

# **Problem Gambling**

## *What Parents Need to Know*

New York Council on Problem  
Gambling, Inc.

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# **Gambling is a high risk behavior...**

Particularly for  
adolescents.

# Why is youth gambling a problem now?

- Societal influences have normalized gambling
- Parents, family members, schools, and the community are not aware of the risks of youth gambling
- Today's youth are the first generation to have legal gambling throughout their lifetime
- The media is bombarding youth with pro-gambling messages

# Five Types of Gamblers

- Social Gambler
- Problem Gambler
- Pathological (Compulsive) Gambler
- Organized Crime Gambler
- Professional Gambler

# Adolescents are actually more likely to become pathological gamblers than adults. (Gupta and Derevensky, 2000)

- Impulsivity
- Developmental nature
- Susceptibility to peer influence
- Emerging egos
- The attraction of winning
- Their belief that nothing negative can happen to them
- Their lack of understanding that there can be a downside to gambling

# Adolescent Brain Development

- Adolescence is a period of profound brain maturation.
- It was once believed that brain development was complete during childhood.
- The maturation process is not complete until about age 24.

# Does normal brain development contribute to adolescent susceptibility to gambling?

## INDIRECT SUPPORT:

1. Greater risk taking (particularly in groups)
2. Greater propensity toward low effort-high excitement activities
3. Lower capacity for good judgment and weighing consequences
4. Greater sensitivity to novel stimuli

# Types of Gambling in New York State

- Lottery
- Horse Racing at Race Tracks and OTB
- Casinos
- Floating Casinos (Cruises to Nowhere)
- Stock or Commodities Market, Day Trading
- Cards for Money, Dice, and slots not at a Casino
- Games of Skill for Money
- Sports Betting
- Office Pools, Raffles
- Dog or Cock Fighting
- Pull Tabs
- Bingo
- Internet Gambling



# Forms of Gambling Presenting the Greatest Risk to NY Adolescents

- Card
- State sponsored lottery games
- Games of skill
- Sports betting
- Dice

(OASAS School Survey 2006)

# Adolescent Gambling Statistics

<b>National (1999)</b> <small>(National Adolescent Review)</small>	<b>New York State (1998)</b> <small>(Gambling and Problem Gambling Among Adolescents in New York)</small>	<b>New York State (2006)</b> <small>(OASAS School Survey)</small>
<b>1.5%</b> of teens age 16-17 can be classified as “problem or pathological gamblers”	<b>2.4%</b> of teens are currently suffering	<b>10%</b> of students have experienced problem gambling in the past year
<b>2%</b> can be classified as “at-risk”	<b>14%</b> total are at risk for developing a problem	<b>20%</b> either at risk or already experiencing problems
<b>30-40%</b> of adolescents report gambling with their parents	<b>44%</b> of adolescents who have gambled started with parents or other family members	<b>37%</b> of students do not know how their parents feel about gambling.

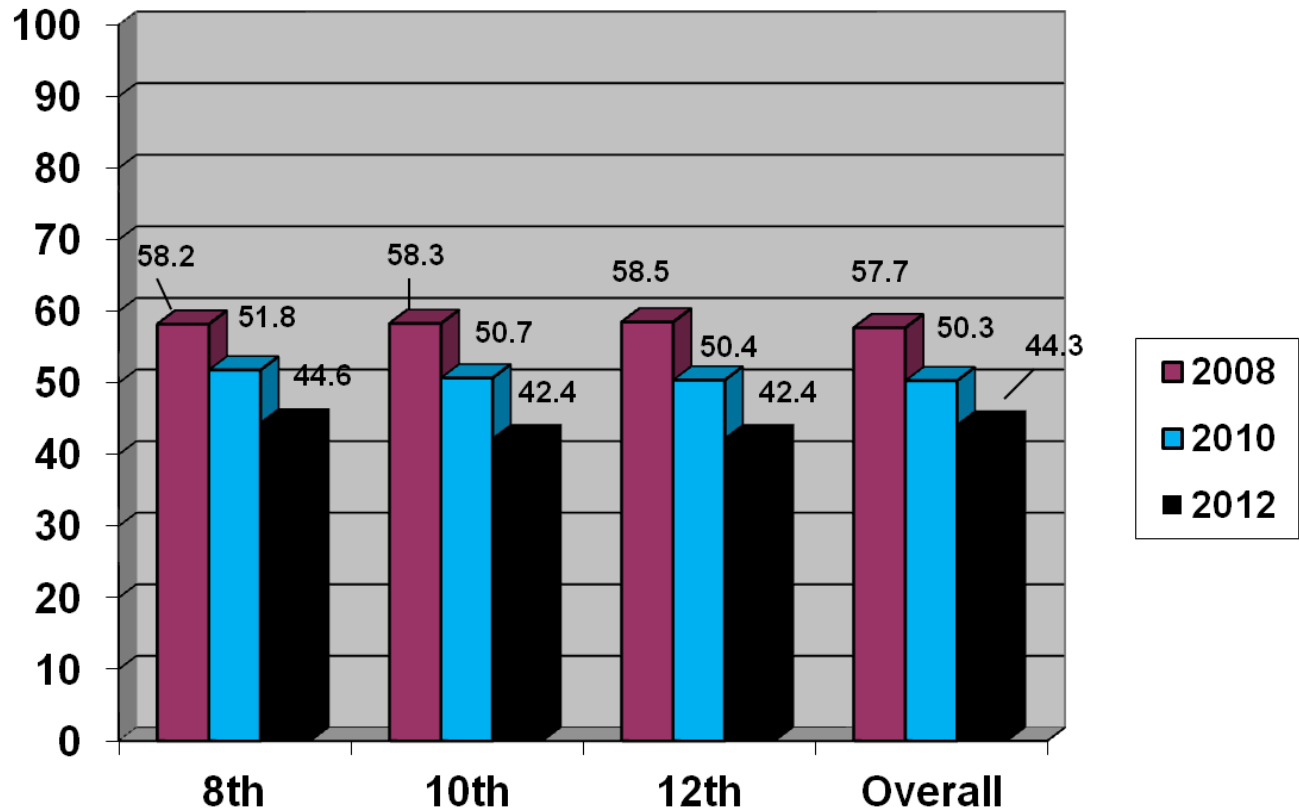
# Other Statistics



- 72% of students in grades 7-12 engaged in at least one gambling activity in the past year.
- 34% have gambled within the past month and 12% have gambled four or more times in the past month.
- Males were 4x more likely to have experienced problem gambling compared to females.

(OASAS School Survey, 2006)

# Putnam County Any Gambling – Past Year



# Problem/ Pathological Gambling and Chemical Dependency

Of those students in grades 7-12 who are in need of chemical dependency treatment services, 28% also experienced problem gambling in the past year.

(OASAS School Survey, 2006)

# Reports show students that reported gambling were:

- Over 50% more likely to drink alcohol
- More than twice as likely to binge drink
- More than three times as likely to use marijuana
- Three times as likely to use other illegal drugs
- Almost three times as likely to get in trouble with the police
- Almost three times as likely to steal or shoplift

(Gambling and Problem Gambling Among Adolescents in New York, 1998)

# Risk Factors Associated With Problem Gambling by Domain

(Gupta and Derevensky, 2000)

Community	Family	School	Individual/ Peer	Constitutional
Accessibility	Family history of addiction, illegal activity	Poor impulse control	<b>Delinquency and persistent problem behaviors</b>	Biochemical factors
Lack of Community Awareness	Lack of parental knowledge		Peer influence	Gender
Social Acceptance	Competitive home environment		Attitudes favorable to problems gambling	<b>Depression</b>
Media; television lottery ads	<b>Family attitudes and involvement</b>		<b>Early win; early onset of gambling experiences</b>	Suicide attempts
	<b>Lack of parental objection to youth gambling</b>			Poor coping skills

# WARNING SIGNS (NY Council on Problem Gambling)

- Increased time spent engaged in gambling activities
- Decrease in previously enjoyable activities and primary interest in gambling related activities
- Increased anxiety and depression
- Problems at home and/ or with friends, significant other
- Financial difficulties despite regular income
- Selling possessions to finance gambling
- Unexplained absences from school or classes



## Cont.

- Exaggerated display of money or other material possessions
- Daily or weekly card game
- Bragging about winning at gambling
- Intense interest in gambling conversations
- Unusual interest in newspapers/magazines/periodicals/sports scores
- Unaccountable explanation for new items of value in possession

# Cont.

- Borrowing or stealing money
- Withdrawing from family and friends
- Uncharacteristically forgetting appointments or dates
- Exaggerated use of word “bet” in vocabulary and/or use of gambling language in conversations (e.g. bookie, point spread, underdog, favorite)
- Sudden drop in grades or failure to complete assignments on time
- Change of personality or behavior

# What Can You Do to Help Prevent Adolescent Problem Gambling?

- Incorporate gambling lessons in already existing ATOD prevention programs.
- Analyze gifts, prizes and events to ensure they do not promote a pro-gambling message.
- Help parents and schools create policies about gambling.
- Raise awareness that gambling can be problematic.
- Challenge youth misconceptions about gambling and the odds.
- Educate kids about the potential dangers.
- Inform kids about how to get help.

# If You or Someone You Know has a Problem with Gambling...



## Help is Available

***National Council on Alcoholism and Other Drug Dependencies/Putnam***

***845-225-4646***

***[www.putnamncadd.org](http://www.putnamncadd.org)***

***New York State HOPEline***

***24-hour Help Line***

***1-877-8-HOPENY***

**New York Council on Problem Gambling**

**[www.nyproblemgambling.org](http://www.nyproblemgambling.org)**

***Gambler's Anonymous***

***[www.gamblersanonymous.org](http://www.gamblersanonymous.org)***

**NYS Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services**

**[www.oasas.state.ny.us/gambling](http://www.oasas.state.ny.us/gambling)**

# Just because you're sixteen doesn't mean you can't be up to your eyeballs in debt.

You may be a minor, but your gambling debts may not be. It's not hard for a teenager to run up hundreds of dollars in debts. The time to quit is before you get in too deep. For help, call the Minnesota Compulsive Gambling Hotline. Break the habit before the habit breaks you. [Minnesota Compulsive Gambling Hotline 1-800-437-3641](http://www.mncompulsivegambling.com)

