

Gambling Survey Development Highlighted Findings

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In Fall 2009, over 1,800 ninth and eleventh grade students from eight high schools throughout Southern California provided outcome data on a survey about gambling and health-related risk factors. The main purpose of the survey administration was to assess the quality of the new gambling items. However, other items about health-related behaviors and attitudes (e.g., ATOD use) were added so that the survey experience would be similar to that of other assessments of health-related behaviors like the California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS). The key findings are as follows:

Prevalence and Frequency of Gambling (Past 12 Months)

- **Any gambling.** More than 2 out of 3 (69%) high school students reported having bet or gambled in some way at least once in the past 12 months (9th grade 70%; 11th grade 68%).
- **Frequent gambling.** Nearly 1 in 4 (24%) of 9th graders and 1 in 5 (20%) of 11th graders reported betting or gambling in some way frequently (“Once a week or more”).
- **Gender.** Males were slightly more likely than females to report any gambling (74% versus 65% in 9th grade and 73% versus 61% in 11th grade). However, males were about twice as likely as females to report gambling frequently regardless of grade (31% versus 17% in 9th grade and 26% versus 12% in 11th). While males comprise 58- 62% of those reporting “any” gambling, they represent 70-74% of the frequent gamblers.
- **Ethnicity.** Hispanics reported the highest prevalence and Asians the lowest. In 9th grade, prevalence rates ranged from 7% among Hispanic respondents to 70-71% among Whites and Multiple/other (71%) respondents, but were considerably lower for Asian (53%) respondents. In 11th grade, group differences narrowed: prevalence rates were slightly lower among Hispanics, (71%), Whites (63%), and Multiple/other (69%), but those for Asians increased to 65%.

Alcohol

- **Any drinking.** Ninth-grade gamblers were almost 3 times as likely as non-gamblers (43% versus 16%) to report having had at least one drink in the past 12 months.
- **Binge drinking.** Ninth-grade gamblers were more than 3 times as likely as their non-gambling counterparts to report binge drinking, (“5 or more drinks” in one occasion) in the last 12 months (23% versus 7%). About 1 in 3 of the 9th-grade frequent gamblers (34%) reported binge drinking. Differences between gamblers and non-gamblers among 11th graders were also substantial

(31% versus 20%), but the gap was smaller than that found in 9th grade, mainly because more 11th grade non-gamblers reported binge drinking.

- **Drinking and driving.** Ninth grade students who reported “Any” gambling in the past 12 months were about three times as likely as non-gamblers to have either driven while drinking or been driven by a friend who had been drinking in their lifetime (28% versus 8%). The difference between gamblers (29%) and non-gamblers (15%) was not as large for 11th graders only because more of the non-gamblers had been involved with drinking and driving in the lifetime.

Marijuana

- The rate of **any 12-month marijuana use** for gamblers was double that of non-gamblers in 9th grade (20% versus 10%) and more than 1 in 4 **weekly** gamblers in the 9th grade reported marijuana use (27%).

Other Drug Use

- **Other substance use** (i.e., cocaine, inhalants, methamphetamine, ecstasy, LSD, and other illegal drugs) among 9th grade gamblers was consistently higher (2 to 8 times) than that reported by non-gamblers. The differences between gamblers and non-gamblers on substance use were similar for 11th grade respondents, but not as large because a higher percentage of non-gamblers at this age indicated use.
- **Frequent drug use.** Students who reported frequent gambling (once a week or more) were far more likely to indicate “weekly” drug use as well. For example, 9th-grade frequent gamblers were 6 times as likely as non-gamblers to report weekly binge drinking (9% versus 1.5%) and 3 times as likely to use marijuana weekly (10% versus 3%). The same comparisons for 11th graders were still substantial, but not as large because of increased number of non-gamblers indicating frequent drug use (e.g., binge drinking 12% versus 4% and marijuana 14% versus 7%).

Tobacco

- **Smoking.** Ninth-grade gamblers were almost 3 times as likely as non-gamblers (14% versus 5%) to report having smoked in the past 12 months. The gap is smaller, but still apparent for 11th-grade gamblers as compared to non-gamblers (18% versus 12%)

Gambling Specific

- **Gambling activities.** The most common gambling activities adolescents reported engaging in are: “Personal skill games” (9th grade 20% and 11th grade 18%); “Personal challenges” (9th grade 12% and 11th grade 9%); “Betting on Sports” (9th grade 10% and 11th grade 10%) and, “Card Games” (9th grade 7% and 11th grade 10%).

- **Gambling locations.** The three most common locations students reported gambling are at: “Home” (9th grade 57% and 11th grade 54%); a, “Friend’s House” (9th grade 43% and 11th grade 49%); and “School” (9th grade 29% and 11 grade 33%).

Violence & Victimization at School

- **Bullying.** Gamblers are significantly more likely than their non-gambling counterparts to report having been physically bullied (“Pushed, shoved, etc”) at school in the last 12 months (39% versus 22% 9th grade and 27% versus 15% in 11th).
- **Weapon at school.** Students who reported gambling were about 3 times as likely to have been “threatened or injured with a weapon at school” than non-gamblers (12% versus 4% in 9th grade and 10% versus 3% in 11th grade). Gamblers were also more likely to “see someone with a weapon at school” (42% versus 20% in 9th grade and 38% versus 20% in 11th).
- **Property victimization.** Non-gamblers were considerably less likely than gamblers to have property stolen or damaged at school (14% versus 36% in 9th grade and 23% versus 34% in 11th grade).