

FAMILY HOMETREATMENT AUTISME (FHA) IN THE NETHERLANDS:

an explorative study about the “true colours” of families with ASD

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BACKGROUND AND AIMS

The upbringing of children with ASD is a difficult task for their parents. Because of their constraints in contact and communication it is hard to understand their needs and therefore the parents and their brothers and sisters need specific skills.

In the Netherlands there is no home treatment specifically for families with ASD. We developed a competence directed home treatment program: the Family Home treatment for Autism (FHA).

The aims are: to restore the balance of family life by improving the competence in dealing with ASD of all family members.

METHODS

In two agencies we measured the effectiveness of FHA before (T1) and after (T2) the intervention with standardized and validated questionnaires (VGFO, SCL-90, SDQ) focused on the parents' practises, parents' personal problems and their perception of the problems of the child with ASD. A total of 85 mothers and 79 fathers with 88 referred children from 86 families filled out the questionnaires.

RESULTS

We demonstrated an overall significant improvement of both parents' perception of their children's problems and in their parental functioning and personal wellbeing. There is a correlation between the parental functioning and the personal problems. Fathers and mothers were classified in three groups: no problems, single problems, multiple problems. Each group has different benefits of the FHA on their parental functioning and/or personal problems and/or on their child.

CONCLUSIONS

The new developed family home treatment in families with ASD (FHA) has a positive impact on parents and children..