

Social support and grand parenting in autistic children families

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Abstract

About 1 in 68 children has been identified with autism spectrum disorder among children aged 8 years according to estimates from Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) (Baio, 2014). Not only undiscovered cause of autism is a source of stress for parents of autistic children, but the stress of raising a child with autism can lead to depression (Morgan, 1988, 263-280). In order to cope with this stressful situation, it is very important for parents of autistic children to find some explanation for their child's developmental disorder, and even to be supported by their family, institutions and society. Even though the pace of research has increased dramatically in recent years, a majority of studies on families with a child with autism collect information from the parents, but not from the other members of the family. This study examined the involvement of grandparents of autistic children. The study is based on a sample of 40 mothers of autistic children from Albania who completed a structured questionnaire. It was hypothesized that mothers of autistic children who live with other members of the family such as grandparents, perceive more social support compared to families of autistic children that consist only by the natural parents.

Keywords: autism, child, grandparents, mothers, social support.

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