

Parental attitudes toward youth gambling: Are parents part of the problem or solution?

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Introduction

- Despite not being of legal age to gamble on regulated forms of gambling, adolescents are at risk for developing gambling problems (Derevensky & Gupta, 2004; Dickson, Derevensky & Gupta, 2004; Jacobs, 2004; National Research Council, 1999; Shaffer & Hall, 1996; Shaffer, Hall & Vander Bilt, 1999).
- Early research suggests adolescents perceive their parents to generally approve of their gambling, are not concerned about getting caught gambling, and report that gambling with family members is a fairly common occurrence (Gupta & Derevensky, 1997; Ladouceur & Mireault, 1988; Moore & Ohtsuka, 1997).
- The purpose of this study was to directly ascertain parental attitudes, perceptions and concerns related to youth gambling.

A Canadian National Study (2009)

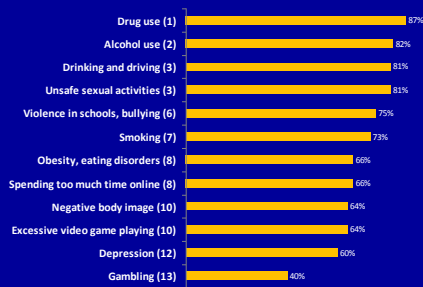
Method

- Participants included parents of at least one child 12-18 years of age.
- Approximately 40,000 Canadian individuals were contacted via e-mail to complete an online survey.
- 2,710 individuals completed the survey (846 males) (31.2%) and (1,864 females) (68.8%).
- The survey was available in both English and French.
- Mean age of respondents was 45 years, with most parents falling between the ages of 45-54.

- Parents referred to their oldest child between the ages of 12-18 currently living at home when completing the survey.
- Four separate domains were examined:
 - 1) attitudes that parents held towards gambling in comparison to other risky behaviours
 - 2) parental gambling behaviour
 - 3) involvement in gambling with their children
 - 4) attitudes/awareness regarding youth education and prevention of gambling problems and other risky behaviors
- Responses were weighted for parent gender, children's gender, age of the child, and province of residence.

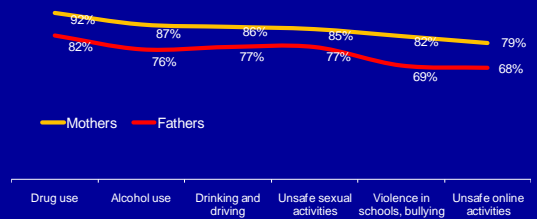
Results

Figure 1: Serious Youth Issues



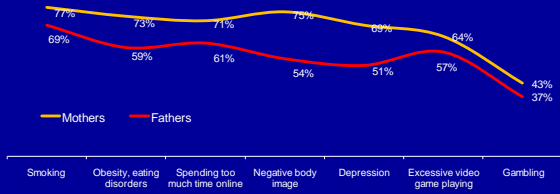
In your opinion, how serious of an issue are the following for teens today? Note, Figure represents responses as "serious" and "very serious."

Figure 2: Comparison of Mothers & Fathers' Attitudes Toward "Serious" Youth Issues



Note: Figures represent "serious" and "very serious."

Figure 3: Comparison of Mothers & Fathers' Attitudes Toward "Serious" Youth Issues (continued)



Note: Figures represent "serious" and "very serious."

Figure 4: Issues Impacting Children

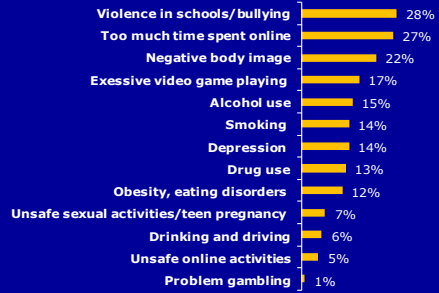


Figure 5: Percentage of Teens With a Computer With Internet Access in Their Bedroom

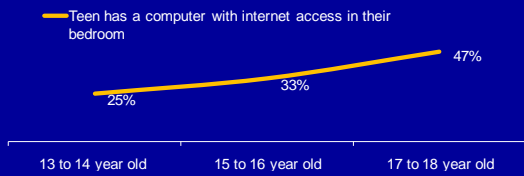
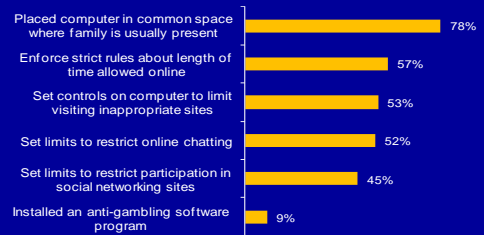


Figure 6: Steps Parents Take to Monitor Child's Online Activities



Have you done any of the following activities related to your child?

Figure 7: Gambling Activities Personally Participated in With Money (Past Year)

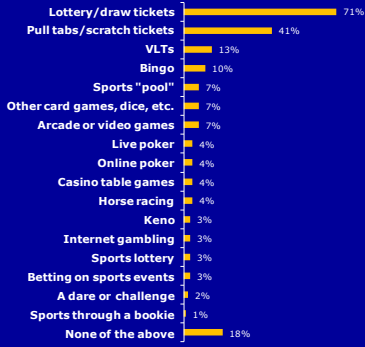
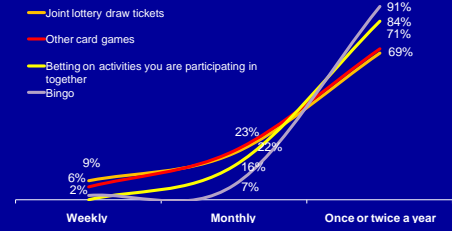
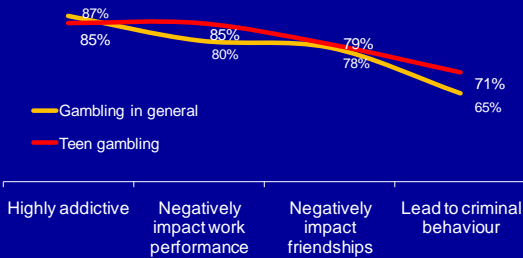


Figure 8: Frequency of Participation in Gambling Activities for Money With Child



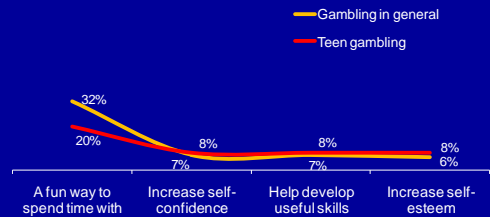
Note: Figures represent cumulative percentages.

Figure 9: Parents' Attitudes Toward Gambling & Teen Gambling



Gambling can ...
Note: Figures represent "agree" and "strongly agree."

Figure 10: Parents' Attitudes Toward Gambling & Teen Gambling (continued)



Gambling can ...
Note: Figures represent "agree" and "strongly agree."

Figure 11: Level of agreement that there are "Benefits" associated with gambling

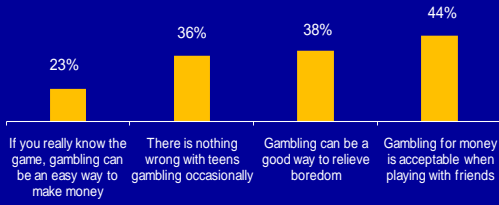


Figure 12: Parents Believe that Teen Experimentation Leads to Serious Problems

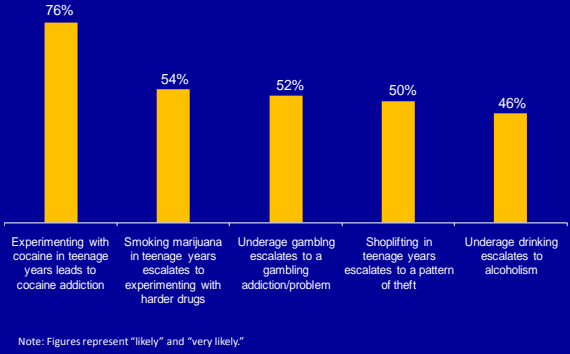


Figure 13: Concern Associated With Child Gambling for Money

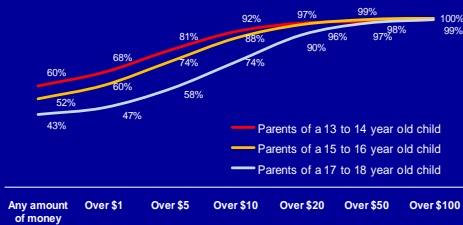
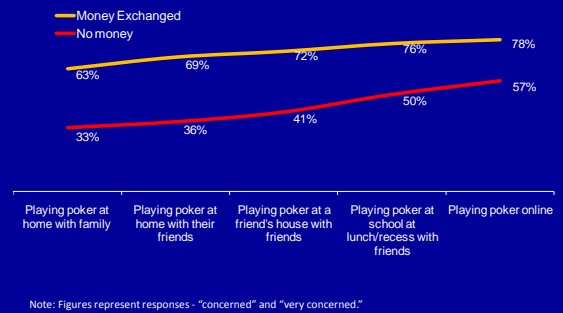


Figure 14: Level of Concern for Child's Participation in Poker Play (for money versus for free)



Parental Gambling with their Child

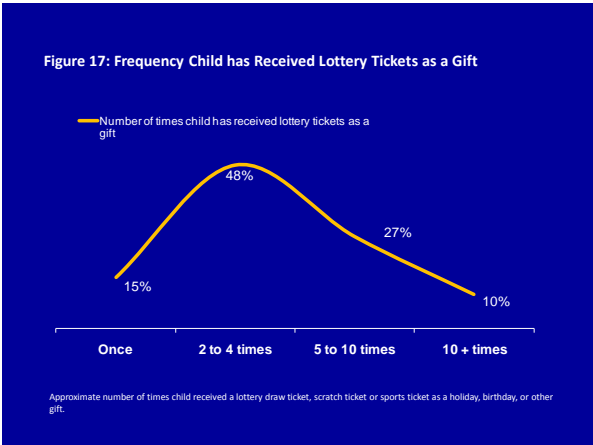
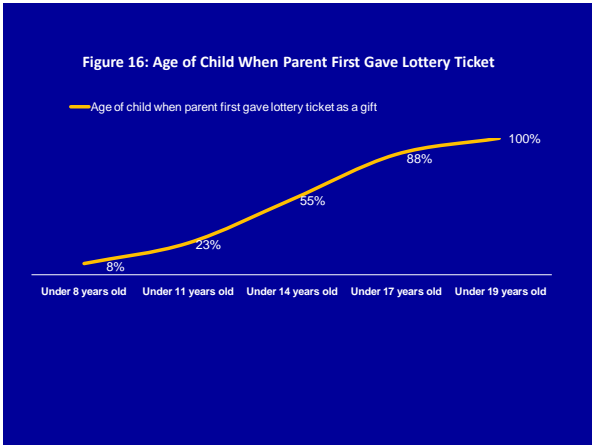
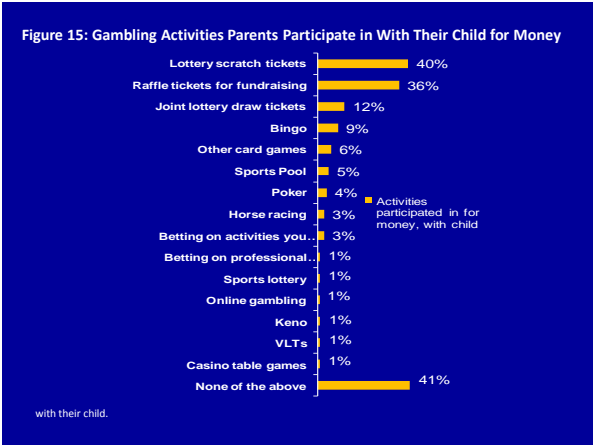


Figure 18: Gambling Activities Parents Believe Their Child has Participated in for Money

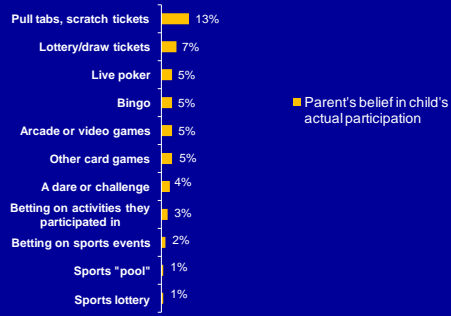


Figure 19: Level of Concern for Child's Involvement in Specific Gambling Activities for Money



EDUCATION

Figure 20: Preferred Channels/Type of Informational Material About Teen Gambling Issues

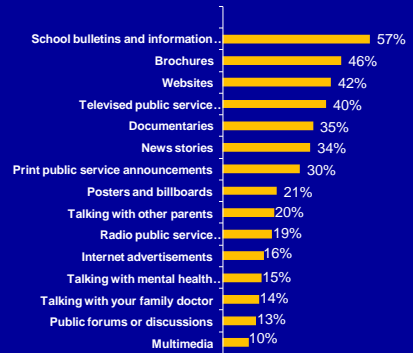


Figure 21: Types of Educational Materials Children Have Brought Home From School

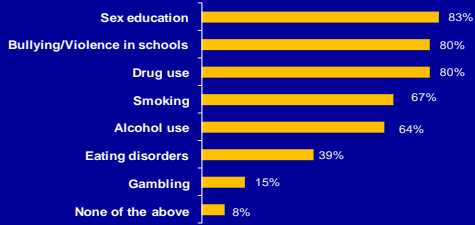


Figure 22: Quality of the Information Available About Youth Issues: Overall Ratings (0 – poor, 100% excellent)

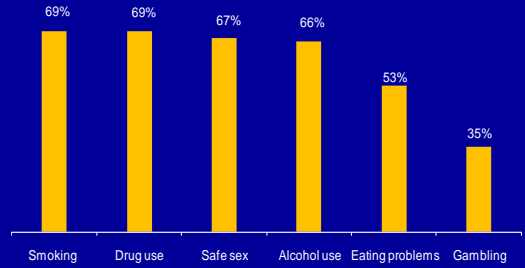


Figure 23: Responsibility for Preventing Teen Gambling

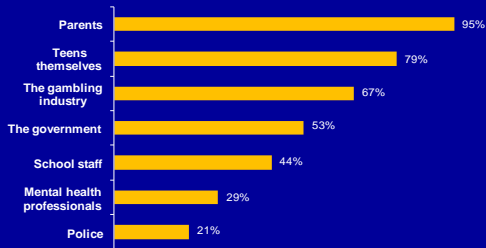
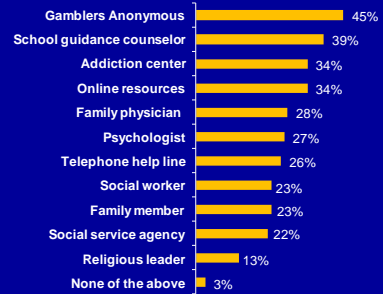
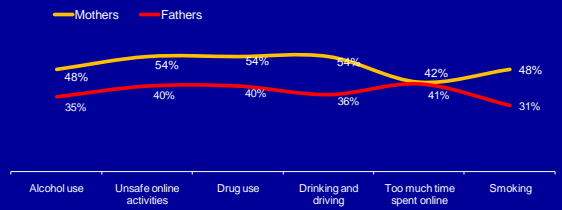


Figure 26: Resources Parents Would Use When Seeking Help for a Teen Gambling Problem



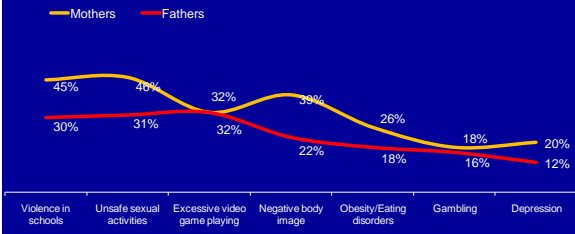
Parent communication

Figure 27: Frequency of Conversations Parents Have With Their Child About Youth Issues



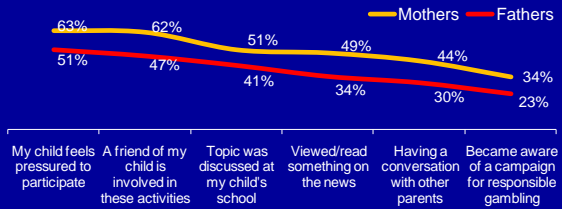
Note: Figures represent responses: "often" and "regularly."

Figure 28: Frequency of Conversations Parents Have With Their Child About Youth Issues (continued)



Note: Figures represent "often" and "regularly."

Figure 30: Situations That Would Prompt a Conversation About Gambling



Note: Figures represent "likely" and "very likely."

Summary

- Gambling was found to be the least commonly discussed issue of the 13 risky behaviours examined.
- Both mothers and fathers had conversations about gambling with their sons more often than with their daughters ($F(1, 2224) = 8.01, p < .01$).
- Mothers believed their children were more likely to listen to them about gambling than fathers ($F(1, 2224) = 5.64, p < .05$).
- Both mothers and fathers were more likely to think that discussing gambling was not a priority with their daughters compared to their sons ($F(1, 2224) = 19.92, p < .001$).

- The most commonly participated in gambling activities with their child included purchasing lottery scratch tickets (40%), raffle tickets for fund raising (36%), lottery draw tickets (12%) and bingo (9%).
- 21% of parents reported having purchased lottery tickets as a gift for their child, with 55% having purchased tickets when their child was less than 14 years old. Fathers reported purchasing lottery tickets for their children more often than mothers ($\chi^2(3, N = 544) = 14.76, p < .01$).

- 8.7% of parents replied that their child brought home information associated with gambling from school.
- 9.4% of parents reported that their child had participated in a prevention or education program about the potential risks associated with gambling at school.
- Parents rated gambling as having the poorest available information available compared with information on smoking, alcohol use, drug use, eating disorders and sexual practices.

Conclusions

- Current efforts, while minimal, to prevent the initiation of youth gambling are possibly being undermined by parents as the majority of parents reported having gambled with their children and do not view gambling as a serious youth issue.
- Given that parental behaviours and attitudes have a significant impact upon their children, the results highlight the importance of targeting parents as a method of helping to prevent youth gambling.

- Schools are an underutilized avenue for communicating with both parents and children about the potential risks associated with gambling.
- The information available to parents about youth gambling may need to be reviewed for its quality and effectiveness. This perception may also be linked to the limited exposure to such programs.

Parents are part of the problem....

but are also part of the solution.

Acknowledgments

- Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission
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- Nova Scotia Gaming Corporation
- Ontario Problem Gambling Research Centre
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