

The Dilemma of and Social Service Strategies for Parents of Children with Autism

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ABSTRACT

Autism is often considered a highly severe individual developmental disorder in children, and it is stressful for both parents and society. Through research, it can be learned that parents with autistic children face difficulties such as significant economic pressure, lack of professional knowledge, and limited social support. These parents' psychological and emotional fluctuations are significant, which can easily lead to family depolarization. The social work intervention can ensure that patients' families avoid fragmentation, improve the social atmosphere, increase tolerance towards autistic children and their parents, enrich social support networks, and help parents of autistic children improve their relevant knowledge levels to solve problems; and the social work intervention can also help to create an inclusive and understanding oriented social atmosphere to encourage parents of children with autism to better integrate into mainstream society.

Keywords: *Autism, Parents of children, Social work intervention, Family education.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Autism is a phenomenon in which children experience serious differences in social, governance, sensory, and behavioral aspects during individual development. From a global perspective, there has been an increase in autism patients in recent years, which has also brought social attention to the development of children with autism, and the parents of these children are also facing significant pressure. However, the current research related to autism has not been in-depth, and there is not much literature formed, which does not match the large number of this social group. For a long time, parents of children with autism not only face significant economic pressure, but also psychological pressure, and also need to face some social exclusion. This article reviews existing literature, combines the actual situations faced by parents of autistic children, summarizes the difficulties they face and the expressed demands, and forms implementable relevant strategies, in order to provide reference for parents of autistic children to overcome their difficulties.

2. OVERVIEW OF FAMILY EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

As the main environment for the physical and mental development of children with autism, family education can help improve the recovery effect of children with autism. Knowing how parents respond to the rehabilitation needs of children with autism and recognizing the important role that parents play, can make others have a more comprehensive understanding of the demands raised by parents of children with autism, and subsequently develop corresponding response measures. This article categorizes families of children with autism into the following types.

2.1 Institutional Dependency

These parents are usually mentally anxious and have a lot of negative emotions, but their actions are relatively lacking. It is urgent to heal their children's emotions. Their knowledge and skills are lacking. Therefore, they place their hopes on third-party rehabilitation units. This means that these parents lack understanding of the importance of family education and are very dependent on

rehabilitation units. However, if the rehabilitation treatment effect does not meet expectations for a period of time, these parents may lose attention and become depressed parents.

2.2 *Leaving Nothing to Chance*

These parents often have expressed that they are no longer effectively promoting home treatment for children with autism, or believe that autism is difficult to cure. They usually send their children to rehabilitation institutions mainly because they can receive certain state subsidies. These parents generally have high economic pressure, low education level, or the caregivers for children with autism are older generations who do not have much energy to participate in the care of special children.

2.3 *Active Coordination*

Active coordinated parents have strong initiative and are able to independently participate in recovery activities for children with autism. They also have a good mentality and hope that their children can recover, and usually have good patience. These parents can cooperate with the rehabilitation unit to actively learn knowledge and skills related to the care of autistic children, and leverage the advantages of family education. Active coordinated parents generally have good economic conditions and relatively high levels of education, but some of them may also experience anxiety due to long-term efforts that have not achieved significant results.

3. THE DILEMMA OF PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

The plight of parents of children with autism comes from financial pressures hitting the family, inadequate social support, and lack of expertise.

3.1 *Economic Pressure Impacting Family Structure*

Children with autism can cause significant economic pressure on their families. Although there has been an increase in corresponding subsidies for disabled children in China in recent years, for most families with autistic children, this economic expenditure will cause significant difficulties for families. Some parents quit their jobs to take care of their children, and their family income is mostly used for expenses such as child treatment and rehabilitation. From an overall perspective, the

treatment and rehabilitation time for children with autism is relatively long, requiring families to continue spending funds, which can easily lead to a certain impact on the family structure and even lead to the phenomenon of marriage breakdown.

3.2 *Insufficient Social Support Leads to Psychological Disorders Among Parents*

From the clinical symptoms, children with autism often exhibit behaviors that differ from those of the general population, such as sudden screams, falling objects, and prolonged periods of neglect. These actions can lead to more social exclusion for children with autism and their parents, leading to greater emotional burden. As a result, parents may gradually be marginalized and passive in shaping social relationships, making them prone to psychological disorders. Therefore, it is necessary to gradually purify the social environment, provide a more tolerant atmosphere for children with autism and their parents, and provide support for their gradual recovery.

3.3 *Behavioral Deviation and Lack of Professional Knowledge*

The rehabilitation of children with autism involves a wide range of professional content, and they need to participate in it for a long time. Rehabilitation institutions and parents need to collaborate, such as providing training platforms and treatment plans, and parents also need to cooperate in the implementation in the family environment. However, currently, most parents of children with autism lack professional knowledge, making it difficult to meet the actual needs of rehabilitation treatment connection. Some parents say that rehabilitation institution staff are responsible for daily training and do not need to worry too much. At the same time, a few parents lack trust in rehabilitation institutions and form incorrect guidance for their children in family education.

4. ANALYSIS OF THE REASONS FOR THE DIFFICULTIES OF PARENTS OF AUTISTIC CHILDREN

This chapter will analyse the causes of parents' plight in terms of policy, society and rehabilitation.

4.1 Policy Aspect: Lack of Targeted and Applicable Policies and Regulations

China categorizes autism as a category of mental disability, meeting the relevant policies and regulations issued by the country for the disabled population. At present, some security systems lack implement ability and face certain difficulties in the implementation process, which makes it difficult for children with autism to receive appropriate rehabilitation training. Parents of children with autism face difficulties in seeking custody. At present, most of the rehabilitation support for patients with autism comes from economic assistance, but there is less involvement in how to provide custody care and strengthen rehabilitation interventions.

4.2 Social Aspect: Low Public Awareness and Social Neglect

The lack of awareness of autism in various sectors of society has led to obstacles for patients with autism in their daily travel and medical treatment. Firstly, China has not yet established a mechanism for autism screening, and there is not much publicity on autism in society. The majority of the public do not have a sufficient understanding of the characteristics and social manifestations of autism; Secondly, from the perspective of clinical manifestations, patients with autism are often relatively stable and generally do not have harmfulness. However, many people say that individuals with autism exhibit stereotypical behavior or emotional symptoms, which may cause harm to others; Thirdly, China has not yet established regulations to establish green channels related to the travel and medical treatment of autistic patients, which will have an impact on the overall rehabilitation of autistic patients.

4.3 Rehabilitation Aspect: Lack of Professional Rehabilitation Guidance and Assistance Institutions

Firstly, there is a lack of psychological counseling. Most of the current research and policy regulations focus on the emotional changes and future development of patients with autism, but do not pay attention to the psychological health of parents. In fact, parents are also prone to psychological problems during long-term care and need psychological counseling. Secondly, there are fewer professional regulatory personnel. Currently, most autistic rehabilitation institutions prioritize

profitability in their business development, while a few institutions are founded by parents of some autistic patients based on their own care experience. There are phenomena in the entire industry such as slow standardization construction, unclear access conditions, and limited employee qualification training platforms, resulting in a low number of professional regulatory personnel and difficulty in ensuring the scientific nature of rehabilitation training.

5. SOCIAL SUPPORT STRATEGIES FOR FAMILIES WITH AUTISTIC PEOPLE

The dilemma of families with autistic people is multidimensional. To solve these difficulties, it is necessary for all parties to provide assistance through multiple channels. Governments, enterprises, and communities should all bear the responsibility of providing assistance.

5.1 Government Support

The Government should formulate an independent support policy for autism, and establish and strengthen the supervision of public autism trusts.

5.1.1 Developing Independent Support Policies for Autism

Compared to ordinary mental disabilities, autism has certain characteristics: firstly, the causes of autism are relatively complex, and the symptoms are also diverse, making it difficult to directly respond with medication; secondly, compared to conventional mental disabilities, although the symptoms of autism vary from person to person, most of them face language barriers and relatively lack social function. From this, it can be seen that autism is not simply a mental disability. Drawing on the mature experience of developed countries, autism can be classified as a separate disability category. When defining the category, it is necessary to refer to the clinical characteristics and social performance of autism patients, sort out the relevant needs for difficult care, rehabilitation training, social communication, psychological pressure, and provide subsidies for autism patients from multiple directions such as government and district. China can introduce policies and regulations directly related to autism patients, bringing certain benefits to these patients and their

families, and effectively safeguarding their legitimate rights and interests.

5.1.2 Establishing a Public Autism Custody Institution and Strengthening Supervision

There is a necessity to establish a public social autism care unit responsible for individuals with high economic pressure and difficulties in family care, and minimize their care pressure as much as possible without affecting the normal economic expenses of families with autistic people. During the construction of the autism trusteeship institution, it is necessary to break the previous registered residence restrictions, and also try to make arrangements nearby. This not only optimizes resource allocation, but also provides some convenience for families with autistic people, avoiding increased care pressure due to long distances. In addition to public trusteeship institutions, governments at all levels can introduce supportive policies to provide support for the development of private rehabilitation institutions, such as formulating industry standards and regulations on employee qualification exams, to ensure that private institutions can have excellent service quality. Local governments can increase the promotion of autism services and guide social capital to participate in the construction and development of autism service institutions.

5.2 Enterprise Support

Enterprises are also an important force in supporting individuals with autism and their families. On the one hand, enterprises can alleviate the economic pressure of families with autistic people through various forms of assistance; On the other hand, enterprises actively establishing and operating autism care and rehabilitation institutions can alleviate the care pressure on families with autistic people.

5.2.1 Developing a Special Assistance Plan to Address the Employment Issues of Parents with Autistic Children

At present, some enterprises have begun to actively fulfill their social responsibilities, such as participating in assistance activities for vulnerable groups, charitable donations, etc., which are explained in the annual reports and performance evaluations of the enterprises. Enterprise trade unions can provide certain assistance and support to

families of autistic patients based on the actual situation of employees, or consider hiring specialized caregivers to provide assistance to autistic patients. At the same time, they should try to provide inclusiveness to family members of autistic patients during work hours and job arrangements.

5.2.2 Encouraging Active Establishment or Operation of Autism Care Institutions

Currently, there are not many social care institutions related to autism patients, and the number of autism rehabilitation units is also small, making it difficult to meet the actual needs of autism patients and their families. Enterprises with conditions can closely follow changes in market demand, establish private autism care institutions, or invest funds to participate in the construction of public autism care institutions, bringing more professional services to autism patients and reducing their family care pressure.

5.3 Community Support

The communities are the main venue for activities of individuals with autism and their family members. By creating a tolerant, comfortable, and smooth living environment and a harmonious supportive atmosphere, the communities can provide the most direct support for families with autistic people, helping them alleviate social and daily care difficulties.

5.3.1 Improving People's Tolerance Towards Families with Autistic People

The community needs to regularly promote information related to autism, encourage residents to further deepen their understanding of autism patients, understand the difficulties faced by autism patients and their families, and thereby enhance residents' tolerance towards the autism community. On the one hand, this can alleviate the care pressure faced by families with autism, and on the other hand, it can improve the community environment in which autism patients live, allowing them and their families to live in a more harmonious community atmosphere.

5.3.2 *Encouraging Volunteers to Help Families with Autistic People*

It is a must to establish a community based family assistance group to provide assistance to families with autistic people through volunteer services, such as relieving emotional stress, recommending intervention methods, and meeting the needs of breathing services. The community can invest efforts to form a volunteer team, regularly provide corresponding training to volunteers, and gradually improve the professional level of volunteer assistance. This can not only improve the internal and external environment of families with autism, but also enhance the harmonious and mutual aid relationship between community residents.

6. CONCLUSION

After analysis, the author of this article believes that families with autistic people need support from the communities, enterprises, and governments. The social work intervention can ensure that patients' families avoid fragmentation, improve the social atmosphere, increase tolerance towards autistic children and their parents, enrich social support networks, and help parents of autistic children improve their relevant knowledge levels to solve problems; and the social work intervention can also help to create an inclusive and understanding oriented social atmosphere to encourage parents of children with autism to better integrate into mainstream society.

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