

## Adverse Childhood Experiences in Minnesota: Substance Use or Mental Illness in Household

Youth who have caregivers or siblings with mental health or substance concerns are more likely to experience poorer physical health, poorer mental health, and feelings of distress (Kamis, 2021; Krzeczowski et al., 2022; Parolin et al., 2016; Wolicki et al., 2021). Additionally, these concerns can also negatively impact parenting skills, family relationships, youth cognitive development, behavior concerns, and academic outcomes (Lander et al., 2013; Parolin et al., 2016; Smith et al., 2016; Straussner & Fewell, 2018). For the most current local data on the percentage of students who live with someone who drinks too much alcohol, misuses drugs, or had a mental illness, please visit MDH's interactive [Adverse Childhood Experiences Data](http://www.web.health.state.mn.us/communities/ace/data/index.html) ([www.web.health.state.mn.us/communities/ace/data/index.html](http://www.web.health.state.mn.us/communities/ace/data/index.html)).

Many effective services, supports, and programs can mitigate or prevent these negative impacts. They include those that promote recovery and positive mental and physical health, provide social support, improve family relationships, and are tailored to the needs of families.

### Effective strategies

Strategies for supporting families and youth with substance use or mental illness in their household include:

- **Recovery coaching and peer support programs** to identify and address barriers to treatment and engage and support caregivers and other family members in the recovery process (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2021; Lyons et al., 2021; Social Programs that Work, 2017; Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, n.d.). Many programs specifically train individuals with lived experience related to mental health or substance use to serve as coaches or peer support specialists, and similarly, some programs may offer services through a group-based format, such as support groups (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, n.d.). Additionally, some programs are aimed specifically at parents or guardians who have lost custody of their children.
- **Family treatment courts**, in which court processes are specifically tailored to families facing substance use and child welfare issues (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2021; Lyons et al., 2021). They are family-centered and focus on connecting families to services and supporting family functioning and reunification, if appropriate.

#### Relevant indicator(s):

- Alcohol abuse in household
- Drug abuse in household
- Mental illness in household

Strategies for strengthening connections to basic needs and promoting parenting skills and family relationships can also help support families with substance use or mental illness concerns in their household.

- **Clinical services**, which may include services for the individual using substances and/or experiencing mental health concerns, relationship counseling for the individual and their spouse or partner, the youth in the household, and/or the family as a whole (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2021; National Institutes of Health, 2022; Social Programs that Work, 2017. Services for the individual affected by mental health concerns or substance use may also involve medication-assisted-treatment and/or other types of medication services.
- **Programs and services specifically for pregnant or breastfeeding caregivers**, which may involve a combination of clinical services such as individual psychotherapy and medication-assisted-treatment, education about behavioral health concerns and their impact on their child, prenatal substance exposure testing and developmental assessments of newborns, and ongoing and coordinated services to support the child and family as appropriate after birth (BC Reproductive Mental Health Program, 2014; Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2016; Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2020) . Integrated clinics that offer a wide range of health services and home-visiting programs can also effectively support pregnant or breastfeeding caregivers.

## Examples of Minnesota initiatives

### Women's Recovery Services

Women's Recovery Services provide a wide range of comprehensive and family-centered services and supports for women who are receiving treatment in Minnesota. In addition to supporting the recovery process, services include employment and housing assistance, physical and mental health services, and helping ensure newborns test negative for substances at birth. These services are grant-funded, and there are several grantees throughout Minnesota, including those that focus on serving women from specific communities.

More information about [Women's recovery services \(mn.gov/dhs/partners-and-providers/news-initiatives-reports-workgroups/alcohol-drug-other-addictions/womens-recovery/\)](https://mn.gov/dhs/partners-and-providers/news-initiatives-reports-workgroups/alcohol-drug-other-addictions/womens-recovery/)

### FastTrackerMN

FastTrackerMN is a search tool that provides real-time information about behavioral health services and availability, including information about clinics and organizations and specific clinical services, support groups, and other types of services or resources.

More information about [FastTrackerMN \(fasttrackermn.org\)](https://fasttrackermn.org)

### Minnesota chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

NAMI provides a wide range of resources related to mental health and substance use in Minnesota, including trainings, webinars, presentations, and other educational opportunities and materials. They also offer support groups and other types of events, including those that focus on specific communities.

More information about the [Minnesota chapter of NAMI \(namimn.org/about-nami-minnesota/\)](https://namimn.org/about-nami-minnesota/)

## Examples of national initiatives

### Families Facing the Future

The Families Facing the Future is a program and curriculum to support families with a caregiver who has substance use concerns. It includes parent training sessions, a family retreat, and sessions with caregivers and youth that focus on practicing skills.

More information about [Families Facing the Future \(www.communitiesthatcare.net/programs/other-programs/\)](http://www.communitiesthatcare.net/programs/other-programs/)

### Peer Bridger program

The Peer Bridger program provides support to individuals who have been discharged from treatment facilities, including intensive individual services and peer support. The individual being discharged is matched with a peer bridger, and the bridger provides social support, mentoring, and general guidance throughout the process of being discharged and adjusting back into the person's community. The program also provides peer support group meetings.

More information about the [Peer Bridger program \(www.nyaprs.org/peer-bridger\)](http://www.nyaprs.org/peer-bridger)

## References

- BC Reproductive Mental Health Program. (2014). *Best practice guidelines for mental health disorders in the perinatal period*. [Best Practice Guidelines for Mental Health Disorders in the Perinatal Period \(www.perinatalservicesbc.ca/Documents/Guidelines-Standards/Maternal/MentalHealthDisordersGuideline.pdf\)](http://www.perinatalservicesbc.ca/Documents/Guidelines-Standards/Maternal/MentalHealthDisordersGuideline.pdf)
- Child Welfare Information Gateway. (2021). *Domestic violence: A primer for child welfare professionals*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau. [Domestic violence: A primer for child welfare professionals \(www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/parentalsubuse.pdf\)](http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/parentalsubuse.pdf)
- Kamis, C. (2021). The long-term impact of parental mental health on children's distress trajectories in adulthood. *Society and Mental Health, 11*(1), 54-68. [The long-term impact of parental mental health on children's distress trajectories in adulthood \(doi.org/10.1177/2156869320912520\)](https://doi.org/10.1177/2156869320912520)
- Krzeczkowski, J. E., Wade, T. J., Andrade, B. F., Browne, D., Yalcinoz-Ucan, B, & Riazi N.A. (2022). Examining the mental health of siblings of children with a mental disorder: A scoping review protocol. *PLoS ONE 17*(9): e0274135. [Examining the mental health of siblings of children with a mental disorder: A scoping review protocol \(doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0274135\)](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0274135)
- Lander, L., Howsare, J., & Byrne, M. (2013). The impact of substance use disorders on families and children: from theory to practice. *Social Work in Public Health, 28*(3-4), 194-205.
- Lyons, N., Cooper, C. & Lloyd-Evans, B. (2021). A systematic review and meta-analysis of group peer support interventions for people experiencing mental health conditions. *BMC Psychiatry, 21*(315). [A systematic review and meta-analysis of group peer support interventions for people experiencing mental health conditions \(doi.org/10.1186/s12888-021-03321-z\)](https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-021-03321-z)
- National Institutes of Health. (2022). *Moms' mental health matters: Depression and anxiety around pregnancy*. [Moms' mental health matters: Depression and anxiety around pregnancy \(www.nichd.nih.gov/ncmhpep/initiatives/moms-mental-health-matters/moms\)](http://www.nichd.nih.gov/ncmhpep/initiatives/moms-mental-health-matters/moms)
- Parolin, M., Simonelli, A., Mapelli, D., Sacco, M., & Cristofalo, P. (2016). Parental substance abuse as an early traumatic event: Preliminary findings neuropsychological and personality function in young drug addicts exposed to drugs early. *Frontiers in Psychology, 7*, 887. [Parental substance abuse as an early traumatic event: Preliminary findings neuropsychological and personality function in young drug addicts exposed to drugs early \(doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.00887\)](https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.00887)
- Smith, V. C., Wilson, C. R., & Committee on Substance Use and Prevention. (2016). Families affected by parental substance use. *Pediatrics, 138*(2), e20161575. [Families affected by parental substance use \(doi.org/10.1542/peds.2016-1575\)](https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2016-1575)
- Social Programs that Work. (2017). *Evidence summary for recovery coaches*. [Evidence summary for recovery coaches \(evidencebasedprograms.org/document/recovery-coaches-evidence-summary/\)](http://evidencebasedprograms.org/document/recovery-coaches-evidence-summary/)

- Straussner, S. L. A., & Fewell, C. H. (2018). A review of recent literature on the impact of parental substance use disorders on children and the provision of effective services. *Current Opinion in Psychiatry*, 31(4), 363-367. [A review of recent literature on the impact of parental substance use disorders on children and the provision of effective services \(doi.org/10.1097/YCO.0000000000000421\)](https://doi.org/10.1097/YCO.0000000000000421)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2016). *A collaborative approach to the treatment of pregnancy women with opioid use disorders: Practice and policy considerations for child welfare, collaborating medical, and service providers*. [A collaborative approach to the treatment of pregnancy women with opioid use disorders: Practice and policy considerations for child welfare, collaborating medical, and service providers \(store.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/d7/priv/sma16-4978.pdf\)](https://store.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/d7/priv/sma16-4978.pdf)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2020). *Preventing the use of marijuana: Focus on women and pregnancy*. [Preventing the use of marijuana: Focus on women and pregnancy \(store.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/d7/priv/pep19-pl-guide-2.pdf\)](https://store.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/d7/priv/pep19-pl-guide-2.pdf)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (n.d.). *Peers supporting recovery from substance use disorders*. [Peers supporting recovery from substance use disorders \(www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/programs\\_campaigns/brss\\_tacs/peers-supporting-recovery-substance-use-disorders-2017.pdf\)](https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/programs_campaigns/brss_tacs/peers-supporting-recovery-substance-use-disorders-2017.pdf)
- Wolicki, S. B., Bitsko, R. H., Cree, R. A., Danielson, M. L., Ko, J. Y., Warner, L., & Robinson, L. R. (2021). Mental health of parents and primary caregivers by sex and associated child health indicators. *Adversity and Resilience Science*, 2, 125-139. [Mental health of parents and primary caregivers by sex and associated child health indicators \(doi.org/10.1007/s42844-021-00037-7\)](https://doi.org/10.1007/s42844-021-00037-7)

Minnesota Department of Health  
Injury and Violence Prevention Section  
PO Box 64975  
St. Paul, MN 55164  
651-201-4035  
MDH\_HPCD\_5.6-IVPS-Economics\_Evaluation\_Unit@state.mn.us  
www.health.state.mn.us

August 2023