



## **Siblings of Autistic Children and Language Delay**

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### **Abstract:**

*Background:* Autism is one of the neurodevelopmental disorders that has dragged the most of international attention of general public and research community during the last decade. Even in Albania has obviously been raised the sensitivity on that disorder.

*Aims:* to evaluate the developmental and difficulties in siblings of autistic children.

*Method:* In a paediatric setting, during January-June 2012, were evaluated 126 siblings of children previously diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. Clinical evaluation, MCHAT, SCQ, ADI were used and the diagnosis were done by a child and adolescent psychiatrist based on DSM-IVR criteria.

*Results and discussions:* The total number of siblings considered "in Spectrum" results to be 9 in 126, the rest of sample resulted to present some type of developmental difficulties. This figure of siblings with ASD stands on top line/margin of reported levels from studies in hospital population. In actual sample (which by being small sample doesn't allow a deep statistical analysis but it resembles the results of similar specialized centers in other countries) it was found the existence of language delay in 36% of unaffected siblings and resistance to change together with restricted interests were found in 67% of them.

*Conclusions:* Siblings of autistic children constitute a population considered "in high risk". Language difficulties are common and subject of early intervention in siblings of autistic children.

### **Keywords**

Siblings, Autism Spectrum Disorders, Language Delay