Parents with Autism of Children with Autism
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Background
- Despite the high heredity of autism, relatively little is known about parents with autism of children with autism.
- The familiarity with the disorder might increase the parents’ ability to respond more effectively to the possible difficulties of raising a child with autism\(^1\).
- However, the social communicative problems of autism might pose additional complications for the interaction between parent and child\(^2\).\(^3\).\(^4\)

Objective
- To explore the characteristics and overall quality of life of parents with autism who have one or more children with autism.

Participants
- 562 adults, IQ>85, participants of the Netherlands Autism Register, a longitudinal online cohort study of individuals with autism.

Conclusions
- Parents with autism of children with autism were: older, diagnosed later, had higher IQ but equal AQ scores, and were more often employed.

Results

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<tr>
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<th>Adults with autism</th>
<th>F/Chi(^2)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender (male; female)</td>
<td>Parent, child(ren) with autism (n=176)</td>
<td>90 (51%); 86 (49%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age (in years; mean (SD); range)</td>
<td>Parent, no child(ren) with autism (n=48)</td>
<td>51.8 (9.2); 33.9-76.1</td>
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<td>Age of diagnosis (in years; mean (SD); range)</td>
<td>No children (n=338)</td>
<td>45 (8.7); 21-70</td>
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<td>IQ (86-115; 116-130; &gt;130)</td>
<td>AQ-28 (mean (SD); range)</td>
<td>26%; 45%; 29%</td>
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<td>(mean (SD); range)</td>
<td>Wellbeing(^5)</td>
<td>74.5 (10.0); 46-98</td>
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<td>2.8 (1.1); 1-5</td>
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<td>Paid Employment (%)</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>38%</td>
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Adults with autism without children reported higher wellbeing, and were diagnosed at an earlier age.

Parents with autism of multiple children with autism (n=81) reported similar to parents with one child with autism on all outcomes.

89% of parents of a child with autism received their diagnosis after their child’s 5\(^{th}\) birthday (mean age of diagnosis in child group was 5 years).

References