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Parenting an adult child autism spectrum disorder: A qualitative examination of the lived experience

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Parenting an adult child autism spectrum disorder: A qualitative examination of the lived experience

Given that individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and intellectual disability (ID) often remain dependent on parental support as they transition into adulthood, this study sought to understand the lived realities of maternal caregivers to adult children with ASD-ID. Twenty mothers of adult children with ASD-ID completed semi-structured interviews. Ten mothers had their adult children living with them in the family home, and ten of the adult children were living in supported residential accommodations. Inductive thematic analysis resulted in three themes related to the uncertainties experienced by mothers of adult children with ASD-ID: (1) aging as a caregiver, (2) residence considerations, and (3) importance of permanency planning. Such uncertainties ensued from mothers simultaneously navigating their own aging process and the continued dependency of their child.