

## **TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS FOR AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS**

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Two programs suitable for Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) are presented and empirically evaluated.

In the first study a teacher training program for ASD, based on “structured teaching” was developed and evaluated within a Pre-Post (9 months) design. In total, 10 teachers working with 10 students with ASD and mental retardation (mean age 10.0 yrs) in special education classrooms in Germany were involved in the training, which consisted of 3 center-based small group sessions (duration: 14h over 3 months; 2 subgroups with 5 teachers each), followed by 6 individual training sessions in the classroom (mean duration: 3h over 6 months). The Pre-Post outcomes measured by teacher questionnaires indicated significant improvement on the Classroom Child Behavioral Symptom Scale as well as on the corresponding Classroom Teachers’ Stress Reaction Scale. A tendency for improvement was shown on the School Situation Questionnaire. In addition, teachers implemented two structured teaching methods on average in their classrooms. Taking into consideration the methodological limitations including the small sample size, these findings provide some first evidence for the clinical and social validity of the training program examined.

In the second study a psychoeducational group training program for parents was developed and evaluated. In total, 23 parents with 24 children with autism participated in the centre-based training program which lasted 3 full-days. The main focus was on teaching a disability concept as well as child management and educational skills. The summative evaluation based largely on the perspectives of parents suggests some evidence for clinical-educational and social validity of the group intervention method examined.

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