustrated images to make communication in everyday clinical practice more intuitive and understandable. The Talking in Symbols picture card set strengthens the positive self-concept and the competence of the young patients through clear, transparent communication and a better understanding of the entire therapy.

### Contact:

name:  
company/organisation:  
e-mail:  
website



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**What was the challenge?**

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**What was the solution?**

Approaching a solution from a scientific point of view, we started a cooperation with the psychosocial team of the Department of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine at Vienna General Hospital and the Austrian Children's Cancer Aid. As children were the target group, a user centered design process included workshops with kids to understand what they need. The content was collected, structured into categories and reduced to the most important dialogue situations in a clinic which were then illustrated. Several prototype testing rounds with children in clinics finally lead to the result: Talking in Symbols is an intuitively comprehensible, image-based card set for language-independent communication between young patients, the treatment team and family members. Each affected child can choose their own Talking in Symbols picture card set, which fits exactly in a child's hand, and personalize it with their name.

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**Project Team**

**Design Experts**

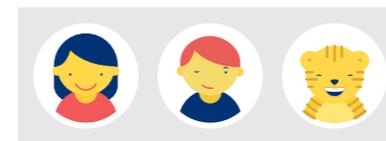
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