One description of the parent-teacher relationship is parent-teacher alliance (PTA).

Stronger parent-teacher alliance has also been associated with lower stress for parents of young children with ASD (Krakovich, McGrew, Yu, & Ruble, 2018).

Collaboration and communication may be especially important for transition age youth (TAY) with ASD:

- Poorer outcomes in employment, friendships, and community engagement compared to disabled peers (Anderson, Shattuck, Cooper, Roux, & Wagner, 2014).
- Increased parental demands after student exits high school (Chase-Zamora, Tel, & First, 2015).

Thus, successful interventions for TAY with ASD may work in part by establishing and leveraging a stronger parent-teacher alliance.

METHODS

Participants

- 20 triads of students with ASD in their last year of school, their parent / caregiver, and their special education teacher overseeing their IEP were recruited.

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RESULTS

1) Relationship between parent-teacher alliance and IEP goal achievement and parenting stress

- Lower scores on the PTAQ (stronger parent-teacher alliance) correlated with higher scores on the PSI-4 SF (lower parenting stress) (r = -0.62, p < 0.01)
- Lower scores on the PTAQ (stronger parent-teacher alliance) correlated with lower scores on the PSI-4 SF (lower parenting stress) (r = -0.50, p < 0.05).

2) Changes in parent-teacher alliance post-intervention implementation

- Controlling for baseline alliance scores, a one-way ANCOVA indicated a trend significance among groups on post-intervention alliance scores (F (1, 14) = 2.67, p = 0.11) with a medium effect size (η² = 0.17).
- For the COMPASS group, a paired samples t-test revealed parent-teacher alliance scores improved from Time 1 (pre-test) to Time 2 (post-test) at a trending level (Time 1 M = 4.14, SD = 13.36, Time 2 M = 35.56, SD = 9.32, t(6) = 1.94, p = 0.08).

CONCLUSIONS

Stronger parent-teacher alliance is associated with greater student improvements on educational goals and lower parenting stress as perceived by parents. The findings also suggest that COMPASS, an intervention designed to increase collaboration between parents and teachers of students with ASD, may improve parent-teacher alliance. Further research with larger samples is necessary.