Abstract

Angelman syndrome (AS) is an untreatable genetic deficiency which involves a delay in developmental and cognitive abilities. Prior work suggests children with AS exhibit more challenging behaviors than “low risk” controls. These behaviors require higher levels of care and likely impact their caregiver’s mental health. Understanding which caregivers may be at risk for negative mental health outcomes is important for improving caregiver well-being and quality of life. This study examines the associations between challenging behaviors in children with AS and caregiver depression, anxiety, and stress levels. Twenty-two caregivers of children with AS participated in this telehealth-based intervention study. Caregivers completed the Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS-21) and the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL). The DASS-21 is a 21-question survey measuring depression, anxiety, and stress. The CBCL includes 99 survey items and assesses behavioral and emotional characteristics in children. We hypothesized that caregivers of children with more challenging behaviors would have higher DASS-21 scores. Data collection is complete, and final analysis will use Spearman correlations to examine these associations. This study contributes to the limited literature surrounding how challenging behaviors of children with AS impact caregiver mental health, with the potential to guide future intervention.