
ABSTRACT

Perceived understanding and support of acting out behavior in the sibling of an autistic child based on attachment with her mother

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An older sister, who felt the burden of caring for her younger brother with autism spectrum disorder, exhibited acting-out behaviors. She and the mother participated in a support group for mothers and children. The mother seemed to be frustrated with her daughter's rebellious and aggressive attitude and tried to suppress her opinion, while the daughter felt threatened because of her mother's unacceptance towards her. This increased the daughter's desire for attachment and resulted in aggressive behaviors in an attempt to attract her mother's feelings. Therapists intervened in the relationship, encouraging adequate expression from the daughter and responsiveness from the mother towards her daughter's feelings. The mother expressed fear and confusion during this interaction and the therapists validated her feelings. This led the mother to cooperate extraordinarily with her daughter. She reviewed her involvement with her daughter, reduced her daughter's caregiving responsibilities, and started spending an increasing amount of time with her. As a result, the girl's rebellious and aggressive attitude decreased, leading to a positive mother-daughter relationship.

Key Words: acting-out child, attachment, siblings
