
Abstracts from Hebrew

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Establishing Reliability of The First Year Inventory in Israel Among Mothers and Fathers

Key Words: Autism, children, early screening, parent report, cross-informant reliability

Screening for early signs of autism spectrum disorders poses both an empirical and clinical challenge. Since the average age of diagnosis is 3 years, most kids do not benefit from early intervention. In response to the need for earlier identification, the First Year Inventory (FYI) was developed as a norm-based parent screening questionnaire for autism in 12-month-old infants. **Objective:** To establish the internal consistency and cross-informant reliability of the FYI. **Method:** A convenience sample of 160 parents (82 mothers, 78 fathers) of children aged 11-13 months completed the FYI. Reliability tests were conducted to determine internal and cross-informant reliability. **Results:** High internal consistency was established among the mothers ($\alpha = .76$) and fathers ($\alpha = .73$). There was low cross-informant reliability ($ICC = 0.47$). Fathers reported significantly higher risk levels than mothers, in the FYI social-communication domain, but not in the sensory-regulation domain. **Conclusion:** The FYI shows good levels of reliability as a screening tool. Differences between parents may relate both to the nature of fathers' involvement in caring for their infants and to their unique perspective on typical social milestones.

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The study is based on a research project performed as part of the requirements for a measurement course under the supervision of **Dr. Ayelet Ben-Sasson** in the MA program at the Department of Occupational Therapy, University of Haifa.

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Interactions Between Mothers and their Children with Autism: The Importance of the Mother's Sensitivity to the Child's Signals

Key words: Autism, maternal sensitivity, development, emotional availability

Maternal sensitivity is defined as mothers' ability to understand and appropriately respond to their children's signals. This paper emphasizes the importance of sensitive maternal behavior towards children with autism as a basis for building a secure relationship with them and promoting their development. Four interactions between mothers and their children with autism are presented and evaluated using the Emotional Availability Scales. Finally, therapists are encouraged to promote and strengthen sensitive behavior in mothers of children with autism.

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Collaboration of Behavioral Analysts and Occupational Therapists in the Treatment of People with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Key words: Autism spectrum disorders (ASD), occupational therapist, Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA)

The increasing prevalence of children diagnosed with autistic spectrum disorder, as well as the characteristics of the syndrome and its complexity, make it imperative to develop a specific and multi-disciplinary framework. Occupational therapists have proven expertise in significant fields of knowledge needed to advance/treat people with this disorder, and therefore, represent key figures in the treatment framework. Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) is a commonly used, evidence-based approach for the treatment of disorders throughout the autism spectrum. In Israel, many families use home-based behavioral interventions under the supervision of behavioral analysts, who often work in collaboration with health professionals. In addition, behavioral analysts are being employed in an increasing number of settings (kindergartens, schools,

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hostels, etc.), in which they serve as counselors, providing guidance and developing treatment plans. Thus, it is inevitable that behavioral analysts and occupational therapists come in contact with one another in the context of their work. In their treatment of children in the autistic spectrum occupational therapists often encounter challenges, such as: difficulties in motivating and initiating participation; behavioral difficulties and difficulty in setting limits in treatment; sensory processing disorders; learning; generalization; and group participation difficulties. ABA is an educational treatment approach that provides a wide range of practical tools that may help in meeting these challenges, and thus help in achieving treatment goals. These tools include a variety of procedures, principles and teaching methods, such as: reinforcement procedures; functional analysis; procedures to moderate behaviors; shaping; prompts; generalization planning; task analysis and backward and forward chaining. In this article a case study is presented to illustrate the potential benefits of collaboration between occupational therapists and behavioral analysts, and the integration of behavioral processes and principles in the work of occupational therapists.

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