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# Examining Unique Substance-related Risk Profiles for Neglectful Behaviors among Parents with and without Clinical Depression.

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## Abstract

### Background

Parental substance use disorder (SUD) is one of the predominant parental risk factors observed for child neglect. Yet individual risks do not exist in a vacuum.

### Objective

This study explored the relative importance of parental substance use behaviors based on the presence of key risk (clinical depression) and protective (social support type) factors.

### Participants and setting

The final analytic sample was composed of 3,545 parents of children aged 2 to 17 years from Wave 4 data collection of the National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being (NSCAW I).

### Methods

Weighted negative binomial regression models examined the interactive relationship between parent self-report of past-year substance use patterns, clinical depression, and social support type for annual neglect frequencies.

### Results

Among parents meeting criteria for clinical depression, parental harmful/risky substance use was associated with lower annual neglect frequency compared to SUD only. In addition, the presence of tangible supports was associated with lower annual neglect frequency while the presence of social companionship was associated with higher annual neglect frequency. For parents not meeting criteria for clinical depression, the study observed an interactive effect where both harmful/risky use behaviors and meeting criteria for SUD significantly contribute to higher average neglect frequencies compared to non-use, depending on social companionship level.

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In order to mitigate neglect risk among substance-using parents, practitioners should look beyond abstinence to address parents' underlying cognitive/affecting functioning and social settings.

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