

# Level of satisfaction of parents of children with autism spectrum disorder with perceived social support



Amélie Ouellet-Lampron, B.Sc., Nathalie Poirier, Ph.D, Nadia Moussa, B.Sc. et Émilie Cappe, Ph.D  
University of Quebec at Montreal



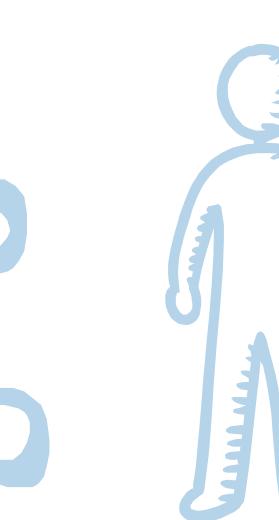
## Background

Perceived social support is a person's subjective assessment of the social support provided by others. The main forms of social support are esteem support, informational support, emotional support and material or financial support. A variety of sources, including family members, friends, co-workers and health professionals providing family services can provide social support. Since social support can have a considerable influence on the lives of parents, this study therefore examines whether parents are satisfied with the social support obtained by those around them.

## Objectives

1. The first objective of the study is to describe availability according to the main forms of social support.
2. The second aim of the study is to represent the level of parental satisfaction according to the main forms of social support.

## Method



A total of 161 Quebec parents of children with ASD participated in this study, of which 91.7% are mothers and 8.3% are fathers.



Their children are aged between 3 and 21 of which 81.6% are boys and 13.9% are girls.



The participants completed the Perceived Social Support Questionnaire (PSSQ) assessing the availability as well as the degree of satisfaction with the social support obtained.

# Level of satisfaction of parents of children with autism spectrum disorder with perceived social support

## Results

	Esteem support	Informational support	Emotional support	Material or financial support
<b>0 to 4</b>	42,2 %	68,9 %	59 %	91,3 %
<b>5 to 9</b>	32,3 %	19,9 %	29,2 %	6,8 %
<b>10 to 14</b>	13 %	6,2 %	7,5 %	1,2 %
<b>15 to 19</b>	5,6 %	3,7 %	3,1 %	0 %
<b>20 and more</b>	6,8 %	1,2 %	1,2 %	0,6 %

Most parents have up to four people available to provide esteem support (42,2 %), to offer informational support (68,9%), to provide them with emotional support (59%) and to provide them with material or financial support (91,3%).

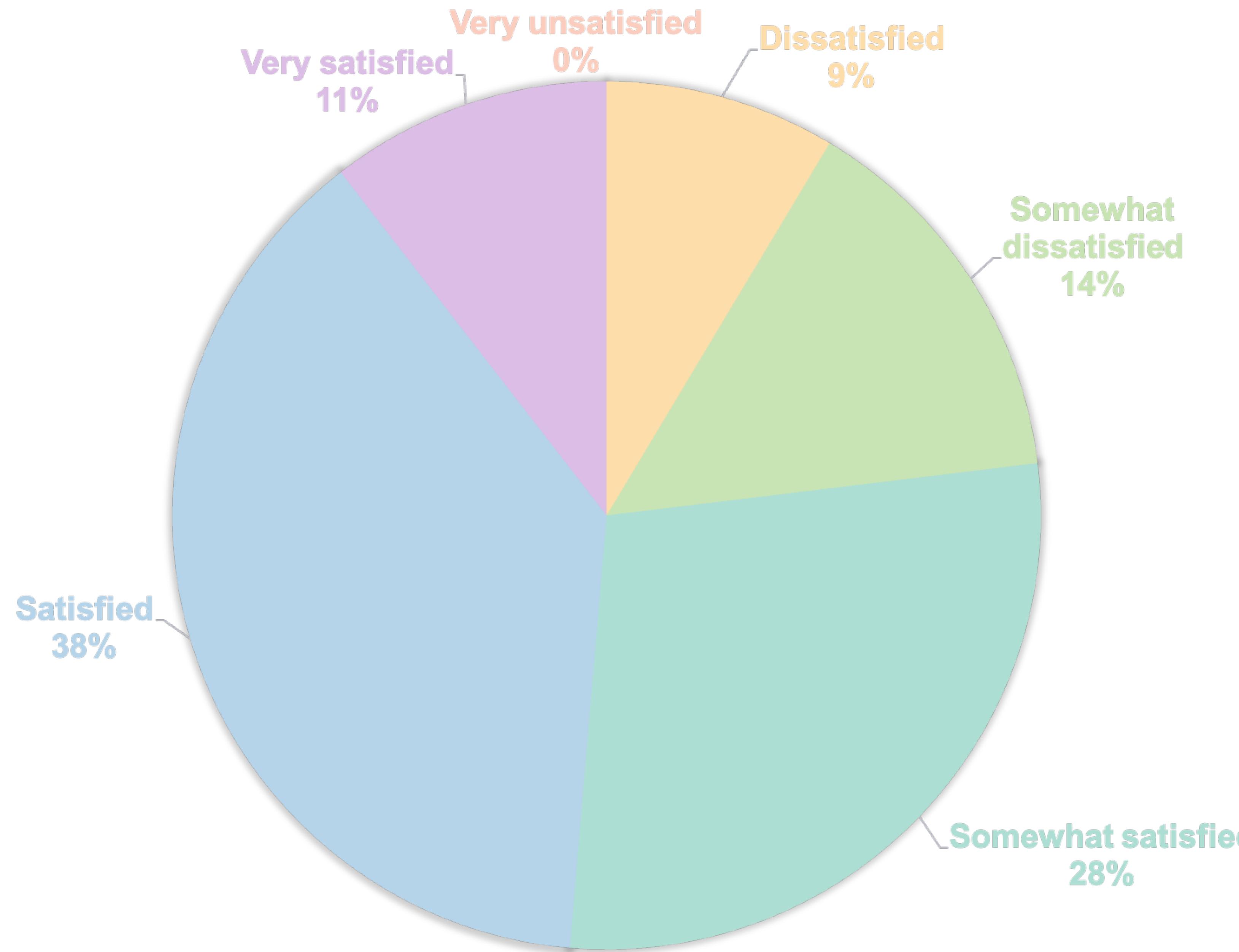
	Esteem support	Informational support	Emotional support	Material or financial support
<b>Very unsatisfied</b>	1,9 %	2,6 %	1,3 %	8,4 %
<b>Dissatisfied</b>	9,6 %	7,1 %	7,1 %	9,9 %
<b>Somewhat dissatisfied</b>	13,4 %	14,7 %	16,1 %	17,6 %
<b>Somewhat satisfied</b>	26,1 %	25,6 %	25,8 %	19,8 %
<b>Satisfied</b>	34,4 %	37,2 %	34,2 %	27,5 %
<b>Very satisfied</b>	14,6 %	12,8 %	15,5 %	16,8 %

The majority of parents are somewhat satisfied (26,1 %) or satisfied (34,4 %) with the esteem support received. These satisfaction rates are very similar for satisfaction with informational, emotional and material or financial support.

# Level of satisfaction of parents of children with autism spectrum disorder with perceived social support

## Results

Average level of parental satisfaction with perceived social support



Overall, 11 % of parents are very satisfied, 38 % of parents are satisfied, 28 % of parents are somewhat satisfied, 14% of parents are somewhat dissatisfied, 8% of parents are dissatisfied and finally, no parent is very unsatisfied. The following figure shows the average level of parental satisfaction with the social support perceived by those around them.

## Conclusion

Parents generally have between 0 and 4 people available to offer them support and they seem satisfied with the support obtained by those around them. The rates of parents who are very satisfied are quite similar for all forms of social support (between 13 % and 17 %). On the other hand, the rates of parents who are very dissatisfied are more variable and show that the main support with which parents are dissatisfied is material or financial support (8.4 %). There therefore appears to be a lack of resources offering material support, such as respite centers, and insufficient financial resources, including government grants available to parents of children with ASD.

## References

- Boyd, B. A. (2002). Examining the relationship between stress and lack of social support in mothers of children with autism. *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities*, 17(4), 208-215.
- Bruchon-Schweitzer, M. et Siksou, M. (2008). La psychologie de la santé. *Le Journal des psychologues*, 7, 28-32.
- Cappe, E.. et Poirier, N. (2014). Qualité de vie et processus d'ajustement de parents d'enfants ayant un trouble du spectre de l'autisme : une étude exploratoire franco-québécoise. Dans V. Christophe, C. Ducros et P. Antoine (dir.), *Psychologie de la santé : Individu, famille et société*. Villeneuve d'Ascq, France : Presses Universitaires du Septentrion.
- des Rivières-Pigeon, C., Courcy, I. et Dunn, M. (2014). Chapitre 1. Les parents d'enfants ayant un trouble du spectre de l'autisme au Québec – Portrait de la situation. Dans C. des Rivières-Pigeon et I. Courcy (dir.), *Autisme et TSA – Quelles réalités pour les parents au Québec ?* Québec, Québec : Presses de l'Université du Québec.
- Gentry, W. D. et Kobasa, S. C. (1984). Social and psychological resources mediating stress-illness relationships in humans. Dans W. D. (dir), *Handbook of Behavioral Medicine*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
- Lampron, A., Poirier, N., Cappe, E. et Moussa, N. (Sous presse). Disponibilité, qualité du soutien social perçu et qualité de vie des parents d'enfants présentant un trouble du spectre de l'autisme.