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The Netherlands

Autism and family health: stress, eating behavior, and health in young children with ASD and their parents

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Citation

Lubbe, A. L. van der. (2026, February 5). *Autism and family health: stress, eating behavior, and health in young children with ASD and their parents*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/4289480>

Version: Publisher's Version

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Propositions

1. Parents of young children with ASD are at increased risk for stress and mental health problems compared to the general population (*this dissertation*).
2. Mothers and their young children with ASD show an elevated risk of obesity compared to mothers in the general population (*this dissertation*).
3. Chronic stress in parents is associated with chronic stress in their young children with ASD (*this dissertation*).
4. Obesity in children with ASD and their mothers is interconnected and should be addressed as a family issue (*this dissertation*).
5. Addressing family dynamics in clinical interventions is important to reduce stress and to improve well-being in both children with ASD and their parents.
6. Early monitoring of health indicators and promotion of healthy lifestyle habits in families with children with ASD could contribute to better physical and mental health outcomes.
7. Educating mental health care providers about associated physical health risks can improve care for children with ASD and their families.
8. Biological stress measures offer additional insights that are essential for understanding stress in individuals with ASD and their families.
9. Combining a PhD study and motherhood asks for flexibility and adaptability.
10. The resilience of parents of children with ASD deserves both recognition and support.