

**Mental disease mother's and parenting practice**

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The psychiatric reform made it possible to care for mental patients in health services of the communities, thus extending the possibilities of women patients to constitute a family and raise their children. The aim of this research is to identify associations between the parenting practice of mental sick mothers and social support (and socioeconomic conditions) and verify the existence of possible differences between parenting practice of mental sick mothers and healthy mothers. The research was carried on with 41 mental sick women and her adolescent children, comparing them with 41 healthy mothers and her adolescent children from a small city in the State of São Paulo, Brazil. The data were collected by Social Support Questionnaire, Responsiveness and Exigency Parental Scales and by the Brazil Criterion of Economic Classification. The outcomes showed that there is a greater dissatisfaction with the social support received by families whose mother has a mental illness and that, in these families, the fathers are less responsive than in the compared group. The study found that mothers in the compared group are more demanding and responsive than in the study group. The mothers are more responsive and more demanding with the younger children and the economic situation also influence the maternal care. We concluded that mental illness influences the actions of maternal care, and that the low social support and uncertain financial condition may have a negative influence on this maternal care, but the adequate social support can act as a protective factor, thus positively influencing maternal care.