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ON-SIRI PISEK : COPING PATTERNS OF FAMILIES WITH AUTISTIC CHILDREN. THESIS ADVISORS : VEENA SIRISOOK Dr.P.H, PRASIT LEERAPANH PH.D., SUPARUTH EK-ASAWIN M.D. THAI BOARD (CHILD AND ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRY) 162 P. ISBN : 974-662-613-2

The purposes of this study are to examine coping patterns of families with autistic children and to investigate the relationships between family factors, autistic child factors, family pile – up stress , and coping patterns of the families. The subjects were drawn form parents who brought their autistic children for corrective training at Day Care Unit of the Mental Health Center, Bangkok. One – hundred and four family samples were interviewed with structured questionnaire. Data were analyzed by multiple regression analysis.

The result, showed that 52.9 % of families used coping pattern at medium level and 47.1% used it at high level. For coping patterns, the study revealed that the pattern concerning maintaining family integration and the pattern called understanding the health care situation were used at a high level while the pattern of strengthening self was used at medium level. The analysis also found that family flexibility accounted for 13.93% of the total variation in using overall coping patterns of the families ; the relationship was significant at  $P < 0.002$  . Based on the results, family coherence and role flexibility among family members are recommend.