

The Impact of Parental Mental Health on Developmental Outcomes in Children 0 to 24 Months: A Scoping Review

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Purpose

Given the rising prevalence of mental health challenges among parents and the growing incidence of developmental disabilities in children, we aim to investigate how the spectrum of parental mental illness impacts children's motor development. Significant gaps in the literature exist considering the motor connection to parental mental health, with current research only focusing on the social-emotional link.

- **This research aims to investigate this relationship to be able to better support families in our practice and help to foster positive relationships and outcomes for the child's success.**

Background

- The first years of a child's life encompass significant physical, cognitive, and social-emotional development, all of which can be impacted by parental mental health (Hepper, 2015).
- There is more established literature on parental mental health conditions being negatively correlated with the social emotional development of children.
- Postpartum depression affects 1 in 7 mothers within the first year after childbirth (Carlson et al., 2024). 13-40% of mothers experience postpartum anxiety (Field, 2018).
- Mental illness also affects fathers with 5-10% experiencing perinatal depression and 5-15% experiencing perinatal anxiety (Darwin et al., 2021)
- According to the CDC 1 in 6 children have a developmental disability in the United States (CDC, 2024).

Methods

- A scoping review was conducted using PubMed, PsychINFO, and Google Scholar.
- The initial search found 36 articles. 11 were excluded due to falling outside our inclusion criteria.
- 13 more articles were excluded due to not addressing our research question.
- Each article was tracked and critically appraised using an evidence matrix table.

Methods cont.

Inclusion Criteria

- Children 0-24 months
- Motor Development
- Parental Mental Health and Disability

Search Terms

- Parental Mental Health
- Motor Development
- Disability
- Maternal Depression
- Developmental Delay

Results

12 articles of multiple designs were included upon meeting the inclusion criteria, consisting of cross-sectional studies, longitudinal and cohort studies, prospective and pilot studies, and a systematic review.

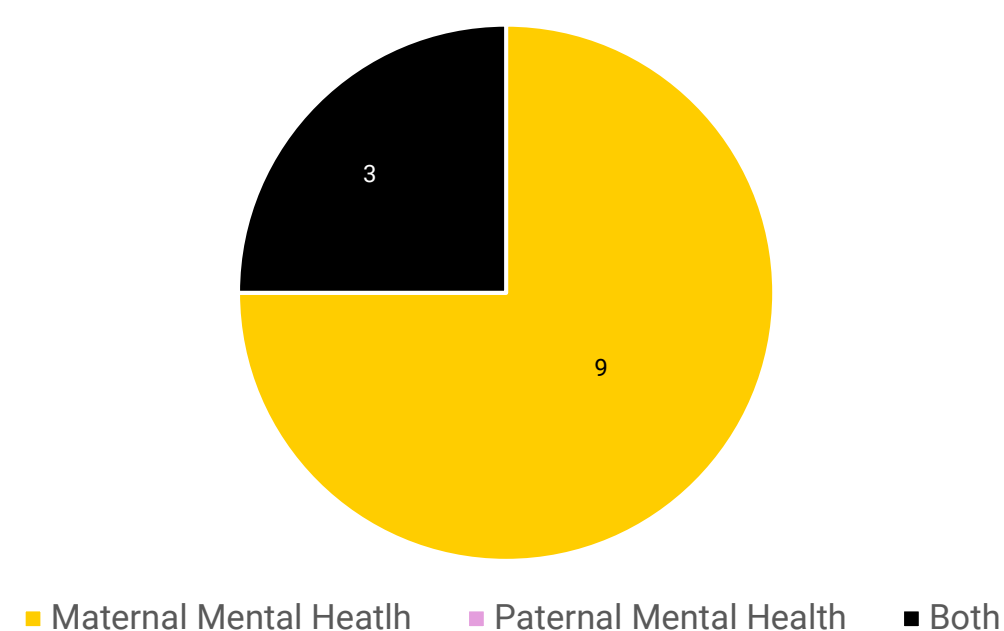
How does parental mental health influence the motor development of children during the first 2 years of life?

- 10/12 studies found that presence of parental mental health disorders were associated with delayed gross or fine motor development.

Does research focus both on maternal and paternal mental health on motor development?

Current research focused more on maternal mental health, while paternal was only included if looked at both parents.

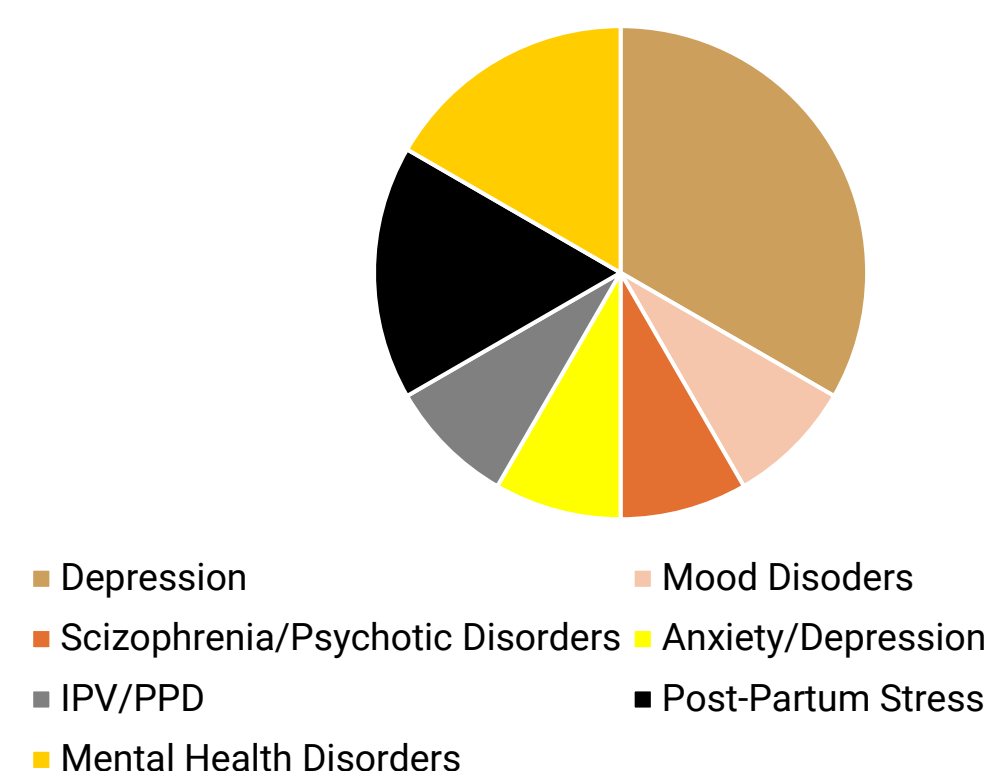
Focus of Research on Maternal vs Paternal Mental Health



What parental mental health diagnoses were included in our findings?

Multiple parental mental health diagnoses were included in our study samples, included in the graph below.

Different Parental Diagnoses Present in Research



Conclusion

Maternal mental health conditions, specifically depression, showed a significant correlation with delayed gross and fine motor in infants aged 0-24 months.

Main Takeaways

Main Takeaway 1

- Depression was the most common mental health disorder that was negatively correlated with children's development.

Main Takeaway 2

- Maternal mental health support both prenatally and postnatally are important for optimal child development and should be considered by providers.

Main Takeaway 3

- Several other factors, like low SES, could contribute in causing motor delays and represent directions for future research.

References

