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### “Breaking the news” – Post-ASD Diagnosis Group Intervention for Parents to 6-18-year-old Children

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This study evaluated the effectiveness of a 3-session group intervention for parents who had received a diagnosis of autism for their child within the past month. The intervention group (N=41) was compared to Treatment-as-Usual (N=40): one meeting with a social worker after the diagnosis feedback meeting. Parental stress was evaluated in both groups within a week and then a month after the diagnosis. The findings indicate an increase in the experienced parental stress for the comparison group on all six indices, while in the intervention group there was an increase only on two indices. That is to say, the intervention reduced stress that occurred in the first month after the diagnosis. Further analyses revealed that parent satisfaction with the group intervention was the single most important variable in predicting stress reduction. We argue that parent support groups immediately after their child’s diagnosis are effective and important, and probably superior to a single post-diagnosis meeting.

#### Biography

Hagit Nagar Shimoni has her expertise in Developmental and Educational psychology. She is the managing director of Mirrors Autism Center in Tel Aviv Souraski Medical Center in Israel. In her academic activities she is a senior lecturer and heads the MA program in Developmental Psychology at the Academic College of Law and Business, Israel. She is an expert in autism spectrum evaluation and therapy in children, adolescents and parents.

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