

Young People and Gambling

Background

Results from the Health Sponsorship Council's (HSC's) *2006/07 Gaming and Betting Activities Survey (GBAS)* measure the attitudes of young people towards gambling. A total of 199 young people (aged 15 to 17 years) were interviewed, from a total group of nearly 2,000 people. Although people aged under 18 years are not legally able to participate in most of the common forms of gambling in New Zealand, they are likely to have already been exposed to a lot of messages about gambling and to have been introduced to some ways to play games for money. Risk factors for developing gambling problems later in life include growing up in a household where people gamble heavily and starting gambling at a young age.

Research Details

Methodology

All young people were asked what sorts of things they thought would attract people their age to start gambling or would put them off starting gambling. They were later asked whether they had taken part in any discussion about gambling in school or outside school and, if so, what this involved. Young people were asked many of the same

questions about their knowledge or experiences of gambling harm as the adult respondents aged 18 and over.

Detailed Findings

Factors that Influence Decision to Start Gambling

- Over one-half (52%) of young people suggested that 'to win money' would be a reason to start gambling. Nearly one-half (46%) suggested that losing money, or seeing others lose, would put people off gambling.
- Other popular factors that encouraged gambling involved seeing other people doing it – thinking it was cool or trendy (13%) or peer pressure (12%). Females were more likely than males to mention peer pressure, while Māori were more likely to mention seeing gambling as trendy. Males were more likely to mention gambling for excitement or a thrill.
- Factors that would put young people off gambling included awareness of general negative effects (14%) and financial difficulties (12%). Negative effects, risk of addiction and effects on family were more likely to be

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mentioned by females. Males were more likely to comment that knowing the odds would put people off.

- Just over one in 10 (11%) young people felt that advertising and public education affected people’s decision not to gamble. This included

advertising that concentrated on the negative effects of gambling, or a reduction in pro-gambling advertising. Young people of Māori (16%) and European/Other (13%) ethnicities were more likely to mention advertising.

Table 1: Most mentioned factors that motivate young people to gamble

15 - 17 year olds	
To win money	52%
Trendy/see others gambling or winning	13%
Friends do it/peer pressure	12%
Easy way of getting money	12%

Table 2: Most mentioned factors that put young people off starting to gamble

15 - 17 year olds	
Losing money or seeing others lose	46%
General negative effects	14%
Financial difficulty/debt/loss	12%
Advertising or education – anti-gambling/less pro-gambling	11%

Discussions about Gambling

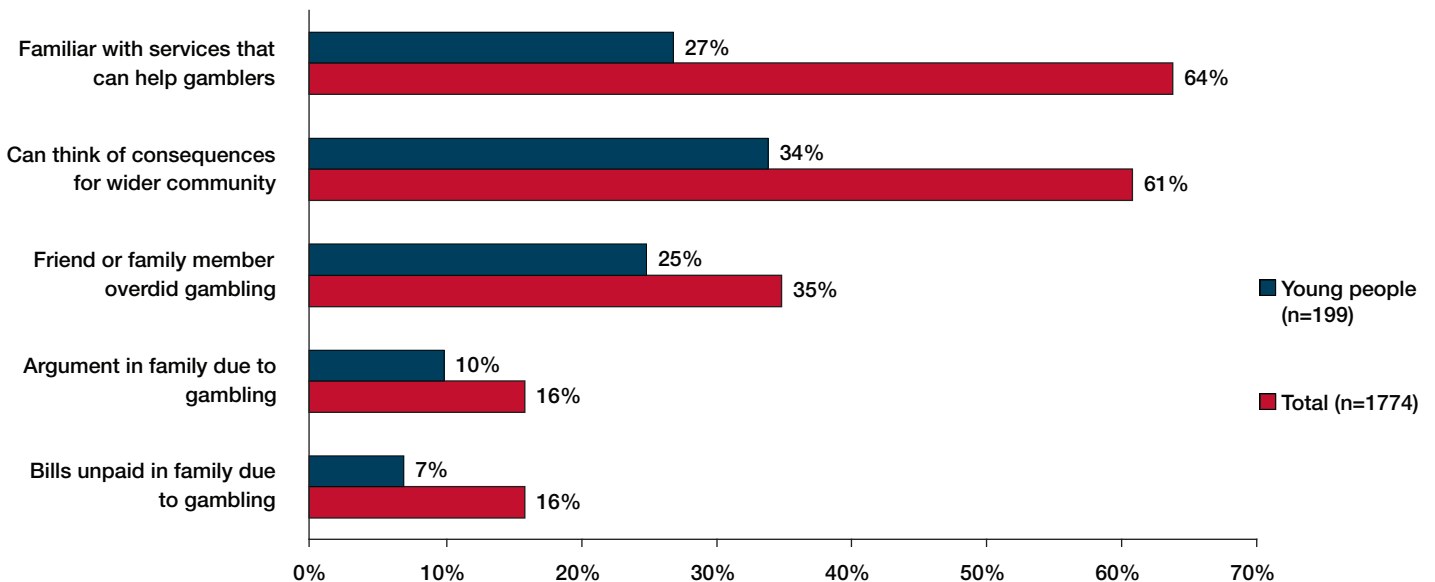
- Just over one-quarter (26%) of young people said that they had had discussions in school about gambling-related problems and ways to solve them. Only 4% had taken part in such discussions outside of school.
- The types of discussion that young people had had at school included ‘effects of gambling’ (44%), ‘general debate or discussion’ (24%) and ‘ways to help people with a problem’ (12%). These results are based on a small number of responses (n=58).

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Young People's Responses, Compared to General Population

- Young people were much less familiar with services that could help people with gambling problems (27% of young people knew of services, compared to 64% of respondents overall). They were also significantly less likely to be able to think of consequences that gambling could have for the wider community.
- Young people did not, compared to the overall average, report as much harm from gambling. While over one in three (34%) respondents overall knew a friend or family member who had gambled too much in the last year, for young people the proportion was one in four (25%). Fewer young people said there had been an argument in their wider family about gambling (10% compared with 16% overall) or bills unpaid due to gambling (7% compared with 16% overall).
- For many other questions, young people's responses were similar to those of the overall group surveyed.

Figure 1: Young peoples' knowledge and experience of gambling harm, compared with general population



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About the Survey

- The findings provide a benchmark for developing and evaluating public health initiatives. The survey contributes to New Zealand's public health approach to addressing gambling harm.
- The GBAS is a nationwide face-to-face survey of 1,774 adult New Zealand residents aged 18 years and over. The survey also included a sample of 199 young people aged 15 to 17 years, resulting in 1,973 people taking part in the survey.
- The sample, with a response rate of 66.3%, included 876 people of European/Other ethnicities, 495 Māori, 267 Pacific peoples and 335 Asian people.
- The data have been adjusted (weighted) to ensure they are representative of the New Zealand population.
- A full description of the 2006/07 GBAS survey methodology and full report can be found online at www.hsc.org.nz/researchpublications.html

The HSC is a crown entity that uses health promotion initiatives to promote health and encourage healthy lifestyles, with a long-term focus on reducing the social, financial and health costs of a number of health behaviours.

Citation

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