

Autism: how it's affecting family life reports examples

[Sociology](#), [Communication](#)



Autism refers to a spectrum disorder that usually affects that communication and social skills. This condition is usually detected during the first three years of the life of a child. Some of the most common characteristics of autism include repetition of words, tantrums, apparent lack of or oversensitivity to pain, absence of real fears to dangers, high sensitivity to sound, and crying, laughing, or showing distress for no apparent reason. However, it should be noted that the effects of autism are not similar in every child and the condition can affect anyone. However, it is important to note that autistic conditions are more prevalent among male children than their female counterparts. Generally, autism is not a condition that can effectively be addressed but it is noteworthy that the symptoms often reduce as the affected child develops.

There are various theories that are used to explain the causes of autism. Some of the theories include environmental factors such as chemicals, genetics, metabolic imbalances, viral infections, as well as certain vaccines (Ariel, 2005). Consequently, there is a belief that children are born with autism and that every child has the potential to develop the condition. Accordingly, it should be understood that the autistic condition is not caused by bad parenting as children with autism are generally not unruly. Most of the families which have a child with autism usually get suspicious of a child's disability when the child is about two years. Consequently, they seek diagnosis for such children for about three years. Through the five years the child usually displays certain disability challenges relating to writing speaking, reading, and deafness.

Usually, the family has to make several adjustments when it becomes

apparent that a child is autistic. The adjustments are basically with regard to behaviors and practices. For instance, the family members have to watch their voices such as avoiding shouting or singing loudly since the autistic child may feel irritated and experience convulsions. Consequently, various breakable items have to be put away and some families have to further change their diet to fit the demands of the autistic child.

Communication is usually a very important factor in families. The aspect of communication varies from one autistic child to another. Most children with autism communicate with other family members. Some communicate easily than others. This is basically due to the fact that some autistic children may have a normal speech while others may only be able to communicate through gestures, picture exchanges, and sign language.

The children that do not have autism are usually aware of the fact that their brother or sister has autism. As such, the other children spend more time with the affected child. However, the health concerns and the behavior of the affected children may limit their activities with other children (Fairfoot, 2004). Mothers are also forced to spend more time with and pay more attention to the autistic children than the rest of the children in a bid to help such children learn social skills, maximize their potential and encourage them to be independent so that they can live their lives to the fullest.

Specific stages that may present major challenges in families include when the family doctor is hesitant to make a diagnosis on a child especially when such physicians do not have a certain treatment strategy to recommend, when acquiring services for the affected child become a continuous struggle, when the affected child reaches the adolescence stage especially when

sexual development turn out to be uncontrolled tantrums in which case controlling the child may become even more challenging when the teenager gets bigger, and even post adolescence stage when the parents realize that there are very few adult autistic services available (Brock, 2010). Conversely a couple may become very close due to the bond they share in the circumstances. However, the financial burden involved in caring for the child with autism is immense and often tend to create a wedge between spouses causing the spouses to drift further and further apart.

When frustrations regarding the autistic child become unbearable, parents may begin to regret often asking themselves what they did wrong as they perceive the affected child as a punishment to them. Some mothers regret taking alcohol before and during pregnancy, allowing the child to be vaccinated, and exercising too much. Such regrets escalate the stress levels and during such periods of frustrations, a parent may find him/herself adopting certain routines such as becoming less interactive and isolating oneself as well as shying away from inviting friends over with the fear that visitors would only end up judging them.

Methods of Intervention

While intervening in autistic conditions, it is important to note that autism affects people differently hence different interventions and treatment protocols that are used on a case to case basis. Some of the interventions include the applied behavior analysis (ABA) interventions, bio-medical interventions, dietary interventions, and other interventions and therapies (Bleach, 2001).

ABA-based interventions are interventions that are usually applied to cases

of people suffering from various interactive and developmental disorders. This approach is used to teach intricate communication, self-help, social, and play skills. Some of the ABA interventions include applied verbal behavior, discrete trial training, and pivotal response training. The applied verbal behavior emphasizes on training the affected children various verbal behaviors through several teaching procedures that focus on behavior analysis. Discrete trial training on the other hand provides the affected child with sequential information. It is usually effective as it provides the child with a clear message regarding what is expected of him/her. It also lets the child know whether a response is appropriate. The pivotal response training basically entails the use of natural and motivational procedures to enhance the development of appropriate developmental behaviors in autistic children. This approach focuses on play and communication behaviors.

Dietary interventions regarding children with autism are more popular interventions. Nutrients such as Gluten which is usually found in wheat as well as Casein which is found in foods such as cheese, milk, and other dairy products are two elements that are usually avoided in the diet of autistic children. This is because foods which have no Gluten and Casein nutrients are believed to improve the sleep patterns, communication, and social interaction while also reducing the digestive problems and behaviors that are considered autistic. However, it is important to note that the dietary interventions approach has not been exhaustively studied.

Bio-medical interventions include the use of chelation which is believed to rid the body off heavy metals toxins and the vitamin therapy which are effective in the treatment of autism. This approach coupled with other bio-medical

interventions may prove effective in dealing with the condition.

Other interventions include speech therapy. Language barriers are a common aspect of autism hence parents may seek professional assistance in order to improve and develop communication skills of an autistic child.

Occupational therapy approaches are also important in treating autistic children considering that the DSM IV is among the autism deficiencies. Other children usually have motor-planning challenges thus affecting their capacity to perform reasonable motor responsibilities such as writing. Occupational therapists are therefore important in developing and refining functional skills. Consequently, physical therapy is very important in improving the ability to the affected child to walk.

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