**Having a Second Child, When Your First has Autism: A Qualitative Study of Parental Experiences**

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**Background:** Around 20% of infants who have an older sibling with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) develop ASD themselves (Ozonoff et al., 2011), and a further 20–30% develop broader developmental difficulties (Messinger et al., 2013).

**Objectives:** This study sought to better understand the impact of this familial risk on parents, and the experiences of parents of a child diagnosed with ASD around the conception, pregnancy and early developmental period of a subsequent child.

**Methods:** The current ongoing study involves in depth interviews with (1) parents of a child diagnosed with ASD, who have a subsequent child (with or without ASD); and (2) parents of two typically developing children. Recruitment of 10 parents in each group reached thematic saturation. Interviews with parents involved a set of open-ended questions developed to explore parental experiences around the pregnancy and early developmental periods of the subsequent child. Interviews lasted between 1-1.5 hours and were transcribed verbatim. Data analysis has been concurrent with data collection, and involves a thematic analysis of the data.

**Results:** Preliminary analyses have found three main themes. The first of these focuses on parents’ experiences of ‘uncertainty’, the second of these focuses on ‘balancing roles’ and the third theme ‘getting through’ explores parents’ methods of supporting their children and finding support for themselves. Final themes and sub-themes will be discussed.

**Conclusions:** Identifying the unique experiences of parents around the pregnancy and early development of a subsequent child when the first has ASD include the identification of psychoeducational focuses and resources that would be important for future parents. The results of this study have broad implications for clinicians and researchers working with the parents of children with ASD.