

# ENGAGING YOUTH IN COMMUNITY ACTION FOR UNDERAGE GAMBLING PREVENTION

**May 7, 2026**

**Presenter: Liz Parsons**



# About the Center and Today's Webinar



## About Us

- We are the Massachusetts Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling Prevention (MCOEPGP)
- Funded by: the MA Department of Public Health, Office of Problem Gambling Services.
- We provide **training, capacity-building, and program development** to support the prevention of problem gambling and related health issues.



PROBLEM  
GAMBLING  
PREVENTION

MASSACHUSETTS CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

# What to Expect Today



## Participation

- Please keep your **webcam on** if you're comfortable. It helps us connect!
- You're muted on entry; feel free to **unmute anytime** to contribute
- Use the **chat** or **raise your virtual/physical hand** to ask questions or share ideas
- **Please stay engaged.** Your experience enriches the conversation.

# Objectives

- 1 Apply lessons learned from an alcohol policy case study to other policy change efforts
- 2 Identify policy levers for effective problem gambling prevention
- 3 Identify ways to gain support for impactful policy changes
- 4 Learn how other adult advisors have engaged youth in policy efforts



# POLL QUESTION

How would you describe your experience with working with youth on policy issues? Check all that apply.

- I currently work with youth on policy issues.
- I intend to work with youth on policy issues but haven't yet.
- I do not intend to work with youth on policy issues.
- I'm not sure if I will work with youth on policy issues yet.
- I've worked with youth on policy issues in the past.



# THE PROBLEM: CASE STUDY EXAMPLE



Total bans or comprehensive restrictions of alcohol advertising across all media types including digital marketing are one of the

**WHO "BEST BUYS".**

"Best buys" are cost-effective interventions to reduce alcohol consumption and associated harm.



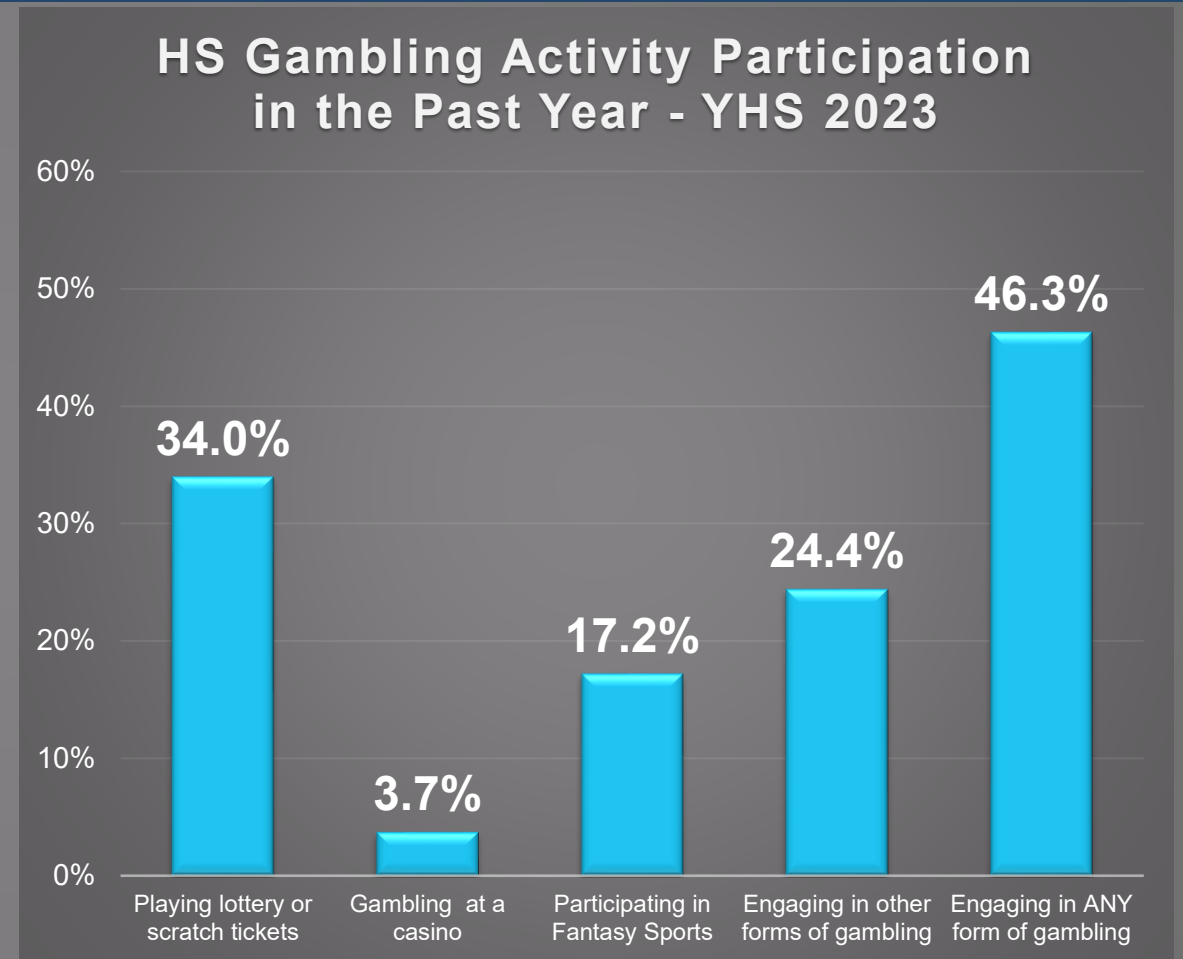
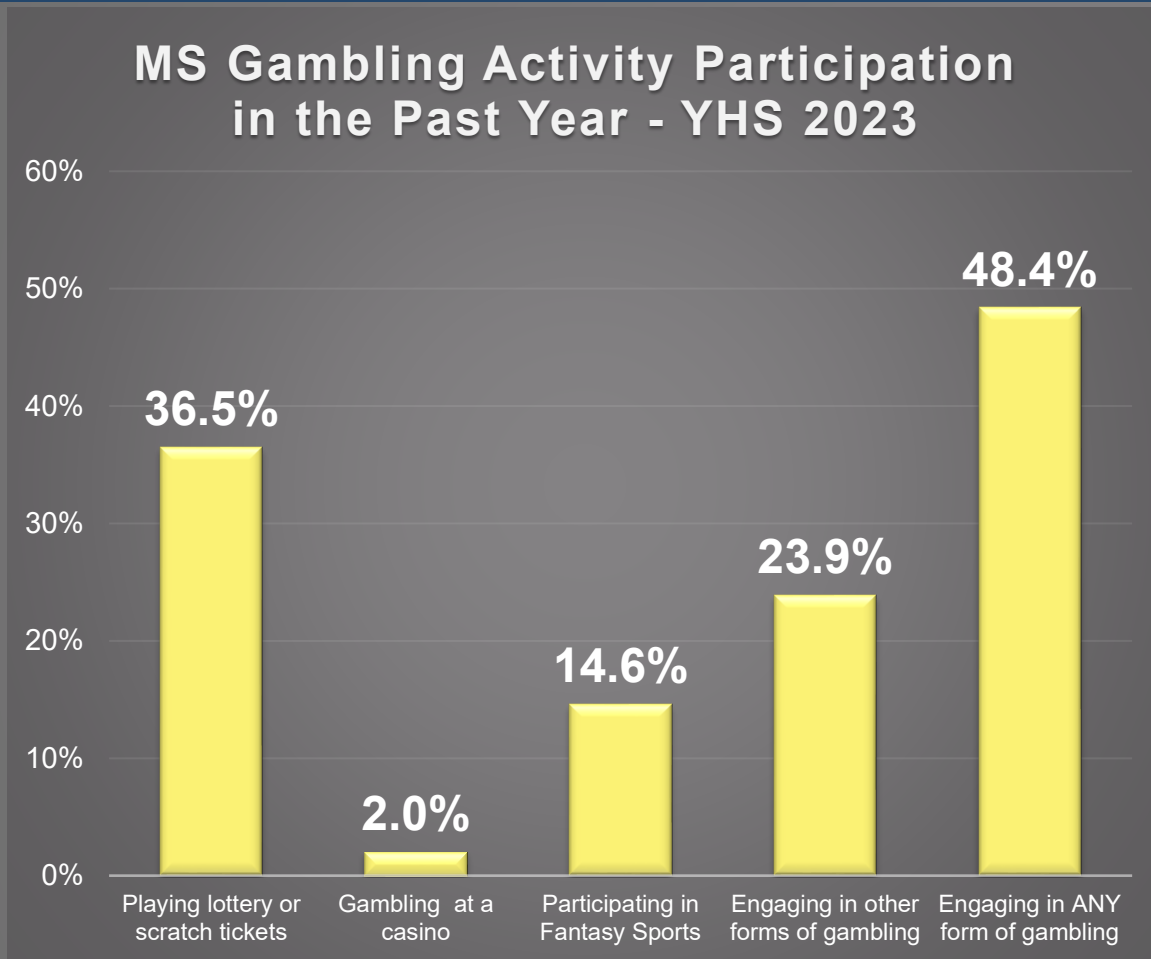
# The Solution: Case Study Example

# THE PROBLEM: UNDERAGE GAMBLING



# 2023: MA Gambling Activity Participation Prevalence in Youth

Percent of middle school (MS) and high school (HS) students reported engaging in some form of gambling in the last year.



# Online Gambling Ads on MBTA



Image: © Boston Business Journal / Gary Higgins



# The Solution

# Policy Solutions

## **Advertising**

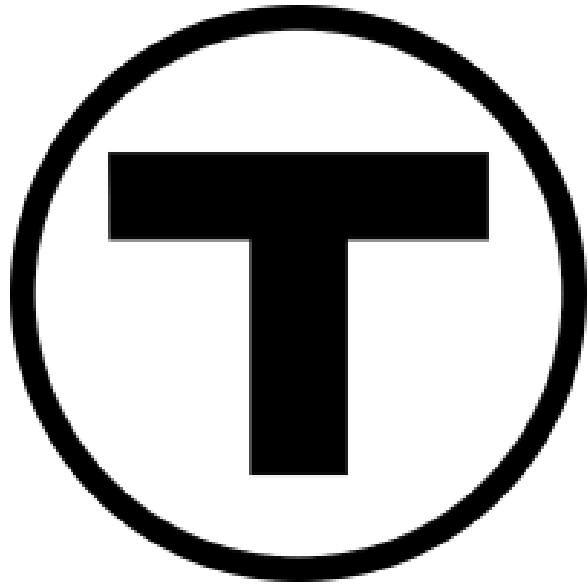
Decreasing the # of gambling promotions

## **Availability**

Decreasing the # of places for gambling opportunities and hours/days allowed

## **Accessibility**

Decreasing ease of online gambling by youth



# THE HOW: CASE STUDY EXAMPLE

# THE HOW: REDUCING UNDERAGE GAMBLING

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**What are the policy or regulatory levers for reducing underage gambling?**



# THE HOW: UNDERAGE GAMBLING PREVENTION

# Gaming Commission

- Regulates gaming in MA
- Must have Gaming Policy Advisory Committee
- Is where advertising regulations posted
- Separate from DOJ office of Tribal Justice and the National Indian Gaming Commission.



# Local Control



- What local control exists for gambling?
  - Physical locations
  - Advertising

# State Legislature

- Can change any gambling laws
- Must be informed of issues and hear from communities and youth



# Attorney General's Office



- Law enforcement entity
- Contains the Gaming Enforcement Division
- Works through community relations with MA Gaming Commission, state police, local police, and federal law enforcement agencies

# THE HOW CONTINUED...

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- 1. Data Collection**
- 2. Capacity Building**
- 3. Building Support**
- 4. Lessons Learned**

# Data Collection & Research

- Opinion Polls
- Documenting ads in the environment
- Research
- Ad revenue

# Data Collection & Research Continued

- What data do you already have that you can use?
- What data might you need to collect?



# Capacity Building & Training for Youth



Increase knowledge



Build skills



Be mindful of power dynamics



Find a space for all youth



# Capacity Building & Training for Youth



- How does your program support youth needs?
- What might you consider to build the capacity of youth to take action?

# Building Support: Case Study Example



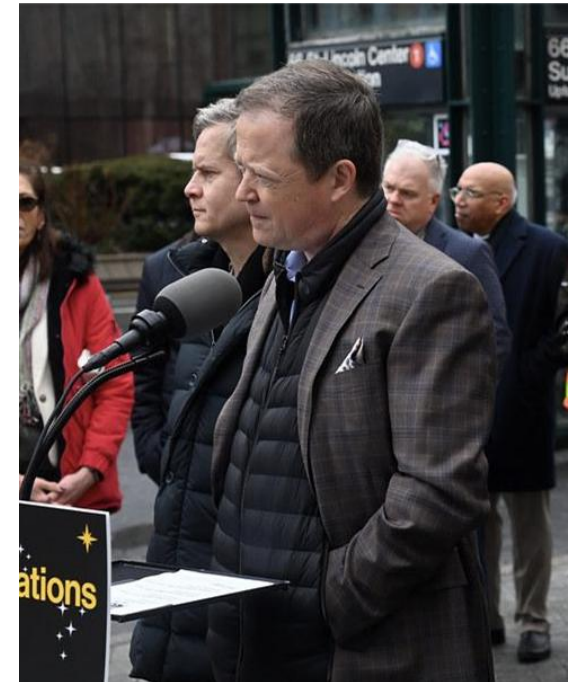
Allies and Aligned Values

Press Conference

Rallies

Resolution

Media



# Building Support: Underage Gambling Prevention

Allies and  
Aligned Values

Press  
Conference

Rallies

Resolution

Proclamations

Health Impact  
Assessments

Community  
Advisory  
Boards

Issue Briefs

# LESSONS LEARNED

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**Value Youth**

**Broad Base of  
Support**

**Shared Values**

**Be Creative**

**Be Aware of  
Political  
Climate**

**Other  
Considerations**

# Resources

## Framing & Communications Resources

- [Berkeley Media Studies Group](#)
- [Frameworks Institute](#)
- [Communications Planning Toolkit](#)
- [Tips with Working with the Media](#)

## Equity Resources

- [Equitable Enforcement to Achieve Health Equity | ChangeLab Solutions](#)

## 10 Step Policy Toolkit

- [Implementing Policy to Prevent](#)

## Problem Gambling Prevention Resources:

- [MA YRBS for youth gambling rates](#)
- [Against the Odds - Problem Gambling Graphic Medicine for Youth](#)
- [Let's Talk Risk](#)
- [Engaging Youth in Prevention](#)

# Questions



# What Do You Think About This Webinar?

**What went well?**

**What can we improve?**

**Please let us know your thoughts!**





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# THANK YOU

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