

# Maternal and Family Processes in Different Subgroups of Youths with Autism Spectrum Disorder

## 不同類型之泛自閉症障礙兒童青少年的母子(女)與家庭互動

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### Abstract

**Objective:** This study examined mothering, mother-child relationship, and family function in youths with ASD, stratified by subgroups with or without language/cognitive delay or disability, and with or without concurrent attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

**Methods:** We enrolled 160 youths (aged 6-18 years; males N=140, 87.5%) with ASD according to both DSM-IV (or ICD-10) criteria and the Autism Diagnostic Interview-Revised, and 160 age, gender, and IQ-matched typically developing (TD) youths. The ASD subgroups consisted of 51 with 'typical autism' (TA), 52 'high-functioning autism' (HFA), and 57 'Asperger syndrome' (AS). Mothers also

received psychiatric interviews for ADHD diagnosis and reported on their parenting styles, relationships with participants, and family function.

**Results:** Maternal reports showed that youths with TA had more overprotection than youths with HFA. Moreover, youths with TA had more behavioral problems at home than youths with HFA; mothers of AS perceived poorer family function than mothers of HFA; and the presence of ADHD was associated with more problems at home. Multiple regression analyses summarized that both TA and AS groups had impaired maternal and family measures, while HFA and co-occurring ADHD only associated with more problems at home.

**Conclusion:** Our findings suggest different ASD subgroups and the presence of ADHD have different impacts on mothering and family processes. Individual differences and specific needs should be carefully considered when designing intervention and support plans for youths with ASD and their family.