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The International Centre For Youth Gambling Problems And High-Risk Behaviors

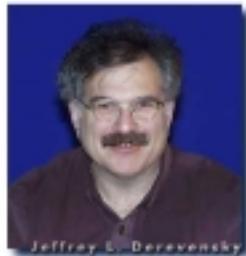
Feature Article

By Rina Gupta and Jeffrey L. Derevensky

It is with great enthusiasm and pride that we introduce our new international centre. The McGill team has served as the focal point for research, treatment, and training of graduate students within the domain of youth gambling for the past ten years. As the issue of gambling has gained media and governmental attention on a global level, the benefits of an international centre specializing on youth gambling issues became apparent. The need for more basic and applied research meeting the highest scientific standards, the development of scientifically validated youth prevention programs, treatment programs, training of researchers and clinicians, and governmental and industry consultations has never been greater. This social reality represents both a challenge and an opportunity. Our interdisciplinary staff remains committed to continue to contribute to the advancement of knowledge concerning youth gambling and high-risk behaviors.

The International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors was officially established at McGill University in the spring of 2001. We are located within Duggan House, a magnificent old mansion on the campus of McGill University. We welcome visitors to our Centre and encourage collaboration in our research, clinical, and prevention projects. This Centre now serves as the vehicle through which we will continue our research, prevention, treatment, training, information dissemination and social policy initiatives.

Our Centre is staffed with highly qualified individuals who share a common vision. The Centre's board of directors and advisory board consist of international, highly qualified and committed professionals. The scope of our work will continue to be done on an international level while continuing to incorporate the highest standards of excellence. This Centre provides an ideal forum for enhanced collaborative psychological, social, biological, neurological, and socio-economic research programs, providing an excellent platform to carry out and coordinate national and international research and social policy agendas.



Jeffrey L. Derevensky

Jeffrey L. Derevensky, Ph.D., is a Professor of School/Applied Child Psychology, Department of Educational and Counseling Psychology at McGill University and a co-director of the International Center for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors. He is a child psychologist, and Associate Professor, Department of Psychiatry; and Associate Professor, Department of Community Dentistry at McGill University. He is a clinical consultant to numerous hospitals, school boards, government agencies and corporations. He has served on many government committees and has performed consultative services for SAMHSA, NIMH, NRC, SSHRC, and the NCPG. Jeff is Associate Editor of the *Journal of Gambling Studies* and is Co- Editor, *Canadian Journal of School Psychology*. He is also on the editorial board of several journals and is a contributing editor of *Wellplace* (www.wellplace.com). He is a member of the National Centre for Gambling Studies, University of Alberta; National Network on Gambling Issues and Research, Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse; is an International Associate of the Centre for the Study of the Social Impact of Gambling, University of Plymouth, England; and is a member of the Program Advisory Board, Institute for Research on Pathological Gambling and Related Disorders, Division on Addictions, Harvard University Medical School.



Rina Gupta, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor (part-time) in School/Applied Child Psychology at McGill University and is a co-director of the International Center for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors. Rina is a child psychologist and in addition to treating youth with gambling problems she has a private clinical practice. Rina was a recipient of a SSHRC and FCAR doctoral fellowship for her work on understanding children and adolescent gambling behavior and her doctoral dissertation won the G.M. Dunlop Award for Best Doctoral Dissertation in Educational Psychology in Canada. She was also the first recipient of the Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation Award from the National Council on Problem Gambling. She has been invited to present her research and clinical work at numerous national and international conferences on youth gambling. Rina is on the editorial board of the *Journal of Gambling Studies* and has served as a reviewer for numerous journals. Her work is published in several journals and she is considered an expert in the field of youth gambling. She is the director of the clinical intervention program for youth problem gamblers at McGill University. Rina is also a member of the National Centre for Gambling Studies, University of Alberta; National Network on Gambling Issues; and is an International Associate of the Centre for the Study of the Social Impact of Gambling, University of Plymouth, England.



Kathy D'Ovidio, M.Sc., is the Director of Program Development and Communications at the International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors. Kathy serves as a link to outside organizations, industries, and government agencies, and heads all public relations efforts. She obtained her Master's degree in Sociology at the Université de Montréal and her areas of interest include deviant social behavior and criminal activity. Kathy is also editor of this quarterly newsletter.



Anne-Elyse Deguire, M.Sc., is the Prevention Specialist at the International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors. She obtained her Master's degree in Psychoéducation at the Université de Montréal. Her thesis examined a particular form of delinquent behavior found in adolescents known as *taxing*. Anne-Elyse has also been involved in different prevention efforts with both elementary and secondary school students where she contributed to the development, training, implementation and evaluation of these programs.



Pierre Thiffault is a Post-Doctoral Research Fellow at the International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors. He achieved a master degree and completed his doctoral studies at the *Laboratoire de Simulation de Conduite* at *Université de Montréal*. His master's thesis examined the relationships between risk perception, risk-taking and sensation seeking. His doctoral dissertation focused on the impact of monotony and individual differences on drivers' fatigue and vigilance in prolonged simulated driving. Together with members of the RISQ (Recherche et Intervention Substances Psychoactives Québec), he is the co-author of a study on the psychological profile of Quebec's driving while intoxicated (DWI) and recidivism that was carried out for the *Société de l'Assurance Automobile du Québec* and Quebec's Ministry of Transport. He is also co-author of two ongoing research projects, one aiming to study the psychological profile of high-risk drivers and the other a preliminary evaluation of Quebec's new legislation regarding DWI recidivism. His research interests are related to risk taking and addictions. He is currently focusing on risk and gambling behaviors, and especially on the relationship between Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder, risk-taking and gambling in youth.



Natalie Schmekel Ph.D., is a clinical psychologist working within the International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors. She has also a consultant to numerous companies and organizations. Natalie has given numerous seminars and workshops on prevention efforts and clinical interventions. She teaches part-time at the Université de Montréal in the area of trauma and intervention and is considered an expert in the field of crisis intervention.



Laurie Dickson, B.A. (Honor's) is currently an M.A. student in the School/Applied Child Psychology program at McGill University. Her research interests include the study of resiliency, risk-taking, and gambling behavior in adolescents and the development of prevention programs for children and teens. Laurie was the recipient of the McGill University Max Bell Master's Student Fellowship and The Master's Student Fellowship from the Ontario Problem Gambling Research Centre. She was also the recipient of the Tibor Barsony Graduate Student Award from the Canadian Council on Problem Gambling (Ontario).



Jennifer Felsher, B.A., is completing her Master's degree and will be pursuing her doctoral studies in the School/Applied Child Psychology program at McGill University. Her Master's research delineated those specific attributes in lottery products which are particularly attractive and reinforcing to underage youth. Jennifer was the recipient of the Levitt Family Foundation Scholarship in 1998 and 2000, and has recently been awarded the Conseil Québécois de la Recherche Social (CQRS-FCAR) doctoral fellowship for her work on youth gambling.



Karen Hardoon, M.A., is in her final year of doctoral studies in the School/Applied Child Psychology program at McGill University. Her Master's thesis examined the social influences involved in children's gambling behavior. Karen is

beginning work on her doctoral dissertation, which will focus on the influence of familial, emotional, conduct, and cognitive problems, and hyperactivity upon risk-taking and adolescent gambling problems. She received the first Outstanding Master's Thesis Award from the National Council on Problem Gambling and recently was awarded an FCAR doctoral fellowship to pursue doctoral work in the area of youth gambling. Karen has numerous publications related to youth gambling and her research has been presented at many national and international conferences.



Felicia Kaufman, M.A., is in her final year of doctoral studies in the School/Applied Child Psychology program at McGill University. Her Master's thesis examined various instruments measuring life stress for adolescents. Felicia's doctoral dissertation will focus on an examination of the interaction between life stress, coping style, and gambling activity in adolescents.



Carolyn Hawley, Ms Hawley is the most recent team member of the International Center for Youth Gambling Problems and High Risk Behaviors. She is a post-doctoral research fellow holding a Masters of Science degree from the University of Wisconsin in Counselling Psychology/Rehabilitation Counselling and has completed her doctoral studies in the School of Allied Health at Virginia Commonwealth University-Medical College of Virginia. Ms. Hawley has been an adjunct instructor in the Department of Rehabilitation Counselling at Virginia Commonwealth University. She has acted as project manager on several grant projects. In addition, she has been employed in programs that serve people with physical and cognitive disabilities and addictions. Ms. Hawley has published several articles and book chapters. In addition, she has experience conceptualizing, designing, and managing interactive multimedia programs and Web sites, specializing in rehabilitation-related training and education. She currently has developed and teaches three online courses dealing with problem gambling awareness, assessment, and treatment.



Chantal Ste-Marie, M.A., completed her Master's degree and is pursuing her doctoral studies in the School/Applied Child Psychology program at McGill University. Her master's thesis examined the relationship between anxiety and adolescent gambling behavior.



Arlene Doheny is the administrative assistant for the Centre. She administers the Centre's multiple grants and research funds and coordinates along with the Director of Programs and Communication the dissemination of information to researchers, treatment providers, legislators, graduate students and the public. She plays an instrumental role in coordinating the Centre's special events, workshops and symposia.



Sanjeev Panigrahy heads the technological services for the Centre. He is responsible for the development and maintenance of our equipment, website, searchable database, and coordination of our computer and audio-visual needs.

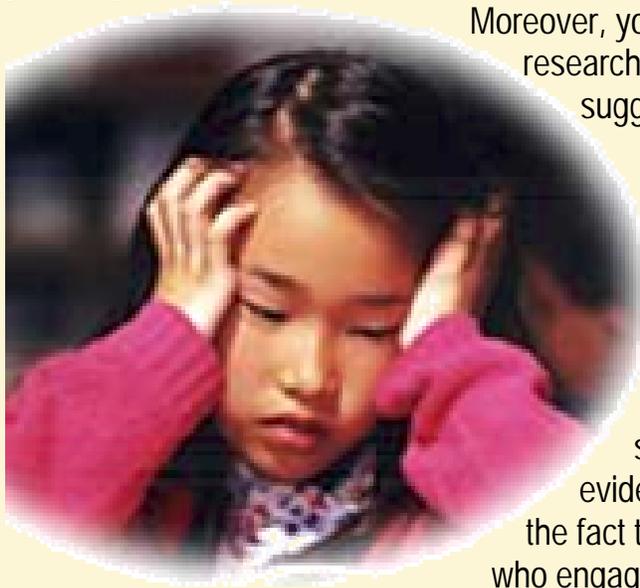


Lei Chen is a new adjunct to the Centre's technological services. She is responsible for keeping our hardware and software up and running and for the technical aspects of our newsletter.

A Look At Our Ongoing Research

I. An Examination of the Interaction Between Life Stress, Coping Style and Gambling Activity in Adolescents

This study adopts a transactional perspective and examines a variety of interactions between how an individual typically copes with life stressors, the types of stressors that appear more influential during adolescence, and how these patterns relate to youth at-risk for the development of a gambling addiction. Past



research has demonstrated that a variety of stressors have a causal influence on the development of different types of psychopathology

(i.e., anxiety disorders, depression, substance use). Many theories of gambling have proposed that exposure to a recent life stressor may act as a trigger for those individuals who may be biologically predisposed to develop an addictive pattern of behavior. This study seeks to examine this connection between gambling activity and stressful life events.

Moreover, youth gambling research has also suggested that individuals, who gamble consistently and heavily, do so as a means of escape. There has been some initial evidence to support the fact that adolescents who engage in high-risk behaviors like gambling, also seem to utilize maladaptive coping patterns such as escape-avoidance coping when dealing with stressful

situations. A key component of this study, apart from assessing the interaction between both minor daily stressors and more severe stressful events in relation to coping style and gambling activity, is the examination of various risk/protective factors that may actually serve to buffer the effects of both life stressors and maladaptive coping style.

It is hoped that the results of this study will contribute to further guide intervention and prevention research, especially with respect to the development of social skills training and the teaching of more adaptive coping strategies that may aid adolescents in dealing with stressful situations.

***II. An Examination of* the Influence of Familial, Emotional, Conduct, and Cognitive Problems, and Hyperactivity upon Youth Risk- Taking and Adolescent Gambling Problems**

Our past research efforts have enabled us to identify several predisposing variables that place certain youth at an increased risk for involvement in high-risk behaviors and the development of serious gambling problems. For example, adolescent pathological gamblers have been found to display specific personality traits, including higher levels of excitability, extroversion, anxiety, and lower levels of conformity and self-discipline. These personality traits have been found to be positively correlated with risk-taking behavior in general. Moreover, research has indicated that children begin gambling with family members, that gambling is an acceptable family activity, and that children do not feel the need to hide gambling activities from family members.

Our research has been complimented with clinical information obtained from

youth in treatment at our Centre. As such, we have been able to identify a constellation of psychosocial variables that may be contributing to the development and maintenance of risk-taking and gambling behavior in youth. Nonetheless, there appears to be a lack of empirical research



supporting the relationship between certain cognitive, emotional, social, and behavioral variables and risk-taking and gambling behavior.

Much of the previous research has focused upon parent and teacher reports as well as

retrospective reports from adult pathological gamblers. The purpose of the present research program is to examine the relationship between self-perceived familial, emotional, conduct, and cognitive problems and the development of risk-taking behaviors in adolescence. In addition, the research seeks to examine the influences of hyperactivity and impulsivity on risk-taking/gambling behavior, as well as to identify developmental and gender differences.

The results of this study will provide a greater understanding of the factors placing certain youth at increased risk for problems with risk-taking behaviors and will provide invaluable information that can be used for their identification as well as for the development and implementation of effective prevention and treatment programs.

III. A Qualitative and Quantitative Examination of Lottery Ticket Purchases by Adolescents

While most underage youth have difficulty gaining access into casinos; there is abundant evidence that many have relatively easy access to purchasing lottery products in spite of legal prohibitions.

Prior research has indicated that lottery products are particularly attractive to adolescents. While it remains illegal in most jurisdictions within Canada and the United States for minors to purchase these tickets due to Provincial and State laws, numerous studies report that minors are actively purchasing lottery tickets. Research has revealed that most problem gamblers follow a similar pattern of gambling before experiencing difficulties. This pattern generally includes playing cards for money, purchasing of lottery tickets, sports betting, with many progressing to VLT and/or casino playing.

Despite our understanding of this progression, most studies have failed to examine the attributes of lottery products deemed important to youth. Given that many youth with gambling



problems begin gambling by purchasing a variety of lottery products, this research may provide clinicians and researchers with additional information as to why certain individuals are susceptible to develop gambling problems.

This research incorporates a qualitative and quantitative approach toward identifying whether there are specific types of lottery products which

appeal to underage youth; toward identifying those scratch and win lottery games that hold special appeal for underage youth; and toward identifying the primary characteristics of lottery products appealing to youth (i.e., monetary value, type of game, size of the prize, visual characteristics, etc). Developmental and preferential patterns of playing behavior among

underage youth will be examined. As well, special attention will focus on youth experiencing gambling problems and those at-risk for developing problem gambling behaviors. A careful examination of these parameters may well help understand the lottery's appeal for underage youth.

IV. Personality Characteristics Related to Gambling Behavior in Children and Adolescents

In an attempt to gain a better understanding of the causal factors of youth gambling behavior, researchers are examining numerous personality traits found to be characteristic of problem gamblers. Anxiety has been found to be a characteristic of adult pathological gamblers. Pathological gamblers have been found to have elevated anxiety scores as compared to the general population. The relationship between anxiety and gambling has led some researchers to propose that gamblers are not necessarily

sensation seekers but rather gamble in an attempt to reduce negative physiological states. Recently, the gambling literature has focused on the increasing proportion of adolescents with severe gambling-related problems. The necessity of examining anxiety as contributing to the development of gambling addictions within this group of gamblers is of interest. It is likely that youth demonstrating higher anxiety levels than the general population may be at risk for using gambling as a means of reducing

their anxious states. The primary goal of the study is to examine the relationship between anxiety, social stress, and gambling behavior among adolescents. Based on the literature with adult pathological gamblers, it is likely that adolescents who gamble will report greater anxiety and social stress compared to non-gamblers, and youth pathological gamblers will report more anxiety and social stress than social gamblers.

It is hoped that the present research will provide insight regarding risk factors in adolescents who may be predisposed to developing problem gambling behavior. The information obtained from this research program will help further our knowledge base of youth and adolescent gambling behavior.

V. Harm-Reduction for the Prevention of Youth Gambling Problems and Other High-Risk Behaviors

Despite increased awareness of the need to begin educating young children about the potential dangers of gambling, empirical knowledge of the prevention of adolescent problem gambling and its translation into science-based prevention initiatives is scarce. In some of our work, we have examined the question of whether or not the common elements of tobacco, alcohol and illicit drug abuse prevention programs can be applied to gambling prevention. Common risk and protective factors across addictions, including gambling, appear to point to the need to develop a more global and general model of prevention. We have articulated the need for science-based prevention initiatives and suggested a general adolescent risk-taking model as a basis for prevention of adolescent problem gambling and other problematic risk behaviors. The applicability and the validity of a harm-reduction approach are currently being examined for use in the prevention of youth problem gambling. Albeit the growing popularity of the harm reduction approach in the field of adolescent alcohol and substance abuse, a harm reduction approach to



prevention and treatment of youth problem gambling remains largely unexplored. We have argued for the use of a universal, selective, and indicative prevention framework to present current prevention initiatives that have emerged from the harm reduction health paradigm for adolescent substance and alcohol abuse. The principles of prevention science are used to examine the validity of the harm reduction health movement and the effectiveness of its associated strategies for the prevention of adolescent problem gambling and other problem behaviors related to socially acceptable activities. Implications drawn from this conceptual examination of the validity of harm reduction as an approach to prevention include valuable information for treatment providers as well. The ongoing refinement of current prevention programs is of utmost importance. We will soon be undertaking a comparative study of the *Moi je passe/Count Me Out* program and the prototype CD-ROM prevention program currently under development at our Centre.

2nd International Think Tank 2001

On May 4th, 2001, McGill University's International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors and the Division on Addictions, Harvard Medical School hosted the 2nd International Think Tank on issues surrounding youth problem gambling at McGill University. Madame Agnes Maltais (Quebec), Minister of Health, Social Services and Youth Protection, and Dean Ratna Ghosh welcomed 66 delegates representing 9 countries; Canada, U.S., U.K., Australia, Holland, Spain, Hong Kong, New Zealand, and South Africa. The delegates included researchers, treatment providers, social policy experts, and representatives from the industry. The goal of this event was to develop an international public health agenda focused on minimizing the negative impact of gambling upon youth. The specific aims of this international symposium included the assessment of the current level of worldwide knowledge and understanding of youth gambling and risk taking issues, the identification of areas of global concern, and the discussion of future direction of youth gambling research, as well as

devise an action plan that would allow effective measures to be taken to minimize the negative impact of gambling on youth.

The Think Tank culminated in the production of a detailed and up-to-date agenda that focused on youth gambling issues of global concern including regulation, legislation and public policy, theory and research,



education and prevention measures, treatment and intervention, resiliency, issues related to the dissemination of information, media and public awareness campaigns, youth gambling and new technologies. Important committees were established to work on the different areas of concern and it was agreed that there exists a need for more awareness concerning youth gambling problems, consortium-based

research, and the establishment of an international body and organization. McGill's International Centre was designated to play an instrumental role in establishment and coordination of international efforts focused on youth gambling problems.

This successful event would not have been possible without the generous contributions from our sponsors: the Ministry of Health and Social Services, Quebec; National Centre for Responsible Gaming, USA; Ontario Problem Gambling Research Centre; British Columbia Lottery Corporation; Harrah's Entertainment, Inc., USA; Loto-Québec; Canadian Institutes of Health Research; and Minnesota Indian Gaming Association.

Several committees emanating from the Think Tank have been formed. We urge all interested individuals to contact the interim chairs for each of the committees if you are interested in information or in participating on the committees:

Definitions & Instrumentation

Dr. Ken Winters
winte001@maroon.tc.umn.edu

Awareness & Information Dissemination

Robert Murray
Robert.murray7@sympatico.ca

International Governance

Ralph Gerdelan
pgf@pgfnz.co.nz
Dr. Harold Wynne
hwyne@wynne.com

Funding

Dr. Howard Shaffer
Howard_Shaffer@hms.harvard.edu

Youth Engagement

Dr. Paul Delfabbro
Paul.delfabbro@unisa.edu.au

Research

Dr. Rina Gupta
rina.gupta@mcgill.ca
Dr. Jeffrey Derevensky
jeffrey.derevensky@mcgill.ca



**THE SECOND
INTERNATIONAL THINK TANK ON
YOUTH GAMBLING ISSUES**



SUMMARY REPORT



Available at following websites: www.youthgambling.com and
www.hms.harvard.edu/doa

Do Parents Have a Duty To Keep Their Kids Out Of Casinos?

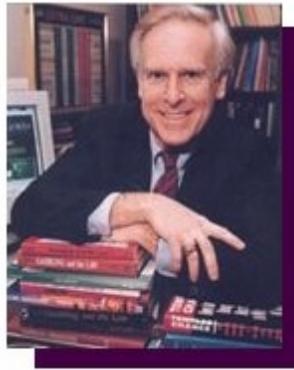
By Professor I. Nelson Rose,
Whittier Law School,
Costa Mesa, CA

When a gaming operator loses its license because parents let their underage children gamble, can the operator sue the parents? The Court of Appeal of Louisiana recently was faced with this question. As this is being written, the Court's opinion is not yet final. And, although the facts of the case are somewhat in dispute, the basic legal issues are clear.

On January 11, 1994, Sandi and Toni Dixon, guardians of four-year-old Candace, brought the little one with them into the Chelsea Street Pub in the Pecanland Mall in Ouachita Parish, Louisiana. The restaurant had a separate section for its video poker machines. Signs warned that minors were not allowed to enter this gaming room. Two state troopers were also in the Pub, having lunch. One testified that he saw Toni take Candace into the video poker room.

Toni put coins into the machine, then showed the child, sitting on her lap, how to touch the screen to play the game. The Video Gaming

Division of the Office of State Police issued a citation to the Pub owner, Carver, Inc., and petitioned to revoke its gaming license.



Now, revoking a license worth hundreds of thousands of dollars because one four-year-old touched a video poker screen may seem a bit extreme. But the Louisiana Legislature's Video Draw Poker Devices Control Law stated, at the time: A. No person licensed...or any agent or employee thereof, shall allow a person under the age of eighteen to play or operate a video draw poker device at a licensed establishment. B. The Division shall revoke the license of any person... who is found by the Division to have committed or allowed a

violation of Subsection A. The Division had the power to issue fines when other violations occurred. But it could impose only one penalty, license revocation, when it came to minors gambling.

The Legislature later realized this penalty was awfully harsh. But rather than give the Division more discretion, the Legislature changed the law to read: No person shall intentionally allow a person under the age of eighteen..."

The Pub's lawyer argued that the Legislature merely was clarifying the prior law; that a license could only be revoked if the Division proved the Pub intentionally allowed little Candace to play video poker. The Louisiana Court of Appeal should have said the reason for the change is obvious. The Legislature felt it would be unfair to revoke a license when an operator was merely careless in letting minors gamble. Instead, in a poorly reasoned opinion, the Court held that the only intent required is what is

known as "general criminal intent". "General criminal intent" actually has nothing to do with true intent. It is a legal fiction, created to prevent an intoxicated defendant from claiming that he was so drunk that he did not know what he was doing.

For the Court to say that the word "intentionally" in a statute means "general criminal intent" means someone can "intentionally" do something that he does not even know he is doing. In other words, the operator's actual knowledge or intent is irrelevant.

The Pub's lawyer pointed out that the four-year-old was not really playing the game. But the Court held the law "includes all minors regardless of their cognitive abilities." Having lost the battle, and its license, the Pub's owner tried to salvage some of its business by finding someone else to take the blame. It probably realized that it could not sue its own employees for letting the child into the gaming area. It did try to sue the State Police Video Gaming Division, but that, naturally, went nowhere.

Carver, Inc. hired a new lawyer, George E. Lucas, Jr., who decided to sue Sandi and

Toni Dixon, the pair responsible for bringing in their four-year-old. Lucas knew that most individuals do not have enough money to make a lawsuit like this worthwhile. But he also knew that homeowners' insurance often covers claims having nothing to do with houses. So, he added Louisiana Fann Bureau Casualty Insurance Company as a defendant. The lawsuit sought damages for the loss of the gaming license "and the substantial revenue generated thereby." Both the trial court and Court of Appeal took

the claim seriously, though they both agreed the lawsuit had to be dismissed. It may seem farfetched that these adults might have to pay for all of the Pub's lost profits. But they did cause the Pub to lose its valuable video poker license.

Fortunately for the Dixons, causation alone is not enough. The Pub alleged that the Dixons were

negligent in letting a child play video poker. Legally, a claim of negligence can only be brought if the defendant owed a duty to the injured plaintiff.

The Court of Appeal analyzed the "moral, social and economic factors, including the fairness of imposing liability." Looking at the history and purpose of the statute and regulations it came to the inevitable conclusion: The duty to keep children out of the gaming area rests ultimately with the licensee.

Parents may have a moral duty to keep their young ones away from gambling. But they owe no legal duty to gaming operators.

In the end, it all came down to money. It is the operator who would make more money if it allowed minors to gamble, so it is the operator who bears the risk.



Mobile phone: The next adolescent gambling problem?



By Dr. Mark Griffiths
Psychology Division, Nottingham Trent University

The growth of the mobile phone industry in the UK has been widespread including mass penetration of the adolescent market. It is often claimed by marketers that online gambling makes commercial sense (i.e., the combining of gambling and the Internet into one convenient package). Gambling looks like it might take another step towards convenience with the advent of mobile phone gambling. This is gambling on the move, whenever, wherever, with the wireless world of mobile gambling. Since it is unnatural to be always near a computer, it makes the cellular phone the perfect medium for online gambling. Whenever a gambler has a few minutes to spare (at the airport, in traffic, etc.), a person can occupy themselves by gambling. Merrill Lynch predicts that online gambling will jump to \$58 billion by 2004 and that mobile gambling will lead the way (Kriz, 2001).

Robert Lezec, (the CEO of the mobile gambling company, Indiqu), claims that "mobile gambling will undoubtedly be the most lucrative of all m-commerce segments over time." As with all new forms of technology, especially when

used for gambling, there are some areas of potential concern.

It has also been said that promoters of mobile phone gambling think it will attract *younger* gamblers. In fact, some companies are deliberately targeting the under-16 market with mobile phones specially designed for them (e.g. the Nokia 3300) although they are not targeting gambling per se. This is something that needs to be monitored.

Mobile phones that do not implement a user ID program will be very hard to trace and check – in particular when it comes to underage customers trying to place a bet.

Market research by Ericsson indicates that almost 10% of Swedes would prefer to gamble by phone and that among younger mobile users the percentage was even higher.

Access and convenience -It could be argued that mobile phones make "impulse betting" easier. It is also another example of convenience gambling.

Mobile phone access is now commonplace and widespread, and can be accessed anywhere. Given that prevalence of behaviors is strongly correlated with increased access to the activity, it is not surprising that the development of regular mobile use is increasing across the population. Increased accessibility may also lead to increased problems. Research into other socially acceptable but potentially addictive behaviors (drinking alcohol) has demonstrated that increased accessibility leads to increased use (i.e., regular use) and that this eventually leads to an increase in problems (although the increase may not be proportional).

Another problem with mobile phone gambling concerns the legal responsibilities associated with this behavior. Currently, the legal framework for mobile gambling has yet to be operationalized. As with most technological forms of gambling, e-gaming regulations and laws are in a state of flux.

Furthermore, the privacy afforded by mobile phone gambling, creates a new set of problems for law enforcement

and taxation issues. With internet gambling there are a number of ways that a person's nationality can be determined. For instance, some sites use Internet protocol addresses to determine a user's tax jurisdiction, some call for user's bank addresses, and others require social security numbers. As previously mentioned, mobile phones that do not implement a user ID

program will be very difficult to trace and check. Industry analysts project it will be 2-3 years before governments and technology providers around the world can arrive at a consensus for a verifiable ID system, and encryption (Kris, 2001).

The introduction of widespread mobile phone gambling may come at a price. As with other new forms

of gambling (such as internet gambling), the social impact of such activities needs to be rigorously monitored.

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Sting Operation in Montreal

A recent sting operation in Montreal conducted by Viva Consulting under the direction of Sol Boxenbaum revealed that despite laws prohibiting the sale of lottery tickets to underage youth in Quebec, it is not difficult for an underage adolescents(18 years of age) to purchase such a product. The headline in The Gazette, Montreal's local paper (Monday, August 6, 2001), read "Teen gamble a sure bet." According Boxenbaum, a recent survey involving the expedition of a 15-year-old girl to 33 different retailers revealed how easy it is for an adolescent to purchase a lottery ticket. Out of the 33 outlets visited by this teenager, 31 sold her a 6/49-lottery ticket.

Although this sting may scandalize some, it is clear that the dangers surrounding gambling activities by underage

youth need to be seriously addressed.

This breach of laws prohibiting the sale of lottery products to underage youth is in fact not atypical. Operation 18+ in New York State revealed serious breaches of underage youth purchasing lottery tickets. The existing statutes and laws must be enforced.

Recently, the Quebec government has recognized the possible dangers associated with problem gambling and addressed the issue as a public health concern. Additional funding has been allocated to different organizations involved for research, prevention, and treatment of gambling related disorders. Although efforts have been made by governmental agencies in providing public awareness material to retailers, greater education for retailers is necessary. Surveys such as the

one conducted by Boxenbaum indicate that greater efforts also need to be made to educate the general public about the possible inherent dangers associated with youth gambling activities, and highlights the responsibility that society must adopt towards the protection of its youth.

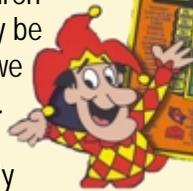
Perhaps, New Jersey's successful "Cops in Shops" program that originally began in 1996 aimed at catching minors who purchase alcohol in stores and bars and adults who buy alcohol for them, which branched out in 1999 to stop them from gambling can serve as inspiration to legislators. Programs like "Cops in Shops" are proactive, ensuring that current laws are enforced.

By Kathy D'ovidio
Director of Program Development and Communications

Gambling Advertisements: Kiddies play?

By Rina Gupta and Jeffrey L. Derevensky

So many marketing strategies employed by lottery corporations or the gambling industry have been criticized for being more appealing to kids than adults. The response of the industry is usually summed up as follows; what usually is found to be attractive to adults just happens to be attractive to children as well. While this may be true to some degree, we struggle with this logic. Which other "adult" products rely so heavily upon cartoon-like images to really be successful? Do we try and sell cars with animated characters? Furthermore, is there not a way to successfully market gambling products to adults without tempting our youth?



products even bear the names of popular board games such as *Battleship* and *Monopoly*.

Lotteries are now taking a new electronic identity. ...presenting themselves on CD Rom as interactive games, with videogame-like graphics, sounds and challenges. When people are surprised to hear that many children gamble regularly,

we cannot help but be perplexed by these statements. Why wouldn't young people want to gamble? Why wouldn't children and adolescents think that such activities are acceptable for them?

The truth of the matter is that so many of the messages concerning gambling are very positive, and intuitively appealing to young people. Gambling has filtered its way into our everyday lives, and while there are more and more education/prevention efforts designed to inform youth about the risks involved, they cannot outweigh the influences of

attractive gambling advertisements.

It should be stated that the gambling industry alone does not bear the sole responsibility of attracting kids to gambling. The influences are everywhere. ...in homes, schools, churches, and even at the local candy stores.

Yes, that's right. ...on a recently made trip to buy some Gummy Bears, there they were. ...milk chocolates wrapped as colorful, attractive, poker/casino chips....

Now, we've seen it all.

We urge the industry to collaborate with researchers and clinicians to work together to minimize the appeal of the lottery for underage youth.

We are encouraged that members of the industry, policy makers, researchers and clinicians have begun productive discussions and dialogues. Together, along with greater public awareness, we remain confident that significant progress will be made.



Let's Talk Prevention

By Anne-Elyse Deguire

Prevention Specialist

anne-elyse.deguire@mcgill.ca

I think each and every one of us has a least one childhood memory of our mother asking us to put on our hats on before we catch a cold! Hence, prevention comes as a natural reflex to protect and promote the well being of those we care about, especially the young.

Prevention efforts aim at limiting or avoiding future undesirable consequences in people that may or may not exhibit signs of a disorder by strengthening them and by changing their social environment through awareness, education, competence-building and social and public policy changes.

With that in mind, one may wonder why prevention efforts should be targeting youth gambling. The answer to that question is quite simple. First, even though legalized gambling is an illegal activity for minors (the age depends upon type of gambling activity and jurisdiction), it has been demonstrated that most teenagers gamble with an alarming number of them being at-risk or having developed a serious gambling problem. Second, despite these prevalence rates, the signs of problem gambling are fairly difficult to detect while the consequences are very costly on a personal and financial level.

For these two reasons, it is imperative for us to invest in prevention efforts.

This generation of youth is the first to grow up in a society where gambling is managed by the state, is highly advertised and promoted and is easily accessible to everyone. Some might argue that teenagers with gambling problems will eventually "grow out of it" and that the consequences are not so grave as to require immediate

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WELL, "MR. LUCKY," YOU FINALLY WON A BOX OF CANDY AND IT ONLY COST YOU \$95

action. Teenagers don't share adults' responsibilities such as having a family and owning a house. However, even if the consequences suffered by teenagers might not be severe for adults, they are often severe for teenagers. The disruption of family relationships, the loss of precious friendships essential for identity formation, doing poorly in school and hence jeopardizing an eventual career, are sufficient reasons to

take actions to minimize the harm gambling activities may cause to our most vulnerable community members, our children.

We have developed an empirically based prevention model where both risk and protective factors found to be involved in problem gambling and other addictive behaviors are incorporated. Although emphasis is placed on abstinence of underage gambling reached, our model conceptualizes prevention efforts in a harm-minimizing paradigm since many youth will likely engage in gambling activities at sometime during their lifetime. So far, we have written three explicit papers detailing our model, one of them being a request from the U.S. National Council on Problem Gambling.

We at the International Center for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors strongly believe in this mandate. Together with governmental agencies and industry leaders, we will continue to work to increase children's knowledge, build competencies, change and/or modify inappropriate and inaccurate cognitions and attitudes, in order to best support today's youth to become responsible adults.

Ripple Effects

By Kathy D'Ovidio and Karen Hardoon

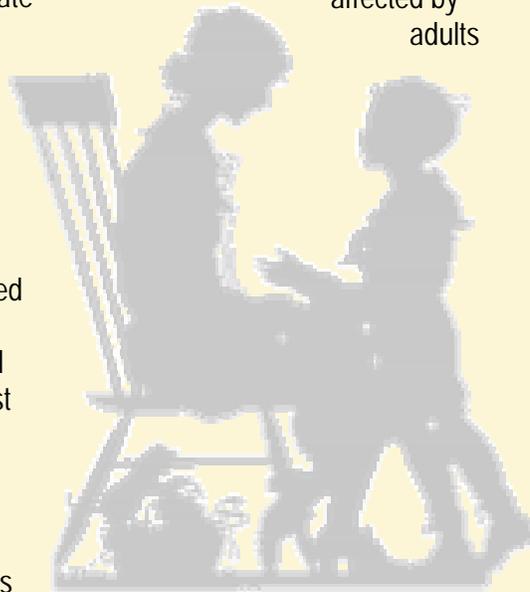
It wasn't until the checks to the milk supplier and school bus suppliers began to be returned NSF (not sufficient funds) that the principal of Holy Cross Elementary School in London, Ontario clued in to what was happening. The unfortunate reality was that the school secretary was stealing money she was in charge of collecting for milk, school trips and other activities to feed her gambling addiction.

She was subsequently arrested for stealing \$8,660 from Holy Cross Elementary School and given one year of house arrest and three years probation. According to Sol Boxenbaum this is just one of many sad cases linked to a gambling addiction. As gambling venues and outlets continues to increase, more people continue to be affected by this addiction. Unfortunately, problematic gambling has become a social problem with serious psychological, sociological and economic implications.

Although Provincial governments have recently acknowledged the dangers of gambling and dedicated some funds to gambling research and to the treatment of that segment of the

population that suffers from a gambling addiction, serious efforts need to be made in the area of prevention.

This unfortunate case highlights how innocent youth can be affected by adults



with gambling problems. Children of parents who gamble excessively are particularly affected. The effects of parental gambling on children will vary depending upon the child's age, cognitive and developmental status, the severity of parental gambling and other factors in the child's environment (e.g., social support systems, sibling and/or non gambling parental support, teachers, etc.).

Children raised in families where a parent or parents have a serious gambling problem have been reported to experience abuse, emotional deprivation, poor role modeling and a number of behavioral problems. These children have been found to have poor stress management skills, poor coping and adaptive skills, difficulties with interpersonal relationships, and have been reported to be at greater risk for the development of health threatening behaviors. As well, they are also at risk for psychosocial disruptions and may experience serious problems in later adolescence and adult life, most notably gambling (they are four times more likely to gamble and experience gambling-related problems).

Their age of onset for their own gambling tends to occur much earlier. It is important to note that early age of onset has also been shown to be associated with more severe gambling and gambling-related problems when these youth reach adulthood. Researchers have recently reported that children living with parents who are problem gamblers report experiencing a 'pervasive loss'. These youth

often report a sense of parental loss, both physically (through separation and divorce) and psychologically (experiencing feelings of abandonment).

Children living in homes with a problem gambler also experience losses in their personal relationships with others, trust, security, a sense of home, and material goods.

Overall, children living in homes with a problem gambler remain at risk for the development of social, emotional, psychological and behavioral problems as well as being at increased risk for the development of a gambling addiction. Professional and self help support groups are recommended for these families.

For more information see the following references or our website at www.youthgambling.com.

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Chat Board: Youth Issues

Send us your comments, questions & anything else of interest

QUESTION AND ANSWER

Q: What purpose will this board serve in upcoming issues?

A: This chat board will serve to give our readers a voice by posting your questions and comments, and addressing your concerns.

Please submit your questions or comments concerning youth gambling to be included in future chat boards.

**EMAIL US AT
YGI@YOUTHBGAMBLING.COM**

Upcoming Events

- **National Association for Gambling Studies: 10th Annual conference. Sydney, Australia, November 21-24, 2001**
- **Annual Conference Toward Meaningful Diagnosis Of Gambling Disorders: From Theory to Practice. Las Vegas, Nev. Dec 2- 4, 2001**
- **Canadian Psychological Association Meeting 63rd Annual Convention in Vancouver. May 30 - June 1, 2002**
- **The 16th Annual National Council on Problem Gambling Conference. Dallas, Texas June 13-15, 2002**
- **110th Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association. Chicago, Illinois August 22-25, 2002**