



FEATURE ARTICLE

Youth gambling behaviors in Iceland: Are they changing?

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The gambling market in Iceland is quite small in comparison to other European markets, with a total population of only 313,376. Until the mid 1980s, gambling activities in Europe's westernmost country consisted mainly of three monthly lotteries, a weekly sports pool, and the operation of amusement machines such as the coin flick game, in which players attempt to flick a coin into the right chute. However, a number of different forms of gambling have been legislated over the last 20 years, each of which was introduced by special law.

The current legal gambling market in Iceland has grown to encompass electronic gambling machines (EGMs), scratch cards, monthly lotteries, National Lotto, Viking lotto, football pools, fixed odds sports betting, and bingo. Casinos are not permitted in Iceland and any form of organized betting on card games (e.g. poker), including Internet gaming (casino games), is illegal. The turn of the last century saw some gambling forms become available on Icelandic websites and it is now possible to buy tickets for the national and Viking lotteries. It is also possible to wager money on the outcome of sporting events on Icelandic websites. Furthermore, non-Icelandic web operators offering all types of Internet gambling (including casino games) advertise their products on Icelandic media.

No legal age restrictions exist for participation in most gambling activities in Iceland, with the notable exception of EGMs. These were illegal for anyone under the age of 16 until 2005, when the age limit was raised to 18. Around the same time, a number of gambling operators set their own age restrictions to 18 years on scratch cards, lottery tickets and sports betting. Some arcades with EGMs have restricted access to their premises to those aged 20 years and older. The operation of all gambling activities in Iceland is restricted to non-governmental institutions or charities, and gambling revenues constitute a substantial part of their financial support.

The Icelandic Gambling Project started in late 2002, the main aim of the project being to collect data on gambling, problem gambling and to identify potential risk factors of problem gambling for both adult and adolescent populations in Iceland. Since 2003, four studies have been conducted on youth gambling in Iceland. All four studies were conducted within schools; two based on convenience sampling (Studies 1 and 3 in Table 1) and the other two incorporated between 77% (Study 2 in Table 1) to 81% (Studies 4a and 4b in Table 1) of all students registered in schools in the capital city of Reykjavik and the neighbouring town of Hafnarfjordur. In all four studies, problem gambling was estimated with an Icelandic version of the DSM-IV-MR-J (Fisher, 2000) gambling screen. In this report, gambling behavior and problem gambling rates are compared between different studies. The overall findings are presented in Table 1.

The results of all four studies revealed that problem gambling rates were similar between studies, ranging from 1.9% (Study 2) to 3.2% (Study 4b), with no difference between studies for the age group of 13 to 15 year olds (Studies 2 and 4a). There was, however, a slight difference among the group of 16 to 18 year olds (Studies 1, 3 and 4b). At-risk gambling results between these studies was similar, ranging from 2.5% to 4%. In all four studies, boys were 5 to 8.5 times more likely to be classified as problem gamblers than girls.

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In terms of gambling participation all studies revealed that gambling activity is widespread among Icelandic adolescents. The majority of students had gambled to some degree, and boys were much more likely to gamble than girls. However, examining trends between studies conducted during the years 2003-2004 (Studies 1 and 2 in Table 1) and studies conducted in 2006 and 2007 (Studies 3 and 4a and 4b in Table 1) suggests that gambling preferences among adolescents might be changing. In the later studies, fewer students reported gambling, and changes were mostly observed for EGMs, scratch-tickets and the lottery, where participation rates decreased. An example of these changes is shown in Table 1 for EGMs only.

Considerable differences were found in Internet gambling rates between the studies done in 2003 and 2004 and those conducted in 2006 and 2007. In 2003 and 2004, only about 2% of students acknowledged gambling on the Internet, but in 2006 and 2007, 22% to 30% of respondents said they had wagered money online. Examining what types of Internet games were most popular among students in studies from 2006 and 2007 revealed that gambling on Casino-type games (EGMs, roulette, blackjack) were the most popular (16.7% to 12.8% respectively), with far fewer students reporting gambling on Icelandic websites in

lottery or sports gambling. Interestingly, although relatively few students gambled on Internet poker in 2006 (1.9%), the interest had risen among students by 2007 (6.5%).

The results for problem gambling in all four studies measured with DSM-IV-MR-J generally revealed that these figures are within the lower range of study findings from North America or Australia, but comparable to other Scandinavian studies. The fact that problem gambling is predominantly found among boys matches international trends (Delfabbro, Lahn & Grabosky, 2005; Derevensky & Gupta, 2000; Jacobs, 2000; Johanson & Gotestam, 2003).

Overall, the findings from the four studies suggest considerable changes in adolescent gambling behavior in Iceland. Compared to earlier studies on adolescents from 2003 and 2004, fewer adolescents seem to be gambling on land-based gambling activities, such as EGMs, the lottery or scratch-tickets, and more appear to be gambling on the Internet. Changes in age restrictions might be an influencing factor in the decline of land-based gambling involvement. In 2005, the legal age limit to EGMs was raised from 16 to 18 years, and gambling operators for the lottery, sports betting and scratch-tickets set their own age restrictions at 18. It is therefore possible that a contributing factor to this shift is less accessibility

to these games for adolescents in 2006 and 2007 than in previous years. Still, these changes do not appear to have affected the frequency of sports betting.

The changes in Internet gambling rates between early and later studies coincide with considerable changes in the quality of Internet access in Iceland. The number of high-speed connections increased from 26% of households with Internet in 2002 to 85% of these wired households in 2006. This suggests that availability and opportunity for Icelandic adolescent to gamble on quick-moving games such as Internet poker, EGMs, roulette and blackjack has changed considerably in the same time period, resulting in a higher rate of Internet gambling.

The changes in Internet gambling among Icelandic adolescents is therefore of significant concern to Icelandic society. This concern is particularly grave, given other studies on Internet gambling that suggest higher rates of problem gambling among Internet gamblers than non-Internet gamblers (e.g., Gupta & Derevensky, 2007; Griffiths & Barnes, 2008). This conclusion was also reached in the Icelandic studies, where between 7.5% (2007 study) and 10.1% (2006 study) of Internet gamblers were classified as problem gamblers, indicating much higher rates than found for the total samples (see Table 1). However, it

TABLE 1: Gambling and problem gambling prevalence among Icelandic Youth

Studies	Year	<u>Gambling rates</u>			<u>Gambling severity</u>	
		Total gambling	EGM gambling	Internet gambling	At-risk gamblers	Problem gamblers
1. 16-18 years (n=750)	2003	79.1	46.7	2.4	3.2	2.0
2. 13-15 years (n=3511)	2004	70.0	32.0	2.0	3.7	1.9
3. 16-18 years (n=1530)	2006	62.0	32.7	22.0	3.8	3.0
4a. 13-15 years (n=1029)	2007	52.5	15.5	21.5	2.5	1.7
4b. 16-18 years (n=518)	2007	64.8	33.4	29.8	4.0	3.2

Note: All table values for gambling participation and gambling severity are percentages.

should be noted that these results do not prove that Internet gambling is more addictive than other types of gambling. It could also be that problem gamblers are simply gambling on the Internet to a greater degree than before. Additional research would help gain further insight into these questions.

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Harm reduction strategies proposed in New Zealand

Compiled by Margot Nossal, B.A.
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According to *Raising the Odds*, a recent study released by New Zealand's Ministry of Health, the proximity of a person's home to a gambling venue affects his likelihood of having a gambling problem. From a sample of 12,000 respondents, the study found that people who lived closer to a casino or pokie bar were more likely to display problem gambling behaviour.

While surveys show that only 1.2% of New Zealanders are problem gamblers, gambling-related problems have been targeted by the country's government as having a negative effect not only on problem gamblers themselves, but on their entire extended family, coworkers, and the larger community. On average, New Zealanders spend around \$2 billion per year on gambling activities. The Ministry of Health has thus been put to the task of developing a strategic plan to encourage supportive environments in order to minimize gambling-related harm. This study has illuminated the contentious issue

of having gambling venues in close proximity to residential areas.

Results showed that people were more likely to have gambled when there was a gambling venue within 5km of their home, compare to those who had non-casino gaming machines within 800m of their neighbourhood centre. It follows from these findings that problem gambling is more likely to be found within these populations than with people who reside further from gambling venues; ultimately, the study concluded that "gambling behaviour was significantly associated with gambling accessibility."

Some objections have been raised with the findings of this study, and further research into the matter is necessary to examine the implied relationship between the geographical proximity to gambling and a resident's gambling behaviour. There is no way to conclusively state that a person develops gambling problems because they live close to a gambling venue. It could be that

problem gamblers choose to live close to casinos and pokie bars. Furthermore, the study has inherent statistical limitations because of the Ministry's method of oversampling certain ethnic groups to ensure accurate representation for those people.

Yet, neighbourhood and municipal councils in New Zealand are taking note of the study's findings, whose suggestions included "limiting the number of gambling venues in areas, in particular in vulnerable communities, and reducing the geographical dispersal of gambling venues in the community." The city council in Christchurch has already imposed a moratorium on new poker machines in the city. While many community and sport groups that make a healthy profit from pokie machines bemoan yet another study of this sort, the Ministry's suggestions for harm-reduction are a good start to the evolution of healthier gambling practices in New Zealand.

Preventing Alcohol and Lottery Ticket Sales to Minors: Is Enough Being Done?

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When a 2007 inquiry by the team of *J.E.*, a francophone investigative journalism program, revealed that a 13-year-old girl was able to purchase alcohol in six out of ten liquor outlets she visited, key players at the *Société des Alcools du Québec* (SAQ), the provincial crown corporation mandated to sell alcoholic beverages in the region, were said to be “surprised” and “disappointed”. This finding is particularly surprising given the SAQ’s *Vise 25* policy, which requires all employees to request identification from all clients appearing less than 25 years of age.

Although shocking, the incident is not an isolated one. A number of news reports and research findings from across Canada suggest that a significant proportion of retailers are selling alcohol or lottery tickets to minors, which violates both company policy and government laws (Arcand, 2007; Lacoursière, 2007). Furthermore, studies in Canada and the United States continue to report moderate levels of retailer compliance with youth access policies for both tobacco and alcohol products (O’Grady et al., 1999; Paschall et al., 2007). Based on these findings, it remains clear that current administrative policies, including age identification requirements for customers appearing under 25 years of age, are not being adhered to by all retailers, and that additional measures are needed to improve vendor compliance with these policies.

Several researchers have identified numerous “best practices” for boosting vendor compliance with laws and policies restricting minors’

access to high-risk substances such as tobacco and alcohol. One valuable strategy for increasing compliance consistently reported in the literature is the establishment of compulsory education and training programs for business owners, managers, and salesclerks (DiFranza, 2005; Mosher & Stewart, 1999). At minimum, education and training programs must include the following components: a) information regarding the importance of preventing sales to minors and on current youth access statutes and policies; b) emphasis on effective management techniques and store policies to encourage compliance; c) cues for identifying minors; d) guidelines for reliable checking of identification cards; e) tips for safely refusing a sale; and f) role-playing exercises to practice identifying minors, checking identification, and refusing a sale. Evaluations of merchant training programs for alcohol and tobacco sales have indicated that, when implemented in combination with regular enforcement activities and media advocacy, vendor education can enhance vendor compliance with minimum-age policies (Mosher et al., 2002).

While most provincial alcohol and gaming corporations distribute print material to license holders outlining guidelines and policies for the sale of lottery tickets and alcoholic beverages to minors, few offer a formal training program. The training of managers or employees is frequently left up to the discretion of business owners or parent corporations, and the quality or content of this training is unknown. It appears that there is a compelling need for the development of accessible, empirically-derived

vendor education and training programs to help strengthen existing prevention initiatives for underage drinking and gambling.

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Energy drinks linked to risky behaviors

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When teens and young adults turn to super-caffeinated energy drinks for a boost, their parents may think these are preferable alternatives to alcoholic beverages or illicit substances. It turns out they may want to pay closer attention.

The Journal of American College Health published a report in its March issue identifying energy drinks as a surprising new predictor for risky behavior among adolescents and young adults. Kathleen Miller, an addiction researcher at the University of Buffalo, found that the high consumption of the drinks, with names like Red Bull, Monster, Full Throttle and Amp, is associated with “toxic jock” behavior, an interrelated series of risky and aggressive behaviors, including unprotected sex, substance abuse and violence.

The study does not suggest there is any causal link here; drinking energy drinks is not considered to cause the bad behaviour. Rather, the data suggests that regular consumption of energy drinks may be a warning sign that these teens are more likely to take risks with their health and safety.

“It appears the kids who are heavily into drinking energy drinks are more

likely to be the ones who are inclined toward taking risks,” Dr. Miller told *The New York Times*.

The drinks in question contain a variety of ingredients in different combinations. Some have plant-based stimulants like guarana, ginkgo and ginseng, sugars, amino acids (like taurine) and vitamins. But the main active ingredient is always caffeine. And while the content of caffeine varies, it is always higher than one would find in conventional colas. For example, a 12 oz. can of Coke or Pepsi has 34 or 38 mg of caffeine and an 8 oz. cup of brewed coffee has between 80 and 100 mg of caffeine, while a 12 oz serving of Red Bull has 116 mg. Other brands go even higher: Monster has 120 mg of caffeine, Wired X3444 has 258 mg, and Spike Shooter has an impressive 428 mg.

Moreover, because these drinks are served cold, they are often consumed faster than a hot cup of coffee, giving one’s system a sudden jolt of caffeine, coupled with the effects of sugar and other ingredients. Not too surprisingly, there have been reports of some adverse effects, including heart palpitations, nausea and sweating, which have led to emergency room visits. Some schools have gone so far as to ban the

beverages in the wake of these complaints.

Beyond the actual buzz associated with consuming high quantities of caffeine and sugar, public health officials have expressed concern about the popular trend of mixing energy drinks with alcohol. An April 2006 study in the medical journal *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research* found that the addition of caffeine can make alcohol users feel less drunk, but impair motor coordination and visual reaction time just as badly as when alcohol is consumed on its own.

In another study, published in the May issue of *Academic Emergency Medicine*, Dr. Mary Claire O’Brien surveyed energy drink and alcohol use among college students at 10 universities in North Carolina. She found that students who mixed energy drinks with alcohol got drunk twice as often as those who consumed alcohol on its own, and were far more likely to be injured or require medical treatment while drinking. Energy drink mixers were also more likely to be victims or perpetrators of aggressive sexual behavior. These effects remained even after researchers controlled for the amount of alcohol consumed.

“You’re every bit as drunk, you’re just an awake drunk,” Dr. O’Brien told *The New York Times*.

The popular beverages, with clever names and slick marketing that appeals to teens and young adults, may provide some of the intense sensations for some vulnerable youth. The findings in these studies have implications for parents, educators and public health officials, who must educate teens about these risks, and keep an eye out for the excessive and regular consumption of these beverages as a possible red flag to other risky behaviors.



There's a new watchdog in town: Betfair evens the playing field

Compiled by Margot Nossal, B.A.
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When the fourth best tennis player in the world withdraws from a match against a player ranked 87th, a few eyebrows might be raised, a question or two asked. But last August, when Nikolay Davydenko withdrew from his match against Martin Vassallo Arguello in the third set, more than a few eyebrows were raised. As a result of several bets worth millions of dollars placed from Russia on the British-based website, Betfair, this irregular activity was flagged, and the legitimacy of the match was put under scrutiny. Had the bet not been voided by Betfair, two unknown people would have gained US\$6 million from Davydenko's loss.

this matter by virtue of its scope; the website has been heralded as revolutionary in the world of Internet gambling for its usefulness in detecting suspicious betting activity. Because of the website's wide-spread international use, Betfair analysts are able to pick up on seemingly minute details that might result from match-fixing attempts. The website has structured an innovative online forum in which members bet with other members in real time, rather than with bookkeepers, and can even wager once the event has started. In Davydenko's case, abnormal betting patterns were flagged because he won the first set 6-2, yet bets against him were placed before the second set began. By the time he withdrew

their favourite matches. Thus far, the site has made agreements with 32 different sports governing agencies around the world, and is looking for more organizations with which to provide real-time notification about dubious betting activity.

Opponents to the website's growing authority have argued that Betfair's operators are just as susceptible to manipulation from interested parties and illegal activity. And, as expected, the information provided by their analysts is not always conclusive. Last year, Irish jockey Kieren Fallon was found not guilty of conspiring to defraud Betfair in 2004 by attempting to manipulate horses' performances, and allegations were made as to whether or not Betfair's representatives were entirely forthcoming to the police with information pertinent to the case. But for the time being, Betfair has presented itself as a new watchdog in the online sports betting world, one that can see the larger picture when a top-ranked tennis player "hurts his foot."

Betfair analysts are able to pick up on seemingly minute details that might result from match-fixing attempts

As the world's largest online betting exchange, Betfair processes 5 million transactions a day, at more than 300 bets per second. The website was launched in 2000, and has since grown to world renown, not only among gamblers, but in the international sporting community as well. Comparable to the widespread concerns raised about doping over the past decade, there is a growing movement of concern about corruption in organized sports, which often manifests itself in the form of match-fixing.

Betfair's new technology addresses

from the match, Betfair had notified the tournament's authorities.

Betfair's prevalence in the sporting world has been highlighted by its recently-announced affiliation with the popular event ticket buying and trading website, Viagogo. This partnership will promise Betfair members exclusive discounts on sports match tickets. Sports fans can "not only attend the match, but take a punt on it as well," according to Lee Cowles, Director of Sports and Specials at Betfair. It is a way of getting gamblers more involved with the game itself, but it can also work to draw sports fans into betting on

<http://www.casinotimes.co.uk/news-1/are-our-sports-games-fixed>

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Is there a connection between God and Gambling?

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Can a belief in God cause certain people to place a bet, or can believing in God help us abstain from gambling? Religion is often neglected by gambling researchers, despite the fact that it may well offer potentially useful links for both prevention and treatment initiatives.

Religion and spirituality are integral parts of many cultures, and can play critical roles in determining the values and moral standards that govern the way people conduct their lives. With the increasing popularity of the ever-expanding gambling industry, it's interesting to examine the impact that the relevance of religion to gambling behaviour.

A poll assessing the importance of faith among American citizens found that only 2% of respondents did not believe in a higher power (Zoll, 1995). However, having faith in a spiritual being does not necessarily mean that one would follow a particular doctrine, or even incorporate any religious activities into one's life. Therefore, in order to understand the impact that religion has on gambling, we must look beyond the differences in religions and examine more closely two different forms of religious behaviour: private faith and public worship.

A study in Macau (Lam, 2006) found that people who attended religious services on a weekly basis were less likely to engage in gambling activities or develop gambling problems. However, considering private worship, the findings revealed that there was little correlation between importance of faith and gambling,

except in lotteries. This study found that lottery gamblers were more likely to view faith as an important part of their lives (Lam, 2006). These people might believe that if they pray, asking for spiritual guidance to help them with the winning numbers, their faith and dedication will help them win.

Different religious sects have different views on gambling. For example, the majority of Protestant religions discourage participation in gambling activities, based on readings of specific scriptural passages (Hoffman, 2000). Conversely, Catholic churches do not necessarily promote gambling among congregants, but do encourage gambling in the forms of organized bingo and other charitable gambling events (Hoffman, 2000). While orthodox Judaism does not support wagering items with monetary value, one can still find the traditional game of the *dreidel* (a spinning toy played at Hanukkah) which incorporates elements of gambling. Similarly, schools and many religious organizations often have casino nights or raffles as a means of raising funds or as a social activity.

The Islamic faith views gambling as a moral evil, as a basic principle of Islam is that man must not take that which he has not earned or worked for. Similarly, Hindus believe that gambling is a punishable act and is forbidden according to the ancient scriptures of the Vedas.

The extent to which people are observant of religious doctrines, formal rules and requirements can also play into their involvement in gambling activities. The degree of

commitment varies from individual to individual, and it would be interesting to look more closely into whether people who adhere more strictly to the doctrines of their said faith are more inclined to abstain from activities that are seen as sinful or morally corrupt.

Just as faith often plays a role in a person's decision to gamble, it is also often a part of some gamblers' recovery process. Gamblers Anonymous integrates spiritual dimensions that require belief in a higher power into its 12-step program. Religious commitment might provide the social reinforcement needed to overcome a gambling problem, in which case, a church or synagogue group would surely be a source of support and encouragement. However, fear of condemnation may also lead those with problems to stray from any affiliation where people might be given the opportunity to judge.

Organized religion and a person's private faith are two very different entities, which can act as either positive or negative influence in a person's involvement with gambling. Additional research into the complex relationship between gambling and religion may well provide insight into motivations for gambling behaviours and treatment for gambling problems.

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Letting the Québec Horse Racing Industry Run Its Course

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Racetrack operator Attractions Hippiques is in difficult financial straits, and appears to be reneging on the 2006 contractual agreements made when they purchased Québec's four hippodromes located in Montreal, Québec City, Trois-Rivières and Aylmer. Threatening bankruptcy, Attractions Hippiques has reduced the purses awarded to race winners by 40% and has drastically cut the number of races at some of its centres. The provincial government would be within their rights to cancel their contractual and financial responsibilities toward Attractions Hippiques. However, concerns about their financial situation have Québec Liberal finance minister Monique Jérôme-Forget looking for other options.

For years, Québec's horse racing industry has been subsidized by millions of government dollars, more than \$300 million in ten years. Despite this influx of funds, there are fewer and fewer bettors attending the horse races. Furthermore, many of those attending are betting on out-of-province races.

The Montreal Hippodrome can expect \$70,000 in bets on an average night. Compare this figure to the revenues seen in the 1970s, when the Montreal race-track led the nation with bets averaging \$1 million per night. Moreover, the industry employed over 25,000 people during its heyday, whereas only 2,800 people depend on the industry for their livelihood today.

With the advent of casinos, VLT machines, online gambling, and other betting venues, the race-tracks have been declining in popularity.

To counter this trend, politically-connected businessmen with interests in horse racing convinced the provincial government to annex gaming rooms to racetracks to boosting their profits. As a result, Lucien Bouchard's government created the *Société nationale du cheval de course* (SONACC) in 1997, a government agency controlled by the same businessmen who now manage the province's four race tracks.

Since then, the province has poured in tens of millions of dollars to renovate the tracks and increase purses to the winners, under the assumption that increasing awards would attract better horses and therefore a greater public, thus galvanizing the industry.

As well as subsidies, the government reimbursed the industry a portion of the taxes collected from the pari-mutuels. They were also given larger commissions of video lottery terminals than was given to bar owners – up to twice as much. Yet the industry continued to perish. Despite these interventions, the lifestyles of the SONACC directors improved dramatically, in terms of vacations, luxury cars, and honorariums, according to the 2006 General Auditor Report.

In 2003, the provincial Liberal government decided to extricate themselves from the racing industry. An offer was made to potential buyers: the organization

that purchased the four hippodromes would collect 22% of the commissions earned on the 1,900 video lottery machines relocated from local bars to the four racetracks, and the Montreal track would be rented out at \$1 per year until a new location was found.

Senator Paul Massicotte's Attractions Hippiques won the contract; they are responsible for maintenance and taxes for the Montreal Hippodrome until a new location is found. The organization owning the hippodromes negotiated an increase in awards assigned to race winners in exchange for the massive revenues expected from the video lottery terminal machines.

Unfortunately for Attractions Hippiques, popular interest in horse racing continues to wane. The Québec City and Trois-Rivières "Ludoplex" centres, the gaming rooms located next to the racetracks, produce a third of the anticipated revenue, and nobody in Montreal seems to want an equestrian casino as a neighbour. Attractions Hippiques has announced monthly losses of \$750,000, and last year's deficit was marked at \$20 million.

The provincial government has provided very generous financial support to Attractions Hippiques, yet they remain unable to draw fans to the racetrack. With taxpayer dollars on the line, it is high time to reassess government support of this dying industry and let the horse racing industry in Québec run its course.

Buffalo study sheds light on gambling in young adults

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Results of a random telephone survey of almost 2,300 American respondents, conducted by a group of researchers from the Research Institute on Addictions at the University of Buffalo (Welte, Barnes, Tidwell and Hoffman, 2007), revealed that approximately 68% of Americans aged 14-21 reported gambling at least once in the past year, while 11% reported gambling frequently (twice a week or more). Among those who gambled, 6.5% were considered at-risk, and another 2.1% were considered problem gamblers.

The South Oaks Gambling Screen-Revised Adolescent (Winters, Stinchfield and Fulkerson, 1993) was used to measure problem gambling among the participants. The SOGS-RA was administered to every participant who reported engaging in any form of gambling behaviour during his life. For the purposes of this study, endorsement of two or three criteria indicated at-risk gambling, while endorsing 4 criteria or more indicated problem gambling.

In addition to this measure, the investigators also administered the DSM-VI *Diagnostic Interview Schedule* (DIS; Robins, Marcus, Reich, Cunningham, Gallagher, 1996) for problem gambling to the adolescent respondents in order to allow for a direct comparison between the current youth survey and an earlier U.S. adult survey using the DIS (Welte, 2008). Endorsement of three or more criteria of the DIS indicated problem gambling

Welte et al.'s results highlighted the fact that males aged 14-21 scored higher than females on every measure of gambling, and that all types of gambling increased with age. Furthermore, frequent gambling

increased between the ages of 14 and 21, among male participants only. No significant differences were found between ethnicity and at-risk or problem gambling. However, some differences were noted in gambling frequency. For example, Blacks and Asian respondents were less likely to have gambled than Whites but Blacks and American Indians were more likely to be frequent gamblers than Whites. Finally, SES status was related to gambling participation and gambling problems: the lowest SES participants were more likely to gamble frequent and to be considered at-risk or problem gamblers.

The lowest SES participants were more likely to gamble frequent and to be considered at-risk or problem gamblers.

Another interesting finding was related to important changes in lifestyle. For instance, two transition variables showed statistical differences, namely, student status and living arrangements. Non-student participants were more likely to gamble frequently than their peer students, and participants living independently were more likely to have gambled and experience gambling problems than those living with their parents. Marital status showed no consistent relationship to gambling involvement.

In addition to adolescent gambling involvement, the researchers compared adolescent prevalence rates to adults' prevalence rates found in a previous national U.S. phone survey conducted in 2000. Results show that the 4% prevalence rate of male problem gambling is reported in both the adolescent (14-21) and adult (18+) sample. On the other hand, the rate of female problem

gambling is statistically different in between both samples (3% in 18+ vs 0.1% in 14-21). Pathological gambling in these results are higher in male adults gamblers (1.3% vs 0.7%) and the same is observed in female gamblers (1.4% vs 0%).

The rates of problem gambling found in this study are not as high as the rates of problem gambling found in many other surveys that used the SOGS-RA. Furthermore, results of this study are not consistent with findings typically found elsewhere in the literature, in which problem gambling is more prevalent among

adolescents than among adults.

These findings also suggest that problem gambling among female adolescents is almost non-existent. However, other studies have shown that females tend to participate in some forms of gambling, both offline and online (but it seems they gravitate towards free practice sites). Further research is needed to understand why American adolescent females tend to wait until later in their teenage years to engage in gambling.

When examining gender differences from a prevention point of view, one wonders if current prevention methods should be used similarly with both males and females. If young women are less involved in gambling activities, then there might be a need to address the issues of gambling participation and problem gambling from a different approach.

Recent publications and presentations

REFEREED PUBLICATIONS

Derevensky, J., Dickson, L., Gupta, R., & Haroon, K. (in press). Adolescent attitudes toward gambling. *Brazilian Journal of Cognitive Psychology*.

Ellenbogen, S., Jacobs, D., Derevensky, J., Gupta, R., & Paskus, T. (in press). Gambling behavior among college athletes. *Journal of Applied Sports Psychology*.

Magoon, M., Gupta, R., & Derevensky, J. (in press). Gambling among youth in detention centers. *Journal for Juvenile Justice and Detention Services*.

McBride, J., & Derevensky, J. (in press). *Internet gambling behaviour in a sample of online gamblers*. *International Journal of Mental Health & Addiction*.

Monaghan, S., & Derevensky, J. (in press). An appraisal of the impact of the depiction of gambling in society on youth. *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*.

Dickson, L., Derevensky, J., & Gupta, R. (2008). Youth gambling problems: An examination of risk and protective factors. *International Gambling Studies*, 8(1), 25-47.

BOOK CHAPTERS

Derevensky, J., (in press). Youth gambling: A Canadian perspective. In J. F. Cosgrave & T. R. Klassen (Eds.) *Gambling in 21st century Canada: Citizens, consumers and the state*. Toronto: McGill-Queen's Press.

Derevensky, J. (in press). Preface. In G. Meyer, M. Griffiths & T. Hayer (Eds.). *Problem gambling in Europe – Extent and preventative efforts*. London: Springer Books.

Lussier, I., Derevensky, J., & Gupta, R. (in press). Youth gambling problems from an international context. In A. Browne-Miller (Ed.), *The Praeger International Collection on Addictions. Volume IV*. CT: Greenwood Publishing Group.

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A harm reduction approach. *The Praeger International Collection on Addictions. Volume IV*. CT: Greenwood Publishing Group.

Derevensky, J. (2008). Gambling. In W. A. Darity (Ed.). *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences Vol. 3, 2nd edition*. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 248-250.

Gupta, R., & Derevensky, J. (2008). Gambling practices among youth: Etiology, prevention and treatment. In C. A. Essau (Ed.), *Adolescent addiction: Epidemiology, assessment and treatment*. London, UK: Elsevier, 207-230.

Gupta, R., & Derevensky, J. (2008). A treatment approach for adolescents with gambling problems. In M. Zangeneh, A. Blaszczynski & N. Turner (Eds.), *In the Pursuit of Winning. Problem gambling theory, research and treatment*. New York: Springer Books, 271-290.

C O N F E R E N C E PRESENTATIONS

Derevensky, J. (2008). Youth gambling; Issues, concerns, and responsibilities: An industry perspective. Address presented at the World Lottery Association Academy seminar on responsible gambling, Lac-Leamy, Gatineau, Quebec, April.

Derevensky, J. & Sklar, A. (2008). Winning never looked so easy: Understanding the influence of gambling advertisement on youth gambling behaviors. Invited paper presented at the Discovery 2008 conference on problem gambling. Sponsored by the Responsible Gambling Council (Ontario), Ottawa, April.

Derevensky, J. (2008). Risk and protective factors associated with youth gambling problems: Some recent research findings. Invited paper presented at the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling annual conference, Boston, May.

Derevensky, J., & Gupta, R. (2008). The effects of gambling advertisements on adolescent behaviors. Paper to be presented at the

National Council on Problem Gambling annual conference, Long Beach, CA, June.

Derevensky, J. (2008). Youth Gambling? Invited keynote address to be presented at the annual North American Regulators Association annual meeting, New Orleans, June.

Derevensky, J. (2008). Youth gambling on the Internet: Cause for concern! Invited paper to be presented at the annual North American Regulators Association annual meeting, New Orleans, June.

Gupta, R., & Derevensky, J. (2008). Prevention of gambling problems: Is this really necessary? Paper to be presented at the National Council on Problem Gambling annual conference, Long Beach, CA, June.

Gupta, R., Derevensky, J., Nower, L., & Blaszczynski, A. (2008). Problem gambling in adolescents: A preliminary examination of the *Pathways Model*. Paper to be presented at the National Council on Problem Gambling annual conference, Long Beach, CA, June.

McBride, J., & Derevensky, J. (2008). College students Internet wagering: Cause for concern? Invited paper presented at the Discovery 2008 conference on problem gambling. Sponsored by the Responsible Gambling Council (Ontario), Ottawa, April.

McBride, J. (2008). Internet gambling among college students: Results from a Master's Thesis. Paper presented at the 22nd national conference of the National Council on Problem Gambling, Long Beach, CA, June.

McBride, J., & Derevensky, J. (2008). Gambling among university students. Paper presented at the Education Graduate Students Conference, McGill University, March.

Monaghan, S., Derevensky, J., & Sklar, A. (2008). Why go to school when I can win the lottery? The impact of gambling advertisements on youth. Paper presented at the International Gambling Conference, Auckland, New Zealand, February.

Durand Jacobs Award Winner

We are pleased to announce Brigitte C. Sabourin is the winner of the 2007/ 2008 Durand Jacobs Award. Her paper, which was co-authored with Sherry H. Stewart, was entitled "Alcohol Use and Anxiety Disorders." This paper has been published as a chapter in M.J. Zvolensky, J.A. Smits (eds.), (2007) *Anxiety in Health Behaviors and Physical Illness*, Springer. Ms. Stewart is

a PhD student in Clinical Psychology at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

The Durand Jacobs Award recognizes outstanding work related to the psychology of addictive behaviors, and is dedicated to Dr. Durand Jacobs' lifelong efforts to help mentor students. We were pleased to

receive a record number of high quality submissions this year, and our thanks goes out to all who entered a paper in this year's competition.

Ms. Sabourin will receive a plaque commemorating the award, as well as a cash award generously provided by Dr. Durand Jacobs and family.

"Alcohol Use and Anxiety Disorders"

Brigitte Sabourin, M.A. and Sherry Stewart, Ph.D.

Abstract

Anxiety disorders and alcohol use disorders are highly comorbid (i.e. co-occurring) conditions. The present chapter reviews empirical evidence linking alcohol use and anxiety at both the behavioral / symptom and the disorder levels. Three main hypotheses are presented to explain the etiology of the co-occurrence of symptoms involved in both disorders: 1) A third underlying variable explains the association between problematic alcohol use and anxiety symptoms, 2) Certain aspects of problematic alcohol use cause anxiety, which can ultimately lead to an anxiety disorder, and 3) Anxiety symptoms cause alcohol misuse, culminating in an alcohol use disorder. Regardless of the etiology of the co-morbid anxiety symptoms and problematic alcohol use, studies

have confirmed that, once comorbid, anxiety and alcohol use exert important influences on each other. Furthermore, processes involved in the initiation of the co-morbidity may differ from those involved in the maintenance and relapse of problematic alcohol use and anxiety. Although the study of specific treatments for anxiety - alcohol co-morbidity is still in its infancy, this area is growing with the emergence of integrated treatment approaches that recognize the complex relationship between anxiety disorders and alcohol use disorders and their possible mutual maintenance. Finally, a promising treatment approach receiving recent research attention involves targeting vulnerability factors (e.g. personality factors such as anxiety sensitivity) in attempts to reduce both emergent problematic drinking and emerging anxiety

disorder symptoms. Research efforts should continue exploring the factors linking anxiety and problematic alcohol use, and ways to address these, to improve treatments for comorbid patients.



News from the Centre ...

Dr. Daniel Thor Olason visiting from University of Iceland

Dr. Daniel Thor Olason is an assistant professor in the Psychology Department of the University of Iceland. Daniel has been working within the field of gambling for few years and leads the Icelandic Gambling Project, which aims to collect information on the prevalence and risk factors of gambling and problem gambling among Icelandic adults and youth. Daniel has been with us at the Centre since April, while on his research leave from the University of Iceland, and has been working with Dr. Jeffrey Derevensky on a d o l e s c e n t gambling on the Internet.



Nova Scotia joins forces with YGI on Media Toolkit series

We are pleased to announce the

beginning of an exciting new project here at the Centre. The Media Toolkit Series, funded by the Nova Scotia Lottery, is a series of multimedia reference materials on the subject of youth gambling problems tailored to the needs of professionals who may come into contact with troubled adolescents. At the moment, we are designing individual toolkits for general physicians and allied health professionals, lawyers and legal system professionals, and mental health workers, respectively. Our Media Toolkits will put a wealth of useful prevention, diagnosis and treatment information at their fingertips, in both video and print formats.

Farewell to Meredith Gillespie

A hearty good luck to Ph.D. student Meredith Gillespie, who is leaving Montreal and the Youth Gambling Centre for Toronto. She will begin work as a counsellor for , and finish her PhD. From Toronto. We will miss both her professionalism and her wonderful sense of humour.

Know Limits/ Dés Joués to be released in fall '08

We are pleased to announce that our long-awaited prevention and awareness game is set to be released in both English and French this coming fall. Funded by a grant from the Government of Canada's National Crime Prevention Strategy, in collaboration with the ministère de la Sécurité publique du Québec, *Know Limits* and *Dés Joués* are designed to appeal to adolescent youth at risk for developing problems with gambling, as well as alcohol, tobacco and other substances. The game is played in a team format, with a minimum of six players, and is adaptable for larger groups. Play involves a variety of fun and educational activities designed to attract and maintain player interest and involvement. So far, *Know Limits/ Dés Joués* has received rave reviews in testing with students at high schools and treatment centres. Check out our website in the fall for ordering information.

Upcoming Events

7th European Conference on Gambling Studies and Policy Issues

July 1 - 4, 2008 - Nova Gorica, Slovenia

Midwest Conference on Problem Gambling & Substance Abuse

August 13 - 15, 2008 - St. Louis, Missouri, USA

New York Council on Problem Gambling Annual Conference

September 18 - 19, 2008 - Albany, New York, USA

Nova Scotia's Responsible Gambling Conference

October 6 - 7, 2008 - Nova Scotia, Canada

9th Annual NCRG Conference on Gambling and Addiction

November 16 - 18, 2008 - Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

National Association for Gambling Studies 18th Annual Conference

December 3 - 5, 2008 - Adelaide, Australia

YGI Newsletter

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