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Abstract Title

Mental Health Interventions for Family Members of Children with Neurodevelopmental Disorders: A Scoping Review

Authors

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Background

Among families of children with neurodevelopmental disorders (NDDs), child mental health concerns are associated with increased family mental health challenges. Interventions targeting parents' and siblings' mental health may promote wellbeing among children with NDDs and their families as a whole.

Objective

This scoping review aims to describe the existing literature on mental health interventions for family members of children with NDDs, and to identify which family members were most represented in this research.

Methods

A search was conducted using the PsycINFO, PubMed, ERIC, CINAHL, Family & Society Studies Worldwide, and PsycARTICLES databases. Screening followed Arksey and O'Malley's five-stage scoping review framework and the PRISMA-ScR extension for scoping reviews. Screening eligibility included publication between January 1, 2010, and May 1, 2026, description of an intervention targeting mental health problems in family members of children with NDDs, and use of quantitative mental health outcome measures.

Results

Eighty studies were included, representing a total of 5,001 participants. Most interventions (61.25%) used mindfulness-based components, and stress was the most frequently assessed mental health outcome (82.5%). A slight majority (56.25%) of interventions targeted the family members of autistic children, and most studies (90%) required children to have formal NDD diagnoses for family members to participate. Most articles described interventions for adult caregivers of children with NDDs, with only one describing an intervention aimed at siblings under the age of 18. Female caregivers were highly represented across samples ($M = 86.12\%$), with most caregivers identifying as parents. Six caregivers (0.12%) identified as other family members, including grandparents and kinship foster care providers.

Conclusion

Findings suggest a need for greater examination of mental health interventions for several different family members of children with NDDs, including siblings, non-female parents, and caregivers within diverse family structures.