

Qualitative Coding Scheme Explanations

Code	Explanations
Maladaptive child behavior (MCB)	Tantruming, Meltdown, Aggressive Behavior (self/others)
Parental respite (PR)	Parent needs a “break” for themselves.
Increased parental response (IPR)	Parent feels they are constantly in “need” by child.
Predictable environment (PE)	Child must have a routine or scheduled environment.
Unpredictable child behavior (UCB)	Parent does not know what will “trigger” child behavior.
Parental isolation (PI)	Parent has given up their personal activities. Parents feel they cannot go anywhere or engage in relationships because of the child’s needs or demands.
Perceived misbehavior-others (PM-O)	Child’s ASD behavior is considered “misbehavior” by others.
Economic distress (ED)	Includes financial distress, unemployment, or threats to employment when parent has to be absent to care for child’s needs.
Marital disconnection (MD)	Spouse feels distanced from each other while attending to the needs of their child. A feeling of “not getting as much time together.” Includes breakdown of marriage/partnership and divorce.
Defensive spousal relationships (DSR)	Spousal relationship becomes defensive when having to address the needs of the child with ASD.
Parental explanations-others (PE-O)	Parents feel the need to explain the behavior/needs of their child to others.
Insufficient supports available (ISA)	Parent feels there are no supports in the community to assist with child’s needs or the parent’s needs.
Professional mistrust (PM)	Parent feels they were unable to trust the professionals diagnosing and providing services to the child/family.
Parental self-expectations (PSE)	Parent feels they are responsible for all aspects of the child including demands, needs, love, support, explanations, and handling situations all fall on their shoulders.
Unfair parent role division (UPR)	Parent feels their role is more challenging/takes on more responsibility or unfair than their spouse.
Sibling equality guilt (SEG)	Parent feels they are ignoring the sibling or not paying as much attention to their other children because of the needs or demands of their child with ASD.
Unknown behavior response techniques (UBRT)	Because of the unpredictability of behavior, parents are unsure of how to discipline or provide consequences for their child.
Inappropriate self-regulation (ISR)	Child unable self-regulate once maladaptive behavior begins or escalates.
ASD management skills (AMS)	Parent unsure or tries management of ASD behaviors on a case-by-case/day-by-day strategy.
Ineffective coping skills-parent (ICS-P)	Parent feels helpless that child is unable to control behaviors or is nonverbal or incontinent.
Ineffective coping skills-child (ICS-C)	Child responses to changes in environment or family are not appropriate.
Sensory over-stimulation behavior (SOSB)	Child’s behavior is related to an excess or limitation of sensory input.
Self-guilt (SG)	Parent feels guilty when they become frustrated or angry when handling situations that involve their child with ASD. They also can feel guilty for leaving the child to do something for themselves.
Fear of child protection (FCP)	Parent has fear for the protection of their child when they are not around, including at school and daycare.
Repetitious behavior (RB)	Parent has to engage in or handle situations in which the child exhibits repetitious behavior.
Child protection (CP)	Parent wants to protect child lifelong (i.e. not putting them in a group home).

Identification of Literature Stressors by Subdomain in Comparison to Study Findings

Literature Stressors	Literature Subdomain	Study Findings
ASD diagnosis and wait time	PCRS	Yes
Extreme parenting responsibilities	PCRS	Yes
Severe punishment of child	PCRS	Yes
Excessive stereotypical behavior	PCRS	No
Parent feels ostracized from others	PCRS	Yes
Inability to find a consistent babysitter	PCRS	Yes
Community judgement	PCRS	Yes
Parent viewed as poor behavior		
Management	PCRS	Yes
Maladaptive behaviors	CB	Yes
Inability to take child to others homes	CB	Yes
Unable to do things as a family	CB	Yes
Severe behavior issues with child	CB	Yes
Pre-planning to avoid unwanted behaviors	CB	Yes
Parent creating rigid routines/schedules	CB	Yes
Parent may not be able to choose, pay for, attend interventions/therapies	CB	Yes
Trying to determine needs due to inability functionally communicate		
Determining child's coping ability in situations	PD	Yes
Functionally communicate	PD	Yes
Determining child's coping ability in situations	PD	Yes
Lack of support system	PD	Yes
Parenting satisfaction/competence	PD	Yes
Parents can feel "trapped" by ASD	PD	Yes
Physically/emotionally		
Drain parent	PD	Yes
Financial strain/unemployment	PD	Yes
Lack of understanding by employer	PD	Yes
Stress spending	PD	No
Poverty/hardship	PD	Yes
Marital dissatisfaction/divorce	PD	Yes