

Parent- and child-related stress attributions and parental self-efficacy in parents of children with visual disabilities

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Introduction

Rearing a child with a disability can be stressful for parents (Tröster, 2001). Having a child with a disability can influence feelings of parental self-efficacy, since high parenting stress has been related to low parental self-efficacy (Jones & Prinz, 2005). It is unclear whether these lower levels of parental self-efficacy are particularly associated with stress attributions regarding the child or regarding the self (the parent). More insight into these associations is important, because lower levels of parental self-efficacy are associated with less competent parenting, which may put these children already at risk for maladaptive outcomes, even more at risk.

Research question

How are parent- and child-related stress attributions associated with parental self-efficacy in parents of children with visual or visual-and-intellectual disabilities?

Method

Participants

- * 82 children with a visual disability (48 boys, 34 girls)
- * Age (1-5 years): $M=3.22$, $SD=1.13$
- * 76 children with low vision, 6 children with blindness
- * 23 children had additional intellectual disabilities (ID)
- * 70 mothers, 12 fathers; mean age (years): $M=35.2$, $SD=5.28$

Measures

- * Parenting Stress Index (two domains: Parent- & Child-related)
- * Self-Efficacy in the Nurturing Role-questionnaire

Statistical procedure

A multiple regression analysis was done with child's intellectual disability and parental education level as control variables in step 1, parent-related stress attributions added in step 2, and child-related stress attributions added in step 3, with parental self-efficacy as outcome measure.



Results

Parents of children with visual disabilities reported significant higher levels of parenting stress, and average levels of parental self-efficacy compared to norm groups of parents with children without disabilities.

Table 1.

Final step of multiple regression analyses of child's intellectual disability, parental education, parent-related stress and child-related stress on predicting parental self-efficacy ($N=82$).

	β	t	p
Child ID	.17	2.12	.037
Parent education	.18	2.19	.031
Parent-related stress	-.57	-5.08	< .001
Child-related stress	-.16	-1.39	.168

Parent-related parenting stress (in combination with child's intellectual disability and parental education) was a significant predictor of parental self-efficacy ($F(3, 78)= 27.82$, $p < .001$, adjusted $R^2 = .50$). Child-related parenting stress did not add to the model (R^2 change= .012, $p= .168$).

Conclusion and implications

Parent-related parenting stress attributions seemed more predictive for parental self-efficacy than child-related parenting stress attributions.

Parents having a child with a visual-and-intellectual disability reported higher scores on perceived parental self-efficacy than parents having a child with only a visual disability. Perhaps these parents have more realistic expectations of their child's abilities.

In a parent intervention a focus on parent-related stress may be useful in alleviating feelings of incompetence, especially for parents with a lower educational level. In this way, parenting for children with visual or visual-and-intellectual disabilities can be improved.

More information:

- Website: <http://www.emgo.nl/research/mental-health/research-projects/1420/effects-of-vipp-v-training/background/>
- Overbeek, M. M., Sterkenburg, P. S., Kef, S., Schuengel, C. (2015) The effectiveness of VIPP-V parenting training for parents of young children with a visual or visual-and-intellectual disability: study protocol of a multicenter randomized controlled trial. *Trials*; 16:401.
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