

Blissett, J., Meyer, C., Farrow, C., Bryant-Waugh, R., & Nicholls, D. (2005). Maternal core beliefs and children's feeding problems. *International Journal of Eating Disorders*, 37, 127-134.

Background: Although maternal mental health problems have been implicated in the exacerbation of childhood feeding difficulties, little research has assessed the contribution of broader maternal cognitions to these problems. The current study examined gender differences in the relationships between mothers' core beliefs and children's feeding problems.

Methods: One hundred and three mothers of girls and 93 mothers of boys (age range, 7-64 months) completed the Young Schema Questionnaire and the Child Feeding Assessment Questionnaire.

Results: While controlling for child age, a clear link between maternal core beliefs and perceived feeding difficulties emerged for mothers of girls. In particular, abandonment, failure to achieve, dependence and incompetence, enmeshment and defectiveness, and shame beliefs were associated with increased reports of feeding problems in girls. In contrast, emotional deprivation and subjugation beliefs were associated with maternal reports of food fussiness and food refusal in boys.

Conclusions: There appears to be a clear role for maternal core beliefs in the reporting of feeding difficulties in children, and the specificity of these links differs depending on the gender of the child. Further research is required to establish the direction of causality and the specificity of these relationships.