



RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS IN YOUTH GAMBLING

Dr. Rachel A. Volberg
Gemini Research, Massachusetts

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Why attend to adolescent gambling?

- Adults with severe gambling problems begin gambling much earlier than people without such problems
- Parental gambling is closely linked to problem gambling among youth
- Gambling often co-occurs with other risky behaviors, may affect success in overcoming these other difficulties
- Youth often begin gambling before they begin experimenting with other risky behaviors
- Evidence suggests that large numbers of underage youth are able to gamble in casinos, bet on horse races & buy lottery tickets



What is known about adolescent gambling & problem gambling?

- Rates vary by jurisdiction but majority of youth aged 12-17 have gambled in past year
- Boys gamble earlier, on more games, more often, spend more time & money, experience more problems
- Preferred activities shift from private games with peers to age-restricted activities as youth age
- Minority / indigenous youth tend to gamble less but are more likely to gamble heavily & to experience problems



What are the known risk factors for youth problem gambling?

- Male gender
- Age of onset of gambling
- Disposable income
- Parental gambling
- Peer gambling
- Availability/accessibility to youth
- Comorbidity & criminality
- Impulsivity, low self-esteem, poor coping skills, delinquency, substance use



Emerging knowledge: Predictors of risk behavior

- Three types of influence on adolescent behavior
 - **Social** factors include parents & peers
 - **Attitudinal** factors include youth orientations to their own experiences
 - **Intrapersonal** factors include personality traits, affective states, behavioral skills & competencies
- Discriminant function analysis used to separate 4 groups for each gender using 20 predictor variables
- Findings
 - Influence of peers & parents is more predictive of gambling involvement by female youth
 - Participation in unstructured activities & risk attitudes/perceptions predicted male & female problem gambling



Emerging knowledge: Parents

- Examined aspects of parenting style in relation to youth problem gambling, controlling for adolescent temperament
- Parental gambling activities were linked to adolescent problem gambling (effect stronger for fathers than mothers)
- Maternal **monitoring** protected against problem gambling only when risk taking was low; paternal monitoring protected against problem gambling only when negative affect was low
- Protective benefits of parental monitoring diminish as **temperamental** risk levels increase
- Parent-child relationship plays important role in protecting against problem gambling but effects are **mediated** by adolescent temperament

Dane, McPhee, Root &
Derevensky, 2004



Emerging knowledge: Parents

- Explored links btw parental gambling, parenting practices & adolescent gambling
- Structural Equation Modeling (LISREL)
 - Analysis controlled for SES, gender, impulsivity-hyperactivity
- Adolescent gambling **frequency** related to parental gambling frequency & problem severity
- Only father's problem **severity** linked to adolescent gambling problems
- Low parental **monitoring** associated with higher adolescent gambling frequency
- Inadequate **disciplinary practices** associated with higher adolescent gambling problems

Vachon, Vitaro, Wanner & Tremblay,
2004



Emerging knowledge: Personality

- Study examines role of impulsivity, sensation seeking, coping & substance use in problem gambling
- Impulsivity & intensity seeking were highly predictive of problem gambling in male & female youth
- Role of stress-coping styles varied by level of gambling involvement & gender
 - Male & female nongamblers used more active coping style than social gamblers or problem gamblers
 - Tendency toward avoidant coping style combined with preference for repetitive & highly stimulating activities renders males particularly susceptible to developing gambling problems



Emerging knowledge: Pathways to problem gambling

- Study aimed to empirically identify groups of youth with distinct longitudinal trajectories of gambling involvement
- 903 low SES boys (Francophone) assessed annually from age 11 – 16
- Three groups identified
 - Early onset high-level chronic group
 - Late onset high-level group
 - Low gambler group
- Chronic & Low group differed consistently on teacher-rated anxiety, impulsivity while Late Onset group was intermediate
- Compared to Low group, both High groups developed elevated rates of gambling-related problems



Emerging knowledge: More about pathways

- Examined role that parents play in preventing development of youth problem gambling
- 2 assessments of mothers, fathers, youth (10-21) using pathways model as organizing construct
 - Blaszczynski & Nower, 2002
- **Pathway 1** (behavioral) - authoritative parenting appears to be protective factor in relation to peer influences (esp. peer antisocial behavior)
- **Pathway 2** (emotional) – depressed youth were granted lower psychological autonomy by mothers which increased odds of emerging or persistent problem gambling
- **Pathway 3** (impulsivist) – mothers of well-regulated youth granted more autonomy & had better knowledge of activities which reduced odds of emerging or persistent problem gambling

Dane, Lawrance, Derevensky,
McPhee & Panetta, 2008



Discussion questions

- Why is gender so important in predicting gambling involvement & problem gambling?
- Are risk & protective factors consistent across cultures?
- What are the implications of different pathways for different youth?
- What might we expect to find in Singapore?