

Double Down Blues: Youth Gambling and Our Community

Project ACE 2005

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Project ACE

Action, Commitment, Education

What is it?

A community-based, assets driven, action oriented collaborative effort of parents, business people, government officials, law enforcement and judicial system leaders, educators, young people, and many more focused on sharing and using our expertise to identify effective and innovative ways to minimize the impact of six critical issues on young people in southwest North Dakota because we recognize the important role young people will play in the future success and vitality of our region.

What are the six issues?

Alcohol, meth and other drugs, gambling, violence, suicide, sex and sexuality

From the headlines....

- **Reality shows featuring four casinos (The Palms, Golden Nugget, Caesars Palace, and Green Valley Ranch) aired this year, and several other series were set in Las Vegas.**
- ***ABC News, CNN, JCSD, New York Times, and 60 Minutes, and others have addressed gambling by young people.***
- **Bed, Bath, & Beyond's Christmas catalogue features blackjack and poker sets.**
- **Poker sets are on sale at Albertson's, located in a high traffic area**
- **A bill was introduced in the most recent session of the North Dakota legislature to legalize online gambling in our state.**

A bit of history....

Gambling has always been a part of human behavior and is arguably more popular now than ever before.

The growth in gambling is a world-wide phenomenon.

Defining gambling

- *"If you bet on a horse, that's gambling. If you bet you can make three spades, that's entertainment. If you bet cotton will go up three points, that's business. See the difference?" Blackie Sherwood, American Sportswriter (Urbanowicz, 1998)*
- **Types of activity: pari-mutuel betting, lotteries, casino gaming, charitable gaming**
- **Legality: skill vs. chance, whether for money (or how much), whether for profit of operator, Internet**
- **Venue: bricks and mortar (inc. tribal casinos), phone or electronic, Internet**

A bit about the history of gambling in the United States....

First wave: Colonial times to the mid-19th century

Second wave: Just after the conclusion of the Civil War to the early 20th century

Third wave: Great Depression to the late 1990s

Fourth wave: Late 1990s to the current

A bit of background...

- **Hawaii is the only state without some form of legalized gambling.**
- **85% of U.S. residents 18+ have gambled within the past year with rate being roughly equal between men and women. Lottery most common. Casino gaming largest extent (Welte, et. al., 2002)**
- **Legalized gambling grossed \$73B last year (American Gaming Association)**
- **More than 2,000 gambling web sites took in almost 10B dollars (an increase of 40% from the previous year). Most of the revenue came from the U.S. (Christiansen Capital Advisors)**
- **Poker doubling to 2B dollars annually and attracting 1M players per month (CasinoCity.com)**

Before they become college students...

- **Teenagers become involved in gambling sooner than they become involved in smoking and alcohol use (Harvard Medical School, 1997), and teens (particularly male teens) are more likely to have gambled than to have drunk alcohol, used tobacco, or smoked pot (Annenberg National Risk Survey of Youth, 2003)**
- **As many as 8% of American and Canadian teenagers self-identify as having a serious gambling problem - almost 2X as high as the rate for adults (University of Minnesota, 1998)**
- **35M teens are addicted to gambling (Harvard Medical School, 1997)**

Once they become college students...

- **85% of college students in the United States report having been involved in some form of gambling, and 23% report being involved on a weekly basis (Lesieur, et al, 1991)**
- **About half of college students in the United States have gambled within the past year (University of Minnesota, 1998)**
- **Why do college students gamble? In order – Money, enjoyment/fun, social reasons (Neighbors, et al, 2002)**
- **5.6% of college students in the United States are pathological gamblers (Shaffer and Hall, 2001)**
- **672K college students are addicted to gambling (Harvard Medical School, 1997)**

Why we're here today...

- **There is a discrepancy between the rates of gambling behavior (particularly problem behavior) by young people and awareness regarding that behavior on the part of parents, educators, and other adults.**
- **There is a relationship between likeliness to gamble, risk-taking behavior, and the use of alcohol and other drugs.**
- **The ways in which pathological gamblers raise money after losing regular funds are (in rank order): salary advance, use savings, float checks, cash in bonds or IRAs, use funds put away for special purposes, convert physical assets, borrow from multiple sources, con family and friends, borrow from loan sharks, steal from family and friends, evade income taxes, commit embezzlement/forgery/fraud (Texas Council on Problem and Compulsive Gambling, 1995).**

Poker

- **The Internet is one of two large influences on the poker craze**
 - **PokerStars.com estimates 50 million people play poker at least one time a month.**
 - **\$136.1M was wagered at online poker sites in September.**
- **Television is the other large influence on the poker craze:**
 - **Bravo's Celebrity Poker Showcase**
 - **CBS's Ultimate Poker Challenge**
 - **ESPN's World Series of Poker**
 - **Game Show Network's Poker Royale**
 - **Fox Sport's Poker Superstars**
 - **Travel Channel World Poker Tour**
- **Poker is being actively marketed to young people on both the Internet and television.**

- **Some parents and colleges and universities see poker as “fun, non-alcoholic” student entertainment – as long as no money changes hands.**

- **Barry Shulman: “I am impressed at how focused kids are, how much they know about statistical aspects of the game. Poker offers five things:**
 - **Social interaction**
 - **Help with math and number related skills**
 - **Understanding of risk/reward scenarios**
 - **Lessons in how to read looks and gestures**
 - **Insights into your own limits of self control.”**

Sports Gambling

- **Sports gambling is legal in three states- NV, DE, and OR (lottery)**
- **48% of the people who gamble bet on sports (The National Gambling Study Commission)**
- **Estimated range of illegal sports betting in U.S.- \$80 to \$380 billion (Weinberg, 2003)**
- **\$81.2 million legal bets in 2004 Super Bowl (Martin)**
- **Online 2004 Super Bowl bets \$400 million**
- **\$4M is wagered online and at the legal Nevada sports book on college basketball. Half of that \$4 billion wagered on the NCAA tournament (Christiansen Capital Advisors)**
- **29,700 hits found on Google search for “college sport gambling”**

Research on Student-Athletes and Gambling

- **Cullen & Latessa (1996), 648 DI Football & Basketball players**
 - **4% of players gambled on games they played in**
 - **25% gambled on other college sporting events**
 - **0.5% received money from gambler for not playing well**
- **Cross & Vollano (1998), 765 DI Football & Basketball players**
 - **80% of male student-athletes gambled**
 - **45% gambled on sports**
 - **7.1% placed bet with bookie or sports card**
- **NCAA National Study on Collegiate Sports Wagering and Associated Behaviors (2004)**
 - **Males reported higher rates of sport gambling than females
35% to 10%**
 - **Division III gambles more than DI or DII**

Reasons Given by Student-Athletes for Gambling (NCAA, 2004)

- **Fun 75.6%**
- **Win money 53.0%**
- **Excitement 52.1%**

Reasons Given by College Students for Gambling (Neighbors, Lostutter, Cronce, & Larimer, 2002)

- **Win money**
- **Fun**
- **Social reasons**
- **Excitement**

Why Are Young People At Risk, And Which Are Most At Risk?

Vast Majority Not of Legal Age

Disposable Income (perceived or otherwise)/Access to Credit

Proximity, Prevalence, and Marketing of Gaming (RL or Internet)

Move Toward Adulthood

- **Social sense of gaming as sophisticated or adult**
- **New experiences and testing boundaries**
- **Redefining selves (interests, morals)**

Social Pressures

- **Hanging with the "haves"**
- **Peer groups (fraternities, teams, residence halls)**

Escape

- **Getting away from school and other pressures**
- **Immediate rewards versus long-term gains**
- **Feeling appreciated and connected (slot crowd friendly, staff)**

Power

- **Bright, feel brighter ("systems", "tips", "locks")**
- **Competitive**
- **Feeling important (big tipping, jewelry)**

Risk Groups

- **Men and women**
- **People with early exposure to gambling (parental histories or personal experiences) or other co-morbidities**
- **Male bonding groups (fraternities, sports teams, male residence halls)**

To do list...

- **Review current conduct policies to assure that they make explicit reference to institutional expectations with regard to gambling behavior. Be as clear with young people about your expectations regarding gambling as you are about other behaviors.**
- **Include questions on gambling in focus groups or surveys at your institution (focusing on both activity and needs). Ask your young people about their thoughts and experiences related to gambling.**
- **Integrate information related to gambling behavior into existing social norming education programs and information on problem gambling into existing addiction prevention and treatment programs for young people.**
- **Advocate for gambling education programs to be developed and implemented for particularly ‘at risk’ groups**

- **If your organization is going to use gambling as a fund-raiser or alternative activity, fulfill your responsibility to educate. Make available a list of local referral resources for off-campus assistance including numbers for Gambler's Anonymous or similar programs, financial counseling, etc.**
- **Other ideas?**

Things not to lose along the way

Cabbage patch territory

What I once wrote “There are were over 650 Internet gaming sites with five to six domain registrations daily. Internet gaming estimated at 1.2B in 1999 and estimated to exceed 3B in 2002.¹”

Type “gambling” or “student gambling” into Google or your local web site and see what you get

Respond to behavior. Address illness.

Bookies and wannabe bookies