

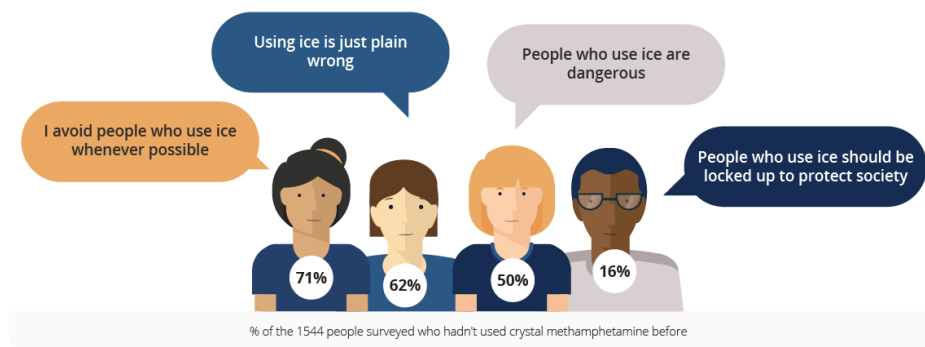
## Stigma and Crystal Methamphetamine use

### What is stigma and discrimination?

Stigma is often described as a mark of disgrace that's applied to people when something about them, or the way they live, is viewed, and judged negatively by others. This leads them to be treated negatively or discriminated against by others as a result. Discrimination can include things like harassment, bullying, social exclusion, aggression, and violence.

### Stigma and Crystal Methamphetamine use

People who use illegal drugs (including crystal **methamphetamine**) can be affected by stigma and discrimination, particularly if they experience problems with drug use or develop a **dependence** on drugs. A [recent survey](#) of over 2000 people conducted by the *Cracks in the Ice* team indicated that stigmatising attitudes towards people who use crystal methamphetamine are common in Australia. It also showed many Australians who use crystal methamphetamine experience discrimination in everyday life. Common attitudes towards people who use crystal methamphetamine in Australia found in the survey included:

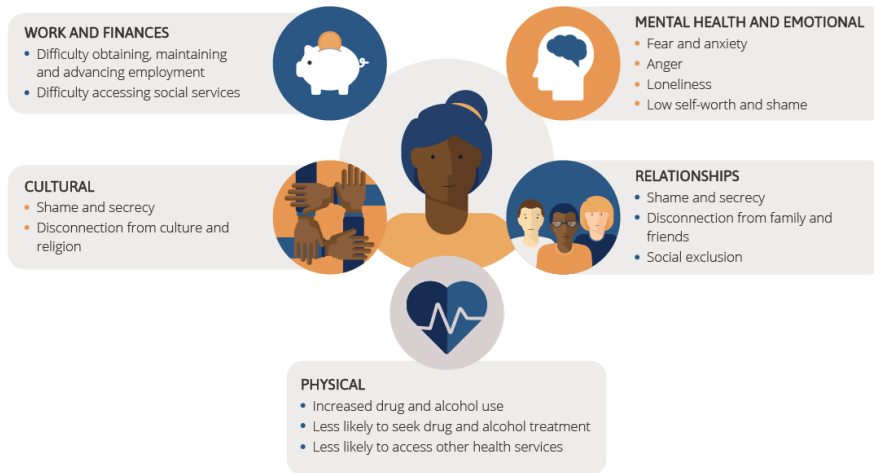


For more information, get the factsheet: [Stigma and Crystal Methamphetamine use in Australia](#)

### What are the impacts of stigma and discrimination?

Stigma and discrimination can impact the wellbeing of people who use drugs like crystal methamphetamine in several ways. Stigma and discrimination can lead people to experience powerful feelings of fear, anger, loneliness, and hopelessness. Sometimes people will also feel other emotions such as shame, embarrassment, and self-hate if they start to believe the negative views others have of them. This experience can sometimes be called self-stigma or internalised stigma. Fear of being stigmatised or discriminated against can stop people seeking treatment and support from health and social services when they experience problems with drug use. Sometimes people who use drugs also end up using them in greater amounts or more frequently as a way of coping with the experience of being stigmatised.

More impacts are summarised in the infographic below:



## How do we reduce stigma?

There are many steps we can take to reduce the stigma surrounding crystal methamphetamine and other drug use in Australia:

- Get the facts about crystal methamphetamine use in Australia and avoid reinforcing stereotypes and misconceptions. To check your own misconceptions and knowledge about crystal methamphetamine take the Cracks in the Ice quiz or read through the stigma factsheet to identify common myths.
- Use person-centred language when talking about people who use crystal methamphetamine or other drugs (e.g. “person who uses crystal methamphetamine” not “ice user/addict”). This can help others to see the whole person rather than just their use of drugs.
- Increase your understanding of the experiences and perspectives of people who use crystal methamphetamine by watch The Truth About Ice and You Can't Ask That videos.
- Visit Cracks in the Ice to learn about the common reasons why people use drugs like crystal methamphetamine.
- Provide nonjudgmental support to loved ones who you think might be having problems with crystal methamphetamine or other drug use. Learn more about how to do this on Cracks in the Ice. The most important thing is to gently encourage them to seek support and remind them that there is no shame in asking for help.
- Engage with people who have lived experience of alcohol and other drug use in your work. If you work with people who use crystal methamphetamine or other drugs, drawing from the expertise of people with lived experience brings a critical perspective to clinical work
- Share the factsheet with others to spread the word and help stop stigma. Only through taking steps together will we be able to put a stop to the stigma attached to crystal methamphetamine use in Australia and help people who use these drugs feel safe and supported.

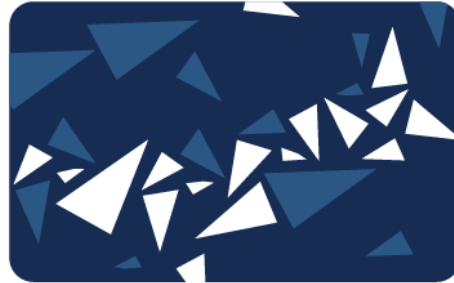
## Learn more about crystal methamphetamine and the experiences of people who use it

**Ice Breaker**

Using ice can lead to insomnia

True  False

[Take the full quiz](#)



TEST YOURSELF BY TAKING  
THE CRACKS IN THE ICE QUIZ

WATCH  
THE TRUTH ABOUT ICE  
on SBS

WATCH  
YOU CAN'T ASK THAT  
on ABC iView

## Key Sources

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Crystal Methamphetamine  
*Trusted, evidence-based  
information for the community*

GET THE FACTS ABOUT ICE    WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF ICE?    STAYING SAFE

[www.cracksintheice.org.au](http://www.cracksintheice.org.au)

Special Broadcasting Service (SBS). (2017, December). The Truth About Ice [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.sbs.com.au/topics/voices/culture/article/2017/12/05/busting-methamphetamine-myths-truth-about-ice>



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