JUSTIFICATION FOR RESPITE FUNDING

Research has shown that respite not only benefits parents but also the children themselves. In 2012, David Mandell, ScD and his team found that the state money spent on temporary relief for caregivers goes a long way towards keeping kids and young adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) mentally healthy. They found that families with children with challenging behaviors that did not have access to respite opportunities had an increased incidence of psychiatric hospitalizations. Hospitalization is a stressful event for everyone in the family and is only a temporary solution that often does not solve the greater problem.

In fact, perhaps as a result of the poor availability of relevant community-based services, children with ASD are much more likely than children with other psychiatric and developmental disorders to be hospitalized for psychiatric reasons. A survey of parents of children with ASD aged 5 - 21 years old found that 11% had a lifetime history of psychiatric hospitalizations. Another study using data on Medicaid claims found that 7% of children with ASD were hospitalized for psychiatric reasons in a single year.

To determine whether respite reduced the number of psychiatric hospitalizations, David Mandell and his team accessed Medicaid records of over 28,000 children and young adults (through age 21) in the United States with an ASD diagnosis. They examined the use of respite care and therapeutic services, based on procedure codes. The study found that each $1000 increase in spending on respite care during the preceding 60 days resulted in an 8% decrease in the odds of hospitalization. Use of therapeutic services was not associated with reduced risk of hospitalization.

Related Articles:

- Why Your Family Needs Respite
- How to Find Good Quality, Safe Child Care for Children with ASD
Recommended Link:

- CAR Resource Directory (search in the Recreation and Respite section)

Additional Resources:

- *JAMA Pediatrics* article by David Mandell and team

The Center for Autism Research and The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia do not endorse or recommend any specific person or organization or form of treatment. The information included within the CAR Autism Roadmap and CAR Resource Directory should not be considered medical advice and should serve only as a guide to resources publicly and privately available. Choosing a treatment, course of action, and/or a resource is a personal decision, which should take into account each individual's and family's particular circumstances.