

Betting on Our Future Toolkit Team



About California Friday Night Live Partnership

The mission of Friday Night Live is to build partnerships for positive and healthy youth development which engage youth as active leaders and resources in their communities.

The primary focus of the FNL/CL/FNL Kids/FNL Mentoring Programs is to form youth/adult partnerships with young people, providing programs rich in opportunities and support, so young people will be less likely to engage in problem behaviors, more likely to achieve in school, and more likely to attend higher education or secure a full-time job. FNL's vision is to work hand-in hand with young people so they are both problem free and fully prepared.

The California Friday Night Live Partnership provides the leadership and field support needed for continued growth and enhancement of FNL/CL/FNL Kids and FNL Mentoring programs. The California Friday Night Live Partnership (CFNLP) was formed to support the following goals for the Friday Night Live system: to provide guidance and leadership to the Friday Night Live Partnership counties, and to build alliances in support of youth development.



About FNL ORET and Youth Leadership Institute

This toolkit was compiled by California Friday Night Live Office of Research, Education, and Training (FNL ORET) with funding from the Office of Problem Gambling through a grant from the California Friday Night Live Partnership. FNL ORET is a project of the Youth Leadership Institute, offering comprehensive technical assistance and support to the California Friday Night Live Partnership.

Youth Leadership Institute has been an innovative leader in the field of youth development for over 20 years—teaching communities to invest in developing youth, and training youth to inspire their communities by being advocates for change. At YLI we believe cultivating engaged and dynamic young people today will lead to a more equitable and sustainable society tomorrow. Learn more about YLI at www.yli.org.

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Introduction

The Betting on Our Future (BOOF) chapter projects are part of an established awareness campaign to develop and execute creative, high-energy presentations to communicate the risks and signs of problem gambling among youth.

Who This is For

This toolkit is intended for young people and their adult advisors to develop creative, youth-driven, gambling prevention multi-media presentations. The purpose of the toolkit is to provide you with basic sample tools, resources and instruction that will assist you in implementing the project.

Materials and resources provided include a brochure on teen problem gambling, plus a postcard with a self-test to assess risk behaviors for problem gambling (in English and Spanish). Both were developed by the California Friday Night Live Partnership (CFNLP) and available for use and distribution. In addition, problem gambling presentations, curriculum, and a fact sheet are provided by NICOS Chinese Health Coalition.

This toolkit highlights the projects created by participating chapters of California Friday Night Live, during the 2009-10 year of the Betting on Our Future (BOOF) project. In this document, you'll find project summaries of Chapter-led projects from 2009-2010. On the enclosed disk are the video projects and scripts produced by the Chapters.

Electronic versions of all files are provided on the enclosed disk.

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Some Good Words from the Field

"It is important for youth to observe what is happening around them on their school campus. What are the forms of gambling that are taking place and are the 'players' in too deep? Is there danger such as betting on binge drinking? If so, the youth must be willing to be advocates."

- Bruce Royer, President, Royer Studios, BOOF Coordinator

"Problem Gambling is more of a problem among our youth than one realizes. I will never forget when one of our team members opened up about his family's problem with gambling, after finishing our first project. It inspired him to make our next problem gambling video."

- Charles Dichiera, Mt. Whitney Digital Film, Tulare, CA

"Listen carefully to the student participants. Guide them in the development of writing clear ideas. Give them the necessary tools to explain their honorable belief systems. Teach them to defend and promote their system until their last breath."

- Rodney Anderson, Playwright/Producer, BOOF Coordinator

"The Betting On Our Future project has engaged young people in a youth development framework and the results are amazing! The young people have built skills in communication, increased knowledge about the risks of problem gambling, and produced incredible products to educate and increase awareness in their community about problem gambling and how to get help."

- Dr. Jim Kooler, Administrator, California Friday Night Live

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Before You Start

Engage Young People in Community Efforts

Supporting youth-driven and led efforts is a core ingredient to this effort. Engaging young people in issues that directly impact them benefits not only benefits young people, but also benefits adults, organizations and communities.

Why Get Youth Involved?

- **Reason 10:** More people to help.
- **Reason 9:** It builds flexibility and responsiveness.
- **Reason 8:** It builds a network of adults who support young people.
- **Reason 7:** It builds a network of young leaders.
- **Reason 6:** It involves young people in visible leadership positions.
- **Reason 5:** It makes your meetings fun and interactive.
- **Reason 4:** It systematizes young people's involvement.
- **Reason 3:** It trains leaders on intergenerational relationships.
- **Reason 2:** Young people are natural leaders.
- **Reason 1:** It increases the effectiveness of your project or campaign!

Youth-Adult Partnerships

Successful youth-adult partnerships are created when both youth and adults operate from a mindset of mutual respect, trust, and support, and when they work together to further individual and community development. Youth engagement - involving young people as full partners and key decision-makers in programs, organizations and systems that affect their lives - supports successful youth-adult partnerships. So, how do you get started?

Get Started with Building Youth-Adult Partnerships:

- Adults need to be willing to share their power and responsibility.
- Young people need to be willing to gain power and take on responsibility.
- Both youth and adults need the skills to work successfully together.
- Forget about youth and adults as separate groups and start treating each other the way they would treat their peers.

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Profile of an Adult Ally

What qualities shape an effective adult ally? While the following qualities may feel obvious and intuitive (which is good!), it's important to reflect upon how these qualities are evident in your work. View them as the glue that holds your project work together.

- **Passion for Youth Perspectives:** Adult allies are committed to achieving a deep understanding of the evidence that supports youth community engagement and perspectives on a variety of issues.
- **Partnership:** Youth-adult partnerships form the basis of Youth-Led Projects. Through mutual respect, cross-generational learning, and shared decision-making, youth and adults are valued for their perspectives, ideas, and experiences.
- **Support:** From skill-building trainings to connection to social services, adult allies provide youth with supports for their personal and social growth.
- **Engagement:** Adult allies believe in and work toward full and meaningful youth engagement in their communities. Adult allies often act as a liaison among community groups and youth: they bring youth to community tables, and work toward making community decision-making tables more accessible and safer places for youth.
- **Fun and Celebrate:** Having fun is a crucial ingredient! Adult allies keep a sense of humor and facilitate a fun experience for youth so that youth are celebrated for who they are and what they contribute to their communities.
- **Creativity:** Effective adult allies learn to be flexible and adaptable to perceived obstacles. They can creatively and resourcefully turn challenges into learning opportunities for reflection and redirection.
- **Community Commitment:** Adult allies feel committed to the communities or schools they work in and are invested in work that respectfully addresses community needs and honors community strengths. They hold a positive, realistic attitude about their communities, and remain open and willing to listen and learn from the experiences of community members.
- **Promote Youth Voice:** Promoting youth voice in its diversity of experiences, ideas, and opinions, adult allies aim to create safe spaces for youth voices to be heard in their communities, and to foster confidence among youth to speak.

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- **Diversity:** Adult allies are sensitive to and address power inequalities, such as those relating to race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, class, age, ability, etc. They reflect upon and explore with colleagues and with youth members the concepts of power and privilege and how they play out in our communities. Adult allies collaborate in identifying positive and thoughtful responses to challenge and address inequities in their communities.
- **Reflect and Recognize:** Adult allies reflect with colleagues and facilitate reflection with youth team members on learning experiences in all forms and times (i.e. project work, community collaborations, healthy risk-taking, revisiting past experiences of success and obstacle). They recognize and draw attention to the everyday choices youth make to value their thinking, relationships, and aspirations.
- **Honesty:** Adult allies are willing to risk not being another adult who “has all the answers.” Demonstrating honesty about learning experiences, challenges, and successes encourages authentic life experience and development among youth and other adult allies.

Best Practices in Youth-Led Efforts

Lessons from the Field

The following practices pair common outreach and recruitment strategies with creative ways to make youth-led efforts accessible and exciting. These practices, or helpful hints, address some of the most common challenges and solutions heard among the field of youth development practitioners in California.

- 1. Inspire!** We're all motivated by the success, inspiration, and learning experiences of the community change work of others—especially youth. Share stories of success and overcoming challenges in group process or meetings. Meet other youth advocates (invite them to your meetings or go out and interview). Network with other youth—share your learning experiences with each other.
- 2. Leadership and Skill Development.** Promote leadership and skill development opportunities making connections to everyday life. Mention skill building and leadership opportunities in recruitment material (i.e. presentation and public speaking, working with elected officials, organizing youth in your community, etc). Connect leadership and skill development opportunities to school success, career advancement, and college preparation (i.e. leading a workgroup or project can be helpful in a job or college application). Highlight that all youth are leaders and provide opportunities that put leadership in action.
- 3. Meet Youth and Community Leaders.** Identify opportunities to meet and work with other youth and decision-makers in your community, county, and state. Publicly recognize groups, networks, and movements that engage youth. Emphasize the relationships that youth will build with community stakeholders, public officials, and other elected leaders.
- 4. Meeting Time.** Ensure that youth are able to successfully attend coalition and project meetings by scheduling meetings for afternoons, evenings, and weekends. Have a consistent meeting time (i.e. first and third Tuesdays, 6:00-8:00 pm). Provide a calendar of meeting times and dates at the beginning of the year. Email meeting reminders and establish a phone-tree in your group to send reminder calls.
- 5. Responsibility.** Recognize that many youth have a lot of school and after-school responsibilities (homework, taking care of siblings, work, sports, other groups, etc). Support youth in managing their time well by providing manageable responsibilities and informal check-in time. Place time commitment responsibilities. Create group expectations and support youth to hold each other accountable. Check in with

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the progress on tasks between meetings. Provide opportunities in meetings to check-in and share what's going on at school, home, etc.

- 6. Transportation.** Youth have varying transportation needs. Many do not have access to their own transportation, public transportation may be difficult, and/or families share vehicles, etc.

Meet in a centralized community location that is accessible to public transit. Create a transit fund (i.e. bus tokens). Identify adult allies (staff, parents, etc) who can share in carpool responsibilities.

- 7. Fun and Interesting.** Use interesting, exciting and hands-on approaches to learning information and skills. Get out of the meeting room. Hit the streets and learn about the community in new ways through assessment, mapping, and survey efforts. Incorporate fun activities and icebreakers into meeting agenda. Encourage creative expression (through different art drama, photography, spoken word, etc) when preparing for community advocacy presentations.

- 8. Youth-led Assessment.** Set aside time at the beginning of the project or program year or for youth to reflect on and assess skills, knowledge, and opportunities. They should also think about their goals for the project. Develop a 'menu' of relevant skills, knowledge, and opportunities, including space to add more areas. Plan check-in points throughout the project period to evaluate progress and course correct.

- 9. Recognition.** Provide recognition opportunities for youth. Recognition can raise awareness of your issue, promote interest in your group, and most importantly, recognize the commitment and contributions of youth involved in creating healthier communities. Participate in, or convene, an annual youth celebration and recognition events.

Friday Night Live Youth Development Standards of Practice

The Friday Night Live system has put forth a set of research-based principles of effective youth development practices and principles into a clear framework for FNL programs. A growing body of research has made the case that youth development is an effective approach to preventing problems and increasing positive outcomes in other areas, such as skill building, and social and personal skills. Integrating the best of the research in identifying the five youth development outcomes - or "Standards of Practice" that guide youth development FNL programs. It is the aim to provide these supports and opportunities during the program.

Youth in FNL/Club Live programs will experience the following:

1. A safe environment

- Physical Safety: to feel safe physically, free from the risk of harm.
- Emotional Safety: to feel safe emotionally, to feel like they can be who they are.

2. Opportunities for community engagement

- Knowledge of Community: to learn about their community and its resources.
- Interaction/Interface with the Community: to interact and work with community members.
- Communication with the Community: to communicate about the program or youth issues.
- Contribution to the Community: to give back and serve their community.

3. Opportunities to for leadership and advocacy

- Decisionmaking and Governance: to participate in decisionmaking and occupy leadership roles, such as staff or board roles.
- Youth Voice: to learn to express their opinions constructively and to hear those of others.
- Action: to take action on issues or projects they care about outside of the program--in the community, at school.

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4. Opportunities to build caring and meaningful relationships with peers and adults

- Peer Knowledge: to learn about their peers and build relationships with them.
- Adult Knowledge/Guidance: to learn about the adult staff and build relationships with them.
- Emotional Support: to feel supported emotionally by others in the program.
- Practical Support: to feel like their practical needs are met by adult staff.
- Sense of Belonging: to feel like they belong, like they matter to the group and its success.

5. Opportunities to engage in interesting and relevant skill development activities

- Specific Skills: to develop and build specific skills through program activities.
- Challenging and Interesting Activities: to engage in interesting and challenging activities.

Sample Project Timeline

As an advisor, it is helpful to have a general timeline and plan of key happenings for the project. Even though youth members will develop a project workplan in their project planning, this general adult advisor planning guide will support your partnership and their success. The below table is provided to assist you in thinking about what major activity areas and support is needed and when during the project implementation. Note that some activities may change when the youth team dive into their planning.

Project: Betting on Our Future (BOOF) Production

Objective: To partner and support young people to develop and disseminate a creative and interactive production that promotes awareness about youth problem gambling to their peers and community

	OUTREACH or RECRUITMENT	TRAINING	YOUTH MEETINGS	PROJECT ACTIVITIES	KEY EVENTS	EVALUATION or REFLECTION
Month or Week: _____						
Month or Week: _____						
Month or Week: _____						
Month or Week: _____						
Month or Week: _____						
Month or Week: _____						

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Get Your Group Together

Getting Started

A group of people working well together is the basis for a successful group project. Here are some important elements you need in order to create an effective group prior to starting your project.

Create a Safe and Trusting Environment

For groups to work well, it is important for people to feel included, welcome and safe. As a leader or group facilitator, this is one of the first things you should do. Below are some ways to do this.

- Make sure folks know each other's names and some important information about each other. Name games and small group discussions go a really long way here.
- Help bring out the diversity of backgrounds, interests, talents and strengths of group members. Recognizing and valuing differences increases personal safety for group members, and creates an inventory of abilities the group can use when planning and carrying out its project.
- Do something fun and informal that everyone can participate in.
- Have a movie night, organize a trip to the beach, or go bowling.

Establish a Mission or Purpose

Developing a mission or purpose is another important step in group work. Getting clarity about why you have come together makes it possible to move forward to more specific projects.

Create Ground Rules or Expectations

Creating ground rules and expectations for youth and adult allies lays the groundwork for this "positive space." The group leader needs to help the group establish these rules and expectations, and help the group enforce them over time. Be sure to ask the group what an expectation looks like. For example, "be respectful" - what would that look like, can you give an example?

Sample Group Expectations

- Participate and "show up"
- One mic, one voice
- Agree to disagree
- No put downs
- Agree on technology use during meeting or working time
- Have fun!

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1. Understanding Problem Gambling

Background Information You Need to Know

Gambling among youth is a growing public health concern. While gambling is predominantly seen as a harmless adult pass-time, many youth exposed to the availability and accessibility of various forms of gambling are tempted by the pressures to participate (McGill Education).

Current research shows that problem gambling among adolescents is associated with adverse outcomes including delinquency, crime, depression and suicide that have an impact on broader society.

Youth and gambling:

- The average age at which problem gamblers had their first contact with any sort of gambling was 10 years old.
- 4-8% of adolescents presently have a serious gambling problem with another 10-14% of adolescents at risk for developing a serious gambling problem.
- A recent nationwide study estimates 2.9 million young people are gambling on cards on a weekly basis.

Consequences of Youth Gambling:

Youth who gamble are:

- Three times more likely to drink alcohol
- Four times more likely to smoke
- Twice as likely to use marijuana
- Twice as likely to use other illegal drugs
- Four times as likely to get in trouble with the police
- Three times as likely to be involved in a gang fight
- A recent study found that more than 50 percent of kids who gamble reported problems like over-spending. Teens record that they can win/lose as much as \$150 to \$200 a night

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Parental Influence:

- 84% of parents do not object to their children gambling
- 61% of teens who gamble do it with their parent's permission

Resources in the Appendix:

Be sure to use the resources in the Appendix to familiarize your group with the problem gambling issue. There are Power Point presentations, curriculum with exercises, a fact sheet, and a self-assessment for youth.

Find Out More:

California State Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs, Office of Problem Gambling

www.adp.ca.us/OPG

Brochure downloads:

<http://www.adp.state.ca.us/OPG/OPGdownloads.shtml>

NICOS Chinese Health Coalition

<http://www.nicoschc.org/>

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Exercise: Youth Problem Gambling Discussion Guide

Below are discussion questions for your group after reading through the facts on problem gambling. Divide into small discussion groups of 3-4 people each. Ask each group to choose a volunteer to facilitate the conversation and another to record the group's thoughts and ideas on paper. After 15 minutes of discussion, ask groups to report out.

Time: 30 minutes

What stands out to you about this information?

What does this problem look like among your peers and in your community?

What are the norms (what is considered normal?) around this issue with your peers, family or community?

Where do you see messages promoting gambling? (Where? From whom? What are these messages?)

What additional information should we find out about this issue?

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2. Identifying and Choosing Issues to Address

Many youth groups start taking action by identifying a problem they want to solve—this is a great place to begin. There are other ways to start, as well. A group could start with a vision of what they want to see in the future, or do a project that helps them use and develop their interests, talents or skills. Where you start is less important than the act of starting. Just start!

Some Examples of Issues

- School is boring and “kids” are always getting in trouble.
- We don’t learn much about our community’s history & culture.
- My family gambles to make ends meet
- Youth in our community don’t see problem gambling as an issue

Dig Deeper

If the focus of your project and work is around problem gambling, dig a little deeper to explore issues within this area. Problem gambling is a pretty broad topic, so what aspect of problem gambling does your group want to focus? Consider some of these areas:

- Casinos in the community and impacts on gambling
- Culture and gambling
- Gambling effects on academic performance
- Gambling and families
- Alcohol use and gambling
- Parental disapproval and problem gambling
- Youth’s low perception of harm about gambling
- What is considered gambling?
- Risks and consequences of youth problem gambling
- Social norms around gambling

The following exercises will assist you in identifying and breaking down further issues - “symptoms and root causes” to problem gambling.

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Exercise: The Problem Tree

This exercise helps you identify and organize different problems or issues that your community or school might have around problem gambling, and think about some of the root causes.

Materials: Large paper tree, green pieces of paper to symbolize leaves, other paper to symbolize roots, tape, markers

Time: 45 mins. - 1 hour

Directions:

1. Tape up a big piece of paper on the wall. For the full effect, the paper should be in the shape of a tree, with roots, trunk and branches.
2. Write in the middle of the trunk of the tree “head cold” and ask the participants to shout out what happens what the symptoms are when they have a head cold. Write these responses next to/on the branches of the tree. Examples include “runny nose”, “headache”, “fever”, “achy feeling”, “sneezing”.
3. Explain that these items written on the branches are the SYMPTOMS, but that in order for these symptoms to occur, there must be a cause. Ask the participants to shout out what causes a person to have a head cold, and write these responses next to/on the roots of the tree. Examples include “germs”, “not enough sleep”, “don’t dress warm enough”, “bad diet”.
4. Explain that these items written on the roots are the CAUSES to the symptoms. Often we spend lots of money and energy trying to get rid of the symptoms (like taking an aspirin for a headache), but if the root causes are not addressed, the symptoms will continue (if you don’t sleep at night, it doesn’t matter how many aspirins you take, your headache will keep coming back).
5. Use this analogy to focus on other social problems, like problem gambling. Hand out 3-5 pieces of paper in the shape of leaves to each person. Follow steps 2-4, engaging participants to first identify the symptoms (i.e. of alcohol abuse could be violence, death, school dropout, loss of job, etc.) and then the factors that cause these symptoms (i.e. of alcohol abuse could be easy access, peer pressure, etc.) Ask people to think about the problems and concerns, or “symptoms” youth face about the issue of problem gambling—things they might want to do something about. Give an example to help people get going. Make sure they write in large letters so it will be visible.

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6. In silence, have participants write down the problems on the leaves. Take about 5 minutes to do this. Have tape ready so that when individual writing is done, you are ready to post the leaves on the trees.
7. Ask participants to come up and tape their leaves on the tree.
8. Ask volunteers to identify the concerns or problems that appear most frequently on the tree. Have volunteers reorganize leaves so that there are clusters of problems that are similar (example: put all the education-related problems in one cluster).
9. Have another volunteer write down the general cluster themes on a separate piece of flip chart paper so that everyone can see the themes clearly. Now you have identified a number of problems or issues that are important to the group.
10. Next Steps: Assign partners to identify 1 or 2 root causes for each of the problem-clusters. Explain that we can often get at the root of a problem by continuing to ask “why?”

Talking Points

The power of this activity is in the simple and visual analogy that can be replicated for multiple issues and efforts at designing effective community development planning and organizing. As the facilitator, remind participants that effective action planning and organizing starts by addressing the root/causes of a problem, rather than focusing on the “bandaid” solution (i.e. an aspirin for a headache, a “just say no” program for alcohol abuse).



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If you did the Problem Tree Exercise, you have probably come up with lots of problems or issues you could address around problem gambling.

How then, do you pick the problem or issue you want to focus on with your media project? Think about these questions to help you choose:

- Is it a problem or issue that all of our group members care about? Does it seem more important than the other problems we are looking into?
- Are group members comfortable focusing on this issue?
- Is it a problem that affects our group directly? If it does, you'll be more motivated to look into it.
- Does the problem affect lots of our peers, families or community? If so, you will find more support from others to help you achieve your goals.
- Is there a clear angle we can take to address the issue?

Bright Ideas for Youth-Led Gambling Prevention Multi-Media Projects

What angle or story line will you explore, teach others or highlight in your project? It is known that you will communicate the risks and signs of problem gambling among youth to promote community awareness about the issue, but is there an additional focus area or angle?

You may also want to highlight a specific focus within problem gambling like in a community, culture or age group, or messages about gambling.

- Explore the cultural aspects of gambling in certain communities, cultures or ethnicities and break-down stereotypes.
- Highlight the risk factors and consequences associated with problem gambling for young people, families and communities.
- What does gambling look like today in mainstream culture? Is it what we usually expect?
- What are the messages youth receive about problem gambling? From family? From media and music? From their community?
- Tell the story of someone who is impacted by problem gambling.

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Package your Multi-Media Production

Now that you have a focus, think about the various ways to package your message and information. There are a variety of ways to utilize and package a message to the community. Be sure what you choose fits your group's skills, timeline and is appropriate to the issue you are focusing on.

- Public Service Announcement or Commercial**
 Intended for a broad audience and often no longer than 30 seconds. This promotes an awareness message about an issue. This can be both radio spots or video spots and include animation.
- Video Documentary**
 Present facts or a story in a visual fashion in an attempt to document reality creatively. This has no limits in time but is usually longer in order to follow a story line. This can tell a story of a community, person or specific issue. Often contains some interviews.
- Play Production**
 Creative representation of a story delivered to an audience in person. This can be from 15 minutes to two hours, and can be a single act or broken up into multiple acts.

Exercise – Determining Your Media Product

If you haven't decided which media product to develop, use this worksheet to map out some of the pros and cons to each, the resources you have and the resources you need for each to aid in the groups' decision.

	Pros	Cons	Things We Have	Things We Need
Short Video				
Public Service Announcement				
Video Documentary				
Play Production				
Other? _____				

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3. Develop Your Action Plan and Timeline

Now that you have your focus, it is time to plan the tasks in creating the multi-media awareness production.

Groups use planning to make sure they are using their time, people power, money and other resources well. Planning includes figuring out your big vision as well as what tasks each person in your group should be doing in a given week. Plans are valuable tools to help make sure youth are included in decision-making and other important work. A lot of people don't like planning because it can be difficult or confusing. But having a strong and clear plan is the best preparation to make sure your project or program can operate smoothly and effectively.

Adult allies have a special role to play in helping youth-led groups do planning. Adults need to help youth stay accountable and focused on their vision and long-term goals, instead of getting distracted by new opportunities and issues that

Dos and Don'ts of Planning

- DO create a vision for your project as the foundation of your planning, and come back to it frequently as you carry out your work.
- DON 'T fall back on the plan you wrote for your fundraising proposal as your end-all, be-all plan. Often, groups don't make the time to plan, and end up using the plan they needed to develop for their fundraising proposals instead. Your funding proposals should be based on your own, more detailed plan, not the other way around.
- DO stay focused and DON 'T get caught up doing things that don't help you move towards your goals. Adult allies should help youth stay focused on your core work.
- DON 'T underestimate how much time things take—including planning time itself! Tasks generally take a lot longer to get done than you think they will. Give your group lots of time—twice the amount you think you need—to create your plans and finish your tasks.
- DON 'T plan too much work when school is starting-up or ending.
- DON 'T try to do too much at once; make sure your plan is realistic and do-able. Having a realistic plan means that your group will gain a greater sense of accomplishment by getting most of it done, instead of a sense of failure because they haven't met their own goals.

Betting on Our Future Toolkit

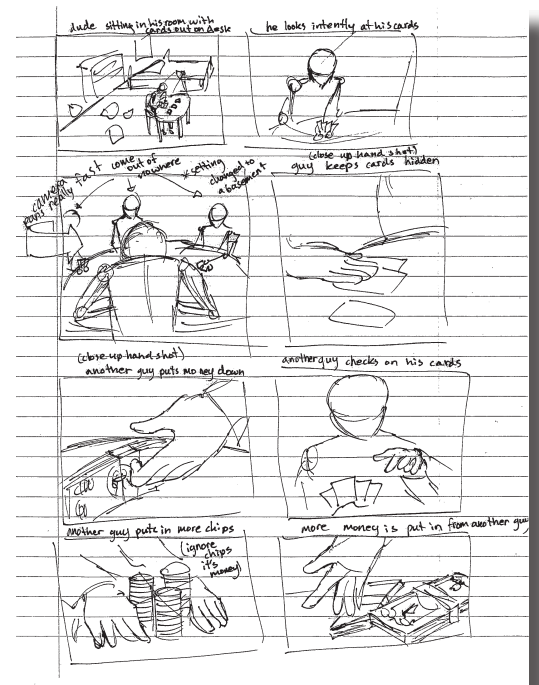
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- DO make a colorful, visual plan, listing out activities, dates, tasks and roles in a way that you can display on a wall or other visible place. This provides an important reminder to youth about the specific tasks in front of them.

Production Steps

These are some general steps to follow for your production products. Note that not all productions utilize these exact steps and may have more detail.

- 1. Determine The Concept.** This step is where you start - determine your angle and focus of your video or play. What is the key focus or story you want to communicate? What about problem gambling will you be addressing and how? This may take some time to develop in your group. Have a series of brainstorming sessions with your group to get all your ideas down on paper. Think about who, what, where when?
- 2. Develop a Storyboard.** This is a series of rough drawings or sketches that communicates the major scenes or concepts that are happening through the production. This lays the groundwork for how you want your video to look and what you want it to achieve. Don't worry about being an artist here, the main point is to get your concepts down on paper - sequentially.
- 3. Write Script or Scenes.** These are the nuts and bolts of the production (PSA, video, play), how the video or PSA or play details the specific concepts, conversations or story. Actors or key messages communicate exactly what you want in the way you want it, but also set the location, action and overall tone of the video or play. Many drafts are usually written at this stage.
- 4. Plan.** Make sure you have all the locations determined for scenes, sets completed for play productions and the equipment needed for shooting (cameras, video, lighting, props, sound, editing equipment if needed, etc.)
- 5. Rehearse.** An important piece to any production. Make sure you schedule enough time to prepare before the final filming or final event.
- 6. And Action!** Once rehearsals go smoothly, this piece begins. This can take as little as a weekend or longer, depending upon the amount of your locations, how long the video is and the amount of "takes" you have. For play productions, this is the moment to shine and deliver to a full audience!
- 7. Edit.** Once all the scenes have been shot, it's now time to weave it all together into a final product. Adding music, video effects, touch-ups, voice-overs, etc. is done here.



^Example:
storyboard from
San Diego High Tech
High BOOF project.

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Exercise: Getting Started on an Action Plan

On Your Mark

School/Group Name _____

Contact _____ Phone/Email _____

Youth Names _____

Lights...

What is your topic?: _____ (problem gambling)

What is the specific issue or challenge that you want to address? (For example: Linkages between alcohol and problem gambling? Culture and gambling? Risk factors about problem gambling? Messages about gambling? Forms of gambling today?)

Camera...

How are you going to address this? In other words, what specifically are you going to do?

Action!

What are the different steps/actions that you will take?

Actions

When it will happen, what will you need, and who will do it?

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Success!

If it all works out, what will be different in your school or community?

Resources...

Brainstorm all the things or people that will help you do your project successfully.

How will you get to your resources?

Challenges...

Brainstorm all the things or people that might stand in your way of doing your project.

How can you overcome your challenges? Who can help you?

Exercise: Creating Short-Term Work Plans

Time: 1 hour

For emerging groups, creating short-term work plans is an important and necessary introduction to planning concepts. You might have a solid idea, a clear vision, and a motivated team. However, the youth group may need a structured way to explore the specific steps and timing for implementation of its project, or components of the project. Below is a group activity that will help you make a plan for a short-term project, like a multi-media project, a planning retreat, or a rally. It has a lot of steps, but is straightforward, active, and fun. It is best to have this facilitated by an adult or a youth leader who has experience in making plans and facilitating group processes.

Materials Needed: Lots of large post-it notes, markers, flip chart paper, 2 pieces of flip chart paper taped together for a timeline.

Directions:

1. Tape a piece of flip chart paper on the wall—write BEFORE at the top. Explain that we are going to brainstorm potential activities that need to happen to get the project underway. Give at least one example. If you are doing an activism workshop, an example of a task might be: “find a space to hold the workshop”.
2. Pass out at least 10 post-it notes to each participant. Have the group brainstorm on post-it notes all the activities they think they need to accomplish. Remind people that a separate post-it note should be used for each activity.
3. Have everyone put up their post-it notes on the BEFORE flip chart paper. At the flip chart, have a participant cluster similar activities. The facilitator should ask the group if there were any activities that were left out. If additional ones are given, have someone record them on post-it notes & add to the flip chart paper.
4. Now you are ready for the timeline. First decide as a group how long you want the timeline to be (1 month, 4 months, 6 months, a year? Keep in mind outside deadlines). Use cross marks to note months.
5. One at a time, have participants take a post-it that represents a specific activity and put it in a place they think it needs to be. Give an example like this first: *“If you are doing a large event, you might want to reserve the room 3 months in advance to be sure you get it.”*
6. As a group, look at all the tasks arranged on the timeline. See if it makes sense to move tasks around, or add and remove tasks. Use the following questions to help stimulate discussion:

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- Do any activities seem out of order? Example: sometimes, people make the mistake of finishing a flyer before they secure dates and locations that need to be on the flyer.
 - Do any activities need more time to be accomplished?
 - Are there any activities that should be on this list but aren't yet?
7. Reserve time in this exercise for group members to assign people to carry out tasks. Write names of participants under the post-it notes.
 8. Copy all of the information into a chart so you have this information for planning! Post this in your work area as a reminder of your plan. Below is an example of a chart you can use.

Sample Workplan Template

Activity	Timeline	Who is Responsible	Notes

Project Tips and Reminders

You are well on your way in production. Remember these tips whether you are producing a play, PSA, video or other media production.

- Be sure to include 1-800 Gambler in all your material and multi-media products and messages and the www.problemgambling.ca.gov
- Get local - explore this issue and stories from a local perspective
- Get others involved!
- Follow your workplan and timeline and adjust as needed
- Connect with the community
- Have fun!

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4. Promote Your Project and Get Others Involved!

There are many ways to promote and disseminate your media project that is free through community events and social media outlets. Here are some questions for the group to consider when deciding the best place to disseminate and promote their production and message.

Exercise: Getting Your Message Out

Materials Needed: Butcher paper, handouts, markers

Directions

You can do this as a large group brainstorm or divide in to dyads or small groups depending upon the number of people in your group.

1. Explain that you need to figure out how to disseminate your group's work in order to promote awareness about problem gambling and don't want the video or work to sit on a shelf.
2. Write out the questions on a large butcher paper or copy this handout and provide.
3. Answer the below questions as a group or in small groups
4. Prioritize and determine your dissemination strategies

Questions for Dissemination:

- Who do you want to see your hear this production? Who is your audience?
- What do you hope to accomplish by having others view this production?
- Where could you get people to view our production?
Consider these using these quick and easy tools to help you promote your message:
 - Post the video or PSA on YouTube
 - Post the video on your Facebook page
 - Post the video file on your organization's or school website (seek permission from your administration)

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- Host your own community or school screening/play
- Work with your local movie theater to run your short video or PSA during the movie previews.
- Schedule and deliver a series of community presentations to different groups (try for at least 3-4 presentations)
- See if you can present at an existing upcoming event. Consider school assemblies, back to school nights, community events, local library events, local arts or film festivals, etc.
- Host a recognition event for youth participants and invite family, friends and other community members and show the production.
- Organize media presentations and discussions of the youth-led production during school lunch periods, assemblies or after school.
- What are pros and cons for us to use the different media outlets?
- Who would be involved with each media outlet or venue?
- Can you accomplish it in time?

Dissemination Method	Advantage	Disadvantage	Who's Involved?
<i>Example: TV</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Reaches a large audience</i> • <i>Cable channel is free</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>May cost too much?</i> 	

Steps for Hosting Community Events or Showings

Why a community event?

They allow young people to share their thoughts and ideas about their concerns and ideas. They are really useful when there's a "hot" issue in the community because they provide a public place to hear lots of voices. It's also a great way to collect info about how people feel, but it's more powerful because it allows youth to learn from each other and build on each other's ideas.

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Qualities of a good youth-led community event

- It takes on an issue that is important and timely, and that youth or community will care about.
- Information gathered from the event will be used for some kind of action in response to what you are learning.
- It's fun, engaging and not too long (two hours max).
- You give more than one way for youth and adults to share their ideas and concerns (i.e.: you break folks up into groups, give opportunities for folks to testify in front of large groups; share ideas in smaller break-outs, write up their ideas on butcher paper that's on the wall.)
- Your target audience attends the event

Steps to make your event happen

1. Figure out the purpose of the event

Use brainstorming to help the group answer the following questions:

- What is the main issue you will focus on?
- What do you want to achieve by the end of the event?

2. Decide what should happen at the event

Your next task is to consider what should it look like to achieve your goal. Ask the group to visualize what they would like to see happen, and write down the answers. Consider the following kinds of activities and agenda items that should be a part of a solid event or screening.

- Warm-up entertainment, like a youth performer, youth-produced video on this issue, or slide show of photos that capture the issue...
- Welcome, introductions, and overview of event purpose and hopes
- An opening section where the issue is explained and made clear so that everyone is on the same page
- The showing of the production
- Youth and attendees share their opinions and reflections regarding the issue, and these are captured in writing
- Youth and community members break into small groups to discuss more about the issue, and talk about possible next steps
- Participants are asked to follow-up in some way
- Thank yous or recognition and closing

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After you've come up with ideas, then you have to prioritize. Figure out what's important, and what you can live without. Remember that you won't have more than two hours tops, including time for people to sign in, get food, and settle down.

After deciding the agenda activities, its time to get more detailed. How should each activity look? Who should lead each activity? Who do we want any entertainment?

3. Figure out how you get people to come

It's a waste of time to plan a great event if people don't show up. Brainstorm strategies to get people to show up. Consider the following:

- Have each youth planner commit to getting 5 friends and 5 adults they know to come
- Offer raffles, prizes, food or other incentives
- Secure entertainment that might be popular with the groups you are targeting
- Use texting, facebook, or other social networking tools to reach teens who might otherwise blow off the standard flyer
- Get media attention for your event—write an advance press release
- Get other organizations to sponsor your event, and have them commit to recruiting others to attend
- Select a location and a time that's really convenient for folks.
- Train planners on how to do face to face outreach (the best way to get people to your event!)

4. Come up with a workplan & timeline for the event

Now that you know what you want to do at the event, and have thought about how to get people to come, it's time to put together a workplan and timeline. You should be pros at this since you developed one. You need to figure out: what needs to be done, when it needs to be done, and who needs to do it! One way that your team can do this is through the following steps:

- a. Give participants 5 minutes to think of all the things that need to get done to be able to pull of the event you've created.** Ask them to write each idea on a separate sticky note—one activity per note. Then, ask all members to place their notes on a piece of butcher paper that's up on a wall. Have the member cluster duplicates, and then see if anything is missing.

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- b. Have members put the activities in order of which needs to be accomplished first, second, etc.** Everyone should review the order to make sure things are done early enough and in the correct sequence (i.e.: you secure a location and date of an event before you send out a flyer.)
- c. Assign people to do the activities that you have generated.**
- d. Get it all in writing.** Use a big piece of butcher paper to create this initial workplan, and bring it to each meeting as a reminder of the progress made and things that still need to be done.

5. Costs for the event

All events are different, but you definitely need to think about how much it's going to cost.

Here are costs you should anticipate and do research to find out how much money you need for your forum:

- Renting the space
- Snacks and drinks for attendees, including paper products
- Printing costs for flyers you are sending in advance
- Postage if you are mailing invitations or flyers
- Printing costs for materials you are providing at the event
- Sound/AV equipment rental (if you need a mic or are having a performance, need a projector for a PowerPoint slide show, etc.)

Event Planning Steps and Worksheet

Suggested Roles During Event

Role	Who
Music or entertainment	
Welcomers	
Facilitator	
Greeters	
Registration/Name Tags	
Note Takers	
Food Table Monitors	
Translators	
Picture takers	
Video tapers	
Other _____	
Other _____	

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Suggested Steps to Plan an Event

Task	Person Responsible	To be done by (date)
Confirm, Date, Time and Location.		
Make flyer/Poster		
Translate Flyer/Poster into Spanish or other language		
Text messaging or email announces		
Give outreach presentations		
Talk to people individually		
Do research about the topic		
Invite Decision Makers/ Politicians		
Invite speakers to talk on your topics		
Create fun & engaging activities (ice-breaker, gameshow, raffle, skits)		
Prepare and copy handouts, flyers, etc		
Make evaluation for the event		
Buy food/drink/plates/cups/ napkins utensils		
Arrange for Entertainment or Music		
Get prizes		
Arrange for translators		
Arrange for transportation/ childcare		
Make Reminder Phone Calls		
Make sign in sheets		
Set up Food		
Set up tables, chairs etc.		
Make and put welcome signs directing people to the event.		
Get Audio/Visual equipment		
Clean up event		

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5. Reflect and Evaluate Your Project

It's good to set aside a meeting to not only evaluate the plan you just finished up, but also to use that evaluation to make a plan for the next year. Evaluations are a great opportunity for youth leaders to develop real critical thinking and planning skills—if you've kept careful track of what got done and what didn't, and how the group stuck to their original plan. If your group didn't accomplish what it set out to do originally in your plan, that's a good indication of what you should try to plan in the future. On the other hand, if you achieved more than what you set out to do, you may want to consider setting higher goals for the future. Adult allies should help youth see how to plan more realistically for the future.

Remind the group of the importance of planning a project, but don't force your own plan onto them. Make suggestions and let them decide what will work best for them, offering guidance along the way. Gaining some experience with planning and carrying out short-term projects gives young people a foundation for doing longer-term planning. It also can help them make a connection to a bigger vision for what they want. Adult allies can see long-term and strategic planning as something that should probably follow planning and implementation of short-term projects.

Evaluation is just as important as planning, and helps you move to the next phase of planning once your initial plan has been finished.

Exercise: Project Reflection

Time: 1 hour.

Directions: Once your group has finished its multi-media project, set aside time to document your work—who was involved, what you accomplished, what you consider your successes and challenges, and any important next steps. This is an important opportunity for your group to celebrate its hard work and recognize the skills and learning experiences gained through the campaign.

1. Project Time Frame:

2. Who participated?

Describe the demographics of the core youth who participated

Describe the demographics of school and community members

3. List and describe the activities your group conducted

Planning and Research Activities

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Multi-Media Activities

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Community or School Awareness/Outreach Activities

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

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What do you feel were some of your **SUCCESES**? What contributed to the success?

What do you feel were some of your **CHALLENGES**? What contributed to the challenge?

What new **SKILLS** did you gain from your project? What skills did you build upon with this project?

What **NEXT STEPS** do you think need to happen in order for the project to make changes in the community? Who should be involved with these next steps?

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Project Spotlights

These spotlights offer examples and short case studies of real youth-led multi-media presentations and projects on problem gambling in local communities. From urban to rural, from plays to YouTube videos, check out how these groups developed their products and raised awareness about the risks of problem gambling and informed others about existing resources. On the enclosed DVD, you can view their multi-media products.

SPOTLIGHT

Mt. Whitney High School - Digital Film

Visalia, CA

Informational Video

Students from Mt. Whitney High School began their project by brainstorming and pitching ideas to find their collective voice on this issue. After a few weekly meetings, it was clear this group was going to utilize an angle of comedy to promote awareness about problem gambling. Young people came up with the ideas, the storyboards, the scripts, the filming the directing, the acting, and the editing while also serving as the film crew.

Getting the Word Out

The group will be taking the video project to classrooms and to the school assembly in addition to using social media sources such as posting videos online at YouTube (www.youtube.org) and uploading to MobileMe. They are currently approaching local TV stations about airing their video.

You can find photos and videos from the project online at:

<http://gallery.me.com/dichierapro>

SPOTLIGHT

Abraham Lincoln High School

Riverside, CA

"You Bet" Play Production

Fourteen Abraham Lincoln Friday Night Live students partnered with their adult advisor, a professional playwright, to develop a play production, relying on a theatrical format to inform, enhance, and inspire an appreciation of the seriousness of youth problem gambling.

Utilizing the unique life perspectives of the student cast in the creation of stage dialogue was central to the development of the production.

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Through a series of free-verse writing and the sharing of personal narratives, student cast members shared openly their own personal struggles with problem gambling and related issues within their respective families. Together, youth and adults developed a series of scenes and scenarios formed from these writings that were further developed and written, guided by their professional playwright adult advisor.

The result of the preproduction and rehearsal phases culminated in the premiere of "You Bet," a one-act play which presents messages of hope and the transcendence of young people whose lives are affected by problem gambling and many of its related issues.

Getting the Word Out

Students hosted their "You Bet" production at their school where each audience member received a packet of information about problem gambling, self-test, definitions and resources.

Student cast members also developed a community presentation agenda and formalized a plan to work with a local organization to hold a community meeting where student cast members will give presentations to raise the overall community awareness of youth problem gambling. The community presentation will also provide a forum for the premiere of the student developed PSA.

SPOTLIGHT

Dramaworks SWEET (Sierra West End Educational Theatre) Program

Quincy, CA

Peer Educators from Quincy High School and Feather River College came together under the Dramaworks SWEET program to develop peer-led presentations and a series of PSAs incorporating information and awareness about problem gambling in their very rural communities.

During their initial research, youth spent time online checking out stories about other youth who had experienced negative outcomes from gambling as well as trying out the 1-800 Problem Gambler number to understand what that resource was like and how it worked.

Getting the Word Out

As part of their peer education model, they incorporated problem gambling awareness and information into their youth-focused alcohol and teen health presentations throughout the County.

Youth included a pre and post-test before and after their presentation to measure increases in audience knowledge as a result of the information shared. To celebrate, the group planned a community event towards the end of their project to deliver a presentation, show their video and celebrate!

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SPOTLIGHT

Blanton Academy, CLC Tech and Jurupa Valley High School

Bakersfield, CA and Mira Loma, CA

Animated PSAs

Royer Studios partnered with two FNL High School groups in Bakersfield and Mira Loma, CA to develop animated PSAs about problem gambling. Royer Studios' Classroom Awareness Through Animation Program offers students the opportunity to write scripts for and produce animated public-service announcements (PSAs) that result in meaningful media messages addressing Youth Problem Gambling.

Using the problem gambling resources, FNL conducted an extensive training with youth from their chapter who then generated a presentation for their peers prior to the story development phase of the Classroom Awareness Through Animation Program. The workshop participants then used this information to assist in formulating the storylines for their animated PSAs. The FNL youth leaders also created their own animated PSA. Working in teams of 8 to 12, participants produce one thirty-second animated PSA per team. Royer Studios supplies all art and animation materials, as well as all video and computer equipment required to complete the project.

Getting the Word Out

The first viewing of the student-produced PSAs is at each school location in the form of a public screening. The students and sites received complimentary DVDs to present their work and help address the issues of problem gambling at home and in their extended families by sharing screening their films for family and community members.

The participants' awareness messages are viewed at school-assemblies, in the classroom and presented on line (see below) and on participating organizations web sites. School sites received 5 DVD copies of the completed PSAs and the films are made available to be uploaded on the school/school district web sites as desired.

Video PSAs can be found online at:

www.royerstudios.com

www.youtube.com/boof (or www.youtube.com/youthproblemgambling)

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SPOTLIGHT

Sutter/Yuba Friday Night Live

Marysville, CA

PSAs

A team of Junior High and High school students collaborated for this project in Marysville, CA. Youth from drama and video classes came together to form the leadership of the project. They decided to promote a contest on both campuses for student submissions in order to initially promote the issue among their peers and get more students involved in the development process. The contest was promoted throughout all the drama and media/technology classes and clubs at the high school and middle schools. Numerous groups submitted storyboards of which four were selected for filming including one animation submission.

The core leadership group selected the winners, provided support in script writing to groups and mentored the junior high students in the full development of their storyboards, scripts and filming. The FNL students then began filming the selected PSA concept storyboards, partnering with adult advisors in the filming, selection of shots and editing.

The final, edited PSAs focused on depicting common experiences and consequences of youth problem gambling that include the garage poker game, online poker gaming, sports betting in basketball games and risking it all - "I'm all in."

Getting the Word Out

Once the PSA's were complete they ran on Comcast Cable for one month. The animated PSAs were also posted on YouTube. The initial storyboard contest promoted at the schools provided a "buzz," sparked interest and initial awareness about youth problem gambling.

SPOTLIGHT

High Tech High Math Class and CRASH Program

San Diego, CA

HighTech High Students and advisors from the math class and after school CRASH Program collaborated in the creation of two (2) PSA and two (2) videos. The group first focused on completing key planning steps to their projects: planning, student brainstorming, and pre-production, allowing for execution of all projects to flow quickly.

Students were tasked to come up with preliminary concepts for the PSAs and video projects. "Pitching" their concepts to peers and adult facilitators, the group narrowed selections down to several solid production possibilities. Students then submitted storyboards for the PSA and video concepts. From these storyboards, two (2) PSA and two (2) video project concepts, focused on music video parody and

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documentary regarding perceived gambling attitudes, were selected to advance to pre-production.

Students worked together to construct sets, design costumes, write lyrics and melodies, and develop questions during the pre-production period based on storyboards and conceptual drawings and finally set the simultaneous shooting schedule for all four products.

Students self-divided into groups based upon interests with help from the adult facilitators including videographers, set designers, video editing and sound, props, principal actors, and extras. Once shooting was complete, the editing team finalized the PSAs, music video and documentary with recently purchased video equipment by the adult advisor to create the final products.

Getting the Word Out

The group posted their PSAs on YouTube and presented the videos at a local community meeting where all 11th grade students present, in addition to collecting evaluation and feedback forms from audience members. One of the PSAs was broadcasted during the previews at two local San Diego theaters running for 14 weeks on a total of 26 screens before each movie! In addition, the PSA is distributed to a local cable outlet for televised distribution as part of their free non-profit distribution process which allows non-profits to air PSAs during air times where no advertising has been contracted.

Appendix

Resources for Problem Gambling Projects

- Teen Gambling Brochure
- The Self Test for Teens Flyer
- PowerPoint Presentations:
 - “Addiction and the Brain”
 - “Youth Problem Gambling”
- Problem Gambling Youth Curriculum
- Youth Problem Gambling Fact Sheet
- Online Resources
- Summary Report on Youth Perceptions of Gambling Behavior in their Communities

Betting on Our Future Toolkit

Compiled by California Friday Night Live's Office of Research Education and Training with funding from the Office of Problem Gambling through a grant from the California Friday Night Live Partnership. CFNL ORET is a project of the Youth Leadership Institute

TIPS FOR TALKING TO YOUR KIDS ABOUT GAMBLING

(Adapted from the Arizona Office of Problem Gambling)

- Let them know gambling isn't a way to make easy money. "Professional poker player" is about as likely as a career as an FNL player.
- Teach them about odds.
- Teach them the serious consequences of problem gambling.
- Look for a time to bring up the topic naturally. Bring it up when running across a poker show on TV or finding out that a friend or family member has won or lost money gambling.
- When you talk to your kids about drugs or alcohol, include problem gambling in "the conversation."
- Convey to your kids the role of gambling in your own life. If you choose to gamble, make sure it is from a conscious, informed position. Share the guidelines you observe when you gamble.
- Ask questions and listen.
- Be patient

Consequences of Youth Gambling

(adapted from the Delaware Council on Problem Gambling, 2004)

- Three times more likely to drink alcohol
- Four times more likely to smoke
- Twice as likely to use marijuana
- Twice as likely to use other illegal drugs
- Four times as likely to get in trouble with the police
- Three times as likely to be involved in a gang fight



For more information, please call
1800-GAMBLER for help or go online to:
www.problemgambling.ca.gov.

BROCHURE PREPARED BY:

The California Friday Night Live Partnership through a grant from the
California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs and
the Office of Problem Gambling



TEEN GAMBLING



Gambling among youth is a growing public health concern. While gambling is predominantly seen as a harmless adult pass-time, many youth exposed to the availability and accessibility of various forms of gambling are tempted by the pressures to participate.

(McGill Education online)

Current research shows that problem gambling among adolescents is associated with adverse outcomes including delinquency, crime, depression and suicide that have an impact on broader society.

(McGill Education online)

ADOLESCENT PROBLEM GAMBLERS

(McGill Education online)

- are more likely to be boys but girls seem to be catching up
- are overly represented as a group compared to adult problem gamblers
- are greater risk takers in general
- often show signs of lower self esteem
- report higher rates of depression
- gamble to escape problems
- are more likely to develop an addiction(s)
- seem to be more excitable and outgoing, are more anxious and less self-disciplined
- are at greater risk for suicide ideation and suicide attempts
- often replace their regular friends with gambling acquaintances
- have poor general coping skills
- report beginning gambling at an early age (approximately 10)
- often recall an early big win
- report more daily hassles and major traumatic life events
- often have parents, relatives, or friends who gamble
- are more likely to be delinquent and involved in criminal activities to acquire money
- develop problems with family and friends
- move quickly from just gambling with friends and family to problem gambling
- show decreased academic performance

Reasons Why Youth May Gamble

(Source: California Council on Problem Gambling Sighing the American Psychiatric Association and the Connecticut Partnership for Responsible Gambling)

- **Escape Problems**
- Loneliness, depression or boredom
- Peer pressure
- Think it is a quick way to get rich
- To impress others
- To be the center of attention
- Think of it as a way to make friends
- Winning provides an instant, temporary boost of confidence



OTHER IMPORTANT TEEN FACTS

(McGill Education online)

- 4-8% of adolescents presently have a serious gambling problem with another 10-14% of adolescents at risk for developing a serious gambling problem
- The average age at which problem gamblers had their first contact with any sort of gambling was 10 years old
- A recent study found that more than 50 percent of kids who gamble reported problems like over-spending. Teens record that they can win/lose as much as \$150 to \$200 a night
- A recent nationwide study estimates 2.9 million young people are gambling on cards on a weekly basis
- 84% of parents do not object to their children gambling
- 61% of teens who gamble do it with their parent's permission
- On average, problem gamblers say they begin gambling at about 10 years of age
- Studies of young people over the last 10 years report that about 8% of adolescents, 12 to 17 years old, can be considered problem gamblers.

Possible Youth Gambling Indicators

(Source: California Council on Problem Gambling Sighing the American Psychiatric Association and the Connecticut Partnership for Responsible Gambling)

- Carries or poses gambling materials – dice, playing cards, casino chips, lottery tickets, sports betting sheets, etc
- Experiences mood swings that seem to be related to gambling wins and losses
- Pays more attention than normal to sports scores, may become agitated over certain game results
- Neglects relationships, responsibilities and favorite activities
- Says gambling is an easy way to make money
- Uses money meant for necessary items (lunch, books, bus fare, etc) for gambling
- Lies to family and friends
- Unexplained absences from school
- Sudden drop in grades
- Changes in personality (irritability, impatience, criticism, or sarcasm)
- Large amounts of money in their possession; bragging about gambling wins
- Shows an unusual interest in newspapers, magazine or periodicals having to do with sports, horse racing, etc
- Intense interest in gambling conversations
- Exaggerated display of money or other material possessions (car, clothes, jewelry)
- Gambling language in their conversation (5-fimer, bookie, loan shark, point spread, underdog, favorite, etc.)
- Exaggerated use of the word "bet" in their vocabulary
- Illegal acts to pay or gamble more, including: stealing or shoplifting, selling drugs or bookmaking, embezzling, or employer theft, family theft



THE SELF-TEST FOR TEENS

Created by Dr. Durand F. Jacobs, Ph. D

*Source: "A Fourteen Year Old Plays Cards for Cash; Is It More Than Fun and Games?"
The Brown University Child and Adolescent Behavior Letter, 4, 1-3. (1995)*

Self Test for Teens – ANSWERS

If you answered yes to 3-4 of the questions

It is time to ask yourself if your gambling is getting out of hand.

If you answered yes to 5-7 of the questions

You are probably losing control of your gambling. It's time to reevaluate your gambling decisions.

If you answered yes to 8 or more of the questions

There is a strong possibility that you have a gambling problem and now is the time to seek appropriate help.

Call 1-800-GAMBLER for help

PREPARED BY:

The California Friday Night Live Partnership through a grant from the
California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs and
the Office of Problem Gambling

THE SELF-TEST FOR TEENS



Question	Yes	No
Do your friends gamble a lot?		
Do you gamble at school?		
Have you ever stayed away from school or work to gamble?		
Is gambling more important than school or work?		
Do you often spend your free time involved in gambling activities such as poker, sports betting, dice etc.?		
Do you find gambling to be the most exciting activity you do?		
When you are gambling, do you tend to lose track of time and forget about everything else?		
Do you often daydream about gambling?		
Do you feel your friends are envious of you when you win money at gambling and that you get extra attention because of gambling?		
When you do win, do you want to return to gamble as soon as possible because you believe that you will continue winning?		
When you lose, do you feel you must bet as soon as possible to win back your losses?		
Do you often gamble with money you originally intended to use for other things, like lunch, clothing, CDs, etc.?		
Do you ever borrow money to gamble?		
Have you ever sold a favorite possession or something very special to you to get money to gamble or pay a gambling debt?		
Do you try to prevent your family and friends from knowing how much and how often you gamble?		
Do you ever lie about your gambling? For example, do you ever tell people that you did not gamble or that you won money gambling when in fact you had lost?		
Do you get into arguments with your parents because of gambling or with your friends over a gambling activity?		
Do you feel depressed or lose sleep or feel guilty because you lost money gambling?		
Have you ever thought of suicide as a way of solving your problems?		
Does one or both of your parents do a lot of gambling?		



EXAMEN PARA ADOLESCENTES

Preparada por Dr. Durand F. Jacobs, Ph. D

(Origen: "A Fourteen Year Old Plays Cards for Cash; Is It More Than Fun and Games?" The Brown University Child and Adolescent Behavior Letter, 4, 1-3. (1995))

Si contestastes "si" a 3 o 4 preguntas, es tiempo de contemplar si te estas sobre pasando en apostar. Llama al 1-800-GAMBLER para asistencia.

Si contestastes "si" a 5 o 7 preguntas, es probable que estas perdiendo el control sobre los juegos de apuesta. Es tiempo de reevaluar tus decisiones sobre los juegos de apuesta. Llama al 1-800-GAMBLER para asistencia.

Si contestastes "si" a 8 o mas preguntas, es probable que tienes un problema con juegos de apuesta y ahora es tu oportunidad de buscar ayuda apropiada.

Llama al 1-800-GAMBLER para asistencia
www.problemgambling.ca.gov


Preparado Por

The California Friday Night Live Partnership through a grant from the California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs and the Office of Problem Gambling

EXAMEN PARA ADOLESCENTES






PREGUNTA	SI	NO
¿Tus amigos apuestan con frecuencia?		
¿Tu apuestas en la escuela?		
¿Has faltado a la escuela o trabajo para apostar?		
¿Es mas importante para ti apostar, que la escuela o trabajo?		
¿Pasas tu tiempo libre en involucracio en apuestas como en poker, o juegos deportivos, dados, etc.?		
¿Para ti la actividad mas emocionante es apostar?		
¿Cuando estas apostando, se te pasa el tiempo y te olvidas de lo de mas?		
¿Suenas despierto con frecuencia que estas apostando?		
¿Crees que tus amigos te envidian cuando ganas dinero en las apuestas y te prestan mas atencion por apostar?		
¿Cuando ganas, sientes que quieres regresar lo mas pronto posible para apostar por que piensas que vas a seguir ganando?		
¿Cuando pierdes, piensas que debes de apostar lo mas pronto posible para recuperar lo que has perdido?		
¿Con frecuencia, apuestas dinero que pensabas gastar en otras cosas como comida, ropa, CD's, etc.?		
¿Pides dinero prestado para apostar?		
¿Alguna vez has vendido una cosa muy favorita tuya o algo muy especial tuyo para conseguir el dinero y apostar o pagar dinero que perdiste apostando?		
¿Ocultas a tu familia y amigos cuanto y que tan seguido apuestas?		
¿Has mentido aserca de tus apuestas? Por ejemplo, le dices a la gente que no has apostado o que has ganado dinero apostando cuando en realidad has perdido?		
¿Discutes con tus padres por tus apuestas o con tus amigos sobre un juego de apuestas?		
¿Te sientes depresionado o pierdes el sueno o te sientes culpable por que perdistes en las apuestas?		
¿Has pensado en suicidarte como una manera de soluciornar tus problemas?		
¿Uno o los dos de tus padres les gusta apostar?		

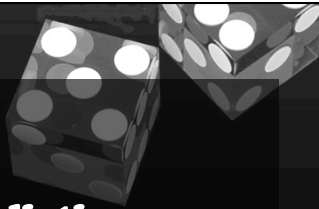


Addiction & The Brain

**“Betting on Our Future”
Awareness Campaign**



 **Michael Liao & Gianna Le**
NICOS Chinese Health Coalition

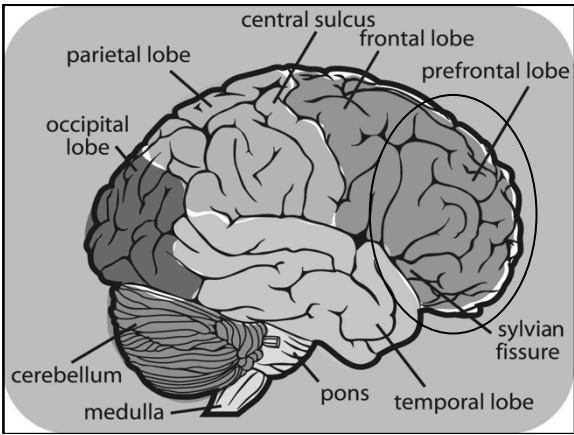


Addiction

Definition of Addiction:

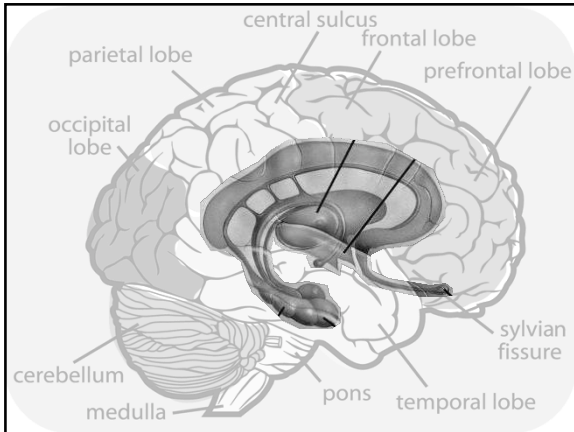
- **Addiction**
 - the brain adapts
 - behavioral changes
 - is often progressive and may be fatal.





Prefrontal Cortex

- **In charge of executive functioning**
 - Tell what's good, bad, same, different
 - Future consequences of behaviors
 - Work towards a goal
- **Also responsible for delayed gratification and impulse control**

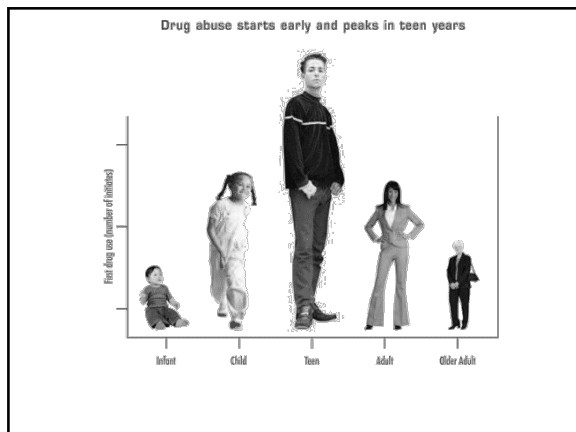


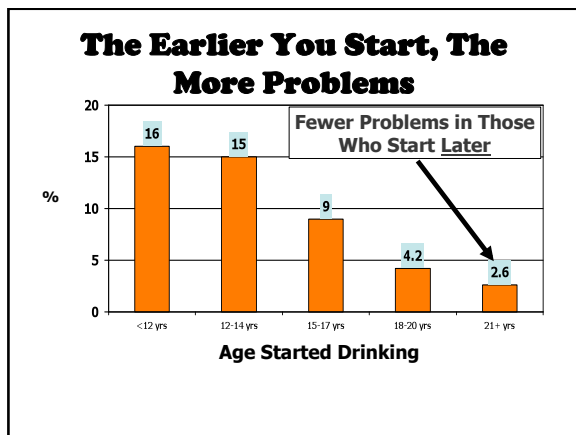
Limbic System

- Older part of the brain
- Survival part of the brain (Fight or Flight Reflex)
- Highly connected to the brain's pleasure center
- Controls memories in the cognitive portion of our brains



Substance Use & The Brain





- **Adolescence is a period of profound brain maturation.**
- **We thought brain development was complete by adolescence**
- **We now know... maturation is not complete until about age 24!!!**

INSIDE THE ADOLESCENT BRAIN

The brain undergoes two major developmental spurts, one in the womb and the second from childhood through the teen years, when the organ matures by its and sends its message that moves from the back of the brain to the front.

Corpus Callosum
... connects the two hemispheres of the brain and is essential for the transfer of information between them. It is made up of nerve fibers and is located in the center of the brain.

Prefrontal Cortex
... is the part of the brain that is responsible for decision-making, planning, and impulse control. It is the last part of the brain to mature, and it is not fully developed until the age of 25.

Basal Ganglia
... are a group of structures in the brain that are involved in movement, learning, and emotion. They are located in the center of the brain and are made up of several different parts.

Amygdala
... is a small, almond-shaped structure in the brain that is involved in processing emotions, particularly fear and anger. It is located in the limbic system of the brain.

Hippocampus
... is a small, seahorse-shaped structure in the brain that is involved in learning and memory. It is located in the limbic system of the brain.

Neurogenesis
... is the process of creating new neurons in the brain. It is a continuous process that occurs throughout life, but it is most active during early development.

Neuroplasticity
... is the brain's ability to reorganize itself by forming new neural connections. This is a key feature of the brain that allows it to recover from injury and adapt to new experiences.

Neurotransmitters
... are chemical messengers that transmit signals between neurons. They are released from the end of a neuron and bind to receptors on another neuron, triggering a response.

Neuroimaging
... is the use of techniques such as MRI and CT scans to create images of the brain. This allows researchers to study the structure and function of the brain in detail.

Neurodegeneration
... is the loss of neurons or the deterioration of their function. This can lead to a variety of neurological disorders, including Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's disease.

Neuroinflammation
... is the body's response to injury or infection in the brain. It involves the activation of immune cells and the release of inflammatory mediators, which can lead to tissue damage and neurodegeneration.

Neuroprotection
... is the process of protecting the brain from damage and disease. This can be achieved through a variety of means, including lifestyle changes, medications, and surgical interventions.

Neuroregeneration
... is the process of regrowing neurons or other brain cells. This is a complex process that involves the differentiation and migration of stem cells, and it is still a major area of research.

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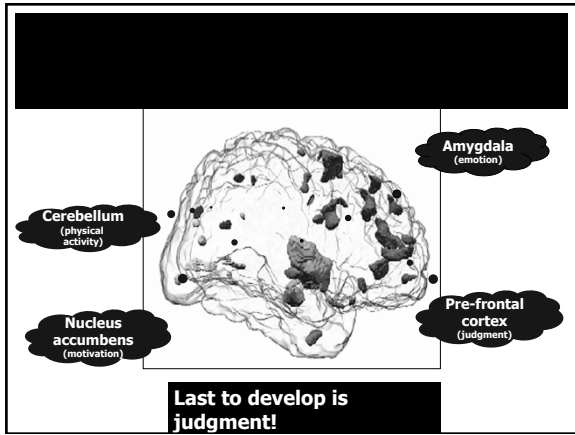
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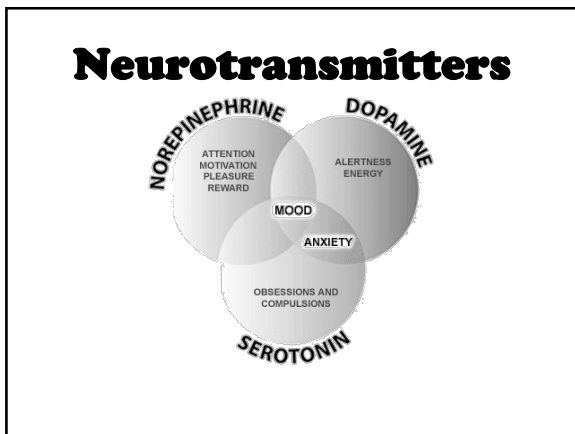
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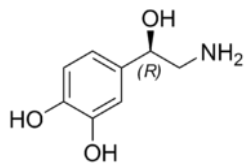






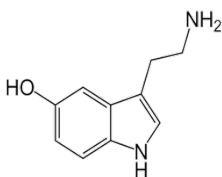
Norepinephrine

- It's indirectly a pain relief, distracts you from discomfort.
- You feel focused and assertive.



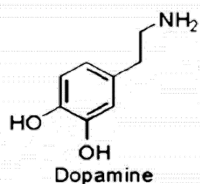
Serotonin

- If you're low on Serotonin, then you'll be violent and compulsive
- 5HT is associated with humans' ability to cope with physical and mental pain



Dopamine

- Released by eating chocolate and is released during sexual intercourse
- With its release, people feel the sensation of pleasure





Similarities between gambling addiction and drug/alcohol addiction

- **The common similarities between all addiction is avoidance of pain and the brain's neurotransmitters are being depleted.**

Difference between gambling addiction and drug/alcohol addiction

- **Drug and alcohol are substances that are directly taken into the body, whereas gambling is an activity outside of the body.**
- **You cannot OD (Overdose) on gambling, so you can lose more \$ in a shorter period of time.**

**Codependency
(when your friend is
addicted)**

• Don't	• Do
- Criticize / judge	- Be respectful
- Enable / rescue / fix	- Set firm boundaries
- Scapegoat	
- Moralize	
- Create more drama	



**NICOS Chinese Health
Coalition**
<http://www.nicoschc.org>

 **Michael S. Liao & Gianna Le**
NICOS Chinese Health Coalition

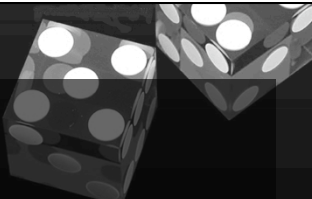


Youth Problem Gambling 101

**“Betting on Our Future”
Awareness Campaign**



 **Michael Liao & Gianna Le**
NICOS Chinese Health Coalition



Definitions & Facts

Types of Gambling



Definition of Gambling

Gambling refers to any game of chance or skill that involves a financial risk



Skill vs. Luck

Games of Skill

• I can control, partially, a game of skill. The more I practice, the better I become.

Games of Luck

• I have no control over the results. Practice does not make me a better player. I cannot influence my chances of winning.

Lottery

1. In Lottery, there are “hot” numbers that are drawn more often than others.

MYTH!

Lottery

2. Your chances of winning a Lottery jackpot of over \$1 million is less than your chances of being hit by lightning.

FACT!

Card Games

1. Counting cards will improve my chances of winning.

FACT!

Card Games

2. Because games like Blackjack and Sports Betting involves skills, it is easier to make a profit from them.

MYTH!

Casino Games

1. The casino comps the best gamblers of the night.

MYTH!

Casino Games

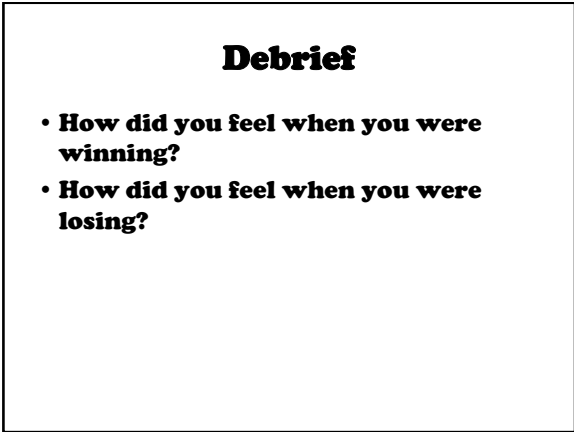
1. In the long run, the more regular you play in the casino, the more losses you'll experience as opposed to wins.

FACT!

Facts

- **Between 50% - 98% of youth report that they have ever gambled**
- **About 4% of adolescents are addicted to gambling**
- **Additional 10% are at risk of developing a problem**
- **In a classroom of 25, 1 student would have this addiction, and another 2-3 are at risk**







Reasons Teens Gamble

- **To Win Money**
- **Excitement / Fun**
- **Enjoyment**
- **To escape problems**
- **Feel important**
- **Peer pressure**



What Are the Warning Signs?



Signs of Problem Gambling

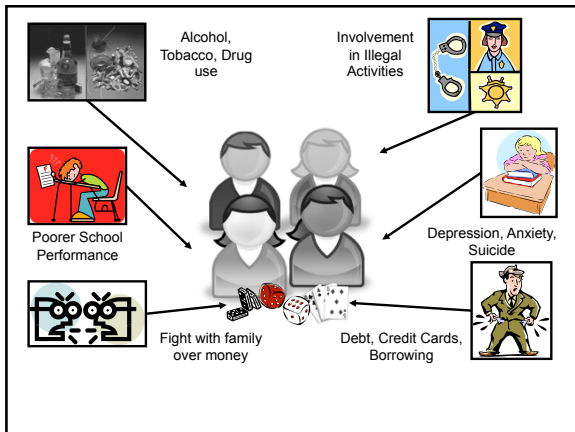
- **Thinking about gambling all the time**
- **Increase the amount of bets**
- **Become emotional or irritable when trying to cut down**
- **Missing important activities at school, in social and family life**
- **Gambling to feel better**

Signs of Problem Gambling

- Engage in illegal activities in order to get money to gamble
- Try to stop gambling but failed
- Rely on other people to bail you out
- Going back to try to get even (chase losses)
- Lie to important people about your gambling activities

Impact of Problem Gambling







Help is Available!

- **Self Survey: Office of Problem Gambling**
Website:
<http://www.problemgambling.ca.gov>
- **Call a helpline:**
 - **1-888-968-7888 (SF Bay Area): English & Chinese**
 - **1-800-GAMBLER: 24-Hours, English & other languages**



Heads & Tails

HTHTHHH ---

Which of the following represents the GREATEST ODDS for the three next coin flips?

- A) TTH
- B) HHH
- C) THT
- D) TTT
- E) Any of the above



Lottery Tickets

2, 10, 18, __, __, __

Which of the following three numbers would best complete the lottery ticket section to provide us with the greatest chance of winning the jackpot?

- A) 19, 20, 21
- B) 27, 39, 44
- C) 23, 33, 43
- D) 20, 30, 40
- E) Any of the above



Education

• Understand important gambling concepts:

- Randomness
- Independence of events
- Understand skill and luck involved





PROBLEM GAMBLING YOUTH CURRICULUM



**Problem
Gambling
Prevention**
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING PROJECT

NICOS
Chinese
Health
Coalition

華人健康組織聯合會

This curriculum guide was made possible by funds from the California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs, Office of Problem Gambling.

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- Key Concepts
- Skill Emphasis
- Teaching Sections
- Standards

II. Teaching Sections

- Define gambling and identify different types of gambling
- Discuss facts/statistics about gambling and reasons why teens gamble
- Distinguish when gambling becomes bad or harmful
- Reinforce an understanding of the spectrum of gambling
- Identify strategies to prevent problem gambling
- Present resources and services for problem gamblers

III. Supplemental Resources

- Educate youth at a community event
- Training in a game show format
- Uncover common gambling myths

Curriculum Last Updated on August 20, 2008!

Special thanks to Stella Lee (Health Career Connections, Summer 2008), who edited and assembled this curriculum guide. Thanks also to Alicia DeLeon Torres and Tana Lepule for their contributions to the curriculum guide.



Lesson Overview

Context

Background

In California, the legal age to gamble is 18 for the lottery and 21 for most other legal forms of gambling. However, many young people begin to gamble long before they reach adulthood. Because it is more socially acceptable and “safe” than other possibly addictive behaviors such as drinking, smoking and drug use, many parents may choose to turn a blind eye to their adolescent child’s gambling. Like adults, however, teens can become problem or pathological gamblers, and are in fact more likely to develop problems.

You may have noticed from recent headlines that teen gambling is a growing concern. Experts have noted an increase in youth gambling, and attribute this largely to the popularity of poker and the accessibility of Internet gambling. Youth problem gamblers bring with them some very unique social and psychological issues and challenges. These lesson plans and activities have been developed to transfer knowledge of problem / pathological gambling issues to adolescents as it relates to them.

About this Lesson

Key Concepts

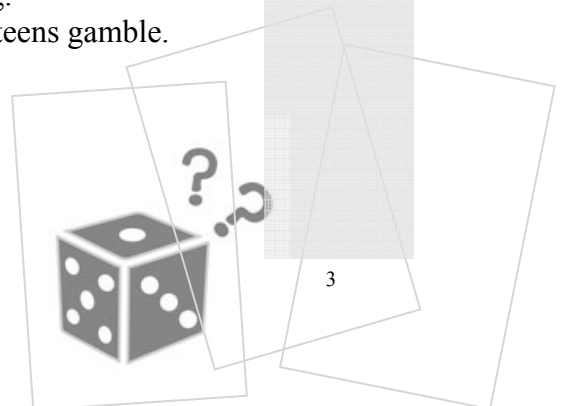
- Recognition and understanding of the risks associated with gambling.
- Prevention of problem gambling.
- Awareness of the help available for those who have or may develop a problem.

Skill Emphasis

Analyzing Internal and External Influences- Analyzing influences "means knowing what influences you and how you are influenced when you make certain health choices." A student demonstrates appropriate application of this skill when he / she can show different ways that health choices are affected, including internal feelings and external things that influence health choices, and that he / she has considered why different things affect health choices (from: Assessing Health Literacy: A Guide to Portfolios).

Teaching Sections

1. Define gambling and identify different types of gambling.
2. Discuss facts/statistics about gambling and reasons why teens gamble.
3. Distinguish when gambling becomes bad or harmful.
4. Reinforce an understanding of the spectrum of gambling.
5. Identify strategies to prevent problem gambling.
6. Present resources and services for problem gamblers.



Standards

According to California Health Framework, health education for high school students should meet the following expectations:

1. Students will demonstrate ways in which they can enhance and maintain their health and well-being.
2. Students will understand and demonstrate behaviors that prevent disease and speed recovery from illness.
3. Students will practice behaviors that reduce the risk of becoming involved in potentially dangerous situations and react to potentially dangerous situations in ways that help to protect their health.
4. Students will understand and demonstrate how to play a positive, active role in promoting the health of their families.
5. Students will understand and demonstrate how to promote positive health practices within the school and community, including how to cultivate positive relationships with their peers.
6. Students will understand the variety of physical, mental, emotional, and social changes that occur throughout life High School
7. Students will understand and accept individual differences in growth and development.
8. Students will understand their developing sexuality, will choose to abstain from sexual activity, will learn about protecting their sexual health, and will treat the sexuality of others with respect.
9. Students will identify information, products, and services that may be helpful or harmful to their health.

Prior to each teaching step in this gambling prevention and education curriculum, the expectation(s) that will be satisfied will be introduced. This ensures the instructor that the material they present will comply with the Health Framework for California Public Schools, adopted by the California State Board of Education (2002).



Teaching Sections

1. Define gambling and identify different types of gambling

Expectation(s): (1) Students will demonstrate ways in which they can enhance and maintain their health and well-being. *Identifying the strongest risk factors for negative behaviors in their own lives and developing effective strategies for counteracting the effect of those risk factors for mental and emotional health*

Learning Objectives:

- Students will learn what constitutes gambling
- Students will be able discern the difference between games of skill and games of luck
- Students will learn that games of skill still involve various aspects of chance

Step 1

> Write the word gambling on the board.

Ask the students if they know another word for gambling.

- Possible responses include:
 - betting, gaming, wagering

Step 2

> Ask the students if they know what gambling is. Define and explain gambling to the students.

- Gambling: Any game of chance or skill that involves a financial risk

NOTE: Remember to inform your students that gambling can often involve items of personal or financial value (clothes, electronic goods) that is wagered in place of money. Inherent in this definition are two concepts: 1. uncertain outcome, and 2. risk of financial loss.

Step 3

> Brainstorm different examples of gambling.

- Possible responses include:
 - Playing the lottery or scratch-off tickets
 - Betting on a sports team or game
 - Playing cards or dice for money
 - Gambling on the Internet
 - Gambling at a casino
 - Betting money on horse races or rooster fights
 - Betting on games of personal skill such as pool, darts, chess, etc

NOTE: Some examples are rather obvious, but activities that we do not commonly associate with gambling—such as buying a raffle ticket at a charitable event or purchasing stocks—fit the definition of gambling. Provide other examples to the students to help them see beyond our traditional concept of gambling as involving only dice and cards and as an activity within the confines of a casino. Based on the definition of gambling just given, it is likely that most if not all of the youth have engaged in some kind of gambling at some point in their life. If your participants exhibit difficulty in coming up with examples, provide some examples to get the discussion started.

Step 4

> Differentiate between games of skill and games of luck.

- *Games of skill*: I can control, partially, a game of skill. The more I practice, the better I become.
- *Games of luck*: I have no control over the results. Practice does not make me a better player. I cannot influence my chances of winning.

After the students grasp the difference between these two types of games, have them classify the previously discussed examples of gambling into the correct category.

Step 5

> Discussion: Ask the students to identify the various aspects that they can control in the game of poker (or any other game of skill). Then, ask the students what aspects of the game that they have no control over.

- Possible responses (can control):
 - When to bet more
 - When to fold
 - Ability to read other players
 - How to bluff
 - How one behaves during a game
- Possible responses (can NOT control):
 - The cards that you get
 - The cards that other players get
 - The skill level of the other players

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

Aim: To hone the students' ability to distinguish the differences between games of skill and games of luck.

Materials needed:

- cutouts of gambling games
- chart or board
- Tape

Create a table on a chart or board that is divided into "games of luck" and "games of skill." Pass out the cutouts of various gambling games to several individuals and have them attach the cutout to the corresponding category. Each student should explain why he/she put the game in a certain category.

NOTE: Many gamblers tend to overvalue skill and underestimate chance. Inform your students that even with extreme skill, there is never a 100% guarantee of winning. Even the best poker players lose because they never have complete control over the game. At this point it may also be beneficial to cast a realistic light on the concept of "professional" players – that is, people who gamble for a living. Young people may have the erroneous idea that anyone can become a pro and make lots of money playing blackjack or poker. Remind your audience that less than 1% of all gamblers can be considered professional gamblers. This is a profession like any other, takes time and lots of practice, and not everyone can become a professional gambler.

Self-evaluation for Section 1:

You should be able to answer *yes* to the following questions:

- Can your students define gambling?
- Do your students understand that there is never a guarantee win in gambling?
- Can your students identify different gambling games of luck and games of skill?
- Be sure to ask the students if they have any questions or want clarification of any of the material presented
- A test or worksheet can be completed by the students at the end of section 1.

Teaching Sections

2. Discuss facts/statistics about gambling and reasons why teens gamble

Expectation(s): (1) Students will demonstrate ways in which they can enhance and maintain their health and well-being. *Identifying the strongest risk factors for negative behaviors in their own lives and developing effective strategies for counteracting the effect of those risk factors for mental and emotional health*

Learning Objectives:

- Students will learn about the prevalence of problem gambling among youth.
- Students will be able identify various reasons why teens gamble.
- Students will explore ways to prevent problem gambling by setting limits.

Step 1

> Present the students with various statistics concerning teen gambling.

- Statistics:
 - Between 50%-98% of youth report that they have ever gambled
 - The most common gambling locale reported by teens are 1) schools, 2) home of a friend, & 3) casinos
 - About 4% of adolescents are addicted to gambling
 - Additional 10% are at risk of developing a problem
 - In a classroom of 25, 1 student would have this addiction, and another 2-3 are at risk

Discussion: Ask the students if these facts are surprising or expected. Have them explain which were probable or improbable and why. This conversation will allow you to assess your students' awareness of this problem.



Step 2

> Play an interactive game of chance:

Higher or Lower Card Game

• Game outline:

- Materials: thirteen playing cards
- Number of Volunteers: 1
- Rules: For visual effects, trainers can make thirteen large playing cards ahead of time, from Ace through King. Take out number 7 card so that you have six cards that are higher than seven (8-K) and six that are lower than seven (A-6). Show the students the cards and shuffle them so that the volunteer does not know the order of these cards. Tell the volunteer that he/she has \$500 (fake money) to wager and the potential to win more money or lose money. Tell the volunteer that he/she will choose a card from the eight card deck and guess whether the card is higher or lower than seven. Write his/her first wager on the board (have the wagers be in \$100 increments for easier calculations), have him/her choose a card, and guess whether or not the card that he/she chose is higher or lower than seven. If he/she is correct, add the wager to the total amount; if he/she is incorrect, subtract it. Continue doing this several times, allowing his/her classmates to voice their suggestions and advice.

Step 3

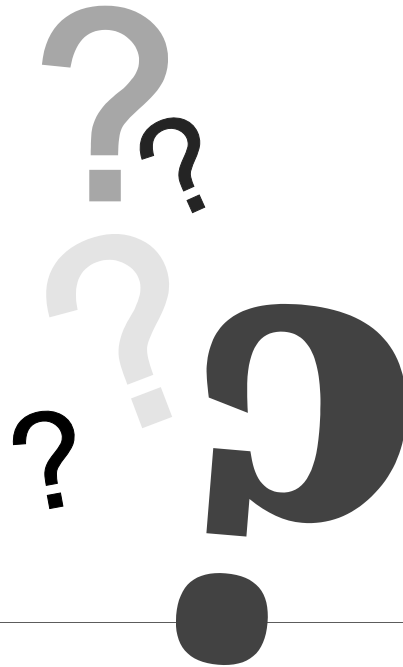
> Following the conclusion of the activity, ask the volunteer of the game how he/she felt when he/she lost and how he/she felt when he/she won.

- Possible areas to explore include:
 - When winning, was there overconfidence and belief that he/she was on a winning streak?
 - If the volunteer bets conservatively, and stops betting after winning, use this opportunity to illustrate it as an example of setting limits.
 - When losing, was there an urge and a tendency to chase back losses?
 - If the volunteer bets conservatively, and stops betting after losing, also use this opportunity to illustrate it as an example of setting limits.
 - How did peer pressure factor into the volunteer's behaviors and decisions? (Invariably the crowd would challenge the bets of the volunteer, or apply pressure for the volunteer to place larger bets)

NOTE: Setting limits refers to setting personal thresholds for spending: i.e. bringing only a set amount of money to my friend's poker game, or deciding that if my winnings reach X amount, I'll stop playing.

Have the other students share their feelings as well. With these answers in mind, ask the students, "Why do teens gamble?"

- Possible responses include:
 - To win money
 - Excitement/fun
 - Enjoyment
 - To escape problems
 - To feel important
 - Peer pressure



Self-evaluation for Section 2:

You should be able to answer *yes* to the following questions:

- Are your students aware of the prevalence of youth problem gambling?
- Do your students understand the concept of setting limits?
- Can your students identify different reasons why teens gamble?

- Be sure to ask the students if they have any questions or want clarification of any of the material

Teaching Sections

3. Distinguish when gambling becomes bad or harmful.

Expectation(s): (1) Students will demonstrate ways in which they can enhance and maintain their health and well-being. *Identifying the strongest risk factors for negative behaviors in their own lives and developing effective strategies for counteracting the effect of those risk factors for mental and emotional health* (2) Students will understand and demonstrate behaviors that prevent disease and speed recovery from illness. *Practicing and using effective self-examination procedures*

Learning Objectives:

- Students will learn about the prevalence of problem gambling among youth.
- Students will be able identify various reasons why teens gamble.

Step 1

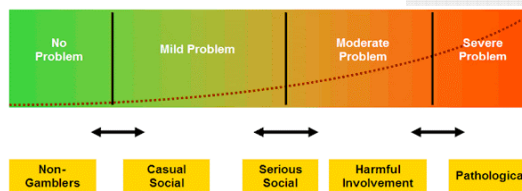
- > Introduce the concept of problem gambling. Ask the students, “When does gambling become harmful?”
 - When it starts to affect your personal, family, and work pursuits.

NOTE: Your students may identify different instances when gambling becomes harmful with more specific examples but make sure they grasp the general concept.

Step 2

- > Present the idea of gambling on a spectrum with “no gambling” on one end, pathological gambling on the other, and social gambling somewhere in between. That is, some people engage in very little or no gambling, while others may overindulge. Most of us probably fall somewhere in between, where we are able to gamble socially and in a controlled manner. As we move toward the right of the continuum, we see that the risk and harm associated with gambling increases.

Use this diagram as a model to depict the spectrum:



- > Distinguish problem from pathological gamblers:

- Problem gambling causes problems in one’s life.
- Pathological gambling is a real mental health disorder found in the DMS-IV and defined by the American Psychiatric Association.

Step 3

> Further discuss the impact of problem gambling and how gambling can negatively affect each aspect of one's life.

Draw a chart on the board with the following categories: personal, career/school, family, financial, and law.

Have the students give examples that fit into each category.

- Possible responses include:
 - Personal: depression, suicide, stress
 - Career/School: bad grades, cutting school, showing up late to work
 - Family: fighting with family members or relationship partners over money
 - Financial: debt, chasing losses, credit card, borrowing/stealing money
 - Law: crime, stealing money, prostitution



Step 4

> Identify the warning signs of problem gambling. Have the students give examples of possible signs of problem gambling.

- Possible responses include:
 - Thinking about gambling all the time
 - Increase the amount of bets
 - Become emotional or irritable when trying to cut down
 - Missing important activities at school, in social and family life
 - Gambling to feel better
 - Engage in illegal activities in order to get money to gamble
 - Try to stop gambling but failed
 - Rely on other people to bail you out
 - Going back to try to get even (chase losses)
 - Lie to important people about your gambling activities

NOTE: You can have your students fill out a self-screening tool available on the web at: <http://www.adp.ca.gov/OPG>. The Self-Test for Teens was developed by Dr. Durand Jacobs, made available on the California Office of Problem Gambling website.

The screenshot shows a web browser displaying the California Office of Problem Gambling website. The page title is 'The Self-Test for Teens - by Dr. Jacobs, D.F.'. Below the title, there is a warning: 'Important! If you are currently having feelings or thoughts about suicide, please immediately call either: National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-7424; or 911. National Hotlines Network: 1-800-238-2822 (1-800-784-2424)'. Below this, there is a section titled 'Depression is treatable. Suicide can be prevented. Problem gambling help is available to California residents at 1-800-GAMBLER (1-800-426-2673)'. The main content of the form consists of a series of questions with 'Yes' and 'No' radio buttons. The questions are: 'Do your friends gamble a lot?', 'Do you gamble at school?', 'Have you ever skipped money from school or work to gamble?', 'Is gambling more important than school or work?', 'Do you often spend your free time involved in gambling activities such as poker, sports betting, dice, etc.?', 'Do you feel gambling is the most exciting activity you do?', 'When you are gambling, do you tend to lose track of time and forget about everything else?', 'Do you often daydream about gambling?', 'Do you feel your friends are envious of you when you win money at gambling and that you get extra attention because of gambling?', 'When you do win, do you want to return to gamble as soon as possible because you believe that you will continue to win?', 'When you lose, do you feel you must bet as much as possible to win back your losses?', 'Do you often gamble with money you originally intended to use for other things - like books, clothing, CDs, etc.?', and 'Do you ever borrow money to gamble?'. The 'No' button for the last question is selected.

Self-evaluation for Section 3:

You should be able to answer *yes* to the following questions:

- Can your students distinguish problem from social gambling ?
- Do your students know how gambling can negatively affect their lives?
- Can your students identify the warning signs of problem gambling?

Teaching Sections

4. Reinforce an understanding of the spectrum of gambling

Expectation(s): (1) Students will demonstrate ways in which they can enhance and maintain their health and well-being. *Identifying personal habits influencing mental and emotional health and developing strategies for changing behaviors as needed to promote positive mental and emotional health*
(2) Students will understand and demonstrate behaviors that prevent disease and speed recovery from illness. *Analyzing one's patterns related to treatment of disease to determine whether those patterns are effective and changing behaviors if necessary to facilitate management or recovery*

Learning Objectives:

- Students will hone their ability to discern different types of gamblers on a spectrum

Step 1

> Provide examples of each type of gambler (social, problem, and pathological) and have the students identify where on the spectrum the gambler falls. Also have the students indicate whether they DO NOT need help, might need/SHOULD seek help, or NEED help.

- Possible examples include:

Gambler 1: Every week, a college sophomore places bets on sports games. He usually spends his own money, but last semester he had barely enough money to buy books. He borrowed money from his girlfriend who he is yet to pay back. She says she needs her money back to pay her credit card bill. He tells her, he's waiting for his big win and that then, he will pay her entire credit card bill.

Gambler 2: A father plays poker once a week with friends in which he allotted himself the weekly budget of \$35. One time, he spent \$75 in one hour. He told himself never to do that again. Since then, he overspent one more time.

Gambler 3: A single mother spends every Friday night in front of the slot machine. Her two children have an at-home babysitter, but the last couple of times she came home not being able to pay for the babysitter. She says next week, she will find another person to take care of her children, but she is not giving up her weekly fun. She looks forward to it all week because it is the only break that she gets from work and the kids.



Discussion 1: This person may be a problem or pathological gambler. He is betting beyond his means so that he cannot afford the necessities of life anymore. He is also gambling with other's money (i.e. his girlfriend). He fantasizes about a big win that will solve all his problems

Discussion 2: Probably a social gambler. This person has for the most parts been able to control his gambling activities. For most people, overspending can happen occasionally, but when overspending becomes a pattern then it may be a sign of problem.

Discussion 3: This person may be at risk of developing a problem. Her gambling behavior seems to have started off as causal. In recent times she has overspend a couple of times. She is still keeping the welfare of her children in mind, but gambling seems to be the only escape for her. If this keeps up she may develop greater problems.

Self-evaluation for Section 4:

You should be able to answer *yes* to the following question:

- Can your students identify types of gamblers and their gambling behaviors on a continuum?

Teaching Sections

5. Identify strategies to prevent problem gambling.

(1) Students will demonstrate ways in which they can enhance and maintain their health and well-being. *Avoiding self-destructive behaviors for mental and emotional health* (2) Students will understand and demonstrate behaviors that prevent disease and speed recovery from illness. *Practicing positive health behaviors to reduce the risk of disease* (3) Students will practice behaviors that reduce the risk of becoming involved in potentially dangerous situations and react to potentially dangerous situations in ways that help to protect their health. *Practicing safe behavior in recreational activities, even in the absence of adults*

Learning Objectives:

- Students will hone their ability to discern different types of gamblers on a spectrum

Step 1

> Discuss the following concepts that are integral to prevention education:

- *House Advantage*: All games are built on edge or advantage for casinos to ensure profits for the casino or gambling venue in the long run. One example of this is in roulette, the gambler has a 1 in 37 chance of correctly guessing a number (true odds), while the payoff is only 35 to 1 (casino odds). House advantage can also include charging a commission on winning bets (e.g., baccarat) and ensuring the rules are in the establishment's favor (e.g., players can bust before the dealer takes any cards in blackjack).
- *Randomness*: The outcome of casino games is random and cannot be predicted. A gambler has no control over this. For example, electronic gaming machines have a computer chip called a Random Number Generator that continually produces random numbers, even when no one is playing the game. There are mathematically more losing numbers than winning numbers. In games such as roulette, the spot on the wheel where the ball lands is completely random.
- *Independence of events*: Each outcome of a game is independent of one another. Thus, one cannot predict what will happen next based on the last outcome. For example, in roulette, the number that comes up next is independent of what came up last. It is often natural for players to notice "patterns" in outcomes, but this "pattern" still only represents what happened in the past. What will happen in the future will be completely unpredictable.

NOTE: For some, a key concept in the discussion of responsible gambling is that the choice to gamble rests with the individual. But for individuals to make the optimal choice, it must be informed with knowledge. Prevention education is predicated on the idea that by dispelling common misconceptions about gambling, one can become a more informed consumer.



Step 2

> Do an activity to illustrate the concept of randomness and independence of events:

Heads & Tails

Put the following on the board or onto a PowerPoint slide:

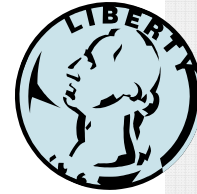
HTHTHHH _ _ _

Ask your students the following question: "If you toss a coin 7 times and obtained the following outcome: Head, Tail, Head, Tail, Head, Head, and Head, which of the following represents the GREATEST ODDS for the next three flips?"

Put the following responses on the board or onto a PowerPoint slide:

- A) TTH**
- B) HHH**
- C) THT**
- D) TTT**
- E) Any of the Above**

Solicit answers from your students, and ask them why they selected the answer that they have.



Possible areas to explore:

Did anyone choose D)? Why or why not?

Some people may choose D) because that will even out the 'Heads' and the 'Tails', making it 50/50. While it is true that in each coin toss there is a 50/50 chance of getting either a 'Head' or a 'Tail' outcome, it is completely random. In the very *long* run, yes, you will get about half 'Heads' and half 'Tails'. But is 10 flips enough to predict that half will be 'Heads' and half will be 'Tails'? No, statistically speaking, the larger your sample, the more normal it will be distributed. Ten flips is simply too small of a sample to make any prediction. But even if you tossed the coin a thousand times, you still cannot predict the next flip because of the Independence of Events.

Did anyone choose B)? Why or why not?

Many people may *not* choose B) because they feel that it is not likely to get 6 consecutive 'Head' outcomes in a row. However, the concept of Randomness tells us that there is no discernable pattern to the coin flips. It is all random and each toss has a 50/50 chance to get either a 'Head' or 'Tail' outcome. The concept of Independence of Events also tells us that we cannot make predictions about future events based on past and current events. It does not matter that we already had 3 consecutive 'Heads'. That has no bearing on which side the coin will land on next.

Afterwards, inform them that the answer is E) Any of the Above.

Explain to your students that since each coin flip has an equal chance (50-50) of producing either a head or tail outcome, each of the combinations is possible and has the same chance of occurring. It is natural for people to look for patterns and attempt to predict future outcome based on past ones, but each flip is independent from the previous flip.

Step 3

> Another exercise that can help explain the concepts of *Randomness* and *Independence of Events* :

Lottery Tickets

Put the following on the board or onto a PowerPoint slide:

2, 10, 18, _ , _ , _

Ask your students the following question: “If you have just purchased a lottery ticket and we have selected the first three numbers to be 2, 10 and 18, which of the following three numbers would best complete the lottery ticket to give us the **GREATEST ODDS** for hitting the jackpot?”

Put the following responses on the board or onto a PowerPoint slide:

A) 19, 20, 21

B) 27, 39, 44

C) 23, 33, 43

D) 20, 30, 40

E) Any of the Above

Solicit answers from your students, and ask them why they selected the answer that they have.

Possible areas to explore:

Did anyone choose A)? Why and why not? Many people will *not* choose A) because it would give them 18, 19, 20, 21. For many people, this combination looks less likely to happen. However, this again goes to the concept of Randomness – in that the numbers are selected randomly so each of the above combinations have the same chance of occurring. Also, the Independence of Events tells us that even though the last number we selected was 18, that does not mean that the following numbers cannot be 19, 20, and 21.

Did anyone choose C)? Why and why not? Most people may choose C) because it looks the most “random”. However, there is no strategy to choosing the right number. Lottery is purely a chance-based game. Each of the above combinations has the same chance of occurring.

Afterwards, inform your students that the answer is E) Any of the Above.

Explain to your students that the winning lottery ticket numbers are chosen randomly; therefore each of the above number combinations would have an equal chance of being the winning combination. For lottery players, playing the same numbers every week or letting the machine randomly select the numbers does not change their chances of winning the jackpot.



Lotto Fact: Your chances of hitting the lottery jackpot is less than 1 in 14,000,000, whereas your chances of being hit by lightning is 1 in 280,000 as reported by the national Lightning Safety Institute.

Step 4

> Inform students that if they ever plan to or currently engage in gambling, to play responsibly.

Ask your students, “What can a person do to gamble responsibly?”

Present these simple ‘tips’ that are often recommended to help a person gamble safely:

- Play with your family members or friends with low stakes.
- Play for fun and skill development, but not with money.
- Accept losing as part of the game.
- Don't borrow money to gamble.
- Don't let gambling interfere with family, friends, or school.
- Don't use gambling as a way to cope with emotional or physical pain
- Know the warning signs of problem gambling.



Self-evaluation for Section 5:

You should be able to answer *yes* to the following questions:

- Can your students define the concept of house advantage? Randomness? Independence of events?
 - Do your students know how to gamble responsibly?
 - Can your students identify different gambling games of luck and games of skill?
-
- Be sure to ask the students if they have any questions or want clarification of any of the material presented
 - A test or worksheet can be completed by the students at the end of section 1.

Teaching Sections

6. Present resources and services for problem gamblers.

Expectation(s): (2) Students will understand and demonstrate behaviors that prevent disease and speed recovery from illness. *Determining when treatment of illness at home is appropriate and when and how to seek further help when needed* (5) Students will understand and demonstrate how to promote positive health practices within the school and community, including how to cultivate positive relationships with their peers. *Accessing appropriately those services available within the community.* (9) Students will identify information, products, and services that may be helpful or harmful to their health. *Identifying appropriate sources of health services for a variety of illnesses and being able to use those services.*

Learning Objectives:

- Students will learn how to deal with a friend or family member who may be a problem gambler.
- Students will identify available resources and services for problem gamblers.

Step 1

> Ask your audience what they will do if they know someone who has a gambling problem.

• Possible areas to explore:

- Did they mention talking to an adult? Who would they talk to? School personnel? Parents? Counselors?
- Will they personally help the problem gambler? How? What are some ways to keep healthy boundaries and still help?
- This may be a good place to discuss healthy ways to help and how to prevent codependency especially when the problem gambler is your close friend or family member:



When your friend or family member is a problem gambler:

DON'T	DO
Criticize/Blame (“If you were smart you would have stopped after the first win!”)	Be Respectful (“I’m sorry about what happened, I’m here for you if you want to talk”)
Enable / Rescue / Fix (Pay off all of their debt, lend them money with no conditions, make excuses for them for what they did)	Set Firm Boundaries (“I know you are in debt right now, but I cannot help you pay your debt until you get some help”)
Moralize (“Gambling is wrong, that is why you’re being punished”)	
Create more drama (Big arguments, gossip, etc.)	

Step 2

> Inform your students about the resources and services available to help problem gamblers.

Your students can visit a free problem gambling website in order to take a self survey:

- www.problemgambling.ca.gov

If the student needs help or knows someone who needs help, there are helplines that they can call:

- 1-888-968-7888 (SF Bay Area): English and Chinese
- 1-800-GAMBLER: 24 Hours, English and other languages

**HELP IS
AVAILABLE!**

Self-evaluation for Section 6:

You should be able to answer *yes* to the following questions:

- Can your students effectively and responsibly communicate to friends or family who may have a gambling problem
- Are your students aware of the services available for those with gambling problems?

Supplemental Resources

* This activity was contributed by the Union of Pan Asian Communities (UPAC)

Educate Youth at a Community Event

When doing outreach to recruit classes or schools that would be interested in providing problem gambling education for students, this activity is perfect for any community event where various booths and tables are set up for youth to visit.

Materials:

- Child's basketball set
- Visual aids
- Small Prizes
- Questions



Objectives:

1. Ascertain youth's knowledge on gambling/problem gambling
2. Engage them in learning
3. Create excitement about learning
4. Sign up class(es)/school for extended training

Step 1

> As youth are attracted to the booth, ask them 2-3 questions about gambling. It helps to have visual aids (mah jong set, 'full house' in poker, horse race betting slip, pictures of gambling equipment, etc.)

- Examples of questions for this game are:
 - Name 3 types of gambling activity.
 - Name 3 signs that someone may be a problem gambler.
 - What 800 number can you call, if you need help in problem gambling?

Step 2

> Every correct answer garners the youth a chance to "make a basket". The youth will win a prize for every basket they make.

Step 3

> After youth takes their turn at the basket, the second staff person:

- a) hands a problem gambling brochure to the youth,
- b) asks if the youth have any questions or would like to share something about their experience,
- c) asks youth if they'd like the presenters to come back for a longer presentation/game show, and
- d) hands the list of interested students to the teacher/organizer as a foundation for a future problem gambling prevention presentation.

NOTE: For cultural events, it helps to "dress up" your booth and basketball set to make it more culturally relevant and appealing. Example: For Pacific Islander events, dress up the basketball set as a palm tree with coconut basketballs.)

You will need 2 people to staff the booth - 1 to engage the youth, 1 to follow up.

* This activity was contributed by the Union of Pan Asian Communities (UPAC)

Training in a Game Show Format

Youth may be more engaged when material is presented to them in a game-show format. This activity can be used as a pre and/or post test and integrated throughout the curriculum for a more interactive learning experience.

Materials:

- Questions
- Markers
- Paper
- Stop Watch



Objectives:

1. Ascertain youth's knowledge on gambling/problem gambling (pre-test, but they don't know it because it's in game form)
2. Engage them in learning
3. Create excitement about learning
4. Engage them in discussion about what they've learned
5. Begin safe, nurturing and sharing discussion on gambling in their communities
6. Ascertain youth's knowledge skills developed during training (post-test, but they don't know it because it's in game form)

This section is divided into 3 sections:

- 1) Game Show
- 2) Training
- 3) Sharing & Discussion.

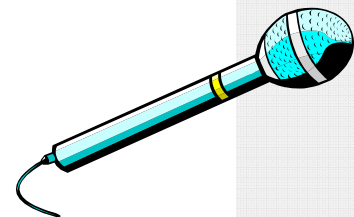
Step 1

> Game Show (aka Pre-Test)

- a. Break the class up into groups of no more than 5.
- b. Give each group markers and paper.
- c. Ask group 5-10 questions.
- d. Whichever group thinks they have the right answer(s) after each question must "ring the bell", post their answers on the board, and present their answers to the class.
- e. If the group gets ALL answers correct they are given prizes. If they have at least one wrong answer, another group will be given the chance to present their answers and win a prize.



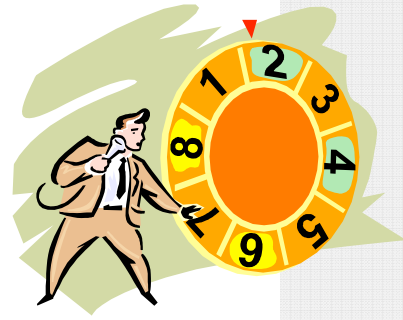
NOTE: You will need 2 people to staff this activity. One will be the high energy 'game show host', one will be the 'nurturer' who leads the after-discussion.



Step 2

> Training

- a. Another staff member will give a 5-10 minute training on that category. It is helpful to use PowerPoint for each 5-10 minute presentation. Each PowerPoint section (re: questions) should be NO MORE THAN 3 SLIDES, and should not be ‘number heavy’. In other words, use pictures and text.
- b. As questions or comments are raised by students during the mini-trainings during the ‘game show,’ staff answer questions and lead class discussion.
 - Examples of questions for this game, and follow up mini-trainings during the game are:
 - Name 10 types of gambling activity. You have 5 minutes to write down your answers.
 - Name 5 signs that someone may be a problem gambler. You have 3 minutes to write down your answers.
 - Name 5 reasons people gamble. You have 3 minutes to write down your answers.
 - What 800 number can you call, if you need help in problem gambling?
 - What is the percentage of youth, in America, who say they have gambled?
 - True or False: All gamblers have flamboyant personalities.
 - True or False: All gamblers are involved in criminal activity.
 - True or False: You cannot become addicted to an activity.



Step 3

> Discussion

It is not necessary to wait until the end of the “game”/training to begin discussions about problem gambling. Strike while the “iron is hot” – as youth ask questions or share information, engage the class in discussion.

- a. Share problem gambling stories that you know of within geographic or ethnic communities. Do not give specifics (names of people, place, etc.)
- b. Always close the discussion with hand outs: 1) a resource list (including websites that the youth can access), 2) problem gambling brochure, and 3) your business card.
(Quite a few students will ask for more brochures/cards to “leave around the house” for family members. Tip: the best place to leave brochures is in the bathroom – for “reading material”).

Assessment:

- In order to measure knowledge gained, ask each student to write down their answers to the questions you asked during the game.
- Give prizes to the student(s) who answered the most questions correctly.

** This activity was contributed by NICOS Chinese Health Coalition*

Uncover Common Gambling Myths

If time allows, debunking common gambling myths may be a useful activity to do before any presentation or training session with youth. It is an easy attention-grabber-activity and it also allows you to gain a sense of how much the youth already know/don't know about gambling.

Materials:

- Myth or Fact flashcards as shown below (this can be presented in PowerPoint format as well)

Objectives:

1. Reveal the truth behind common gambling myths and misperceptions
2. Gain participation and involvement
3. Engage the students' attention on this topic

Step 1

> Present a statement about gambling to the students and ask them whether they think it is a myth or a fact. Allow multiple students to voice their opinion and explain why they think a certain way.

Step 2

> After you have gained several opinions and support statements, reveal the answer to the students with an explanation.

NOTE: You can write out several statements on big flashcards or present them on a PowerPoint.



? **Myth or Fact:**

Players can control lottery outcomes by using various methods to forecast winning numbers.

Problem Gambling Technical Assistance & Training Project 1
© NICOS Chinese Health Coalition, 2008

- **Possible Myth/Fact Statements:**

- In Lottery, there are “hot” numbers that are drawn more often than others. **MYTH!**

Explanation: Lottery winning numbers are chosen randomly therefore there is no system to predict outcomes. Consumers may erroneously use past numbers, patterns, or even buying from vendors which sold previous winning tickets to improve their chances. But we call this an “illusion of control”. Ask your audience whether they think consumers select lottery numbers randomly or if they use a “system”, most people will reply that consumers select numbers of significance to them. Stories such as a woman winning a multi-million dollar jackpot by selecting her daughter’s birthday helps reinforce such beliefs in “lucky” numbers. However, people win lotteries by chance, nothing they do can change their chances.

- Your chances of winning a Lottery jackpot of over \$1 million is less than your chances of being hit by lightning. **FACT!**

Explanation: If you play a lottery with 49 different balls and 6 get drawn, when you work it out, your chances of winning the lottery is 10,068,347,520 divided by 720 which comes out at roughly 1 in 13,983,816 or 1 in 14,000,000. That means you have a .00000007 % chance of winning the lottery. Your actual odds of winning the lottery depend on where you play, but single state lotteries usually have odds of about 18 million to 1 while multiple state lotteries have odds as low as 120 million to 1. The national Lightning Safety Institute calculated a 1 in 280,000 chance of being struck per year. Your odds of being struck by lightning are much greater!

- Staying at one slot machine will improve your chances of winning. **MYTH!**

Explanation: Stories have been told of people who wear adult diapers and play at the slot machine for hours or even days. In California, there have been lawsuits filed against casinos because patrons have sat down to play slots only to find the seat wet—with the previous patron’s urine. Patrons can also become very proprietary about the slot machine that they are using. The belief is that if one stays long enough at a slot machine, eventually it will pay out. Myths abound of people who leave the slot machine only to have the next patron win the jackpot. While it is true that slots are designed to pay out at certain intervals, it is completely random, and each slot machine has an equal chance of paying out. Some casinos may guarantee payout when the progressive jackpot reaches a certain threshold, but again, each slot machine has an equal chance of paying out.

- After a slot machine has paid out a jackpot, it is less likely to pay out. **MYTH!**

Explanation: The slot machines have a computer chip inside that runs the Random Number Generator (RNG). The RNG is continuously cycling through numbers even when the machine is not being played. Every outcome is random and is not dependant on previous outcomes. It is equally likely that a jackpot could hit at any time including the next spin.

- Counting cards will improve my chances of winning. **FACT!**

Explanation: Yes, it is true that by counting cards you can increase your chances of winning games like blackjack at the casino. This is why casinos frown upon card counters. However, separate points should be made: The first is, how many people can actually count cards? Card counting takes lots of skills and practice, it is not something that anyone can master. Secondly, when you are playing in the casino, counting cards may improve your chances but the odds are still stacked against you. While you may be making a “better” bet by counting cards, it may still not be a “good” bet. Finally, in many gambling establishments, one can get thrown out for counting cards.

- Because games like Blackjack and Sports betting involves skills, it is easier to make a profit from them. **MYTH!**

Explanation: Many gamblers tend to overvalue skill and underestimate chance. Inform your students that even with extreme skill, there is never a 100% guarantee of winning. Even the best poker players lose because they never have complete control over the game. Gamblers begin to believe that wins are produced by their own efforts rather than by the random operation of a gambling device or cards. Almost all gambling games are completely random, and no amount of skill or effort on the part of the gambler will change this. In some card games, such as blackjack and poker, and sports betting, some skill or knowledge of the game is required to play well, but the randomness of the way the cards are dealt, coupled with the house advantage and environmental factors to which players have no control over, ensure that over time players will lose more money than they win.

- The casino comps the best gamblers of the night. **MYTH!**

Explanation: The myth persists that those who get the free meals and the free night stay at the casinos are the big winners of the night. In reality the casinos comp those who lose money. There are several reasons for this: first, it takes a bit of the sting out of losing, and builds customer loyalty. Patrons may think that they are breaking even if they get a free night stay after losing few hundred dollars, but in fact that is one expensive night’s stay.

- In the long run, the more regular you play in the casino, the more losses you’ll experience as opposed to wins. **FACT!**

Explanation: The longer you play in the casino, the ratio of money lost to money bet will get closer to the expectation for that game. It costs a lot of money to pay for the glitzy buildings, spectacular attractions, and all those employees that go into running a casino; don’t forget the large amount of profits that casinos make as well. They don’t make that money by losing to you. There’s no way around it. The odds will catch up with you if you play long enough. With that said, there are some games that offer better odds (smaller house edge) than others. However, a “better” bet at the casino is still not a “good” bet, as you’ll lose more than you win in the long run.

The Problem Gambling Prevention Technical Assistance and Training Project is an effort to build awareness and develop resources and strategies to prevent problem gambling in California

For more information or to receive additional technical assistance and training (including Train the Trainers), please call (415) 788-6426 or send requests to:

NICOS Chinese Health Coalition
1208 Mason Street
San Francisco, CA 94108



YOUTH PROBLEM GAMBLING FACT SHEET

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November, 2009

Prepared for California Friday Night Live Partnership
By NICOS Chinese Health Coalition

YOUTH – FACTS

In California, the legal age to gamble is 18 for the lottery and 21 for most other legal forms of gambling. However, many young people begin to gamble long before they reach adulthood. Because it is more socially acceptable and “safe” than other possibly addictive behaviors such as drinking, smoking and drug use, many parents may choose to turn a blind eye to their adolescent child’s gambling. Like adults, however, teens can become problem or pathological gamblers, and are in fact more likely to develop problems.

Population: According to the 2008 U.S. Census estimates, 24.3% of the U.S. population are under the age of 18. In California, 25.5%, or more than 9 million people, are under 18.¹

Gambling Participation: Numerous studies have been conducted on youth and adolescent population. An examination of prevalence studies (mostly from North American and Europe) from 1980 to 2000 uncovered that the percentage of children and youth who reported ever gambling ranged from about half and up to 98%.²

Problematic Behavior: First, we must define problem gambling. The National Council on Problem Gambling defines *Problem Gambling* as gambling behavior which causes disruptions in any major area of life: psychological (mental stress, anxiety, depression, emotional breakdown, etc.), physical (health complications, lack of sleep, poor nutrition, etc.), social (neglecting friends and family, loss of social networks, etc.) or vocational (loss of job, losing productivity due to gambling, etc.).³ Problem Gambling is usually used as a general category that includes every type of gambling behavior that causes major problems. On the other hand, *Pathological Gambling* is considered the most serious form of problem gambling, and is actually classified as a mental health disorder by the American Psychiatric Association. Put in another way, pathological gamblers are those we consider to be *addicted* to gambling.

Based on national prevalence problem gambling prevalence rates, the California Attorney General estimates that there are nearly 600,000 youth problem gamblers in the state.⁴ Studies have shown that, compared to adults, youths are 2 to 4 times more likely to become problem gamblers⁵, for a variety of reasons that will be discussed later in the Risk Factors section.

TYPES OF YOUTH GAMBLING

While it is illegal for youth under age 18 to gamble in most states, there are still many ways that youth are exposed and indoctrinated into the world of gambling:

Lottery: Lottery and scratch-off tickets are perceived by youth in many studies to be easily accessible and it is often pretty easy for underage patrons to purchase them without having to show their IDs. In California, lottery is available in over 21,000 locations/ retailers – including liquor stores, grocers, etc.⁶ California’s lottery commercials are seen and heard on TV and radio, respectively, by everyone – including youth. These commercials often also appear during programs that are tailored to young people – such as local pop music radio stations and youth-oriented TV shows.

- The California Attorney General’s report also cites research that shows a large majority of young people in America (90%) have ever purchased a lottery ticket.⁷
- 2005 National Annenberg Risk Survey of Youth also found that lottery tickets are highly accessible for youth. Fifty-nine percent of youth age 14-17 reported that they can purchase a lottery ticket within 5 blocks of their home.⁸

Casinos: While casinos are supposed to turn underage patrons away, many studies have found that youth routinely gain access into casinos to gamble.

- California Friday Night Live Partnership’s youth focus groups found that casinos is the 3rd most common locale where youth gamble (reported by 21% of youth).⁹

Sports: In recent years, sports has been frequently associated with gambling – anywhere from a famous football player’s involvement in animal-fighting operations, to sports referees engaging in point shaving to influence betting/ gambling outcomes. Betting on sports itself is also a very common activity for youth.

- Wallisch (1996): The study was conducted in 1995 of Texan youth, reported that 26% of the youth reported having bet on sports with their friends.¹⁰
- Stinchfield (2000): According to a Minnesota study, 22.8% and 25% of the 9th and 12th grade boys, respectively, reported having gambled on sports.¹¹

Internet: Internet sites constantly bombard youth with pop-up ads for internet casinos and online poker games. Although it is technically illegal for Americans to gamble with money online (there is a federal ban on internet gambling, with the exception of some states that allow internet bets on horse races), it is incredible easy for people to log on and play on internet poker, internet casino, and internet sports betting sites.¹² Research seems to show that more and more youth are gambling on the internet. Even if these internet gambling sites are successful in preventing underage gambling, most of these sites also provide “demo” or trial periods, or “practice” sites where anyone can play (instead of money, you play with credits).

- The International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems & High Risk Behaviors found in a study of U.S. and Canadian youth, it was found that over half of all high school students and nearly half of all college students reported playing gambling games on “practice” sites. These sites have been found to have over-inflated payout rates (meaning on practice sites you win more than you would normally win in a real game). Success on these sites may lead youth to believe that they are more skilled in the game than they actually are, and may lead to more gambling with actual money.¹³

GAMBLING IN THE MEDIA

TV, radio, and newspaper still remain a powerful source of information and cultural learning for youth. Televised poker tournaments and celebrity poker players are believed to have fueled the resurgent popularity of poker among youth. Many of these poker tournaments are broadcasted on TV channels that normally broadcast sports – casting a social message that poker is a sport, rather than a form of gambling.

- 2005 National Annenberg Risk Survey of Youth (NARSY) found that of 900 young people age 14 to 22, there was a 20% increase in youth reporting monthly gambling with cards from 2004, which indicates that more youth are being drawn to this form of wagering.¹⁴

Some examples of recent pop-media references to gambling:

- *21* (Movie, 2008): Plot: "21" is the fact-based story about six MIT students who were trained to become experts in card counting and subsequently took Vegas casinos for millions in winnings.
- *Ocean's Thirteen* (Movies, 2007): Plot: Danny Ocean rounds up the boys for a third heist, after casino owner Willy Bank double-crosses one of the original eleven, Reuben Tishkoff.
- *Casino Royale: 007* (Movie, 2006): Plot: In his first mission, James Bond must stop Le Chiffre, a banker to the world's terrorist organizations, from winning a high-stakes poker tournament at Casino Royale in Montenegro.
- *Two for the Money* (Movie, 2005): Plot: After suffering a career-ending injury, a former college football star aligns himself with one of the most renowned touts in the sports-gambling business.

RISK FACTORS

Developmental Stages: Developmentally, the period of adolescence and youth is marked by risk-taking behaviors, experimentation with “adult” behaviors, and the need of acceptance by peers and to conform to group norms.¹⁵ These characteristics may predispose youth to be more prone to take up gambling. Research has shown that the human brain is not fully matured until about age 25. One of the last areas of the brain to develop is the prefrontal cortex – which is associated with decision-making, judgment, and impulse control.¹⁶ The fact that in adolescents and youth, this part of the brain is not fully developed has implications for a variety of risk-taking behaviors including reckless driving, drug and alcohol use, and gambling.

Early Exposure: Most problem gamblers start gambling at a very young age, often before age 10.¹⁷ Just like early use of alcohol and drugs, the early exposure to gambling can also create more problems. This is related to brain development – where the use of substances OR behaviors (e.g. shopping, internet, video games, gambling) over time to cause a rush of excitement/ pleasure can create addictions. Addiction is defined in part by the adaptation of the brain (this adaptation is called tolerance – the need to use more/ do more over time to achieve the same high/ excitement). Therefore, it's important to understand that even though gambling doesn't involve the intake of substances/ chemicals, the thrill of possibly winning money also activates the neuron-chemicals in our brain, and over time can cause changes in the brain – thus creating addiction.

Lack of Coping Skills: Gambling usually doesn't just appear out of nowhere. Most youth problem gamblers come from households where 1 or more parents gambled excessively.¹⁸

Another source for youth to pick up gambling is through peers/ friends.¹⁹ We pick up coping skills by observing and learning from others how they deal with stress, pain, and boredom. When a young person grows up in an environment where people used substances or gambling to escape their problems, then that becomes their coping mechanism of choice. Research finds that youth problem gamblers were more likely than non-problem gamblers to report gambling to escape, to alleviate depression, to promote relaxation, and to cope with loneliness.²⁰ These same youth also report that gambling makes them feel more important, special, and successful.²¹

Co-Occurring Problems: Several studies have shown that youth gamblers also engage in the use of substances, including smoking, drinking, and other drug use.²² For some youth, particularly males, gambling may fit within a larger constellation of deviant behaviors that include delinquent behaviors and substance use. Youth who are problem gamblers are often also dubbed as troubled youth²³, and they are also more likely to report engaging in illegal acts, stealing, or borrowing money to sustain their gambling activities.²⁴

Gender: A study in Minnesota of 9th and 12th graders found that males had rates of gambling participation 8 times that of females.²⁵ A study in Texas corroborated that males are more likely than females to be a gambler. But when the Texas study compared their survey results from the year 1992 and the year 1995, the gender gap appears to be closing (rates of gambling by females were rising).²⁶ A separate study also found that among girls who actively play video games, their rates of gambling were similar to that of boys (think about how these activities are similar: taking risks for reward; color/graphic/music design; used to relief stress, excitement when playing, etc.)²⁷

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Source: The Search Institute (2002).²⁸ The more protective factors that a young person has, the less likely they are to develop problems related to substance abuse, problem gambling, and other issues. These are some of the protective factors that have been found to help shield youth from developing problem gambling:

- **Support** (family, community, school) – Youth finds high level of love and support from their family (could be parents, guardians, or even from an older adolescent), community and school (could be other caring older adolescents or adults).
- **Positive outlook** – Youth is optimistic about her/his personal future.
- **Realistic boundaries and expectations** – The family, community and school all have clear rules and boundaries for how youth should behave; and the youth is encouraged by both parents/guardians and teachers to do well in school.
- **Internal control** – Youth feels that she/he has control over “things that happen to me”.
- **High self-esteem** - Youth reports having high self esteem and feels good about self.
- **Constructive use of time/contributing** – Youth spends time in activities such as creative arts, youth programs, and in community activities such as faith-based programs, etc.
- **Good problem solving skills** – Youth seeks to resolve conflicts and problems nonviolently, and uses.

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ONLINE RESOURCES

TV SHOWS:

- "IT'S ALWAYS SUNNY IN PHILADELPHIA"
[HTTP://VIDS.MYSPACE.COM/INDEX.CFM?
FUSEACTION=VIDS.INDIVIDUAL&VIDEOID=38971410](http://VIDS.MYSPACE.COM/INDEX.CFM?FUSEACTION=VIDS.INDIVIDUAL&VIDEOID=38971410)
- "LOST" – SEASON 2
[HTTP://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?v=JGG4TDWYYJK](http://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?v=JGG4TDWYYJK)

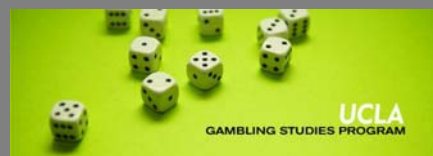
MOVIES:

- [HTTP://WWW.POKERPRIZECLUB.COM/GAMBLING MOVIES.PHP](http://WWW.POKERPRIZECLUB.COM/GAMBLING_MOVIES.PHP)

MUSIC:

- [HTTP://WWW.GOCEE.COM/POKER/MUSIC.HTM](http://WWW.GOCEE.COM/POKER/MUSIC.HTM)
- [WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/VIEW_PLAY_LIST?
P=4A21E995B1E46E1B&SEARCH_QUERY=GAMBLI](http://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/VIEW_PLAY_LIST?P=4A21E995B1E46E1B&SEARCH_QUERY=GAMBLI)

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Online Resources

BOOF Project Partners

**California State Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs (ADP)
Office of Problem Gambling (OPG)**

www.adp.ca.us/OPG

Brochure downloads:

<http://www.adp.state.ca.us/OPG/OPGdownloads.shtml>

California Friday Night Live Partnership

<http://www.fridaynightlive.org>

Youth Leadership Institute

<http://www.yli.org>

NICOS Chinese Health Coalition

<http://www.nicoschc.org>

**University of California, Los Angeles
Gambling Studies Program**

<http://www.uclagamblingprogram.org>

Betting on Our Future Toolkit

Compiled by California Friday Night Live's Office of Research Education and Training with funding from the Office of Problem Gambling through a grant from the California Friday Night Live Partnership. CFNL ORET is a project of the Youth Leadership Institute

Further Websites

National Council on Problem Gambling

<http://www.ncpgambling.org>

Betting on Our Future youth presented at the NCPG National Conference in 2008, and will be presenting again in 2010.

California Council on Problem Gambling

<http://www.calproblemgambling.org>

International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors

McGill University, Montréal, Québec, Canada

<http://youthgambling.mcgill.ca>

A pioneering institution in youth problem gambling, McGill has several resources for gambling prevention from elementary to college age students.

Evergreen Council on Problem Gambling

Washington State

<http://www.evergreencpg.org/pages/youth-programs.php>

National Asian Pacific American Families Against Substance Abuse Problem Gambling Prevention Project

<http://www.napafasa.org/pgp>

Prevention Lane

<http://www.preventionlane.org/gambling/index.html>

Betting on Our Future Toolkit

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CALIFORNIA FRIDAY NIGHT LIVE PARTNERSHIP

Summary of Report on:

Youth Perceptions of Gambling Behavior in their Community

January 2007



YOUTH LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE



California Friday Night Live Partnership (CFNLP): Youth Perceptions of Gambling Behavior in Their Community

January 2007

Summary of Report on Youth Perceptions of Problem Gambling

The California Friday Night Live Partnership (CFNLP) was interested in learning more about the perceptions of youth about gambling behavior. In order to do so the CFNLP worked with the Youth Leadership Institute (YLI) to engage youth in focus group discussion on the topic. This report is a summary of the comprehensive report about what was learned from these groups.

Youth connected to the FNL system, as well as those who are not, were asked a variety of questions about their perceptions regarding the prevalence of gambling in their community, as well as its character and nature and likely impact. Report contents draw conclusions about gambling behavior in California from findings that were derived by synthesizing youth responses to these questions, which were asked by facilitators to guide discussion about a variety of related topics. Findings are based on the themes, concepts, and issues youth used to present their views. With that in mind, the remainder of the introduction for this report lays out a plan for presenting findings and the conclusions drawn from them.

The summary provided is the following:

- An overview summarizes key findings and conclusions drawn from them in an effort to highlight next steps for addressing youth gambling behavior in California based on the perceptions of participants.
- Findings are presented and interpreted to make clear youth perceptions as reported by participants about a variety of topics related to gambling behavior in their community.
- Conclusions are drawn from a summary of findings that provide the framework for discussion in the overview.



Overview and Summary of Youth Perceptions Reported

Most participants seemed to feel that youth are not as capable of gambling responsibly as adults and that they are more likely to develop problems as a result if gambling behavior begins before adulthood – but many also feel that gambling behavior is not a problem for adults. This view is troubling given the prevalence of gambling perceived by participants among adults and other youth, especially male youth 17 years of age and older, and the negative effects. Just as troubling is that few participants felt gambling should be addressed and even fewer felt that something could be done to prevent youth gambling behavior.

Specifically, data from focus groups suggest that gambling behavior is common among adults and youth in the community. Participants indicate that gambling behavior takes on many forms and occurs in many places, and it can be destructive. Surprisingly, gambling behavior is seen as mainly a problem only for youth, not adults, despite the perceived negative effects, such as increased debt or strained family relationships. In other words, youth do not appear to see a connection between adult gambling behavior and its influence on youth in their community like they do for habitual behavior they associate with alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs (ATOD) and their negative effects.

Consequently, male youth in their late teens and older may be particularly vulnerable to gambling problems, if we take the views of focus group participants seriously. Focus group discussion indicated that older, male youth are more likely to gamble and less likely to see it is a problem than their younger counterparts or females. As a result, older, male youth might be more vulnerable to gambling problems, but we must also consider the vulnerability of all youth given the familiarity of participants with many types of gambling behavior. They report exposure to lotto, bingo, poker, blackjack, craps and many other forms of gambling, and say they see it exhibited in their community by adults in many places, such as online, in casinos, and in the homes of friends and relatives.

Perceptions by participants that adult gambling behavior is common in their community suggests we should not be surprised when they report such behavior is also common among peers. They report exposure to poker, blackjack, craps and many other forms of gambling that are exhibited by youth in their community in many places, such as in school for younger youth and casinos for older youth, as well as online and in the homes of friends and relatives.



Questions Posed to Youth

Focus group participants were asked nine primary questions by facilitators that are specified in the protocol to promote consistent, systematic discussion among youth across focus groups about gambling behavior in their community. Questions begin with a focus on adult behavior that shift toward youth behavior while covering a variety of related topics to better understand youth perceptions, such as the scope and dynamics of gambling behavior as well as its likely impact. Primary questions posed by facilitators as well as secondary questions (in parentheses) to further guide discussion are the following:

1. How common do you think gambling is for adults in your community? (Probe: How often? How much money do they spend?)
2. What types of gambling do adults in your community participate in most often? (Probe: Online, casinos, horse or other races, other sports bets, in-person card games? Any other? What is most popular?)
3. How common do you think gambling is for young people in your community? (Probe: How many young people gamble? How often? How much money do they spend?)
4. What kinds of gambling by young people do you see or hear about? (Online casinos, horse or auto race, other sports bets, in-person card games? Any other? What is most popular?)
5. Among young people, who gambles the most? (Probe: Older or younger youth? Male or female? Does the type of gambling vary by these factors?)
6. Where do young people in your community gamble? (Probe: At home on their computer? At friends' homes? Casinos? Other places in the community? Which is most common?)
7. Why do you think young people in your community gamble? (Probe: What influences them – friends, family members, television, local casinos, ads, billboards, and movies. Probe about whether family members also gamble, community norms or other factors, and youth and adult acceptance of young people gambling.)
8. Does gambling by young people cause problems? If so, for whom – young person, family, or others; and, what kinds of problems does gambling cause? (Probe: At what point do you think gambling is a problem for a particular young person?)
9. What do you think could be done in your community to prevent gambling by young people?



Focus Group Sample

The purpose of the sample for this report was to produce viewpoints during discussion from youth who are diverse and from many places. To that end, voluntary participation was solicited in several counties in California that were connected, in one way or another, to the YLI and the FNL Partnership. As a result, 11 focus groups were populated by 72 youth with an array of characteristics from the following counties in California (number of youth in parentheses) – Butte (4), Fresno (6), Kern (11), Marin (8), Riverside (3), San Diego (4), San Luis Obispo (6), San Mateo (11), Santa Barbara (14), Santa Clara (1), Stanislaus (2), and Trinity (2).

Table 1 presents demographic characteristics of youth participants in focus groups. Percentages in the table refer to the proportion of youth who are in specific age groups, female, and live in residential areas that are suburban, urban, or rural. Percentages are presented for youth overall, as shown in the total column, and by county.

Data in Table 1 clearly show that youth participants:

- **Ranged in age from 13 to 22 years and were mostly between the ages of 14 and 18 (83.3%).**
- **Were just as likely to be female (55.6%) as male (44.4%).**
- **Lived primarily in suburban areas (67.2%), but also lived in urban (9.8%) and rural (23.0%) areas.**

These data suggest views about gambling behavior in the local community reflect views of participants that are diverse with respect to age, gender, and residential location.

Consequently, conclusions in this report are drawn from findings that reflect perceptions on gambling in the local community from male and female youth of many ages from a variety of metropolitan settings. However, views of participants are less likely to be sufficiently diverse with respect to residential location than age and gender given the low proportion from urban settings, which means differences will not be examined by suburban, urban, and rural areas. Nevertheless, meaningful insights about gambling behavior in California can still be drawn from focus group discussion because it likely reflects the views of youth in many areas throughout the state.



Findings and Interpretation

This section presents findings from discussion by youth about their perceptions of gambling in the local community during focus group activities. Discussion follows the plan for data analyses described earlier that defines the following sub-sections (see the section entitled 'data management and analyses'):

- **Adult gambling behavior (questions 1 and 2)**
- **Youth gambling behavior (question 3-8)**
- **Community responses to youth gambling behavior (question 9)**

Each sub-section identified above begins by presenting findings for overall perceptions. Next, findings are presented by age and gender where these demographic characteristics are associated with different perceptions of gambling behavior by participants. Findings are not examined by residential area as stated in the previous section. Finally, findings are summarized and interpreted to begin the process of synthesizing them into a coherent narrative that identifies key themes about gambling behavior likely reflected in the views of many youth from many communities throughout the California.

Adult Gambling Behavior

This section reports findings on youth perceptions about adult gambling behavior in their community. Participants were asked about the prevalence of gambling behavior in their community (question 1) and the types of gambling behavior exhibited by them (question 2).

Findings: Most reported that gambling by adults was common in their community (65%) and also reported many types of behavior. Some types of gambling occurred online and in casinos, such as nickel and dime poker, slot machines, blackjack, and craps, while other types did not, such as lotto, dominos, and even dog and cock fighting. Interestingly, some males (22% of all participants), most of whom were 17 years of age and older, were much more likely than females (5% of all participants) to see gambling behavior by adults as benign.

Summary and Interpretation: Clearly, participants perceived gambling behavior among adults as common in their community, which may explain their familiarity with many types. But males older than 16 years of age are somewhat less likely to see it as a problem. As a result, older male youth might be more likely to gamble than younger males and females. If that is so, opportunities to gamble might increase the likelihood they will begin that behavior and continue to do so as adults (and fathers).



Youth Gambling Behavior

Questions posed to participants about youth gambling behavior were more wide-ranging than those posed to them about adult behavior. As with adults, facilitators posed questions to youth about the prevalence of gambling among them in the local community (question 3) and the types of gambling they exhibited (question 4). However, additional questions were posed to determine what types of youth gamble the most (question 5) and where they do so (question 6), as well as why youth gamble (question 7) and whether or not it leads to problems (question 8).

Findings: As with adults, most youth reported that gambling among them was common in their community (65% to 74%), which also explains their familiarity with many types. Participants report that youth play poker, craps, slot machines, blackjack, and bingo, mainly online and in casinos, and that peers even flip dollars bills for lunch money in school. Unlike perceptions of adult behavior, prevalence of gambling behavior among youth does not appear to vary by gender, nor does there appear to be a tendency by older males to see it as benign.

Participants elaborated further on youth gambling behavior when:

- **More than half (60%) reported male youth are more likely to exhibit gambling behavior than females, and a similar proportion (46%) indicated males of high school age or older are more likely to gamble.**
- **Few reported frequent gambling by youth online (<5%) but rather in school (35%), the home of a friend (25%), and casinos (21%).**

Different perceptions for participants are evident by gender and age only when they considered places where youth might gamble. Data show:

- **Females were more likely than males to report casinos as a likely place for youth gambling (17% to 6.4% of all youth).**
- **Youth older than 19 years of age (14.9% of all youth) were more likely to report casinos as a likely place for youth gambling.**
- **Youth 16 years of age or younger (29.6% of all youth) were more likely to report school as a likely place for youth gambling.**



Findings (Continued)

Participants report that youth gambling is subject to a variety of influences, such as boredom, peer pressure, media exposure, and the thrill of winning money as well as the need for it. They also consistently acknowledge that it can lead to problems when it becomes uncontrollable, although some youth do not feel that happens frequently. Specifically, gambling becomes a problem when it results in unaffordable losses and periods of time spent away from responsibilities and obligations that interferes with meeting them. When that happens, participants overwhelmingly report problem gambling behavior contributes to a lower quality of life in the community due to the following effects:

- **Increased personal debt and ruined credit.**
- **Strained relationships with family, friends, and/or co-workers.**
- **Feelings that gamblers are being taken advantage of by hustlers (e.g., casinos, street gamblers, etc.)**
- **Violence related to unpaid debts after engaging in unsafe gambling (i.e., gambling that is not sanctioned and regulated by government)**

Summary and Interpretation: Clearly, participants perceive gambling behavior among youth as common in their community and as with adults, they describe many types. Unlike perceptions for adults, participants report youth gambling is more likely to become a problem when it occurs, which in their view may place older, male youth at risk because they are perceived as more likely to play games of chance.

Findings for participant perceptions of youth gambling behavior are consistent for the most part with those for adults except for one key difference. Youth appear more likely to see gambling as a problem for peers than for adults. Therefore, it does not appear participants understand negative effects of gambling for adults might be more likely if they began such behavior in earlier years. If that is true, participant perceptions that youth gambling behavior occurs in schools and by older youth in casinos is disturbing.



Community Responses to Youth Gambling Behavior

Lastly, participants were posed a question about addressing youth gambling behavior in their community (question 9) and it appears they have somewhat mixed reactions. A few (about 10%) reported nothing needs to be done while a larger minority took the opposite view, but few actively considered whether or not anything *could* be done:

- Some participants (23%) thought nothing could be done to prevent youth gambling behavior, and some of them drew upon the persistence of drug use despite efforts to eradicate it as evidence gambling by adults and youth could not be stopped.
- A similarly small proportion of participants (26%) thought something could be done to prevent youth gambling behavior. They tended to focus on increasing awareness about the character and nature of gambling behavior, such as its prevalence and negative effects, and the role of the media in promoting it (e.g., poker tournaments on television and casino advertisements).



Key Findings

Clearly, gambling behavior in the community is prevalent according to the views of focus group participants. However, it appears youth may not fully understand the risks associated with gambling because they are not making the connection between gambling as a potential problem for adults like they do for youth. Failing to make that connection may place male youth especially at risk relative to females despite acknowledgement from most participants that gambling behavior can be self-destructive. Supporting evidence is provided by the following key findings:

- ***A majority of youth report gambling behavior is common among adults (65%) and youth (74%).*** This finding suggests youth are exposed to gambling by adults and other youth. Consequently, a potentially powerful behavioral model is in place to tell youth in California that gambling is acceptable in their community. Supporting evidence for this point is reflected in the familiarity of participants with many types of gambling they say is exhibited by adults and youth in many places, such as casinos for adults and for youth in schools and homes of friends.
- ***Males 16 years of age and older are less likely to see gambling as a problem for adults (22% of all participants) than their younger counterparts or females.*** This finding suggests male youth may be more likely to engage in gambling behavior as adults and to develop gambling problems along the way compared to females.
- ***Almost two-thirds of participants (60%) reported male youth are more likely to exhibit gambling behavior than females, and almost half (46%) emphasized older male youth.*** This finding confirms conclusions drawn from the previous finding, which stated that male youth are more likely to engage in gambling behavior than their younger counterparts or females. Therefore, it would seem that male youth would indeed be more likely to gamble as adults and develop gambling problems in their lives.
- ***Few youth (26%) thought anything could be done about gambling behavior in their community, regardless of whether or not they thought something should be done about it.*** In other words, few youth thought something should be done to address gambling in their community and also articulated strategies to do so. Consequently, there does not appear to be any consensus among youth about how to address gambling behavior in their community.



Conclusions

As stated in the overview, older, male youth may be especially vulnerable to gambling problems in adulthood relative to females, which means younger males are vulnerable if we assume they follow a behavioral path that is similar to their older counterparts. Findings to support these contentions are quite evident in discussion by participants, and there are implications for addressing gambling behavior in the community.

With that in mind, the remainder of this section supports discussion in the overview by summarizing key findings and the conclusions drawn from them about youth perceptions of gambling behavior in their community. Afterward, discussion in the overview is reinforced further by a brief summary of next steps that are framed by findings and conclusions.

Next Steps

Information obtained from focus group discussion is not definitive, but it is useful for thinking about gambling behavior in California because it offers views from male and female youth of many ages who live in many places (e.g., suburban, urban, and rural). Specifically, key findings summarized above and the conclusions drawn from them suggest the focus for next steps should be on collecting more evidence about youth gambling behavior to develop a specific set of strategies to address it in the community. Those steps are described in greater detail in the overview and they might be:

- **Study the perceptions of youth further by more rigorously assessing their perceptions about the dynamics of youth gambling behavior in their community and its consequences.**
- **Raise youth awareness about the dynamics of gambling behavior and its consequences through educational efforts.**
- **Recognize the vulnerability of male youth in any strategy to address habitual gambling behavior in the community.**

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Next Steps

Ultimately, using findings and the conclusions drawn from them in this report to address gambling behavior in the State of California depend upon the nature and quality of the data, which raises the following key points for next steps:

- ***Further study is necessary of youth gambling behavior that is more comprehensive than the study presented in this report.*** Focus group data is useful for thinking about gambling in California because it reflects the views of diverse participants from many places. However, findings are exploratory and based on perceptions of youth rather than a systematic study of the demonstrated influences on gambling behavior and resulting effects. In other words, discussion here is not definitive, which means more attention should be given to understanding youth gambling behavior as a potential problem and the dynamics and consequences associated with problem behavior.
- ***Educational efforts to address youth gambling behavior might raise awareness among youth about the related problems exhibited by adults as well as their origins, dynamics, and consequences.*** Perceptions of focus group participants suggest youth do not understand the prevalence of problems associated with adult gambling behavior, or how they might be related to youth gambling behavior.
- ***Strategies to address youth gambling behavior might recognize that older, males appear especially vulnerable to problem behavior and that gambling in schools appears to be very common among them.*** Participants clearly indicate many types of gambling in school among youth in their local community, especially by older, males who are the least likely to see it as a problem for adults, and to a lesser extent for youth, relative to their younger counterparts and females.





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