

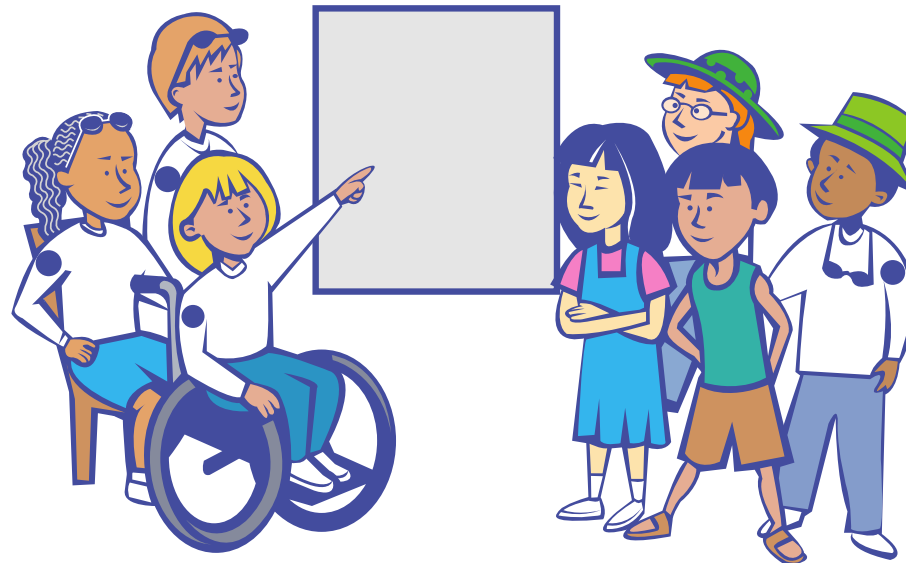
# add\*Ed Research

**What does the research on families of students with severe disabilities from diverse backgrounds say?**

**Compiled by: Hannah Petterson**

# Summary

**This review identifies and describes past research on the intersection topics: diversity, severe disability, and family. The findings highlight the topics, population, and methods covered by the research.**



# Methods

- **Researchers systematically reviewed 34 studies, from a previous review, focused on family members of children with severe disabilities aged 0-23+ with diverse backgrounds**
- **Diversity included spirituality/religion, English language learners, socioeconomic status, nationality, race/ethnicity, and or sexual identity and orientation**
- **Categorized each study by research focus, participants, methods, year, student age, and diversity focus.**
- **Summarized the previous research on this topic**



# Findings

- **62% had Mothers as the majority source of data in studies**
- **Most studies focused on children aged (5-22) with severe disabilities**
- **Over 75% of studies focused on the topic of race and ethnicity**
- **47% of the articles focused on the topic of family impact and support**
- **No research on sexual orientation and gender diversity present**



# Educator Take-Aways

- **To create an understanding of the current research available in severe disability, diversity and family**
- **To identify specific studies on the topic that might be helpful for further reading**
- **To demonstrate the areas in need of more research.**



Article

## Diversity, Severe Disability, and Family: A Systematic Review of the Literature

Jordan Shurr<sup>1</sup> and Aleksandra Hollingshead<sup>2</sup>

### Abstract

Understanding family challenges and perspectives are critical to effective programming and services for individuals with severe disabilities. Equally central, yet often overlooked, is the relationship between family challenges and diversity. This systematic review examined a set of peer reviewed literature published between 2002-2015 at the intersection of diversity, severe disability, and family for the purpose of identifying the foci, subjects, and research methods of such studies. Results indicated a bias toward studies on the impact of disability on the family, as well as disability beliefs and behaviors. In addition, a majority of articles reported mothers as the primary source of data and surveys as the primary method of data collection. Implications of the findings and directions for future research are explored.

### Keywords

family, diversity, severe disability

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