



## **Gambling among youth involved in Georgia Courts**

Literature has indicated that risk factors for problem gambling in youth populations include substance use, delinquency, and involvement with the criminal justice system<sup>1</sup>. Based on this information, the Georgia Department of Human Resources funded the Georgia State Pathological Gambling Research Team to collect data from Georgia Juvenile, Juvenile Drug, and Family courts on youth gambling behaviors. Preliminary results indicate rates of problem gambling among these 145 Georgia youth are nearly three times those of youth from community samples. Additionally, these youth report gambling in youth detention centers and committing gambling related crime, although less than 1% have sought treatment for a gambling problem. Ultimately, these results indicate a serious need to screen youth involved with Georgia courts and provide prevention and treatment for this debilitating issue.

### **South Oaks Gambling Screen-Revised for Adolescents<sup>2</sup>**

77.2% either don't gamble or no problem

10.3% at-risk gamblers

12.4% problem gamblers

### **Group Differences**

- 16% of males are problem gamblers versus 4.4% of females
- Males are 3times more likely to be problem gamblers than non-problem gamblers
- No significant differences exist in gambling severity between youth in urban versus suburban or rural counties
- The percentage of Caucasian youth that are problem gamblers (6.5%) is significantly less than for both African-American youth (15.8%) and other<sup>3</sup> Ethnic minorities (20%).

### **Gambling Risk Factors**

- 36% report someone in their life has a gambling problem; 18.6% have a parent who is a problem gambler.
- Youth with a parent with a gambling problem are 9 times more likely to be a problem gambler than not.
- Substance use is a significant predictor of gambling problem severity when controlling for age, gender, and race/ethnicity.
- Suicidal ideation does not predict problem gambling severity.

### **Gambling Activities**

- 32% of youth who reported never having gambled endorsed at least one gambling activity
- Scope of gambling activities predicts a .5 point increase in problem gambling score
- 18% of youth report playing the lottery<sup>4</sup>
- 9% play slots (most likely video lottery terminals)

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- 36% play pull-tabs and/or scratch-offs (by far the activity endorsed most by females)



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### **Gambling in Detention**

- 69% of youth who have spent time in detention gambled while there
- PG rates of youth who have been to detention (39%) are significantly higher than in youth who have not (6%).
- Youth report betting on sports, cards, and dice
- Motivations for youth gambling include boredom, respect, and entertainment
- Two youth commented that it was fun to gamble with the juvenile correctional officers

### **Gambling-related Crime**

- 8.3% of youth have hurt/threatened or been hurt/threatened over gambling
- 19% of youth who gamble have committed gambling-related crime
- Youth who commit gambling related crime are 7 times more likely to be problem gamblers or at-risk gamblers than non-problem/non-gamblers.
- Youth reported connections between gambling and crime, including: “Gamble for money to smoke weed”, “hustling people is easy money”, “stole a car when I was drunk on a bet”

### **Steps you can take**

- Add in the Lie-bet screening tool to your basic screening/intake measure (*See below for appropriate use*)
- Introduce problem gambling prevention and intervention tools to youth in group settings a few times per month to reduce stigma associated with gambling
- Contact the Georgia State Pathological Gambling Research Team for brochures, fact sheets, interventions, and any technical support necessary to reduce the risks these youth face

### **LIE-BET TOOL TO RULE OUT PATHOLOGICAL GAMBLING<sup>10</sup>**

This 2-item questionnaire has been found to be reliable and valid at discriminating between pathological and non-problem gamblers. A response of “Yes” to either question indicates further assessment of disordered gambling is warranted.

#### **Lie-bet screening questionnaire:**

- 1) Have you ever felt the need to bet more and more money?
- 2) Have you ever had to lie to people important to you about how much you gambled?

<sup>1</sup> Stinchfield, R. (2000). Gambling and correlates of gambling among Minnesota public school students. *Journal of Gambling Studies*, 16, 153 – 173.

<sup>2</sup> Winters, K.C., Stinchfield R.D., and Fulkerson, J. (1993). Patterns and characteristics of adolescent gambling. *Journal of Gambling Studies*, 9, 371 – 386.

<sup>3</sup> The “other” racial/ethnic category is comprised of youth who identified as Hispanic/Latino, Asian, and Native American youth

<sup>4</sup> These figures are representative of all youth who endorsed at least one activity, and do not include youth who have never gambled

<sup>5</sup> Johnson, E. E., Hamer, R., Nora, R. M., Tan, B., Eistenstein, N., & Englehart, C. (1988). The lie/bet questionnaire for



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screening pathological gamblers. *Psychological Reports*, 80, 83-88.