

GAMBLING: NOT A PROBLEM FOR KIDS? DON'T BET ON IT!



**Fairlie Brinkley,
LCSW, CAP**

FCCG Believes

Gambling, like alcohol, tobacco and illicit drug use, is illegal for minors but is often thought of as less dangerous – even, as fun and exciting – for young people. Gambling, however, can be as damaging and disruptive to relationships, health, and lifestyle as any substance abuse.

~Pat Fowler, FCCG

FLORIDA COUNCIL ON COMPULSIVE GAMBLING, INC.

- The Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling, Inc. (FCCG), established in 1988, is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) educational and advocacy organization, under contract with Florida State government.
- The FCCG's primary mission is to help persons adversely affected by problem and compulsive gambling. The FCCG maintains a neutral stance on the issue of legalized gambling, while seeking to assist citizens in need of supports.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

- **Toll-free Confidential 24-Hour HelpLine (888-ADMIT-IT)**
- **Prevention/Education/Outreach Programs**
- **Training for Medical/Other Health Care Professionals**
- **Representation on gambling related issues before policymakers**
- **Sponsor/conduct research**
- **Problem gambling awareness/education/training for governments/gaming operators/others**
- **Coordination/assistance in establishing alternative sentencing options in conjunction with judicial/law enforcement authorities**
- **Impaired Professionals Program**
- **Adolescent/Senior Outreach Programs**
- **Statewide Speakers Bureau**

Icebreaker

- Take a moment and think about the first time you gambled, bet, or 'dared' someone to do something.
- What was the activity?
- What, of value was on the line?
- What do you remember feeling? Did you *win/lose*?
- Anyone willing to share?

WHAT IS GAMBLING?

- What is gambling?
- What are some of types of gambling?
- What are some of the “cultural” influences associated with gambling?
 - Who plays a role in the gambling picture?

WHAT IS GAMBLING?

- Any time you bet money or something of value on an event of uncertain outcome, you are gambling.
 - Can wager with money, possession or other items of value (e.g. pride, prestige, favors, etc.)
 - What items of value might a young person put up in a bet?

FORMS OF GAMBLING INCLUDE...

- Lottery
- Horse/Dog Racing
- Car Racing
- Land Based Casinos*
- Native American Casinos
- Floating Casinos
- Jai Alai
- Bingo
- Stock or Commodities Market
- Numbers
- Cards or dice games for money
Not at a Casino
- Games of skill for money

- Slot Machines, Poker Machines,
Other Gambling Machines, Not
at a Casino
- Sports
- Office Pools, Raffles or
Charitable Small-Stakes
Gambling
- Internet
- Trading or “chase” cards
- Flipping coins
- Dares (i.e. youth)
- Other (DJJ study – sex,
touching, fighting)

*Not available in Florida

Common forms of youth gambling

- Sports betting
- Cards not at a casino
- Dice or dominoes not at a casino
- Arcade and video games
- Games of skill, such as pool
- Trading or sports cards
- Other table games
- Dares, Simple Bets

WHO PLAYS A ROLE IN THE GAMBLING PICTURE?

1 of 4

- Government Support
 - State Lotteries
 - Support of Industry Expansion
 - Offset for business, property and personal tax increases
 - Engine for economic development

- Corporate
 - Gambling is sanctioned entertainment option
 - Can become part of corporate culture
 - Promoted through conference locations, incentives, etc.
 - Minimal investment with high rate of return
 - Market/sell products
 - Simulated games
 - Enticements

WHO PLAYS A ROLE IN THE GAMBLING PICTURE?

2 of 4

- Gaming Industry
 - Heavily promote and market
 - Provide transportation
 - Offer incentives that are hard to compete with
- Media, Entertainment, Need for Risk
 - Heavily promote and market, including unlawful forms
 - Normalization of gambling, prestige for winners
 - Elevated demand for risk in order to be “entertained”
 - Focus on winning and risk, not the odds of losing

WHO PLAYS A ROLE IN THE GAMBLING PICTURE?

3 of 4

- Workplace/Community Organizations/Schools
 - Sponsor gambling activities as social events to generate funds or as an alternative activity to substance use.
 - Office pools
 - Raffles
- Community Support/Lack of Problem Gambling Awareness
 - Economic Development
 - Underwrites public works/programs – keeps taxes lower
 - Belief in “a dollar and a dream”
 - “Get rich quick” mentality
 - Little awareness of gambling as addictive behavior or knowledge of its impacts on individual, family, community
 - Limited resources available for awareness, education, intervention and treatment for affected individuals

WHO PLAYS A ROLE IN THE GAMBLING PICTURE?

4 of

4

- Family environment
 - Schools (drawings, raffles, fundraisers, alternative activity nights that feature gambling activities (cards, etc).
 - Values and beliefs
 - Role of faith
 - Other

- Other

MARKETING OF IMMEDIATE GRATIFICATION

- Children today are being marketed items that provide instant gratification
 - Instant Messaging
 - Cell phones
 - Internet
 - Other

FORMULA FOR RISK

Acceptability

+ Accessibility

+ Availability

**Equals = Vulnerability to Problem and
Pathological Gambling**

THREE TYPES OF GAMBLERS

- **Social Gambler** - Gambles for entertainment and little excitement. Dedicates small amounts of leisure time and gambling is not given excessive emphasis.
- **Problem Gambler** - Dedicates more time, thoughts and money towards gambling.
- **Pathological (Compulsive) Gambler** - Uncontrollable preoccupation and urges to gamble. Gambling is the most important thing in their life.

AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION DSM-IV CRITERIA

- To be classified as a pathological gambler, an individual must meet at least five (5) of the following ten (10) criteria:
 - thinks constantly about gambling
 - increases bets to sustain thrill
 - exhibits agitation when cutting back
 - gambles as an escape
 - chases losses
 - lies to conceal activity
 - finances bets through illegal acts
 - jeopardizes significant relationships
 - relies on financial bailout
 - fails in effort to control or stop

PATHOLOGICAL AND PROBLEM GAMBLING

- Pathological gambling is defined as a progressive condition, which takes years to develop.
 - Classified as a mental health disorder of impulse control by American Psychiatric Association
- Problem gambling among adolescents is viewed as a pre-clinical state. Likelihood to progress to adult classification depends upon variety of factors and influences, including prevention, education and treatment efforts.

PROBLEM GAMBLING

Gambling is a problem when it adversely affects:

- Relationships
- Family
- Friends
- Physical, Social and Mental Health
- School
- Employment
- Finances

SIGNS OF A GAMBLING PROBLEM

1 of

2

- Gambling to fit in or impress friends.
- Skipping class or work to gamble.
- Losing track of time and betting more than planned when gambling.
- Gambling with money earmarked for something else.
- Selling or pawning personal possessions for gambling money.

SIGNS OF A GAMBLING PROBLEM

2 of

2

- Gambling to get mind off something that is troubling.
- Attempting to stop but unable to do so.
- Borrowing or stealing money from friends or family to place bets or pay off gambling debts.
- Gambling online at home, school or work.
- Feeling depressed or having self-destructive thoughts due to a gambling problem.

COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

- Gambling is an easy way to make money
- Gambling is the solution to problems
- “I can beat the odds”
- “I am a lucky person”
- Borrowing money to gamble is okay
- “I can always win it back”

RECENT RESEARCH FINDS

- Family and peer gambling behaviors influence the development of problem gambling behaviors among youth
- Additional research substantiates findings that parental attitudes and behavior and the age of onset of gambling are the greatest predictors of problem gambling

PROBLEM GAMBLING PREVALENCE AMONG YOUTH

- FCCG study (conducted by University of Florida, 2002)
- 1,051 Florida adolescents surveyed:
 - Ages 13-17
 - 3.8% of Florida adolescents are problem or pathological gamblers.
 - 5.9% of Florida adolescent males are problem or pathological gamblers vs. 1.6% of females.
 - 8.2% of Florida adolescents are at-risk gamblers.

REASONS FOR GAMBLING BY ALL FLORIDA YOUTH WHO GAMBLE

- Socialize
- Entertainment or fun
- Win money
- Excitement

REASONS FOR GAMBLING BY FLORIDA YOUTH MEETING DSM-IV CRITERIA

- Feel high
- Peer pressure
- Hobby
- Distraction from everyday problems

TOP THREE FORMS OF GAMBLING* AMONG FLORIDA ADOLESCENT PROBLEM AND PATHOLOGICAL GAMBLERS

- Games of skill
- Sporting events
- Cards, dice or dominoes, not at a casino

* Note: Study conducted in 2002, prior to heavy usage of online gambling and/or poker play

MEAN AGE FOR INITIATION AND OTHER FACTORS

In Florida:

- The mean age for gambling initiation among youth is 12.5 years.
- Age when first started gambling, how many adults the adolescent lives with, and income plus allowance in an average week were not found to be statistically linked to problem gambling behavior.

ILLICIT BEHAVIOR AMONG FLORIDA YOUTH

- Early involvement in gambling now precedes the expected onset for use of cigarettes, hard liquor and marijuana.
- Illicit behavior, such as alcohol, marijuana, tranquilizer, crack or cocaine and other stimulant use, as well as tobacco usage, have strong association among adolescent problem gamblers.
- Scientific studies have shown that persons under age 18 are most at risk for developing addictive patterns of behavior, from substance abuse to problem gambling.

ILLEGAL ACTIVITY AMONG FLORIDA YOUTH

- Florida youth who exhibit problem gambling behavior are more likely to report illegal activities, problems with the law, poorer school performance and more truancy.
- At-risk, problem and pathological gamblers in Florida are more likely to sell personal or family property, steal other things, buy or sell stolen property, and borrow money from friends or acquaintances without their knowing to obtain money to gamble or pay off gambling debts.

FLORIDA YOUTH ARE MORE LIKELY THAN FLORIDA ADULTS TO GAMBLE ON...

- Cards not at a casino
- Dice or dominoes not at a casino
- Arcade and video games
- Games of skill, such as pool
- Trading or sports cards
- Other table games

*While 18.5% of youth report buying lottery tickets, they are more likely than adults to purchase lottery scratch-offs

GATEWAY ACTIVITIES

- Sports betting is a gateway to other forms of gambling.
- Some research suggests that lottery play may encourage young people to engage in other less broadly sanctioned forms of gambling.

ADOLESCENTS INCARCERATED IN FLORIDA DJJ FACILITIES

1 of 3

- FCCG Study (conducted by Drs. Lieberman and Cuadrado, 2002)
- Study approved by DJJ's Institutional Review Board
- Sample of 569 incarcerated adolescents
 - 17% attributed institutionalization in part to gambling
 - 51% in need of help for a gambling problem
 - Significant findings because system does not screen
- Told needed treatment for gambling (12.5% past year)
- Received professional help for gambling (3.1% past year)
- In DJJ system due to gambling (16.9%) past year)
- Arrested or detained because of gambling (9.4% past year)

ADOLESCENTS INCARCERATED IN FLORIDA DJJ FACILITIES 2 of 3

- Research speculates that youth may be engaging in income generating crime to pay for a gambling debt or engaging in violence for which they were arrested to avoid a gambling debt or some other indirect gambling related offense.
- Over 80% of those who gambled in year prior to institutionalization had at least one negative consequence
 - Translates to 63% of entire residential population
 - Few reported receiving any help for gambling despite problems experienced.

ADOLESCENTS INCARCERATED IN FLORIDA DJJ FACILITIES

3 of 3

- **Four most popular forms of gambling for both lifetime and last 12 month period:**
 - Personal skill sports
 - Cards
 - Sports teams
 - Dice
- **Other category – 97 write-ins**
 - Fights (street and unspecified)
 - Fights (dog and cock)
 - Racing (foot, bicycle, auto)
 - Sex (touching, kissing, etc.)
 - Conventional board games/target games, etc.

FLORIDA YOUTH RISK SURVEY

1 OF 2

- **Study conducted by Florida Department and Children and Families (Florida Youth and Substance Abuse Survey)**
 - Middle and high school students
 - Focus: alcohol, tobacco, other drugs, and risk/protective factors
- **Two questions added**
 - Gambling frequency in past year
 - Whether betting caused arguments
- **Secondary analysis (Drs. Lieberman and Cuadrado, 2006)**
 - 8,501 (near 50-50 male/female)
 - Past year - 12.6% gamble monthly or more and 4.3% bet weekly or more

FLORIDA YOUTH RISK SURVEY

2 OF 2

- 14.9% had arguments with family or friends due to gambling
- Problem gamblers are:
 - More likely to use alcohol and drugs in past 30 days
 - Twice as likely to be drunk or high at school within past year
 - Six (6) times more likely to carry a gun to school within past year
 - Far more likely to do poorer in school, skip class for six (6) or more days
 - Nearly three (3) times more likely to attack someone to hurt and more than three (3) times more likely to have been arrested
- Overall, the higher the Gambling Risk Score, the more likely to engage in antisocial or problematic behavior

DIFFERENTIALS: GAMBLING AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE ADDICTION

1 of 2

- Gambling is a “hidden” disorder
- Overdose is not possible (as long as there’s money, there is no saturation point)
- Gambling requires no ingestion of chemicals
- Gambling often causes tremendous financial problems which require immediate attention in treatment
- Gambling is usually not viewed as a disorder

DIFFERENTIALS: GAMBLING AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE ADDICTION

2 of 2

- A “drug” or “urine test” cannot be administered for problem gambling
- Fewer resources are available for problem gamblers and their families
- Problem gamblers are generally more functional
- A gambling prevention message is not as easily accepted as drug prevention

Screening clients is essential in identification

Deception

- Teen Docudrama included in the PTA toolkit.
 - **Video is about a high school student who becomes involved in gambling.**

While watching the DVD watch for:

- Types of gambling
- Warning signs
- Ways Tim obtains money

FCCG – DJJ SPECIFIC PROGRAM

- Are You Gambling with Your Life?
 - Approved by DJJ
 - Preliminary Screening
 - 10 hour educational component
 - At-risk and problem gamblers
 - Treatment training
 - Collateral materials
 - Poster
 - Interactive CD

MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL PREVENTION PROGRAM

- FCCG Developed
- Approved by Florida Dept. of Education
 - Endorsed by Departments of Juvenile Justice, Children and Families, Health, Drug Control, and funded by the Florida Lottery
- Instructor Guides, Student Workbooks and Counselor Guide (all materials available on CD)
- Meets Sunshine Standards
- Flexible
- Online lesson plans (addendum to prevention program and enables educators to remain current with trends)

PTA Toolkit

- Designed to provide parents, teachers, school counselors, or youth based prevention programs with the materials to create an problem gambling awareness program.
 - Includes: *Minor Gambling-It's Not a Game* DVD
 - Parent Teachers guide
 - Learning exercises and games
 - State Approved Curriculum
 - *Deception* – Teen Docudrama
 - Collateral Materials

FCCG 24-HOUR HELPLINE

888-ADMIT-IT

(888-236-4848)

- Open to Anyone
- Statewide
- Toll-free and Confidential
- Staffed Around the Clock
- Supportive Intervention
- Information
- Assistance
- Resource Referral (self-help, professional treatment, legal, financial and other referrals)

RESOURCES

- FCCG 24-HOUR HELPLINE 888-ADMIT-IT
- Website for Youth: www.gamblinghelp.org
 - Click on “Help for Youth” and Teen Forum
- Middle and High School Prevention Program
- Interactive Youth CDS: “Fool, You Lose!” and “Are You Gambling with Your Life?” (High Risk & General Population Versions)
- PTA Kit
- Youth Docudramas: T-Bone Films for Channel One and “Deception”
- Video Library
- Print Materials (newsletters, brochures, posters and research)
- Collateral materials (youth oriented)