SIBLING PERSPECTIVES OF FAMILY FUNCTIONING IN PEDIATRIC OCD

Research Aims:
Sibling perspectives have been largely overlooked in the literature. This study sought to examine sibling perspectives of family functioning in pediatric OCD.

Methods:
The sample included 234 families containing relevant data from youth affected with a confirmed DSM-IV diagnosis of OCD, their siblings and their parents. Validated measures of family functioning were completed by all family members using the OCD Family Functioning (OFF) scale. Analysis using t-tests, correlations and multiple linear regression were used.

Results:
There was a significant difference in sibling reported OFF scores and parent reported OFF scores (t(233)=3.99, p<0.001), with siblings reporting lower overall scores of family impairment (mean = 22.1, SD = 12.4) compared to their parents (mean = 25.1, SD = 12.2). The difference between sibling reported OFF scores and OCD affected youth reported OFF scores was more modest (t(191)=2.35, p=0.02) but suggested siblings reported slightly lower OFF scores than OCD affected youth (mean = 23.5, SD = 11.7). Together, the 17 predictors explained 52% of the variance in sibling OFF scores. Among the strongest predictors were greater family accommodation (β = 0.39), absence of symmetry presentation (β = -0.25), OCD severity (β = 0.22), fewer number of siblings (β = -0.21), and younger age of the OCD affected child (β = -0.20).

Conclusions:
Siblings appear to report lower levels of family impairment compared to their parents and similar levels of family impairment when compared to the OCD affected child in the family. Potential predictors of sibling reported family functioning impairment were noted.