

INFLUENCES OF METHAMPHETAMINE USE ON FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS: INTERVIEWS WITH FAMILY MEMBERS



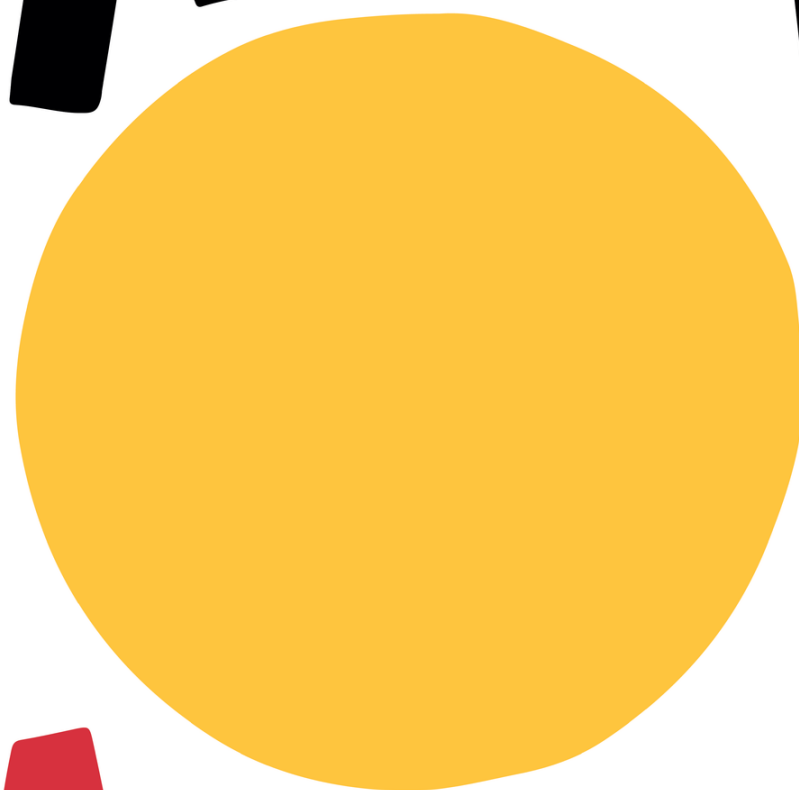
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ALWAYS WAS



ALWAYS WILL BE

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Acknowledgements

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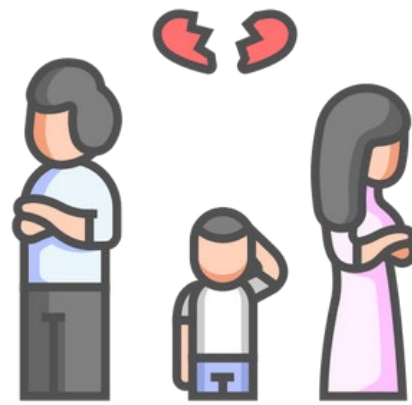
Sarah Etter



We would like to acknowledge
all the participants who shared
their lived and living experience
with us

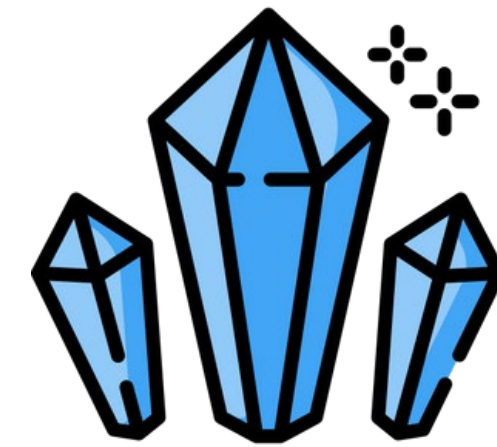
Methamphetamine use in a family context

Having a family member who regularly uses drugs may influence family dynamics



Families experience a lot of stigma, which can prevent them from seeking social support

Methamphetamine use associated with interpersonal behaviour changes (e.g., agitation, paranoia)



Minimal existing research including various family members of people who use methamphetamine*

Aim

Explore the close interpersonal relationships of family members of people who use methamphetamine

Methods



Interviews

N = 19



58% phone

42% Zoom



Recruitment



Inclusion criteria



Family member of someone who uses methamphetamine

Thematic analysis


Braun & Clarke, 2006

Family definition

"family, friends and anyone who cares"

 63%
women

n=8 mothers 

 n=5 siblings

n=4 partners* 

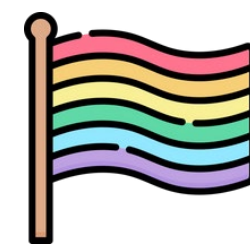

VIC 63%
NSW 32%
QLD 5%

46

mean
age



50% receiving
FDS support



straight 89%
gay 11%

*also n= 1 father and n=1 friend

Findings

Family members were not aware of the exact patterns of drug use

By virtue of study participation, these family members were likely to have experienced negative consequences

1 Perception of loved ones becoming 'other'

“

“It's like [she was] another person. It's like nobody's home - you just stare into their eyes, and there's nobody there. It's just next level. You never expect to have a beautiful child, and then it to go [away]”

- Zara*, aged 58, mother of Layla

*All names are pseudonyms



Image: Designed by Freepik

2 Responding with grief and mourning

“

“[It's] really hard seeing what [methamphetamine use] has done to Grace ... And so sad, from somebody who had a lot of potential”

– Ava, aged 65, mother of Grace



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3 Influences on home and work environments

“

“[Our] household didn't function very well; it couldn't flow ... We were all walking on eggshells ... It's just awful ... Jordan [has] worn us [all] down because of [his drug use]”

- Charlotte, aged 51, mother of Jordan



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3 Influences on home and work environments

“

“When Hugo [went to] rehab the first time ... I was so proud ... [And then] when he relapsed ... I just had this rage inside me ... By the end of [multiple unsuccessful rehab attempts] I honestly just lost hope. Like the last time he went to rehab, I wasn't proud anymore”

- Levi, aged 26, brother of Hugo



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4 Keeping everyone safe and happy

“

“I burst into tears, [and] I said, ‘I love you, but I can't have you [at home] anymore, I just can't do it ... My whole life has gone down the toilet’ ... That was a very hard thing to do ... but looking back, it's the best thing I could have done”

- Florence, aged 61, mother of Patrick



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5 Social support and experiences of stigma

“

“I lost a lot of friends, [laughs] and my life went down the toilet. People just thought I was mad for keeping on trying [to support Patrick] ... But my three close friends have stuck with me through it all. The rest sort-of just dropped away”

- Florence, aged 61, mother of Patrick



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6 Seeking professional support and improving communication

“

“[Layla and I are] a lot closer [now] than we probably were before because I've done a lot of work on myself with [professional supports]. Which has really helped our relationship ... She's really proud of me”

- Zara, aged 58, mother of Layla

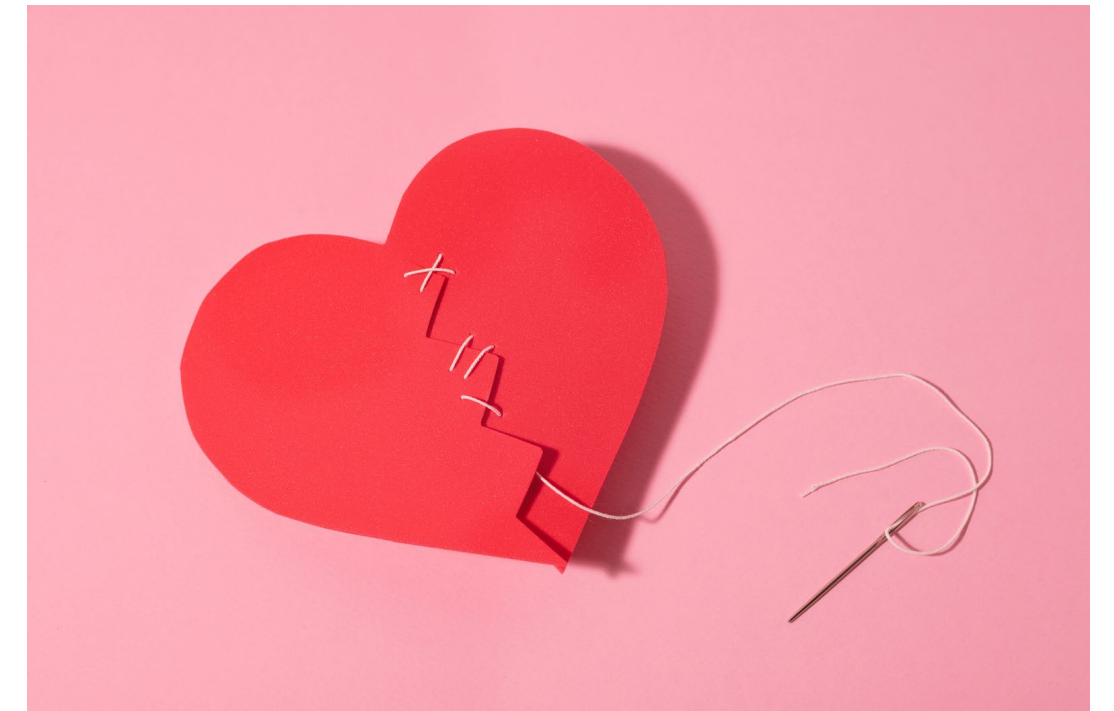
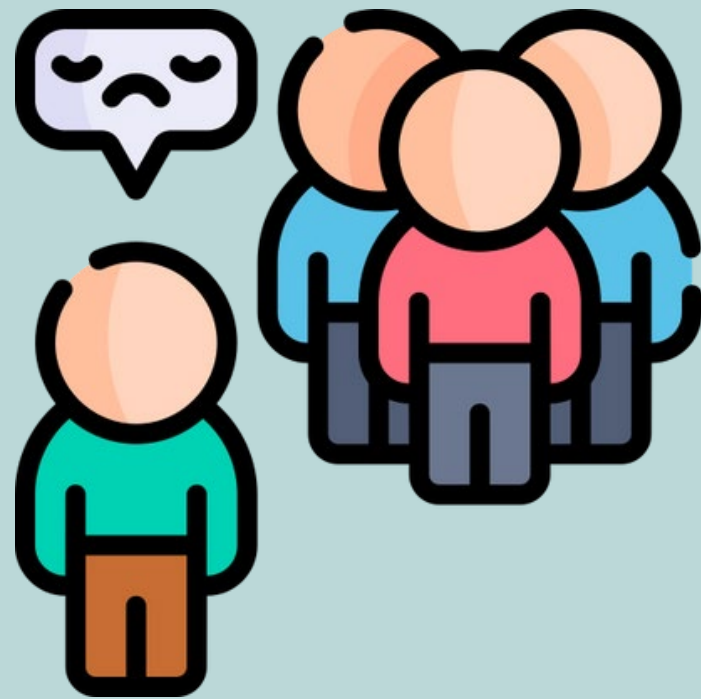


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Conclusions and future directions



Stigma underscored
all participant
experiences



Stigma is a barrier to
families seeking
support



Need to increase
awareness of family
support services

Thank You!

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