Know When to Fold 'Em: Problem Gambling & Prevention

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'Know the Rules of the Game'

Today's Conversation
- Gambling overview & trends
- Problem gambling implications & risk factors
- Connections with other issues
- Prevention: Importance & current strategies
- Prevention: What WE all can do

Gambling
- To risk money or something of value on the outcome of an unpredictable event or contest.

Legal Gambling in Oregon
- 1933: Legalization of racetrack gambling
- 1984: Voters approve state lottery
- 1989: Off-track betting
- 1992: Video lottery begins
- 1994-2004: Nine tribal casinos open
- 2005: Video slots

Oregon Gambling Revenues
- ALL gambling (2002):
  - $1.18 billion spent in Oregon on all forms of gambling (ECONorthwest, 2003)
- Oregon Lottery (2004-2005):
  - $937 million
  - Oregon sales per capita: $347
  - Lane County sales per capita: $298

Where the Revenues Go
- Lottery allocations:
  - Education
  - Economic Development
  - Parks & Natural Resources
  - Problem Gambling Treatment Fund
- Oregon depends on Lottery for 5% of its total budget (Source: Oregon DAS, 2003)
- Oregon's reliance on all forms of gambling for total budget: about 10%
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Another Side...?

A Snapshot of Problem Gambling in Oregon
- Adults: >60,000 affected (2.3%)
- Youths, 13-17 years old: <10,000 (4%)
- Similar stats across U.S., other western countries
- Groups at highest risk:
  - Youth
  - College age
  - Elderly
  - Persons with A&D issues
  - Persons with mental health issues

Rates of Problem Gambling Among Varied Age Groups

Continuum of Involvement

Telling the Difference

SOCIAL GAMBLING
- Occasional gambler.
- Sticks to limits of money to play with.
- Hopes to win but expects to lose.
- Can take it or leave it.

PROBLEM GAMBLING
- Frequent, or spends more time gambling.
- Plays with $ that is needed or borrowed.
- Expect to win; keeps playing to win back losses.
- Is revolved around gambling.

Source: Carlson & Moore, 1998; Shaffer & Hall, 2001; Moore, 2006; Volberg, 2001
“So What?!“
Implications & Risks

**IMPLICATIONS:**
More than Just Money
Problem Gamblers Seeking Treatment in Oregon, 2005

- **Financial problems**
  - Average: $23,000
  - Total gambling related debt: >$29.5 million
  - Not paying bills on time: 56%

- **Employment problems**
  - 15% reported problems with job / job loss
  - 14% reported poor job performance

- **Crime**
  - 23% reported committing crimes to finance gambling


**IMPLICATIONS:**
More than Just Money
Problem Gamblers Seeking Treatment in Oregon, 2005

- **Relationship problems**
  - Two in three (64%)

- **Mental health**
  - Correlation with mood disorders, high rates of depression
  - 6% attempted suicide within 6 months prior to entering treatment

- **Concurrent alcohol / drug problems**
  - Alcohol: 29%
  - Drugs: 11%


**ADDITION" CONNECTION:**
Gambling & Substances

- Loss of control
- Denial
- Depression & mood swings
- Progressive
- Chasing
- First win (high) remembered
- Use as an escape
- Preoccupation
- Use of rituals
- Similar ‘highs’
- Hidden addiction
- Can’t overdose-no saturation point
- Huge financial problems
- Can function at work
- Can’t be tested
- Doesn’t require ingestion
- Fewer resources available
- Perceptions

**Recognized Youth Problem Behaviors**

- Substance abuse
- Violence
- Delinquency
- Teenage pregnancy
- School dropout

→ Problem gambling...?

Source: Channing-Bete Company, Inc. (problem gambling currently not recognized)

“The earlier people begin gambling, the more likely they are to experience problems from gambling.”
- National Academy of Sciences, 2001

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Research: Potential Risk Factors

- **Community:**
  - Availability
  - Community Laws & Norms
- **Family:**
  - Family History
  - Family Conflict (competition)
  - Parental Attitudes/Involvement
- **School:**
  - Anti-Social Behavior
- **Individual/Peer:**
  - Peer Involvement
  - Favorable Attitudes
  - Early Initiation
  - Constitutional


### ASSETS RESEARCH:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent of Persons Gambling With High Risk Patterns*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-10 Assets</td>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
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* Definition of Gambling as High Risk Behavior Pattern:
Has gambled three or more times in the past year.


Playing the Cards Right:
Problem Gambling Prevention

Why Prevention is More Important than Ever

- Availability
- Accessibility
- Acceptability
- Advertising
- Age

Youth gambling is thus far an issue under-checked, under-studied, under the radar!

PREVENTION/OUTREACH: Oregon

- Administration: Department of Human Services
- Funding: Oregon Lottery
- Statewide ‘responsible gambling’ campaign: Oregon Lottery
- Programs:
  - 20 regional programs
  - Heavy emphasis on:
    - Outreach to treatment
    - Awareness-building
  - Newly encouraged emphasis on “true” prevention

Information Dissemination

- Presentations (LC*)
- Public service announcements (LC)
- Ads
- Newspaper articles, guest editorials (LC)
- Other media (LC)
- Website (LC)
- Educational materials (LC)
- Outreach to special populations

LC=this strategy done in Lane County
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Prevention Education
- Integrating problem gambling prevention material into existing evidence-based addictions prevention
- Developing evidence-based problem gambling prevention curriculum (not yet underway in Oregon)

Alternative Activities
- None known to date specific to problem gambling prevention...

Problem I.D. & Referral
- Screening ‘at-risk’ youth, providing follow-up gambling prevention efforts

Community-Based Coalitions
- Oregon Problem Gambling Prevention Committee
- Lane County Problem Gambling Advisory Committee
- Representing problem gambling at the table of related groups (like LCCPSA!)

Environmental/Policy
- Regulations: Implementing responsible gambling policies/ordinances in communities, gambling establishments, schools, etc.
- Enforcement: Retailer compliance against underage gambling sales
- Changing availability of gambling opportunities
- Protecting problem gambling services funding

Percent of Oregon Prevention Activities by CSAP Strategy
- 87%
- 9%
- 2%
- 0%
- 1%
- 1%
- Information Dissemination
- Prevention Education
- Alternative Activities
- Problem I.D. & Referral
- Community-Based Processes
- Environmental

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What can WE do?

School-based efforts:
- include problem gambling in addictions prevention curricula
- develop gambling conduct codes
- exhibit healthy behaviors by including gambling-free fundraisers and grad night events
- educate counselors & teachers on problem gambling, problem identification

Local agency efforts:
- increase awareness about the issue
- education on problem I.D. & referral

Research:
- gambling behaviors & attitudes
- relationships with other issues
- determine best practices for prevention

Home & community:
- talk with youth about gambling risks & consequences
- set clear & consistent expectations
- model healthy gambling choices
- monitor youth behavior

FREE TREATMENT in Lane County

1-877-2-STOP-NOW
Help Line, available 24 hrs, every day

emergence (formerly ACES) Gambling Treatment Program
- Help/treatment is free for anyone concerned about gambling
- Over 200 problem gamblers and loved ones treated in 2005
- Individual and group counseling
- Gender-specific groups

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

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