



Youth Gambling International

International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors
Centre International d'étude sur le jeu et les comportements à risque chez les jeunes

FEATURE ARTICLE

Packaging gambling with sex a risky combination for teens

Alissa Sklar, Ph.D.

International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors

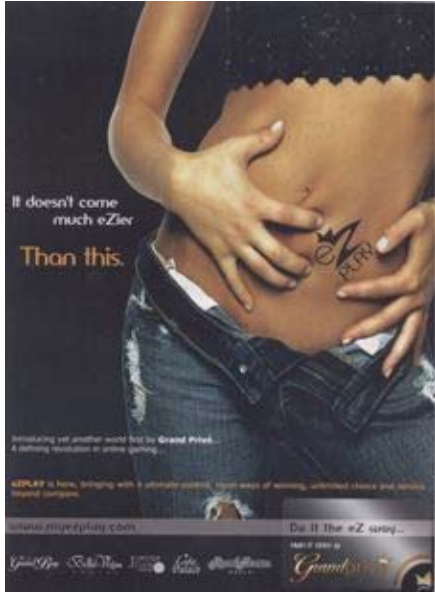
Clad in a barely there bikini, the buxom Pamela Anderson offers a seductive challenge from the cover of *Gambling Online Magazine*: “Play With Me.” With the dubious distinction of being the most downloaded woman on the internet, Anderson decided to team up with online poker magnate Doyle Brunson to launch PamelaPoker.com.

While the use of sex to sell consumer products and services is nothing new, this business alliance does serve to draw attention to a particularly worrying marketing trend when it comes to gambling, since the vast majority of youth with gambling problems are male. In the full page ad for her poker site, the topless Anderson peers back at the viewer from over her shoulder, as she squats provocatively in shiny leather chaps and black stilletos.

“Online Poker just got a whole lot HOTTER” screams the headline, “Come and Teach Me a Thing or Two and get your share of millions monthly.”

Anderson promises to log in regularly to chat and play poker with visitors, telling *Gambling Online Magazine*, “What’s really fun though, is going in and chatting with all the characters playing.” The star of television series such as *Stacked* and *Baywatch* lends a Hollywood gloss to the familiar combination of online gambling and sex.

Images of young women in various stages of undress are part of the visual aesthetic of online gambling, and the language used in conjunction with them is full of sexual double entendres. BoDog.com commercials urge potential participants to “Play Harder” and Titan Poker shows the exposed cleavage of a young woman, with the message to “Keep your hands full for a while”.



Source: Gambling Online Magazine

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Players can use the code “handsfull” to receive a small bonus on their first deposit.



In one full page ad for eZplay.com in *Gambling Online Magazine* there is an image of the bared torso of a very young woman, with her torn jeans unzipped and her hands clutching her tanned, toned midriff. The headline says “It doesn’t come much eZier than this.” The logo for eZplay is digitally tattooed near her navel.

Challenging appeals are made to the masculinity of male viewers and readers. These images construct gamblers as virile, desirable and powerful. The aggressive brand of male heterosexuality further encourages high risk behaviour. The cowboy-themed site of Doyle Brunson (www.doylesroom.com) announces in a two-

page ad in *Gambling Online Magazine* that “Our players suck. Get your piece of \$4 million every month while you chew them up and spit them out.” Brunson advises, “Let me teach YOU how to beat these clowns.”

Teens are particularly vulnerable to the seductive promises of gambling. The elusive dream of easy money and its inherent escapism can seem all the more appealing when bound up with the promise of sexual power and social desirability. The sexual images distract from the questions of probability and odds of winning. The beautiful girls draped on the arm of the high rollers in magazine pages, on celebrity tournaments and gambling themed films make it seem all the more credible. This is a world where the size of your chips really do count.

While encouraging high risk behaviour in teenage males is of major concern on its own, the potential for problems with these images goes further. Young men spending hours at their computers gambling online may well be spending substantially more time with the fictional personas of highly sexualized and completely passive young women than interacting with real girls their own age. The objectification of female sexuality is both denigrating

and potentially dangerous. Gambling disorders which tend to socially isolate at-risk youth may interfere with the development of real-life relationships that can have a protective effect on some youth. Furthermore, the high incidence of co-morbidity with alcohol and drug abuse, raises additional concerns about high-risk sexual activities.

Using sex to sell gambling degrades both women and men, obscures the hard reality of gambling and makes risky behaviour attractive to a vulnerable segment of the population. This kind of imagery deserves further study and vigilance, and should be addressed as a part of prevention and awareness programs aimed at adolescents.



Source: Gambling Online Magazine

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN YOUTH PROBLEM GAMBLING

A cross-cultural study of gambling behaviour among adolescents

Stephen Ellenbogen, Rina Gupta, and Jeffrey L. Derevensky

International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors

Cultural beliefs can determine a wide variety of perceptions and attitudes about the world. Since gambling behaviour can be driven by these underlying attitudes, research into cultural differences offers insight into which population groups may be more at risk for gambling problems. This information can be used to develop more effective prevention programs, treatment efforts, and for informing legislators attempting to develop effective social policies (Derevensky, Gupta, Messerlian & Gillespie, 2004).

A study by Stephen Ellenbogen, Rina Gupta and Jeffrey Derevensky looked into whether cultural background can be related to the gambling behaviour among adolescents in Quebec. From a cross-cultural research standpoint the situation in Quebec is interesting in that there are two large cultural groups of relatively comparable socio-economic status with similar education and social service systems. However, there are marked cultural differences between Anglophone (English) and Francophone (French) Quebecers which go beyond linguistic differences

A convenience sample of 1273 Quebec high school students (605 males, 660 females, 8 unspecified) aged 12-18 was divided into three linguistic groupings: Anglophone (English), Francophone (French), and Allophone (other). They were asked to complete five instruments: DSM-IV-MR-J, the Gambling Activities Questionnaire (GAQ) IFPI, EMT and FACES II.

The results suggest that cultural affiliation did have a determinative effect on youth gambling, with Allophone (those whose mother tongue is neither French nor English) had the highest proportion of youth who gambled on a weekly basis, followed by Anglophone and then Francophone youth.

Although the results need to be interpreted with some caution, based on the small sample size, there were significant differences between Anglophone and Allophone youth, with Anglo boys having almost as many probable pathological gamblers as their Allophone counterparts, despite showing only half the amount of youth who gambled on a weekly basis.

None of the Francophone youth met the criteria for PG, though one would naturally expect the prevalence rate to be much higher. Taken with the results of previous studies, there is strong reason to believe that the rate of problem gambling and frequent gambling among Francophone youth may be significantly lower than that of other youth in the province.

Consistent with numerous studies indicating that gambling problems are more widespread among minority youth (Wallisch, 1993, 1996; Zitzow, 1996), cultural and ethnic minority individuals demonstrated the greatest risk for problem gambling. In the present sample, these were most commonly adolescents of Italian, Hispanic, Arabic, Portuguese and Chinese decent.

These results support the conjecture of Derevensky et al. (2003) that the wide variability in prevalence rates of youth problem gambling reported in recent Quebec studies may be due, in part to cultural and linguistic factors and not because of conceptual and methodological difficulties. The authors point to the need to take into account cultural differences when examining prevalence rates and in directing prevention initiatives.

A compelling question remains as to why cultural differences in the rate of problem gambling actually exist given similar opportunities and possible venues. Research on the question of cultural affiliation and

gambling needs to be replicated with larger sample sizes, distributed across a more varied selection of schools in the greater metropolitan area.

Despite the limitations of this study, these results add to the growing body of evidence indicating that youth from different cultural backgrounds are not equally at risk of developing gambling problems. More importantly, the present results suggest that minority groups may be at increased risk for reasons that go beyond poverty and other disadvantages. Further research is needed to identify these reasons. It would also be important to verify whether the increased youth PG rates in some cultural communities lead to long-term repercussions and increase the risk of becoming an adult problem gambler.

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Gambling gifts for kids discouraged for holidays

Isabelle Martin, Ph.D.

International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors

Christmas season is here and, once again, many adults will be wondering what gifts they should give teenagers and children. From CDs and DVDs to clothes, computers, toys and sports equipment, there are plenty of products competing for our attention. It can be difficult to make sense of the non-stop advertising coming through our mailboxes, papers, television and the Web. It's not always an easy task to select up the right present for kids and teens, especially for those we don't get to see often enough.

Consequently, many adults will turn to lottery products and scratch cards as stocking stuffers, thinking they are the perfect gift. They are easy to find, not too expensive and most kids and teenagers enjoy the thought of winning a lot of money in an "adult" activity.



Harvard® Casino Game Cabinet
Source: Sears website

teenagers are much more at risk of developing gambling problems than adults; in fact, two to three times more likely. In most jurisdictions, the law prohibits the sale of lottery products to individuals under the age of 18, and forbids children's access to all other forms of state lottery, in order to protect this vulnerable group from

Kids get the message that gambling is OK for them.

Adults offer such products despite a growing awareness of the risks associated with excessive participation in gambling activities. Many are still not informed or convinced that lottery products can be harmful. Lottery products, especially instant ones, may seem inoffensive but, too often, they are a gateway to more addictive forms of gambling. And research has shown that

developing gambling behaviour problems. Research has also shown that those experiencing severe gambling problems started gambling at an early age, often around 9 or 10 years of age, and frequently with family members.

This Christmas season, like the previous ones, our Québec Loto-Corporation is offering "Holiday" instant lotteries, like

the Celebration®, Noël à vie® and Noël d'Argent®. Parents and kids are also presented with a wide selection of gambling "games," poker being one of the most popular. Poker kits, boards and variants are offered for children as young as eight years-old. And many children would be thrilled to get them because they view poker as an exciting grown up form of entertainment. Poker is presented to them as a sport and a fun skill-based activity that is safe and can lead you to fame and fortune. The notion of fame is particularly appealing to the very young.

If youngsters are receiving gambling games from adults they respect, they acquire the message that gambling activities are meant for them, are safe and that adults endorse their use. Children may not have the maturity to make a clear distinction between poker with and without money. If they begin to play poker at the age of 9, by the time they become 12 or 13, they will be convinced that they

have mastered the game and may feel safe wagering money, while losing sight of the risks associated with it.

Help spread the message this holiday season: gambling products are not appropriate gifts for anyone under the legal age. Feel free to speak with store managers if you see inappropriate, gambling-themed products to be sold for kids.

Games or gambling?

Playing for money goes mainstream

The show line-up for GSN (the GameShow Network) features at least 6 different series showcasing poker and two featuring high stakes Blackjack, in addition to other gambling-themed shows. With betting pools in the six and seven figure range, it's hard to see how these poker tournaments can merit the benign term of "game," but GSN's line-up extends the same normalization of gambling as ESPN's World Series of Poker.

Further blurring the line between games of chance and games of skill is the newly announced World Series of Backgammon, which premiered on European TV screens in November. Sponsored by Partygammon.com, players could battle against the clock for the chance of winning 50,000 euros.

The presence of these shows, complete with the colourful personalities of newly crowned

professional players, makes card playing all the more attractive to teen viewers. Viewers of all ages are rarely aware that the so-called pros playing high-stakes cards in these tropical settings are heavily sponsored, and don't rely on winnings for their glamorous lifestyles.

Additional confusion is caused by the glut of books, products and instructional guides on the market which claim to teach novices the skills and techniques which will enable them to become high-rollers themselves. For example, only \$34.95 USD will buy you Doyle Brunson's *Super Systems II: A Course in Poker Power*, which claims to offer strategy advice and poker game variations. Online training videos are also available for downloading at donkit.com and training "systems" can be purchased for \$95 USD (or \$149 if you buy two) at SystematicPoker.com.

The notion of poker playing as a credible career option, not to mention an actual "profession" is further bolstered by these ideas of training and practise. Parents of teenagers are often relieved that their sons and daughters are downstairs in the basement playing cards with their friends, instead of out on the street, so it is imperative that awareness and education initiatives target these misconceptions.



Durand Jacobs Award: Call for Papers

The International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors at McGill University is pleased to announce the 2006-2007 *Durand Jacobs Award*. This award is for the graduate student who submits the best paper related to the psychology of addictive behaviors. This annual award is dedicated to Dr. Durand Jacobs' lifelong efforts to help mentor students. Published and/or publishable papers will be considered by the selection committee, comprised of an international panel of experts in the field. The recipient will receive an award plaque and their work will be featured in the Youth Gambling International Newsletter. Graduate students from all related disciplines are encouraged to submit their papers by January 31st, 2007.

Please submit all entries electronically to alissa.sklar@mcgill.ca. If you have any questions, please direct them to Dr. Alissa Sklar by email or telephone: (514) 398-2470.



CENTRE FOR GAMBLING STUDIES

University of Auckland, New Zealand

The Centre for Gambling Studies (CGS) at the University of Auckland, New Zealand was founded in 2001 to address the escalation of gambling activity in New Zealand. Their principal focus lies in a commitment to providing independent and quality research and learning to minimise harm from gambling and to promote gambling related well-being in communities.

The CGS works actively to develop collaborations with community groups, NGOs, government agencies, international researchers and other research organisations. It has developed a number of collaborative projects in the areas of treatment research, health promotion research, community evaluation and workforce development. CGS is also developing project relationships with a number of Maori, Pacific and Asian providers.

A Faculty Centre within the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences, the key members of the CGS have an extensive background in research and expertise in public health, policy and gambling fields and contribute to the development of the Centre, its governance and research.

The Centre has ready access to experts in epidemiology, statistics, evaluation, qualitative research,

health economics, behavioural science, primary health, community development, Maori health, Pacific health, Asian health and youth health.

There are numerous ongoing activities at the CGS. The following is a sample of some of the Centre's ongoing projects.

Interventions Research

CGS has been commissioned by the Ministry of Health to conduct a research project to investigate the effectiveness of intervention services for problem gambling in New Zealand. The intention is to provide a better understanding of the range of treatment approaches utilised in New Zealand and maximize their effectiveness for different segments of the population.

Public Health/Health Promotion

CGS has contributed significantly to the thinking behind gambling as a public health concern. A 2006 research study commissioned by the Ministry of Health aims to develop and deliver a gambling specific training package for the wider public health workforce and to develop a longer term workforce development strategy and a best practice model.

Community Indicators Project

CGS was commissioned by the Problem Gambling Foundation of New Zealand to develop a community indicators model to assess, monitor and evaluate the impact of gambling opportunities on communities. This model takes the local context into account and is able to be translated into simple action steps, and work is being done to design surveys and a manual that the community action groups can utilise for their own

purposes. The plan is to then develop a community development pilot programme for this participatory action research.

Crime & Gambling

The Centre for Gambling Studies and Auckland University of Technology have jointly gained a new Ministry of Health Contract to conduct formative research into the links between gambling (including problem gambling) and crime (focus on unreported crimes committed by gamblers). The project will investigate criminal behaviour in relation to gambling, using focus groups and interviews with gamblers, their families and stakeholders.

Additional research and activities include developing a conceptual framework for best practice host responsibility in gambling venues in New Zealand, formulating a development strategy to tackle the issue of youth gambling, researching why people choose to gamble. Another study, in conjunction with the school's Pacific Health section, looks at how gambling impacts on the lives of Pacific peoples.

Key Personnel:

- Dr. Samson Tse is the Acting Director at the CGS. He has a background in occupational therapy and mental health research. Dr. Tse is the principle investigator in two major research projects on reasons why people gamble, and host responsibility.

- Dr. Peter Adams, currently on sabbatical leave, has been the CGS director since it began. He has a background in psychology and addictions, and has been involved in gambling research and development for 12 years. Dr.



Adams was also the Board Chair of the Problem Gambling Foundation (1997-2002).

- Dr. Robert Brown has a background in psychology and addictions with special interest in gambling policy and criminal offending. He has been working on

gambling research and development for ten years. He also served as the Deputy Chair of the Problem Gambling Foundation of New Zealand from 1997-2005.

- Lisa Campbell is the Research and Administration Coordinator. She has a background in health

promotion, mental health promotion, community development. She completed two projects researching community indicators for gambling and improving information for territorial local authorities on gambling in their districts.

Nova Scotia website seeks ban on VLTs

A group of Nova Scotia activists are taking aim at the “crack cocaine of gambling” through a website campaign and petition to ban VLTs from the province. Although Nova Scotia has only 3% of Canada’s population, they have 7.5% of the country’s video lottery terminals, which the website organizers believe are specifically designed to create addictions. The grassroots, non-partisan group, called GameOver VLTs, grew out of an initial meeting with former Liberal MLA and Gambling Critic Danny Graham and a Nova Scotia activist group. It quickly expanded to bring together 19 different faith communities in the province and a number of researchers and social service workers.

The website was designed in response to a piece of legislation in 2005 designed to reduce the number of VLTs in the province. Critics say the plan is toothless and ineffectual, and will not do anything to combat the province’s gambling problems.

It is estimated that 15,000 Nova Scotians have problems with

gambling, of which only 1,000 are believed to be receiving treatment. Every year, between six and ten Nova Scotians commits suicide because of gambling problems.

Nova Scotia has only 3% of Canada’s population but 7.5% of the country’s VLTs.

The website, gameovervlt.com, is a novel take on community gambling problems. The site is clean and well-designed, with numerous heart-breaking stories from gamblers themselves. The Myths vs. Realities section offers a clear, easy to understand rebuttal to the more common excuses used to defend VLTs (such as “banning VLTs would mean a huge loss in revenue for health and education.”).

There is a page listing all the Nova Scotia MLAs, with direct links to their websites, so that people can call or write asking them to ban VLTs in the province. In addition, there is an electronic petition to which people (even non-Nova Scotians) can add their name to a call for banning video lottery terminals.

In addition to the website, GameOverVLTs has received funding to help support business establishments (such as bars and restaurants) that have resisted the “easy money” promise of VLTs.

The VLT Free campaign helps promote these establishments as socially responsible local businesses, where people with gambling disorders, their friends and families can safely visit, without fear of being lured by the machines.

“These establishments deserve a lot of credit for not jumping in to the ‘easy money’ pool,” explains spokesperson Debbie Langille, herself a former VLT addict. “We want to recognize them as well as do some positive advertising for them.”

For more information about the website, petition and other gambling awareness initiatives in Nova Scotia, visit www.gameovervlt.com.

GAME OVER VLTs.COM!

A campaign for the elimination of VLTs in Nova Scotia.

Gambling & Pop Culture

For most people, gambling is an activity framed through the media, advertising, social interaction and through direct experience. Much of the popular understanding of gambling as fun, entertaining, exciting and even glamorous is socially constructed through popular culture. In recognition of this pop culture influence on both adolescents and adults, we offer a brief roundup of some of the ways in which gambling has appeared recently in film, television, music and in the news.

High Hat: CBC.ca/KIDS website: Parents who let their children play games on the CBC Kids website may be surprised to see a casino-style card game for kids. Called High Hat, the game uses images of suspicious-looking adult characters sitting around a card table, with the warning that "competition is fierce around the High

Hat table." Although the game itself is played by adding up values of cards across suits, the visual aesthetic is that of an online gaming site. Cards are dealt across a casino table, and kids with the highest total win over the other players. Players can see the week's top scores, and are advised to send this page to a friend.



X-Box Poker: The new X-Box poker package, much anticipated by the electronic gaming industry, is in stores now. Crave Entertainment announced in mid-November that the Xbox 360 version of the "World Championship

Poker: Featuring *Howard Lederer All In*" was recently shipped for sale. In the "World Championship Poker" game, players can pit their skills and wits against some of the most heavily promoted professional poker players in the business, including Howard Lederer, Robert Williamson III, Marcel Luske, and Annie Duke.

CBS Sportline.Com: Texas Hold'em Poker. Sponsored by a shampoo company, this free online gaming site is available to anyone, regardless of age and is another example of how poker has become constructed as a sport in the popular imagination. Promoted heavily on the CBS Sports website through banners, the game offers the opportunity to play alone against the computer, with other players, or to invite a friend to join.

Gambling in the News

Internet gambling targeted by new U.S. law

The Unlawful Internet Gambling Enforcement Act became law in the United States on October 13, 2006, effectively criminalizing the placing of bets over the Internet. In an effort to target offshore Internet gambling sites that have escaped regulation, the Bush administration prohibited the use of credit cards, checks and electronic fund transfers to place and settle bets on a sport or a game subject to chance. This controversial piece of legislation was tacked onto a port security bill, drawing criticism from the gambling industry that it was snuck in without media coverage.

This law places the burden of enforcement on banks and other U.S. financial institutions, some of which fought the legislation. This new law could prove crippling to a worldwide industry which depends heavily on American gamblers, their biggest

customers. According to the Washington Post, 23 million Americans wagered almost \$6 billion on online gambling sites last year.

PokerStars.com, the world's second-biggest Internet poker firm, insisted that the ban would not affect them. They argue that poker is a game of skills and not chance, and therefore not subject to coverage by the bill. The Poker Players Alliance, a lobbying group, has said they are planning to ask Congress to exempt poker from the legislation.

Ontario seeks to ban online gambling ads

Ontario is moving to ban advertising for gambling websites, out of a concern for their growing popularity with the province's youth. Although the sites, many of which are offshore, are illegal, some argue the federal government has not made the issue a high priority. Ontario Government

Services Minister Gerry Phillips introduced the bill, in an effort to protect minors from the essentially unregulated industry, according to a CTV report. The bill would prevent media organizations from running ads by gambling web sites.

Critics argue the proposed ban stems from the Ontario government's inability to tax online gaming revenue, given the province's willingness to accept the taxable regulated gambling industry, estimated at \$1.5 billion in 2005. This industry has suffered losses in the last couple of years, which they attribute to the growing popularity of online gambling. A study by the Responsible Gaming Council found 5.5% of people in Ontario, aged 18 to 24, gambled online in 2005, up from 1.4% in 2001. According to their definitions, internet gambling includes video lottery terminals and online day trading, as well as popular sites for online poker games.

Current Publications of Interest

Presentations

Gupta, R. (2006). Youth Gambling: A synopsis. Nova Scotia's responsible Gambling Conference. Halifax, October 2006.

Derevensky, J. (2006). Electronic gaming machines: A Canadian perspective. Invited address at the symposium: Gambling and Problem Gambling in Norway: Lessons from National and International Research. Oslo, Norway, October.

Derevensky, J. (2006). What we know about youth problem gambling: Myths, realities, and public policy challenges. Invited keynote address presented at the Vermont Conference on Addictive Disorders annual conference, Fairlee, Vermont, October.

Derevensky, J. (2006). Youth problem gambling: Past, present and future challenges. Invited keynote address to be presented at the National Association for Gambling Studies annual conference. Sydney, Australia, November.

Publications

Bergevin, T., Derevensky, J., Gupta, R., & Kaufman, F. (2006). Adolescent gambling: Understanding the role of stress and coping. *Journal of Gambling Studies*, 22(2), 195-208.

Derevensky, J., & Gupta, R. (2006). Measuring gambling problems amongst adolescents: Current status and future directions. *International Gambling Studies*, 6(2), 201-215.

Dickson-Gillespie, L., Derevensky, J., & Gupta, R. (in press). Youth gambling problems: An examination of risk and protective factors. *International Gambling Studies*.

Ellenbogen, S., Gupta, R., & Bergevin, T. (in press). A cross-cultural study of gambling behaviour among adolescents. *Journal of Gambling Studies*.

Ellenbogen, S., Derevensky, J., & Gupta, R. (in press). Gender differences among adolescents with gambling related problems. *Journal of Gambling Studies*.

Gillespie, M., Derevensky, J., & Gupta, R. (in press). Adolescent problem gambling: Developing a gambling expectancy instrument. *Journal of Gambling Issues*.

Gillespie, M., Derevensky, J., & Gupta, R. (in press). The utility of outcome expectancies in the prediction of adolescent gambling behavior. *Journal of Gambling Issues*.

Gupta, R., Derevensky, J., & Ellenbogen, S. (2006). Personality characteristics and risk-taking tendencies among adolescent gamblers. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science*, 38(2), 201-213.

Lussier, I., Derevensky, J., Gupta, R., & Bergevin, T. (in press). Youth gambling behaviors: An examination of the role of resilience. *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors*.

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

Messerlian, C., & Derevensky, J. (in press). Evaluating the role of social marketing campaigns to prevent youth gambling problems: A qualitative study. *International Journal of Mental Health*.

Messerlian, C., Derevensky, J., & Gillespie, M. (in press). Beyond drugs and alcohol: Including gambling in our high-risk behavior framework. *Pediatrics and Child Health*.

Ste-Marie, C., Gupta, R., & Derevensky, J. (2006). Anxiety and social stress related to adolescent gambling behavior and substance use. *Journal of Child & Adolescent Substance Use*, 16(4) 55-74.

Turchi, R. M., & Derevensky, J. (2006). Youth Gambling: Not a safe bet. *Current Opinions in Pediatrics*, 18(4), 454-458.

Wilson, D., Ross, N., Gilliland, J., Derevensky, J., & Gupta, R. (2006). Neighborhood contexts and opportunities for youth gambling in Montreal, Quebec. *Canadian Journal of Public Health*, 97(3), 202-206.



News from the Centre ...

Dr. Rina Gupta receives 2006 NCRG Young Investigator Award



We are pleased to announce that our very own co-director, Dr. Rina Gupta, was the recipient of the 2006 Young Investigator's Award as part of the fifth annual National Center for Responsible Gaming (NCRG) Scientific Achievement Awards. Dr. Suck Won Kim, professor of psychiatry and director of the Impulse Control Disorders Clinic at the University of Minnesota Medical School, received the 2006 Senior Investigator Award for his pioneering work in the pharmacological treatment of gambling disorders.

The awards were presented Nov. 13th, at the 7th annual NCRG Conference on Gambling and Addiction, which is sponsored by the NCRG and the Institute for Research on Pathological Gambling and Related Disorders, a program at the Division on Addictions at Cambridge Health Alliance, a teaching affiliate of Harvard Medical School.

Dr. Gupta's research has had important implications for intervention, prevention and social policy. For example, her findings have been translated into numerous curricula designed to prevent gambling disorders among school-age children. Her numerous

publications have focused on identifying risk and protective factors associated with youth problem gambling, and on the development and testing of prevention programs. Dr. Gupta has received international recognition for her expertise, and we are very proud of her accomplishments.

Talk It Out gets talked about

A new online chat service launched by the International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High Risk Behaviours in September has received a fair bit of press this Fall, allowing us to get the word out about help available to teen gamblers.

Called *Talk it Out!*, the English-language service offers free, an anonymous and confidential chat site for Canadian youth with trained psychology graduate students from McGill University, and is offered seven days a week, from 8 p.m. to midnight EST. It can be accessed at www.gamtalk4teens.com. The chat service is designed as an initial support service, directing teens to local resources if needed. This one-year pilot project is supported by a grant from the Max Bell Foundation.

Annual holiday lottery ticket awareness campaign kicks off

The International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems has approached lottery corporations about working with us to ask parents and caregivers not to give lottery tickets as holiday gifts to underage youth. We sent out sample press releases, inviting them to make this announcement in partnership with us, or to use the press release sample on their own.

We are pleased to announce that the Atlantic Lottery Corporation will be taking on this campaign, urging against lottery gifts to children and teens under 18. They plan to do an

extensive amount of publicity, including making the pea in writing on lottery tickets themselves, doing a radio noon call-in hour on the subject, using messages on digital point of purchase signs and more.

Loto-Québec will also join forces on this campaign for the 3rd consecutive year.

Centre has very productive year

We've always been particularly proud of our hard-working and dedicated staff and graduate students at the Youth Gambling Centre, but this has been a particularly productive year. We are proud to announce the arrival of our newest honorary team members: Carmen Messerlian and husband Dan Halton welcomed Mateo Felix Halton into the world on October 19, 2006; and



graduate student Jennifer Felscher and husband Golan Mergui welcomed Daniella Elizabeth Mergui on May 28, 2006. We wish them a hearty congratulations!





Upcoming Events

[Ninth Annual Statewide Compulsive Gambling Awareness Conference](#)

March 22 - 23, 2007

Green Lake, Wisconsin, USA

[NASP 2007 Annual Convention](#)

March 27-31, 2007

New York, NY, USA

[6th Annual Alberta Conference on Gambling Research](#)

March 30 - 31, 2007

Banff, Alberta, Canada

[Western Regional Gambling Youth Conference](#)

April 5-6, 2007

Seattle, Washington, USA



Happy Holidays

YGI Newsletter

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