

## **Experiences of having a family member who uses methamphetamine: A global systematic mixed methods review and narrative synthesis**

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**Introduction:** Previous reviews have explored the influence of substance use on family dynamics. There have been no reviews that have focused specifically on the experience of family members of people who use methamphetamine. We conducted a mixed-methods review of the literature describing the experiences of family members who use methamphetamine.

**Methods:** Three databases (PsycINFO, PubMed, EMBASE) were searched for peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2000 and 2023 on the experiences of family members of people who use methamphetamine. Data on family functioning, family members' well-being, and resilience factors, were narratively synthesised according to family members' roles.

**Results:** Of 9,928 studies screened, 18 provided relevant qualitative (k=14) or quantitative (k=9) data on children (k=7), parents (k=2), partners (k=1), and various/unspecified family members (k=8). All studies on children involved minors in contact with protective services. These children described turbulent and often violent home lives. Social support from grandparents and positive family memories helped children cope with these experiences. The qualitative accounts from parents described concerns about their child's safety, the safety of other family members, financial issues, and feelings of self-blame. Overall, relationship breakdowns disrupted family life and contributed to emotional distress and reduced quality of life. Professional support helped families cope with these challenges. Stigma compounded family members' distress and prevented support-seeking.

**Discussions and Conclusions:** This literature provides insight into the complex dynamics and challenges that occur within the families of people who use methamphetamine. However, most of this literature is focused on children in contact with protective services, with little research on the perspectives of children outside of this context or other family members.

**Implications for Practice or Policy:** A better understanding of how methamphetamine use can influence family dynamics is needed to develop appropriately tailored family-focused supports and interventions for the family members of people who use methamphetamine.

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