

# A Study of the Care Needs in Parents of Precocious Puberty Children

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## Background

Since the change of society and dietary culture, there is more and more children with precocious puberty. Nevertheless, there is rare studies about the psychological journey of their parents.

## Objective

To explore the parents' perspective and care needs in the caring for their precocious puberty children by qualitative research method.

## Methods

This study was conducted on the parents of precocious puberty children in the pediatric ward in a medical center in northern Taiwan. The researchers selected eligible subjects and explained the study purpose and process to them, then the researchers use semi-structured interview guidelines for data collection in an undisturbed room. Using one-by-one and face-to-face interviews, adopting an open-ended and non-guided approach, allowing the subjects to share their real feelings and ideas. Within 12 hours after the interview, the interview content was transcribed into a text draft for data analysis.

## Results

Total of 20 subjects, 18(90%) were mothers, and 85% of the children were female.

The interviews summed up three themes:

### 1. Noticing precocious puberty

1-1. The child's development of secondary sex characteristics

1-2. The googling for solutions

1-3. The worrisome about the effects of precocious puberty

### 2. Coping precocious puberty

2-1. The pressure of medical treatment

2-2. The children's unwillingness to cooperate

2-3. The bet to receive additive risks

### 3. Living with precocious puberty

3-1. Adjusting the expectations

3-2. Adapting to the medical treatment routine

3-3. Accepting the ultimate results

## Conclusions

1. Since the parents noticed the development of secondary sex characteristics on their children, they have been worrisome of the child's growth and have started gathering relevant information on the internet.

2. The parents accompanied their children to face the challenges together and try to resolve the conflicts triggered by disciplines of diet, sleep and exercise. They also bear the stress from limited effect of natural treatment and the golden time of growth and make the inevitable choice of receiving medical treatment.

3. In the process of caring their children, the family adapt and accept the outcomes of precocious puberty. As the result, the parents adjust their expectations of the children's heights, the behavior of preparation for the clinic visits and make consensus with their children of the daily routines with proper food and regular sport activities.

4. The parents of children with precocious puberty hold a perspective that "the child's growth is the parents' responsibility".