

P03-432

COGNITIVE COPING STRATEGIES IN MOTHERS OF HIV-INFECTED CHILDREN AND THEIR CONNECTION TO THE MOTHER'S PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS, PARENTING, AND SPOUSAL RELATIONS

E. Tartakovsky, L. Hamama

The School of Social Work, Tel Aviv University, Tel Aviv, Israel

Objective: The main goal of the present study was to investigate the coping strategies of mothers of HIV-infected children and their relation to the mothers' psychological distress, parenting, and spousal relations.

Methods: The study was conducted in Southern Kazakhstan in the wake of a children's HIV-epidemic caused by the use of unsterile instruments and infusions of infected blood in State hospitals. Mothers of HIV-infected children undergoing testing and treatment in the municipal HIV Center participated in the study (n=63).

Results: The most frequently used strategies were focusing on planning and catastrophizing; the least common strategies they employed were putting into perspective and self-blame. Focusing on planning and rumination were associated with a high level of acceptance of the child, while self-blame was associated with a low level of acceptance. Positive refocusing was associated with a low level of psychological distress, and catastrophizing was associated with a high level of psychological distress. Self-blame was associated with a low level of spousal relations, while positive refocusing and focusing on planning were associated with high levels of spousal relations.

Conclusions: The results obtained are discussed in light of stress-coping theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), the positive psychology paradigm (Seligman et al., 2005), and the two-track model of grieving (Rubin, 1996).