

“Passport to Life: Investigating the need for life-skills training among young people with autism and their parents”

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Introduction: In the area of autism interventions continuous research is needed to identify effective strategies to promote independence. This was a qualitative study with the aim to investigate: **a)** Views and needs for self-efficacy in relation to adulthood transition as expressed by young people with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs) and their parents **b)** Their previously accessed experiences of training and support **c)** What type(s) of future life skills support may consider beneficial and would wish to access.

Methods: Data were collected through 20 semi-structured interviews with ten young people in the age groups 11-17 and ten mothers. Data were analyzed using NVIVO.

Results: Thematic Analysis produced 9 main themes: 1) Interests and Activities 2) Challenges 3) Interests and Activities 4) Transition to adulthood 5) Desired Training and Support 6) Experiences of Support from School 7) Experiences of support from other services 8) Other sources of support 9) Identifying and Accessing Support.

Conclusion: Participants’ experiences regarding support they had received around life skills were quite diverse and mothers were not always aware of what support was available and how they can access it. Mothers wanted to take a step back from playing a central role in supporting the young person and expressed the need for mentoring that would guide young people through secondary school and early adulthood.