

Anchoring Personal Agency in Brace Treatment: A Unique Outcome Experienced by the Adolescents with Adolescent Idiopathic scoliosis (AIS) and Their Families from a Multiple Family Therapy

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Abstract

Managing brace treatment by adolescents having Adolescent Idiopathic Scoliosis (AIS) is a health challenge and potential battlefield for both adolescents and their families throughout the course of disease management. Mixed method approach with both medical care and a family-based intervention was adopted to help these adolescents and their families in resolving this health challenge. A Multiple Family Therapy (MFT) consisted of six family-based sessions was offered to 4 to 5 families with adolescents (aged between 10 and 16 years, with AIS and prescribed brace treatment) to complement in Hong Kong. Fifteen adolescents and twenty-two family members have joined the multi-family therapy in four well-conceptualized family groups during September 2023 and July 2024. Twelve adolescents participated in a qualitative interview upon the completion of family-based sessions to share their experiences in MFT. With narrative analysis, the unique outcome of adolescents' personal agency in brace treatment was anchored in (1) their sense of individual autonomy, (2) assertiveness in brace treatment and (3) active involvement in own health care. The personal agency embraced adolescents' choices and self-mastery in disease management.