

## Youth & Adolescent Risk for Gambling Problems

*Any young person can develop a gambling problem, regardless of age, gender, race, ethnicity or socio-economic status.*

Though gambling problems do not discriminate, research has shown that among youths the following groups are more susceptible to gambling problems:

- Those who gamble at a young age <sup>1,2</sup>
- Males <sup>1,3,4,5</sup>
- Those with a family history of gambling problems <sup>4</sup>
- Those in a lower socioeconomic status group<sup>1</sup>
- Those who have low and/or declining parental monitoring between the ages of 11 and 14 <sup>6</sup>
- Those who gamble:
  - On cards
  - At casinos
  - On routine daily events<sup>3</sup>
  - On games of skill (basketball, pool, golf, etc.)



## Disordered Gambling and Risky Behaviors

*Disordered gambling is associated with numerous other risky behaviors among young people.*

Compared to adolescents aged 16–17 who do not gamble, those aged 16–17 who do gamble are more likely to:

- Use alcohol/Be dependent on alcohol
- Use drugs/Be dependent on drugs
- Experience depression<sup>7</sup>

## CONNECTICUT COUNCIL on **PROBLEM GAMBLING**

### What is gambling?

Gambling is risking something of value on the outcome of an event when the probability of winning is less than certain.

### What is problem gambling or gambling disorder?

Problem gambling/gambling disorder is characterized by behavior that leads to adverse consequences for the gambler, others, and the community.

### What is social gambling?

Social gamblers gamble for entertainment, typically will not risk more than they can afford, often gamble with friends, chase losses briefly, gamble for limited periods of time, and are not preoccupied with gambling.

*See DSM-5 for more complete clinical definitions.*

**The Connecticut Council's Helpline:**  
**(888) 789-7777**

### Helpline workers provide:

- Live, confidential, and compassionate support 24-hours a day, 7-days a week
- Referrals to self-help groups, treatment providers, and other community resources

For more information, visit:  
<http://www.ccp.org>

# General Problem/Disordered Gambling

Compared to youth who do not have gambling problems, youths with gambling problems are more likely to:

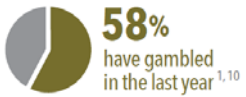
- Use alcohol, binge drink <sup>2,4,8</sup>



**MALES**  
ages 14-21



**FEMALES**  
ages 14-21



- Use illicit drugs <sup>2,4,8</sup>
- Smoke cigarettes <sup>4</sup>
- Be delinquent, have conduct problems <sup>2,4</sup>
- Attempt suicide <sup>2</sup>
- Engage in peer and dating violence and delinquency <sup>9</sup>
- Report negative peer influences <sup>9</sup>

## Youth & Adolescent Gambling Prevalance Rates

Studies have estimated the percentage of youths/adolescents who gamble and have gambling problems.

Gambling prevalence among 14–21 year olds:

◆ Gambled in the past year <sup>1,10</sup> ..... 68%

Males.....	77%
• Ages 14–15.....	68%
• Ages 16–17.....	76%
• Ages 18–19.....	83%
• Ages 20–21.....	80%

Females.....	58%
• Ages 14–15.....	53%
• Ages 16–17.....	52%
• Ages 18–19.....	65%
• Ages 20–21.....	64%

◆ Gambling by activity type in the past year<sup>3</sup>

• Card games.....	33%
• Office pools, charity.....	30%
• Lottery.....	29%
• Sports betting.....	23%
• Games of skill.....	21%
• Bingo.....	12%
• Dice games.....	9%
• Casino gambling.....	7%
• Gambling machines.....	6%
• Horse or dog tracks.....	5%
• Internet.....	2%

◆ Gambled twice a week or more<sup>1</sup> ..... 11%

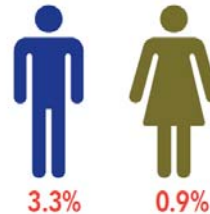
Males.....	18%
Females.....	4%

## At Risk and Problem Gambling Prevalence Among 14–21 Year Olds

**6.5%**  
of 14–21 year olds are  
**AT RISK OR  
PROBLEM  
gamblers<sup>1</sup>**



**2.1%**  
of 14–21 year olds are  
**PROBLEM  
gamblers<sup>1</sup>**



## Prevention Strategies

### ◆ *Increased Parental Awareness of Youth Gambling*

A recent study in Canada confirmed previous reports by youth that parents do not perceive youth gambling to be a serious issue.<sup>14</sup> Of 13 potential adolescent risky behaviors, gambling is viewed as the least problematic.<sup>14</sup>

### ◆ *Increased Teacher Awareness and Education*

Another recent study in Canada, assessing teachers' awareness and attitudes regarding adolescent gambling and other high-risk behaviors, found that gambling was viewed as being the least serious of issues affecting youth. Drug use and school violence topped the list.<sup>15</sup>

## Signs of a Gambling Disorder

*A person shows signs of gambling disorder if he/she:*

- Needs to gamble with increasing amounts of money to achieve the desired excitement.
- Exhibits restless or irritable behavior when attempting to cut down or stop gambling.
- Is preoccupied with thoughts about gambling.
- Gambles when feeling distress (e.g., helpless, guilty, anxious, depressed).
- Chases one's losses/returns another day to get even.
- Lies to conceal the extent of gambling.
- Jeopardizes a significant relationship, job, or opportunity because of gambling.
- Relies on others to provide money to relieve desperate financial situations caused by gambling.

For more information about gambling disorder, please refer to evaluation tools provided by the DSM-5.

## Endnotes

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