



Lie-telling: developmental milestone or warning sign?

By Sarah-Jane Renaud, M.A. & Victoria Talwar, Ph.D. – McGill Education Child Development Lab

Popular childhood narratives about lying in such stories as “Pinocchio” or “The Boy Who Cried Wolf” have negative connotations, and are told with the intention of extolling the virtues of honesty. Yet it is worth asking whether we could really function without such a useful behaviour. After all, research with adults has reported that lie-telling is a daily behaviour (DePaulo, Kashy, Kirkendol, Wyer &

Epstein, 1996). We employ lies for a variety of reasons, most often to benefit ourselves. Individuals tell lies not only for self-gain (e.g., lying to your boss about how you really enjoyed working on a particular project) and to avoid negative repercussions (e.g., lying to your boss about why you are late to work), but also to smooth interpersonal relationships and to present a positive image of ourselves to others (e.g., lying to a colleague about skipping their party by claiming illness serves both purposes: the colleague feels better not thinking you were rejecting their company, and you don’t look rude). As such, lie-telling can actually be a fairly successful social strategy when used to ease awkward moments and spread positive feelings. That is, of course, until you get caught.

In order to be able to tell a lie, or even to successfully wiggle out of one, an individual must first understand the defining features of a lie: a message that a sender knows to be false, but which is told deliberately to mislead (Bussey, 1999). This requires the ability to understand that verbal statements do not always represent the truth, and that the true meaning of a statement is actually determined by the speaker’s intent. If this is not understood, lies can be confused with unintentional mistakes, jokes, sarcasm, exaggerations, or make-believe stories. Research on children’s ability to understand such subtleties has found that most children over the age of three

are able to distinguish between a lie and an honest mistake (Lee & Cameron, 2000; Siegal & Peterson, 1996; Talwar & Lee, 2008). The development of this understanding is positively correlated with children’s use of this new knowledge, as children as young as three begin to use lie-telling as a strategy to avoid punishment. But how good are children at telling lies?

We ask this very question nearly every weekend at our research facility by examining the behaviour of children between the ages of three and 14 years. Studying lying behaviour is tricky though; lies are, by their very nature, private. Lies are meant to be secret to everyone but the liar, and successful liars will attain this goal. So to examine children’s lies, we must create situations where children will lie naturally, and where we can verify the truth of the statements. To accomplish this, we employ a variety of different procedures to examine children’s use of deception. We play games with children to see if they cheat when left alone (their behaviour is caught on camera), then we ask them about their behaviour and see if they lie. In another situation, we give children gifts that we know they will not like (e.g. a bar of soap), and then we ask them how they like their present.

Our research has indicated that not only does the understanding of deception develop with age, but the frequency at which deception is used also increases

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as children age. While two-thirds of three-year-olds who transgress and cheat subsequently confess to their “naughty” behaviour, most children between four and seven years of age lie about their behaviour (e.g., Talwar & Lee, 2002). When children are given a disappointing gift, older children are more likely to tell a white lie (i.e., a lie told to protect another’s feelings), claiming they like their gift and showing concern about not offending the gift-giver’s feelings (Talwar, Murphy & Lee, 2007).

necessary, tactically adapting your behaviour to avoid arousing suspicion. In other words, as children’s cognitive development increases, their cognitive capacity for lie-telling also increases, and the result is a skilled lie teller. As such, younger children’s lies are easier to detect, whereas children eight to ten years old are not only better at concealing their lies when questioned, but they are also as effective as adults at avoiding detection (Talwar, Gordon & Lee, 2007).

nature of the lie-telling increases in seriousness (e.g., falsely denying drug abuse or gambling), especially in adolescence, that lying becomes of concern and a warning sign of other potential problems. Chronic lying is often a symptom of delinquent behaviour, but can also be a sign of other problems in the child’s environment (e.g., an acrimonious divorce). In these cases, lying becomes a maladaptive strategy for self-protection and to reduce negative consequences. In these situations, a clinician or parent needs to not only focus on the act of deception, but also the cause behind it, realizing that it is a product of a larger problem.

Lie-telling can be a fairly successful social strategy to ease awkward moments and spread positive feelings. That is, of course, until you get caught.

Not only do these two types of lies – termed “antisocial lies” and “prosocial lies” respectively – increase in frequency and complexity as children age, but children’s ability to conceal their lies in their verbal and nonverbal behaviours also increases with age (Talwar & Lee, 2008). Telling a successful lie requires a degree of cognitive complexity. It requires self-control and the ability to remember what you had previously said in order to avoid saying anything that would be inconsistent with your lie, thus incriminating you. If you told your boss you were late for work because your daughter was sick, you must not mention later in the day that she is away at camp. You need to be able to control your expressive behaviour, and be able to simulate appropriate facial expressions in order to lie successfully. For example, in thanking someone for a gift, a positive look rather than a grimace is necessary as you claim that it’s a wonderful gift. Finally, awareness of other people’s perspectives and knowledge is

So when is a lie just a lie? When is it just a normal, occasional behaviour and when is it a warning sign of problematic behaviour? The answer differs depending on the frequency, complexity, and nature of the lie. A preschool-aged child who lies about brushing their teeth at night would likely be viewed as simply testing their boundaries. It is also a mark of their developing cognitive abilities, especially as their lies progress from simple denials to more complex attempts at deception (e.g., whether they put a squirt of toothpaste in their mouth as “proof”). Indeed, for children diagnosed with a pervasive developmental delay, a population that often has difficulties with understanding different perspectives, such a simple lie may be viewed both as an exciting marker of cognitive development, and as a welcome sign of characteristic child-like behaviour. Typically, developing children lie occasionally (as often as adults) from late elementary school years onwards. However, it is when the frequency and the

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Gambling remains a hot issue

By Jeffrey L. Derevensky, Ph.D.

International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviours

With the U.S. presidential election behind us and the world's economy nose diving, no industry appears spared, including the gaming industry. One doesn't have to be an economist or fortune teller to see that significant changes are inevitable. The Las Vegas Strip, Macau and Atlantic City, among others, are all scrambling to help regenerate revenues. The Las Vegas Sands, a key international player, reported halting completion on several properties, despite the billions of dollars already invested. After a one-month moratorium on the smoking ban in Atlantic City, it looks like gamblers will once again be able to light up.

a hold on new construction at its flagship casino resort. However, the Las Vegas Sands' project in Singapore still seems to be going forward, leaving one to conclude that monopoly ownership offers distinct advantages.

What will be the impact on youth gambling?

In Nevada, legislators are currently considering reducing the gambling age from 21 to 18 years. While the governor is not in favour, there seems to be some growing support for this as a form of economic recovery. If Americans can enlist in the military, the argument goes,

and more congressional and senatorial hearings can be expected in the coming year. While adolescents often don't have easy access to credit cards, there is evidence from a number of studies that young adults are more likely to be engaged in Internet wagering. My prediction is that Internet gaming will be regulated and vastly expanded in North America.

Former U.S. New York State Senator, Alfonse D'Amato, currently chairman of the Poker Players Alliance, a non-profit organization set up to help protect and fight for the rights of poker players in the United States, has been working diligently to protect the right of poker players to play online for some time. Poker, the game of choice for young people who perceive themselves as smarter and more intelligent than their adult counterparts, continues to grow in popularity. Denmark's Peter Eastgate, a 22-year-old role model for vast numbers of youth, is the 2008 World Series of Poker Champion, taking home \$9 million. A group in the U.S. wanted to hold a "Poker Camp" for children and teenagers in Canada to help enhance their poker playing skills.

If I look into my crystal ball I see continued gambling expansion, considerable movement toward regulation and licensing of Internet gambling sites, and more and more youth gambling. All this without much protection or prevention. Now is the time to help educate our children and sensitize parents that what starts off as innocuous fun can escalate into problematic behaviours.

It is now time - more than ever before - for researchers, clinicians and the gambling industry to work together in formulating sound, empirically-based policy decisions.

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The financial meltdown will likely also result in some pretty drastic changes to the gambling landscape. Recent referenda in the U.S., while not universal, saw individuals approving increased gambling opportunities. Charitable contributions and education revenues often linked to gambling will be in a free fall unless new initiatives are created.

Mohegan Sun recently signed a lease for a potential gaming site that will give the giant Connecticut casino a foothold in neighbouring Massachusetts - should the state authorize casino gambling (previously defeated before the true effect of the economy was realised). The Mohegan tribe's decision to expand, in turn, stands out amid a phase of gaming industry consolidation, as the tribe itself put

why should they not also be able to gamble? In an ironic counterpoint, Bally's (Atlantic City) was ordered to pay a record \$157,500 fine for allowing an underage player (20-year-old Candeda Simpson), who was rated as a high roller 143 times, to gamble on their property. While there doesn't seem to be much current support for lowering the gambling age in Nevada, could it only be a matter of time? And, if Nevada laws change, what will other jurisdictions do?

In a second development, Internet gaming "will be the hottest federal issue facing Nevada's gaming industry in the next few years," reported Frank Farenkopf, president of the American Gaming Association. The topic was debated on the national level in the U.S.,

Gambling to feel better: affect-regulation expectancies

By Will Shead M.Sc. - International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviours

Anecdotal and clinical evidence suggests that certain individuals are motivated to gamble based on the expectancy that gambling can lead to desirable affective end states. These expectancies may take different forms across individuals depending on the associations that have been formed between gambling and changes in mood. For instance, the expectancy that placing a few bets will help boost depressed mood may lead some individuals experiencing negative affect to gamble. Alternatively, the expectancy that gambling will help augment pleasant emotions may lead others to gamble if they are in a good mood.

Expectancies are the mechanisms through which we use prior experiences and knowledge to predict what will happen in the future, forming the basis for most behaviour (Tolman, 1932). A vast amount of research has been conducted to examine the role of expectancies in the onset and maintenance of various addictive behaviours, including alcohol consumption, smoking, and drug use. Much of this research contends that addictive behaviours are largely determined by the reinforcing effects that are expected as a result of these behaviours (Goldman, Del Boca, & Darkes, 1999).

Most research on expectancies and addictive behaviour has examined the role of expectancies in the consumption of alcohol. Studies have shown that self-reported drinking behaviour increases with more positive expectancies and decreases with more negative expectancies (e.g., Carey, 1995). A review of the alcohol expectancy literature concluded that although causal links between expectancies and alcohol consumption have not

been established, there is support for associations between expectancies and alcohol use (Jones, Corbin, & Fromme, 2001).

Individual differences in gambling expectancies have also been examined (e.g., Gillespie, Derevensky, & Gupta, 2007). Stewart and Wall (2005) developed a measure that specifically examined gambling affect-regulation expectancies (Gambling Expectancy Questionnaire; GEQ). A principal components analysis of their measure resulted in a two-factor solution with one factor pertaining to relief expectancies (e.g., "I

item GEQ successfully replicated the two-factor structure obtained by the authors of the scale. Factor scores were used to subtype participants as: Reward Expectancy Gamblers (Reward EGs) - have strong expectations that gambling augments positive mood, Relief Expectancy Gamblers (Relief EGs) - have strong expectations that gambling relieves negative affect, and Non-Expectancy Gamblers (Non-EGs) - have neither strong expectation. Comparisons across these three subtypes on various measures showed that Relief EGs and Reward EGs reported more severe

Having affect-regulation gambling expectancies is associated with a general loss of control.

would feel less tense if I gambled now") clearly differentiated from one pertaining to reward expectancies (e.g., "It would be wonderful to gamble now).

The overall objective of the current set of three studies was to expand on existing research in the expectancies literature to examine how expectancies - specifically those related to affect-regulation - influence gambling cognitions and behaviour. Study 1 aimed to replicate the factor structure of the GEQ (Stewart & Wall, 2005) and use this measure to subtype gamblers according to the type of affect-regulation expectancies they have about gambling. An initial sample of 513 undergraduate university students (32.7% male; age range = 17 - 57; M age = 22.1 years, SD = 5.13) who gambled regularly completed an online questionnaire. A principal components analysis of the 18-

gambling problems, were more likely to engage in hazardous drinking, and had higher impulsivity scores compared to Non-EGs. These results suggest that having affect-regulation gambling expectancies is associated with a general loss of control.

Study 2 examined whether the three subtypes of gamblers differed in their degree of semantic activation of gambling concepts following exposure to negative and positive affect primes. A primed Stroop task was administered to 66 participants from Study 1 to assess colour-naming latencies of gambling and non-gambling words following exposure to positive and negative affect primes. Gambling-schema activation did not differ across gambler subtypes for the two types of affect primes.

Study 3 examined whether subtypes of gamblers differ in actual gambling behaviour following exposure to one of two versions of the Scrambled Sentence Test (SST) to prime either “relief” or “reward” affect-regulation expectancies. After completing this priming task, participants (N = 132) completed a gambling task with real money to measure levels of gambling behaviour. The hypothesized Prime type X GEQ subtype interaction was not significant. When a more stringent set of criteria for GEQ subtyping was imposed, the “purified” subsample (n = 54) produced a statistically significant Prime type X GEQ subtype interaction. Relief EGs gambled more after being primed with the construct “relief of negative emotions” compared to after being primed with the

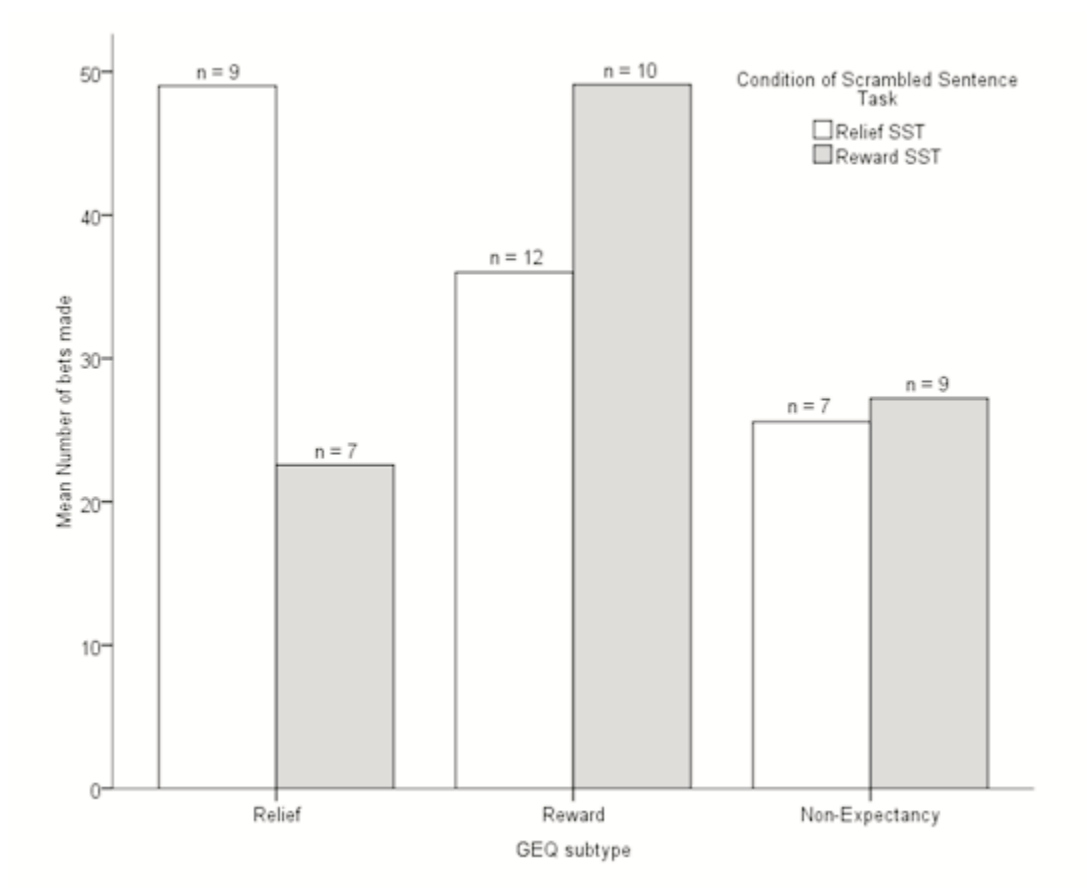
construct “augmentation of positive emotion.” Planned orthogonal contrasts showed a significant linear increase in number of bets made across GEQ subtypes when prime type corresponded to GEQ subtype.

It is hoped that the findings of this research will lead to better understanding of the mental processes that are associated with gambling behaviour and facilitate the development of more cost-effective treatment strategies for gambling problems. The results suggest a need for components in gambling treatment programs that address clients’ specific difficulties in regulating their emotions, particularly when they have strong expectancies that gambling can provide a specific desirable emotional outcome.

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Mean number of bets made on gambling task amongst players across GEQ subtypes and SST conditions for the “purified” GEQ conditions



“Contest crack” keeps people chasing dreams

By Alissa Sklar, Ph.D. - International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviours

Filling in a contest form, mailing in a ballot or rolling up the rim to win is a pretty benign act for most people, but it turns out some people take contests so seriously, it can have a detrimental impact on their lives.

Some of the more hardcore contest fans (who prefer to call themselves “contestors” in Canada and “sweepers” in the U.S.), maintain an impressive eternal optimism in the big dreams promised by contest sponsors, a preternatural level of hope that seems oddly similar to that of addicted gamblers. Similarly, a solid grasp on the odds of actually winning, which vary according to the contest, the value of the prize and the number of entries, is dismissed in favour of superstition, lucky shirts, feng shui and self-help books on the power of positive thinking.

The rhetoric of this obsession should raise the eyebrows of anyone familiar with the pattern of gambling addiction. A CBC documentary entitled *Winning for a Living* profiled a number of people so obsessed with what they

call “contesting” that they have given up their jobs. Most were adamantly convinced they have come out ahead financially, and see “contesting” as a legitimate way to earn money for themselves and their families.

The producers spoke with Mike Smith of Toronto, who has been contesting for over 30 years, and has won an estimated \$250,000 in free stuff, including seven televisions. Despite these prizes, he spent all of one weekend filling out 2,000 ballots in hopes of winning TV number eight, filling in ballots in his car while waiting at red lights. Smith admits that his wins come with serious costs, and acknowledges his marriage has suffered from his contest addiction.

Fern Corraini of Calgary was profiled in this documentary as the newbie, a retired teacher and closet contestor for years until she finally went public with her friends and relatives. She reports having only just won her first \$1,000 prize. As a result, she's now an addict to what another contestor describes as “contest

crack: one win and you're hooked!” Corraini says she firmly believes a key to success is that you need to feel 'worthy' of winning.

Those who take contests seriously can find plenty of reassurance and support from other like-minded individuals on the Internet and in such organizations as the Canadian Contesting Association (“an association for individuals who regularly participate in contests”). Member can get tips from each other on the “Four C’s” of contesting: cash, cars, cruises, and computers. There are plenty of grassroots contesting clubs organized across North America where participants trade tips and cheer each others’ wins.

Carolyn Wilman, the self-appointed “Contest Queen,” blogger and author of *You Can't Win if You Don't Enter*, also maintains the contention that “you'll be lucky if you feel lucky.” With her background in marketing and passion for contests, Wilman has translated her expertise into a contesting enterprise (for which she was

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nominated for a 2008 RBC Canadian Woman Entrepreneur Award). While she spreads the word about lucrative contesting opportunities in workshops, speaking engagements and media appearances around North America, online visitors to her website (contestqueen.com) can buy her line of “lucky bead” necklaces, baseball caps and “I Am Lucky” Essential One-Of-a-Kind Spray-on Oil (\$74.95 US for 60 ml).

tickets to win other people’s re-prized items.

On the retail end, contests are an increasingly popular way for companies to attract attention to their products and services. *Winning for a Living* reports that Canadian companies spent over \$200 million a year on these promotions, which are really more about selling products than winning prizes. That's why two-thirds of brands used contests last



with innovative ways to prevent ballot box stuffing or the use of the new computer software programs like RoboForm, that allow contestors to accelerate filling out multiple contest ballots, so that one-time only entrants have a fair shot at winning, too.

One player describes the experience as “contest crack: one win and you're hooked!”

Successful “sweepers” conventions are held periodically, where participants trade tips and discuss what the CCA terms “a hobby that friends and family may not completely understand or appreciate.” One popular aspect of these “sweepers” conventions is the opportunities for re-prizing. Participants bring in the swag they’ve won but do not need (how many large-screen TVs can one person use?) in exchange for raffle

year as part of their marketing plans. In the brave new world of cyberspace, a whopping 61% of Internet users enter contests every two weeks, making ‘cybermarketing,’ with its emphasis on creativity and interactive participation, an exciting new frontier for contest promoters.

These companies are aware of the devoted core of contesting enthusiasts, and try to come up

The perils of excessive contesting will be familiar to those who have treated disordered gambling behaviour: inability to stop, negative repercussions from time spent contesting on work, relationships or school, and lying about contest participation. These individuals need to be recognized as having serious problems possibly related to impulse control disorders or other mental health problems, and should be evaluated, screened and treated if necessary.

2008 Durand Jacobs Award: Call for Papers

The International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviours at McGill University invites submissions to the 2008 *Durand Jacobs Award* competition, to be awarded to the best graduate student paper related to the psychology of addictive behaviours. 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 Centre’s newsletter. Graduate students from all related disciplines are encouraged to submit their papers by Feb 27th, 2009.

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.

Le coût social élevé de la dépression et l'abandon scolaire chez les jeunes québécois

By Isabelle Martin, Ph.D. - International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviours

Selon Diane Marcotte, psychologue et professeure à l'Université du Québec à Montréal, approximativement 16% des élèves québécois du secondaire présentent des symptômes dépressifs. Au début des années 1900, cette proportion était estimée à 2 % pour progresser à 9 % dans les années 50. Il ne fait pas de doutes que cette augmentation s'explique, en partie, par un meilleur travail de dépistage. Mais, aux dires de Mme Marcotte, le nombre de cas a incontestablement augmenté au fil des ans.

Les manifestations et les conséquences de la dépression chez les adolescents sont assez bien documentées; rendement scolaire détérioré (perte d'intérêt, diminution de la performance), changements de routines, symptômes physiques, idées suicidaires, et quelques fois un passage à l'acte. Cependant, une conséquence grave associée à la dépression est encore mal connue bien qu'elle ait un impact négatif important tant pour l'élève que pour la société: l'abandon scolaire.

Selon les résultats d'une étude longitudinale menée par la professeure Marcotte, la dépression se classe au deuxième rang des facteurs qui peuvent contribuer à l'abandon scolaire, le rendement scolaire en mathématiques étant le premier facteur invoqué. Contrairement à ce que l'on pourrait croire, les élèves dépressifs ne se trouvent pas nécessairement en situation d'échec scolaire. Les symptômes dépressifs (le vague à l'âme, les idées sombres) sont associés à une

baisse de la motivation, de l'intérêt, le sentiment d'être moins performant et, éventuellement, l'absentéisme qui mènera à l'abandon scolaire.

Au Canada, au début des années 90, le taux d'abandon scolaire (proportion d'individus âgés de 20 à 24 ans qui n'ont pas de diplôme d'études secondaires ou qui ne fréquentent pas un

(12 %) comparativement aux jeunes femmes (7 %). C'est au Québec que cet écart est le plus marqué, sept décrocheurs sur dix étant de sexe masculin. De plus, au Québec, approximativement 30 % des élèves inscrits au secondaire n'obtiennent pas leur diplôme d'études secondaires dans le temps normal requis. Ce taux de diplômation plafonne depuis les 15 dernières années et

Au Québec, approximativement 30 % des élèves inscrits au secondaire n'obtiennent pas leur diplôme d'études secondaires dans le temps normal requis.

établissement scolaire) était d'environ 17 %. En 2005, ce taux s'établissait à environ 10 % pour l'ensemble du territoire canadien, selon le *Labour Force Survey*, un taux similaire à celui notée en Finlande. Les plus bas taux d'abandon sont notés à Terre Neuve-Labrador, Île-du-Prince-Édouard, Colombie Britannique et en Ontario (8 % à 10 %). Les plus hauts taux sont notés dans les provinces des Prairies et au Québec (11 % à 13 %). De plus, l'abandon est nettement plus marqué dans les régions rurales et les petites villes canadiennes (16 %), notamment au Québec et en Alberta (20 %), comparativement au taux noté dans les grandes régions urbaines (10 %).

D'un océan à l'autre, les jeunes hommes sont davantage représentés chez les décrocheurs

une légère hausse du taux de décrochage semble se dessiner depuis 2000. Quels sont les coûts de ce phénomène?

Pour une première fois au Québec, un économiste, M. Pierre Fortin, a tenté d'estimer le coût de l'abandon scolaire, tant le coût à payer pour le jeune adulte que celui payé par la société. Selon les calculs du professeur Fortin, les coûts associés à l'abandon scolaire d'un seul individu sont d'approximativement 460 000 \$, une estimation conservatrice. Les calculs de M. Fortin sont notamment basés sur le revenu moyen d'un travailleur sans diplôme, 25 000 \$ par année, comparativement au revenu d'un diplômé du secondaire qui est de 25 % plus élevé, soit 31 250 \$. En estimant le nombre d'années de vie active à 45 ans, le coût de la non diplômation est donc près

d'un demi-million de dollars (revenu cumulatif en dollars constants de 2008), si l'on prend en considération les coûts pour les soins médicaux et les services sociaux (plus élevés chez les non diplômés), encore une fois, une estimation conservatrice.

Au Québec, pour l'ensemble des décrocheurs, si l'on estime à 640 000 le nombre de personnes sans diplôme, âgées entre 20 et 64 ans, il en coûte à la société environ quatre milliards de dollars, annuellement. M. Fortin estime qu'une baisse de seulement 3 % du décrochage avant le 5^e secondaire (de 12 % à 9 %), dès 2009, notamment par la mise en place mesures préventives dès la petite enfance, permettrait

d'économiser approximativement 22 milliard de dollars d'ici le milieu du siècle.

Le professeur Fortin estime que les effets favorables de la scolarisation et la diplomation, notamment sur la santé individuelle et collective sont principalement de deux ordres: une diminution des coûts de santé et des coûts sociaux; et une augmentation du revenu net individuel et collectif (recettes fiscales du gouvernement). Enfin, M. Fortin souligne l'importance de la mise en place de programmes de prévention et des investissements en petite enfance et leurs impacts positifs pour l'ensemble de la collectivité, tant au plan social qu'économique.

Diane Marcotte, professeure, Université du Québec à Montréal, département de psychologie, section éducation.

Étude de la trajectoire développementale et des facteurs associés à la dépression dans le contexte de la transition primaire-secondaire.

Pierre Fortin, professeur, Université du Québec à Montréal, département des sciences économiques.

Les sans-diplôme au Québec : portrait d'ensemble. Communication présentée aux Journées interrégionales sur la persévérance scolaire, Mont Saint-Anne, Québec, octobre 2008.

Economic woes pose questions for casinos

With current global markets in a general recession, the American gambling industry's revenues might reflect similar trends. Across the United States, casinos and betting outlets have seen a noticeable decline in business and gambling activity. But in this time of economic uncertainty, how willing are Americans to wager their dwindling amounts of disposable income on chance?

Las Vegas casino revenues fell for the eighth consecutive month in August 2008. In a city where the economy is heavily dependent on income generated by its gaming culture, this decline did not bode well for either casino or business owners in the supposed "Entertainment Capital of the World." The Nevada Gaming Control Board has been monitoring casino revenues since 1983, and has declared this the longest recorded period of straight losses, surpassing the previous record set during the weeks and months following September 11,

2001. As a result, plans for the development of new casinos and hotels on the city's main strip, which would cost over \$10 billion USD, have currently been put on hold.

Though some critics argue that non-gaming income from attractions such as theatre shows, rounds of golf and merchandise, has emerged as an important source of revenue in Las Vegas, the fact remains that the economic downturn will affect more than just vacationers. The city's residents are currently experiencing above-average rates of unemployment, up 2% from numbers reported in 2007, as well as high foreclosure rates and slumping home prices.

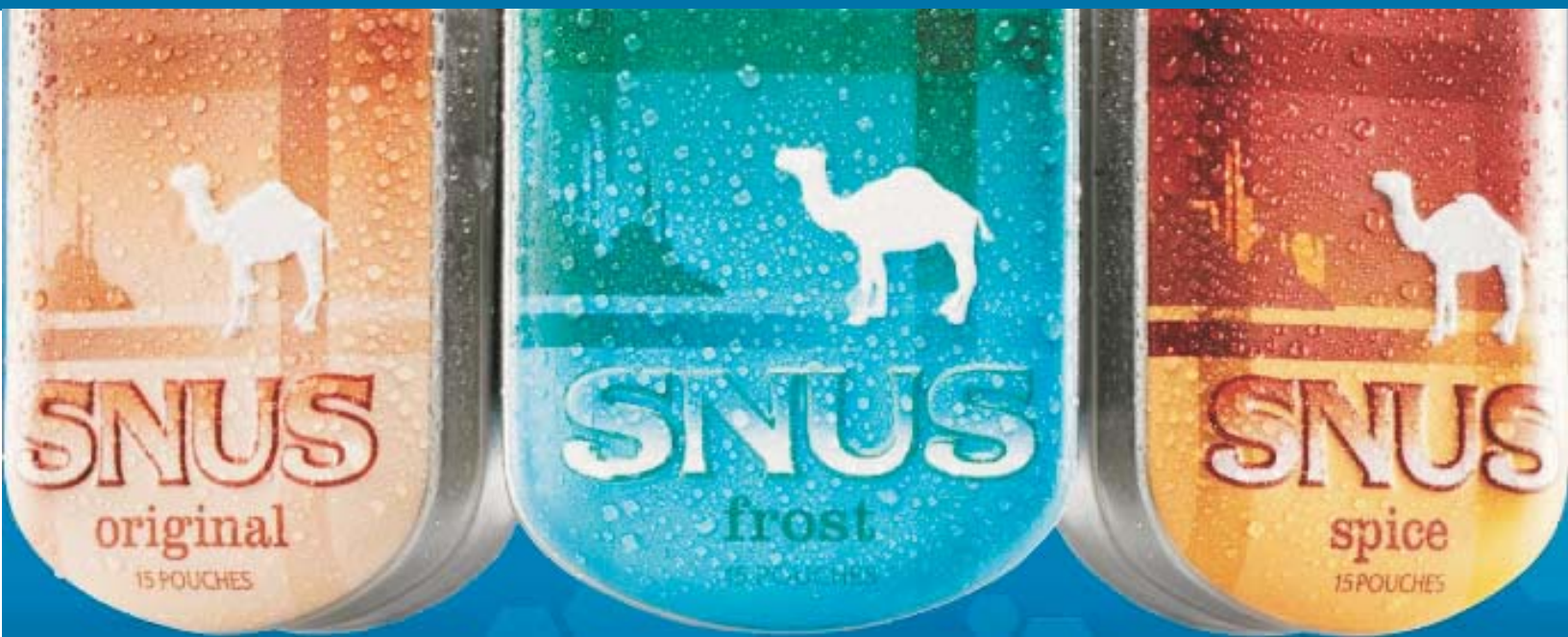
This phenomenon is not limited to Las Vegas. Casinos across the United States are being subjected to the same economic instability experienced by the automobile industry and the housing market, reflected even in the price of staple

food items such as flour. For instance, Foxwoods Resort Casino, in Connecticut, saw a 16% drop in income for September 2008 when compared to the same month in 2007, and national entertainment club, Rick's Cabaret, lost 74% of its NYSE market value in 2008.

But Mike Smith, president of the Casino Association of Indiana, is optimistic: "One of the key things is we develop more and more into a total entertainment package [at the casinos] throughout the state," adding that attractions such as golf courses would draw a potentially new type of clientele. While such an inclusion might positively regulate excessive gambling behaviour at casino resorts, only time will tell whether the nation's casinos can weather this economic storm.

<http://www.reporter-times.com/stories/2008/10/28/news.qp-3869041.sto>

<http://www.allheadlinenews.com/articles/7012676551>



New smokeless tobacco may increase potential for addiction

By Alissa Sklar, Ph.D. - International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviours

Camel Snus, the latest smokeless tobacco product to hit the American market, poses a worrisome risk of addiction, according to some experts. Unlike chewing tobacco, Snus isn't a type of spit tobacco, and can potentially be consumed almost anywhere – “at a concert, right in front of security guards,” “on a jet from Miami to L.A.,” or at an “overpriced tapas restaurant,” a promotional brochure suggests.

Available in three flavours (Original, Frost and Spice) and packed in attractive metal tins, Snus comes with a significant risk of addiction. Each single-serve pouch (amounting to a single dose) can contain as much as eight milligrams of nicotine. That is far more nicotine per gram than is present in other popular chewing tobacco products or in single cigarettes (which vary between 2.5 and 3.3 grams per cigarette). Nicotine is a highly addictive substance.

“[Snus is] so high in nicotine that the probability of becoming addicted to it with utilization of just one tin is going to be very

high,” Bruce W. Adkins, director of the division of tobacco prevention of the West Virginia Bureau for Public Health, told the *New York Times*.

One package of Snus marketed in the U.S. earlier this year was found to contain five milligrams of nicotine per gram of tobacco, or about two milligrams per pouch serving.

Since then, the amount of tobacco and the concentration of nicotine in each pouch appear to have increased. “The nicotine in these products doesn't happen by accident,” reported Robert Anderson, deputy director of the Prevention Research Center at West Virginia University.

An R.J. Reynolds spokesperson confirmed that the latest packaging does contain more tobacco, 0.6 grams per pouch instead of 0.4 grams, and therefore more nicotine.

Scientific evidence points to the very strong likelihood that Snus will have dire health consequences for its users. Chewing tobacco

regularly increases the risk of developing oral cancers; recent studies have associated heavy use with increased odds of pancreatic cancer, as well. According to the *New York Times*, the European Union banned sales of an earlier formulation of Snus in 1992 after a World Health Organization study determined the product could cause cancer. Snus is still sold in Sweden, where it originated, as well as in Norway.

Snus poses serious concerns for both teenage and adult tobacco consumers, as it offers the potential for a nicotine fix without lighting up, so users can ignore initiatives proven to reduce tobacco use, such as indoor smoking bans. Snus also fits better with societal expectations, since there is no second-hand smoke or spitting.

The flavours and attractive tins may also prove attractive to underage users. Since Snus can be used discreetly, it may also appeal to teenagers, explains Mr. Anderson: “The surreptitious aspects of it will be very obvious to them.”

Etymology of gambling terms

By Jean Claude Moubarac, M.A.

International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviours

Understanding the source and historical development of words can reveal interesting facts about their current use and meaning. An examination of the origin of words related to gambling provides us with a better understanding of the evolution involved in games of chance. Unravelling the foundation of a word also gives us the opportunity to discover exactly when and where new games emerged in the history of gambling. Most of these words associated with gaming or gambling originate from the 12th century and onwards in Europe.

Chance

[1297]

From Old French *cheance* ("accident or the falling of dice"), from Vulgar Latin *cadentia* ("that which falls out"), from Latin *cadent-*, *cadens*, present participle of *cadere* ("to fall"), perhaps akin to Sanskrit *œad-* ("to fall off"). The verb meaning "to risk" is from 1859.

Dice

[1330]

From Middle English *dees*, plural

of *dee*, from Old French *dé*. Altered in the 14th century to *dyse*, *dyce*, and in the 15th century to *dice*.

Gamble

[1594-1726]

From a dialectal survival of Middle English *gammlen*, variant of *gamenen* ("to play, jest be merry"), from Old English *gamenian* ("to play"), or possibly a derivative of *gamel* ("to play games") from 1594.

Casino

[1744]

From Italian *casino*, diminutive of *casa* ("house"). Originally meaning "a defence-post," it was more generally used to describe a small country house or lodge in a park. In the 18th century, it was also used to describe a public room for music or dancing.

Keno

[1814]

From French *quine*, a set of five winning numbers in a lottery, from Latin *quini* ("five each").

Roulette

[1745]

From French *roulette*, a gambling

game played with a revolving wheel, from Old French *roetele* ("little wheel"), diminutive of Latin *rota* ("wheel").

Lotto

[1778]

From Italian *lotto* ("a lot"), from Old French *lot* ("lot"), of Germanic origin, akin to Old English *hlot*. The meaning "a lottery" is attested from 1787.

Poker

[1834-1836]

Probably a modification of French *poque*, a card game similar to poker. Also, perhaps from the first syllabic element of the German *Pochspeil*, a card game similar to poker, derived from the verb *Pochen* ("to brag as a bluff"). The earlier version of the game of poker in England was called *brag*.

Bingo

[1925-1927]

There exist many possible origins. Most likely is "bingo!", an exclamation of sudden realization or surprise, attested to 1927. Possibly an alteration of *bing*, an interjection suggestive of a ringing sound (1925).

Canadians spend billions on gambling

Compiled by Margot Nossal, B.A.

International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviours

Over the past 15 years, the amount of money Canadians have spent gambling has increased five-fold. Whereas revenues from gambling activities such as lotteries, casinos, slot machines, and video lottery terminals were at \$2.7 billion in 1992, they soared to \$13.6 billion by 2007.

However, Doug Little, a former problem gambler and author, noted that the \$13.6 billion profit for the gambling industry is at the expense of gamblers. On average, Canadians spent \$524 per person on gambling last year, and overall, 73% of

households reported to participating in at least one gambling activity. The richest Canadian households spent the most amount of money gambling, but the poorest households spent the largest percentage of their incomes.

According to Robert Williams, a coordinator at the Alberta Gaming Research Institute, this low-income group includes many students and young adults, who are more prone to big spending in gambling, in addition to other risky behaviours. He adds that, compared to the United States, "gambling is actually much more

omnipresent in Canada," where every province will have a casino by 2009.

With this relative ease of accessibility to gambling, the onus falls upon the government to provide better responsible management, Little argues, in the form of addiction warning labels and awareness campaigns, similar to those targeted at cigarette use and workplace safety.

http://www.responsiblegambling.org/g/staffsearch/library_news_results_details.cfm?intID=11767

Youngest poker champion: Skill or chance?

By Amy Taylor, B.A.- International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviours

In November, the World Series of Poker crowned its youngest champion ever. Peter Eastgate, 22. He won the title after playing Texas Hold'em for eleven days straight. Before Eastgate, the youngest champion was eleven-time gold bracelet winner Phil Hellmuth, who was 24 years old when he assumed the title for the first time. And although Eastgate reported that it felt good to "beat Phil's record," he kept focus on the game, clearly motivated by the \$9 million jackpot.

Poker fans, players, and viewers should be aware of what professional poker playing entails, given its well-established popularity among young male gamblers. Televised events and large cash payouts lend an illusion of glamour to the game. In reports of Eastgate's wins, there was no mention of how many games or how much money he had lost before winning the championship; viewers saw only a young man acquiring a large amount of money after eleven days of sitting at a table "reading people" and playing cards.

There is no doubt that a certain amount of skill is required to play poker; a successful player must be patient, observant, and diligent. However, none of the coverage on Eastgate's win discussed the element of chance as a factor in the game. Young people who hear of his successes should be made aware that while he might possess the qualities of a skilled poker player, chance played a sizable role in helping him win that generous payout.

Chance as an element of successful poker playing is a difficult concept for young adults to grasp, especially when they see self-described "professional poker players" devote all their time and energy to playing the game. Furthermore, many poker websites exist, purporting to teach all the skills a person might need to win at the game. Unlike a VLT machine or roulette wheel, where the element of chance is more obvious, the factor of chance is masked in poker by the illusion of control that is created.



As Eastgate walks away with \$9 million and the title of champion, many will be watching to see where he places in the next tournament. If he doesn't make the final cut, will he credit his skill? Or might it just be a matter of "luck"?

Gambling prevention measures needed for seniors

It seems that problem gambling prevention isn't just for the young. Recently, the Waverly, Nova Scotia Legion Hall hosted a fashion show to increase awareness of problem gambling among seniors. It was reported to be an amusing event attended by over 150 senior citizens from the region, and included presentations by members of the police force and addiction specialists on the dangers of problem gambling among the elderly.

Just as with other population groups, only a fraction of seniors who gamble will develop problem gambling

behaviour. However, seniors face unique obstacles in recognizing and dealing with problem gambling. Since gambling activities offers opportunities for socialization and entertainment, it is hard to judge whether seniors' habitual involvement in gambling activities is a result of compulsive gambling, or if it is merely a chance to get out of the house and socialize. Seniors might also be sensitive to the traditional social stigma that used to surround gambling, thus making it harder to admit that they need help. As well, retired people might have a limited income, and may

have few opportunities to recover lost money.

A barrier to assistance, says Nova Scotia Gaming Corporation spokesperson Krista Grant, is that "seniors are not treated as a separate group in prevention planning." Events like this fashion show, however, aid in bringing awareness to seniors as a targeted group for education on gambling problems.

Moore, Oliver. "Chips on the old block." *The Globe and Mail* 5 Nov. 2008: A10.

Holiday campaign grows in leaps and bounds!

By Alissa Sklar, Ph.D. - International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviours

Each year, for the past four years, the International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviours has joined forces with industry partners to warn parents about the risks of giving lottery tickets and scratch cards as gifts to minors.

Loto Québec was our original partner in this effort, and was joined a year later by the Atlantic Lottery Corporation. Last year we were delighted to also welcome the Nova Scotia Lottery and Ontario Lottery and Gaming. Each year, we – and our partner lotteries – have received great press coverage about this, and helped us spread our responsible gambling message.

This year, we are pleased to announce we have expanded once again. We have partnered with the U.S. National Council on Responsible Gambling, in the hopes of getting this important word out to lotteries in the U.S. Executive Director Keith Whyte has worked with us to develop the campaign, and welcomed our Centre to their NCRG booth at the NASPL convention in Philadelphia this September.

“NCPG is excited to partner with McGill’s Youth Gambling Centre – the leading academic center on youth gambling issues – on this campaign, as we believe these concerns transcend borders and demand comprehensive and practical responses,” explained Keith Whyte, executive director, National Council on Problem Gambling.

The response has been very positive so far. Our joint campaign received unanimous support from the NASPL Responsible Gaming Sub-committee, as well as the Canadian Gaming Association. We have since welcomed the

JOIN THE HOLIDAY CAMPAIGN!

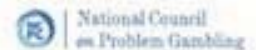
Send a positive responsible gaming message this holiday season.



The International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviours at McGill University and The National Council on Problem Gambling invite lottery corporations to join their colleagues in our annual holiday responsible gambling message for youth.

Don't gamble with a child's future:
Lottery tickets are for adults...
not for kids.

Debbie Roth Weiss, Executive Director, National Council on Problem Gambling, 202-327-9301, debbie@ncprg.org • Dr. Alissa Sklar, Senior Researcher and Communications Specialist, International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviours, McGill University, 514-398-3476, alissa.sklar@mcgill.ca



Alberta Gaming and Liquor Corporation, the Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Minnesota and Massachusetts State Lotteries as well. At time of writing, the Nebraska State Lottery was also seriously considering this campaign, according to Director Jim Haynes.

“We know that playing the lottery at a young age can increase the potential for problem gambling later in life,” said Dr. Jeffrey Derevensky, co-director of the centre and a renowned expert on problem gambling among young people.

In past studies conducted at the Centre, approximately 70-80% of Canadian adolescents reported having gambled for money in the preceding 12 months, with as many as 30% gambling on a weekly basis. In addition, the 2007 Student Drug Use Survey prepared by Dalhousie University for all four provinces of Atlantic Canada reports that 35% of Atlantic Canadian minors who took part in the survey have played Scratch'nWin tickets.

Many problem gamblers reported taking up gambling during childhood, often with family members, as early as ages 9-10.

Lottery products are popular gifts because they are affordable and

easily obtainable. Results from a recent study in Quebec show that 31% of high school students have received one or several lottery products as a gift during the preceding 12 months.

"At Loto-Québec's request, the Québec government passed a law in February 2000 forbidding retailers to sell lottery tickets to people under 18," underlines the president of Loto-Québec, Mr. Alain Cousineau. "We regularly remind retailers to be vigilant in the regard; we also ask parents to use their judgment and find more suitable gifts to children and teenagers than lottery tickets," adds Mr. Cousineau.

ALC's President and CEO

Michelle Carinci maintains preventing minors from playing the lottery is a priority for her organization: "Lottery tickets are designed for adults. We at ALC work hard to remind our retailers not to sell to minors. As we approach the Holidays season, parents need to remember that these tickets are not appropriate for children at any time of the year."

"OLG commends the Centre for its efforts, and we are a key partner in ensuring that lotteries are enjoyed only by adults," said Lenna Bradburn, OLG Chief Security and Compliance Officer and head of the Player Protection program.

The International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviours wishes to extend best wishes for the holiday season to all our colleagues and friends around the world.

Season's Greetings and Happy New Year!



News from the Centre

Congrats to Loto-Québec

A hearty congratulation goes out to Loto-Québec, which won the *Best Player Education Program Prize* at the World Lottery Association 2008 Convention in October. Loto-Québec has implemented, among its other prevention measures, the Responsible Gaming Awareness Week, aimed at the general public, business partners and employees. They have also set up proactive player intervention programs, including self-exclusion options at the casinos and Ludoplex, as well as the *I.D. Required Here* program in support of Québec legislation that prohibits lottery sales to individuals less than 18 years of age. Through their website and the *Fondation Mise sur toi* site, they provide detailed information about gambling dependency and associated risks, taking a leadership role in responsible gambling at the industry level.

Marc Potenza wins NCRG Senior Scientist Award

We wish to extend our congratulations to Dr. Marc Potenza, Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Director of the Problem Gambling Clinic at Yale University, who was named the recipient of the 2008 NCRG Scientific Achievement Award in the Senior Investigator category. Potenza is the first person to receive NCRG Scientific Achievement Awards in both the Young Investigator (2003) and Senior Investigator categories.

The Senior Investigator Award honours scientists whose career work has led to important advancements, discoveries, or developments in the field of gambling-related research. Potenza, who was selected by an independent awards committee, has made contributions to the study of gambling disorders in the areas of population studies, genetics, treatment outcome research, and neuroscience. Among the many milestones in his career is his completion of the first two brain-imaging studies conducted in this field. His current research also includes a brain-imaging study that has found similarities in the brain activity of pathological gamblers when they experience gambling urges to the brain activity of people with cocaine dependence when they experience cocaine cravings.

New publication

Moubarac, J-C., Martin, I., & Gupta, R. (2008). La promotion du poker sur Internet et son influence sur la participation des jeunes adultes aux jeux d'argent. *Loisir et Société*, 30 (2), 513-526.

Congrats to Ève

Ève St-Cyr, our graphic designer, and her husband Éric Girard welcomed their third daughter, Frédérique, into the world on November 13th, 2008, weighing 7 lbs., 10 oz. We wish them and their newly extended family best wishes.



Upcoming Events

- **Banff Conference on Internet Gambling**
March 27 - 28, 2009 - Banff, Alberta, Canada
- **The International Conference on Gambling and Risk Taking**
May 25 - 29, 2009 - Stateline, Nevada, USA

YGI Newsletter

A Quarterly Publication by the International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviours

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