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SMART Family & Friends

Feasibility of an intervention for family & friends
impacted by methamphetamine

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AUSTRALIA

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands on which UOW is situated.

We pay our respects to Aboriginal Elders past and present, who are the knowledge holders and teachers.

We acknowledge their continued spiritual and cultural connection to Country. As we share knowledge, teaching, learning and research within their University, we also pay respect to the knowledge embedded forever within Aboriginal Custodianship of Country.



NCCRED

National Centre for Clinical
Research on Emerging Drugs

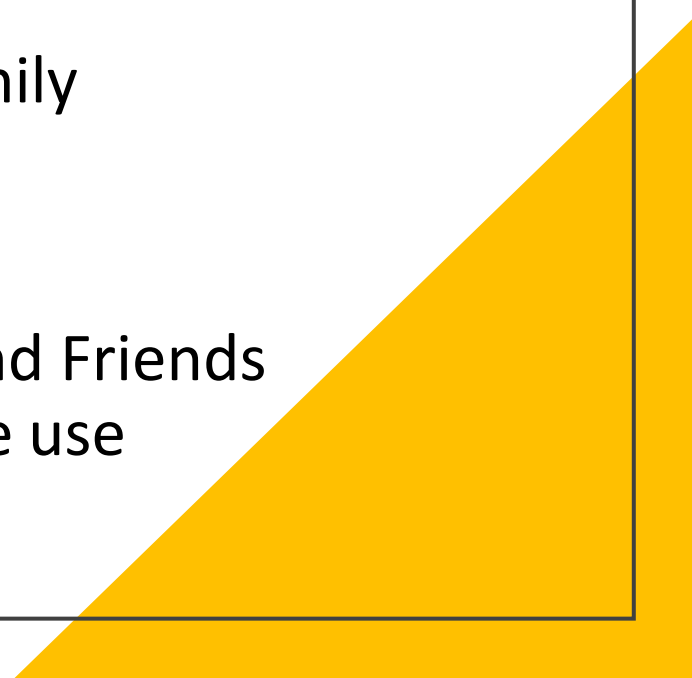
Acknowledgements



Research Team

- Tamsin Thomas (University of Wollongong)
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Background

- Harms related to methamphetamine use are increasing in Australia
 - Methamphetamine has an enormous impact on family members, friends and supporters
 - Aim: Examine the feasibility of the SMART Family and Friends program for people impacted by methamphetamine use
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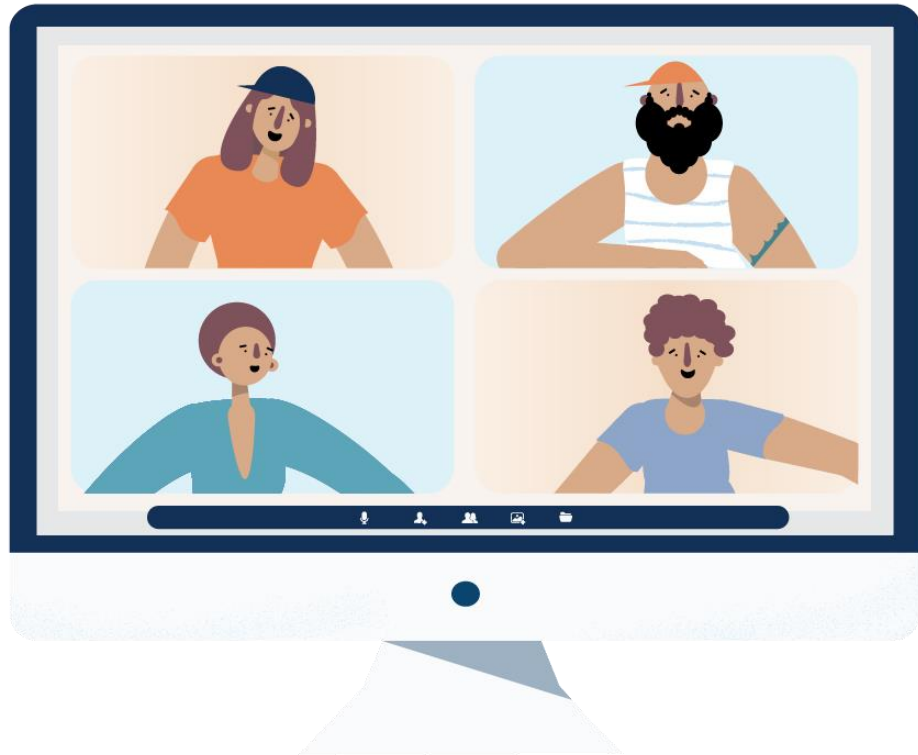
SMART
Recovery

Life beyond addiction

SMART Family and Friends

Dan Raffell- Senior National Program Manager, SMART Recovery





Traditional SMART Recovery

- ◆ Worldwide Self Management, mutual aid support program
- ◆ Recovery journey defined by the participants
- ◆ Evidenced based principles (CBT, MI)
- ◆ 4 Point Program
- ◆ Equipping participants tools, skills and strategies to better manage problematic/addictive behaviours
- ◆ Harm Minimisation philosophies
- ◆ Free weekly meetings (F2F or Online)
- ◆ Run by a trained facilitator

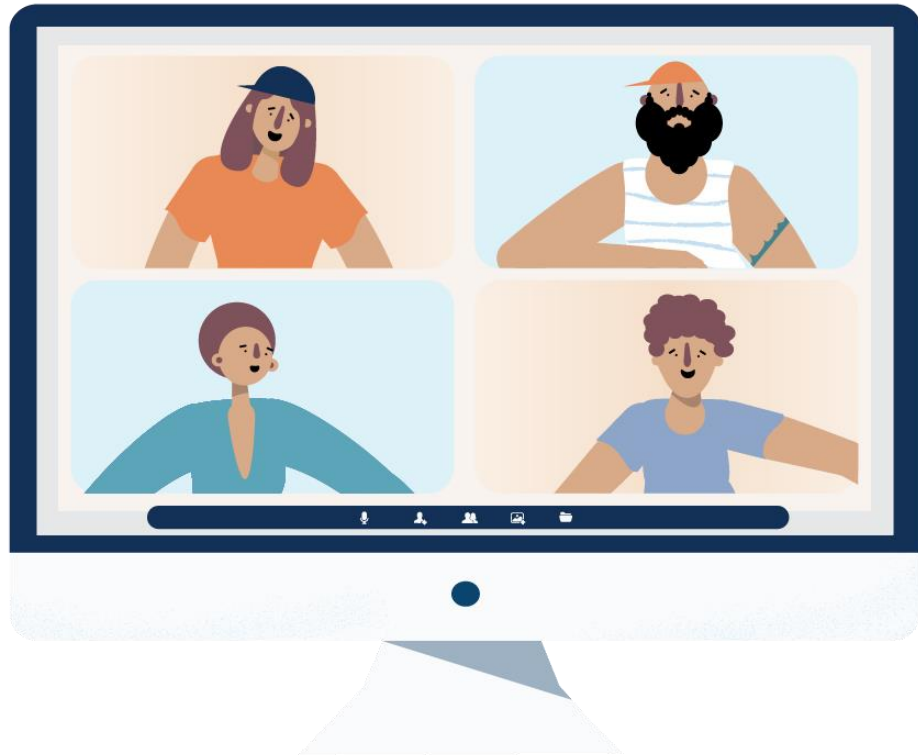


Life beyond addiction



SMART Family and Friends

- ◆ Developed 2009 to support significant others, family and friends
- ◆ Adapted slightly to be delivered as an 8 session course, and or on going meeting
- ◆ Equipping significant others with a tool kit
- ◆ Harm minimisation- Keeping self safe from harm, protecting the home, reducing harmful effects on others
- ◆ Influenced from 5 step model- Stress, strain-coping-support model (Velleman)



SMART Family and Friends

Week 1 - Finding Motivation to change

Week 2 - Self Care, Support and Rewards

Week 3 - The ABC of CBT

Week 4 – Assertive Communication

Week 5 – Problem solving and making better choices

Week 6 - Coping with lapses

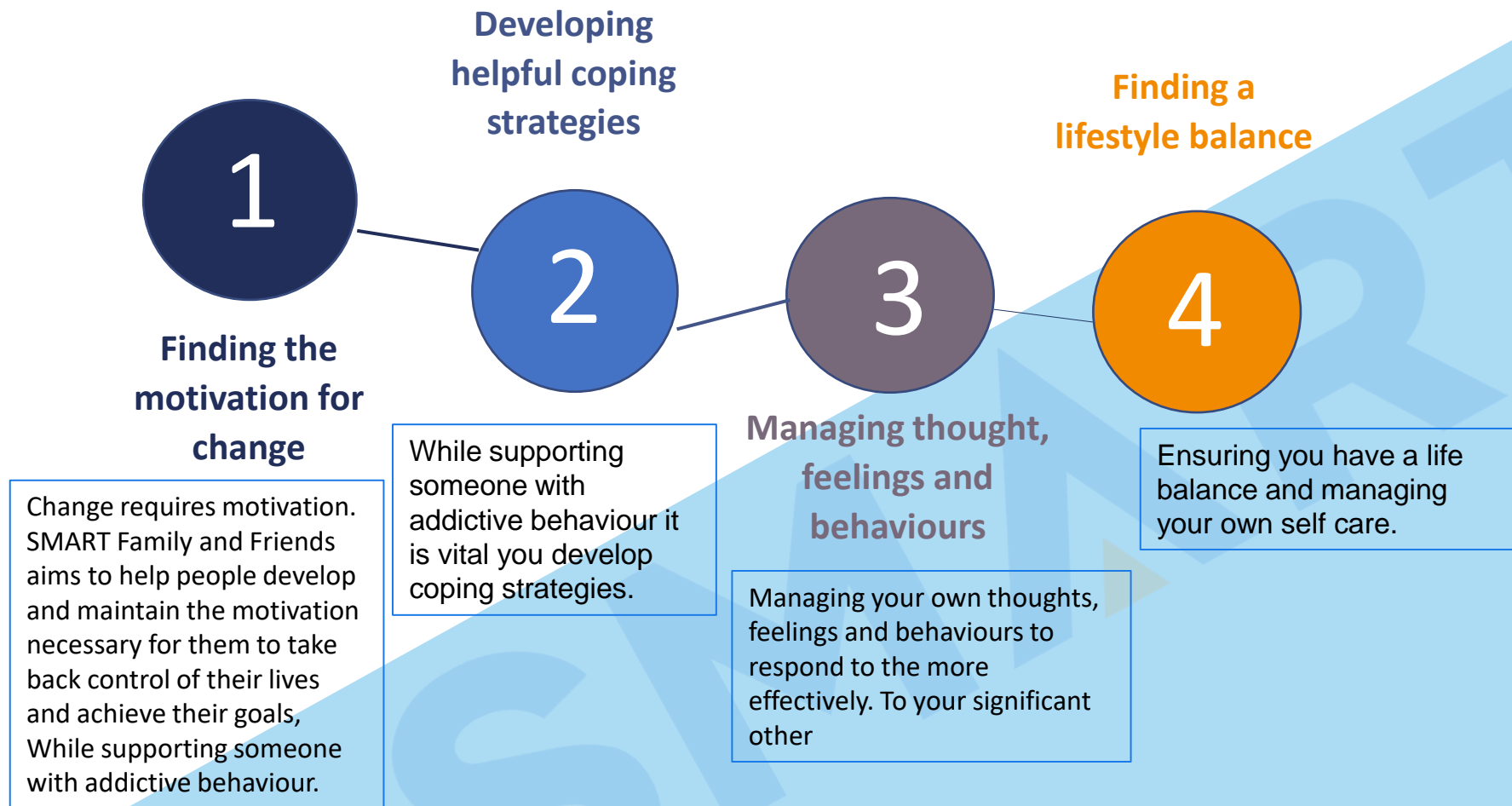
Week 7 – Keeping safe and seeking support

Week 8 – Goal setting



SMART Family and Friends 4 Point Program

These 4 Points guide the goals that SMART participants work towards



Borrowing from 5 - step method (Velleman)

1. Getting to know the family member and the problem, by giving the family member the opportunity to talk about the problem in a non-judgment setting.
2. Providing relevant, specific and targeted information.
3. Exploring and discussion coping behaviours, including how people are responding, what they might do differently, and the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
4. Exploring and enhancing social support systems.
5. Exploring additional needs and further sources of help.



Borrowing from 5 - step method

- Manage emotional upsets
- Change unhelpful thinking
- Improve communication
- Set boundaries
- Work on developing better functioning support systems and lifestyle balance
- Cope and regain control

The three P's

- Practice
- Patience
- Persistence

The four C's

- You didn't cause it
- You can't cure it
- You can't control it
- All you can do is cope with it

Current SMART Family and Friends Research



SMART
Recovery

Life beyond addiction

- NCRED Grant Project

Feasibility of an intervention of family and Friends impacted by Methamphetamine- Prof Peter Kelly

- Australia Drug Foundation (ADF)
(Currently being undertaken)

Building peer and provider capacity to effectively deliver SMART Family and friends meetings: A two stage mixed-methods evaluation



Design: Feasibility and preliminary effectiveness of SMART Family and Friends program for people impacted by methamphetamine use

Assessment: Pre/post assessment and 1-month follow-up

Target: deliver 5 community-based groups across multiple Australian states

Disclaimer: Impacted by COVID-19 – all groups delivered online

Methods

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Results

Recruitment

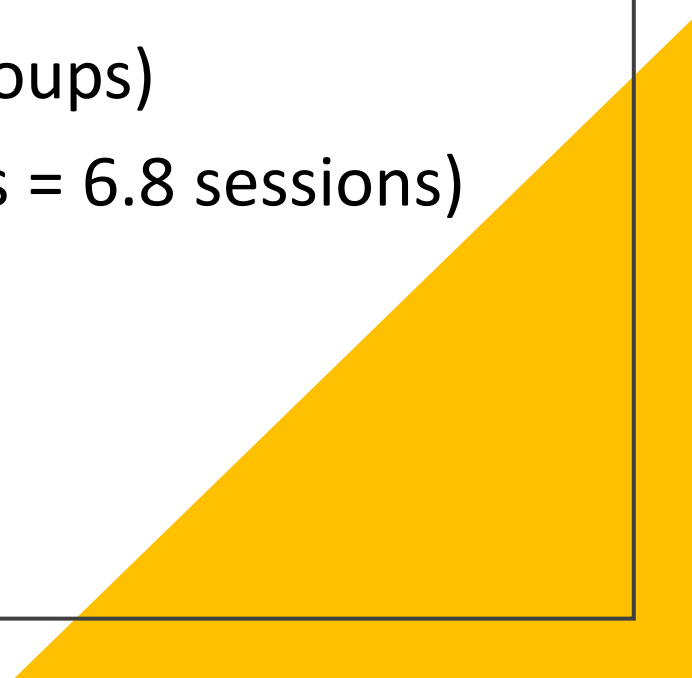
- We successfully completed five groups (N = 45)
- Recruitment all through the SMART Recovery Australia website
- 89% of participants impacted by methamphetamine use of family or friend

Fidelity

- High fidelity in the delivery of the groups

Results

Participant engagement

- 44 people commenced the groups
 - 6 people didn't engage (13%, attended 2 or less groups)
 - 39 people regularly attended (87%, average groups = 6.8 sessions)
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Results: questionnaires

| Domain | Questionnaire | Example Questions | Average Scores | Outcome |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Psychological Distress | Frequency of symptoms of distress i.e., anxiety and depression. Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10) | Over the past 4 weeks: 1) how often did you feel nervous? 2) how often did you feel worthless? Rated from 1 " <i>none of the time</i> " to 5 " <i>all of the time</i> " | Before = 24.3 (8.6) After = 20.6 (6.0) Paired t-test ₍₃₂₎ = 2.18, p = 0.018 (sig) | Significant decrease in distress from before to after SMART. |
| Quality of Life | Psychological, physical, social, and environmental quality of life. EUROHIS QOL 8-item | Over past 2 weeks: 1) How satisfied were you with your health? 2) How satisfied were you with your personal relationships? Rated from 1 " <i>very dissatisfied</i> " to 5 " <i>very satisfied</i> " | Before = 28.6 (5.9) After = 30.4 (4.5) Paired t-test ₍₃₂₎ = -1.81, p = 0.04 (sig) | Significant increase in quality of life from before to after SMART. |
| Burden | Burden of supporting a family member who is dependent on drugs or alcohol. Short Questionnaire for Family Members Affected by Addiction (SQFM-AA) | In the last 3 months, how frequently have: 1) your family's finances been affected? 2) you got moody or emotional with [the family member you support]? Rated from 0 " <i>never</i> " to 3 " <i>often</i> " | Before = 26.2 (9.6) After = 19.9 (9.3) Paired t-test ₍₃₂₎ = 3.98, p < 0.001 (sig) | Significant decrease in burden from before to after SMART. |

Results: participant feedback

| Theme | Domain | Examples and/or quotes |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Development of strategies to cope with Family Members use | Setting boundaries | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No longer lending family member (FM) money. • “Now I just lock the door and won’t let him into the house until the time I told him he could come back”. |
| | Compromising to help set boundaries | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not lending FM car but driving them to where they need to go. • Not giving FM money but buying them groceries instead. • “I don’t give her money anymore, but I’ll pay for her petrol”. |
| | Coping with conflict | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaving when FM gets angry instead of having a fight. • “I told him we should wait until we were both calm before we talked so we didn’t have a fight”. |
| Changing attitudes towards Family Member | Attitudes toward dependence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I’ve now accepted that his drug use will be something we deal with our whole life”. • “Drug use is a behaviour that he does, but he is so much more than that”. |
| | Acceptance of the current situation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “learning that I can’t control his behaviour. Our relationship is better if I don’t”. • “Using drugs or alcohol is just their way of trying to cope”. |

Results: participant feedback (cont.)

| Theme | Domain | Examples and/or quotes |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Decreased loneliness and social isolation | Making connections in the groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants were extremely supportive of each other, calling each other things like strong, brave, and resilient.• “I realised I’m not the only person going through this”.• “It’s been wonderful making friends in the group... people who can understand and validate my experience”. |
| Group format and content | Difficult content | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants stated the groups were exhausting and triggering. However they said: “it has to be that way if you’re talking about these things”.• The reported it was hard or impossible to go back to work after the group sessions. |
| | Online groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Doing it on Zoom means you feel more comfortable and secure as you’re in your own home. Plus it’s easy as you don’t have to travel”. |

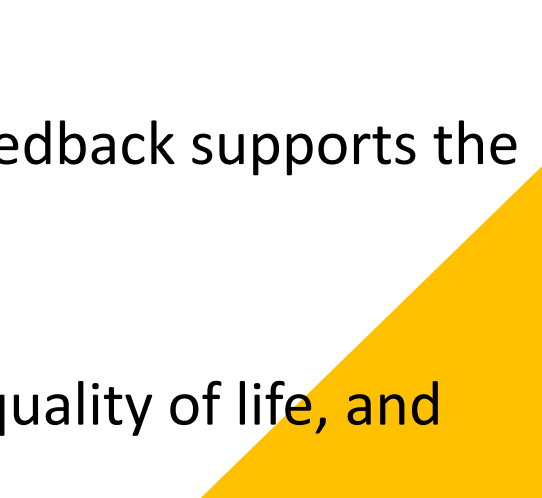
SMART Recovery International Global Research Network



- Brings together a network of International researchers interested in SMART Recovery
- To join the research network visit the SMART Recovery International website

<https://www.smartrecoveryinternational.org/global-research-advisory-network>

Conclusions

- Feasible to deliver **online**, group based SMART Family & Friends program
 - Able to recruit family members impacted by methamphetamines
 - Participants report valuing the groups and qualitative feedback supports the underlying philosophy of the program
 - Analysis indicates significant improvements in distress, quality of life, and burden.
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Questions

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