Sports Betting Prevention That Scores Wins!



Deborah G. Haskins, Ph.D., LCPC, ICGC-II, CCGSO, BACC

MOSAIC Consulting and Counseling Services

For Education Development Center

October 27, 2026

PROBLEM GAMBLING PREVENTION
MASSACHUSETTS CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

Massachusetts Department of Public Health
DPH

Funded by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health,
Office of Problem Gambling Services

Learning Objectives



Examine current trends in sports betting



Understand the profiles of persons at risk for sports betting addiction



Review practical prevention strategies to increase public awareness of lower-risk betting and strengthen connections to problem gambling care resources, including technology-formatted resources



Poll: Are You a Sports Fan?

- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No





Poll: Have you created sports betting prevention opportunities?

- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No



Overview

This section is key information for sports betting prevention

What is Sports Betting?
(Otis, et al., 2022)

- Broadly defined as the act of wagering money on the prediction of outcomes of sporting events.
- Gambling includes activities involving placement of money or valuables at risk based on the uncertain outcome of competitions, draws, or other events (Reicher, et al., 2025).



What are the Popular Sports Betting On?





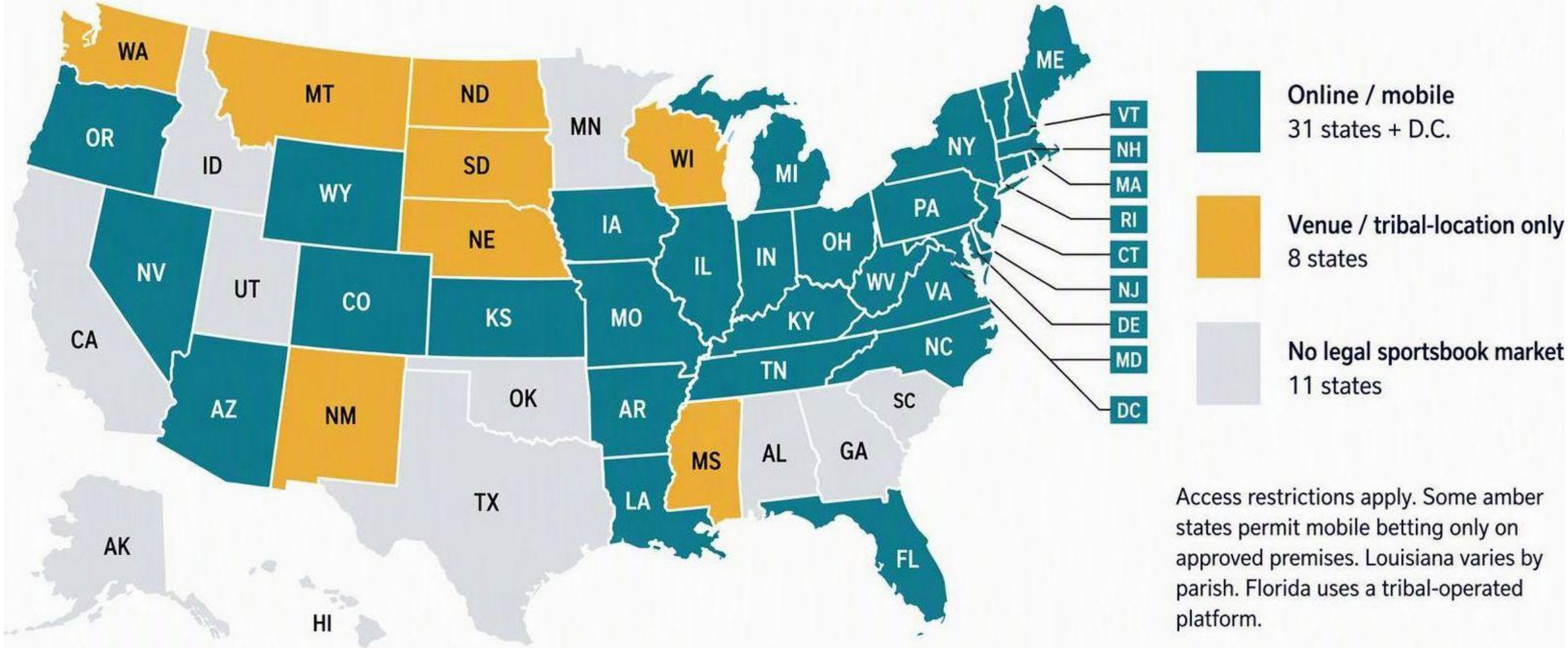
How did we get to bat?

- Congress restricted state legalization in 1992: ***Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act (PASPA).***
- New Jersey challenged that restriction, and in 2018 the Supreme Court removed **PASPA** it enabling states to open their own markets

Sources: *U.S. Supreme Court, Murphy v. NCAA (2018)*

Legal sports betting in the United States

As of October 4, 2026 • 39 states + D.C. offer legal sports betting



Access restrictions apply. Some amber states permit mobile betting only on approved premises. Louisiana varies by parish. Florida uses a tribal-operated platform.

Sources: Sportsbooks by State (Aug 2026), Bookmakers Review (Oct 2, 2026).
Regulated sportsbooks only. Excludes DFS, sweepstakes and prediction markets. Check local rules before wagering.

What Are Prediction Markets?

Definition

Markets where people trade contracts tied to future events. Contract payouts depend on the outcome.

"Prediction markets offer contracts tied to sporting outcomes. Sports has become the most-traded topic on Kalshi and Polymarket (Radde, 2026).

Hypothetical Sports Example

"Will Team A win?" A YES contract pays $1 if Team A wins and $0 if it loses. At a $0.60 purchase price, the buyer gains $0.40 or loses $0.60, before fees.

Reading the Price

A $0.60 price suggests roughly a 60% market-implied chance. Forecasts can be wrong.

Source: Radde, K. (2026, September 23). *Prediction markets trading volume doubled between May and July, largely driven by sports*. Pew Research Center.

Recent Example on Regulation of Prediction Markets as Gambling



6th US Circuit Court of Appeals rules against Kalshi, says prediction markets can be regulated like gambling

What's Happening in Massachusetts?

- **Legal market:** Seven mobile/online operators and three retail sportsbooks operate under MGC oversight. [1]
- **Latest revenue:** $47.09 million in taxable sports wagering revenue in August 2026, distinct from total money bet. [1]
- **Young-adult risk:** Participants often viewed betting as casual and low-risk in a 2026 qualitative study of 62 people ages 18–25. [2, 3]
- **Prevention implication:** Address perceptions of low risk and connect screening with gambling-support resources.

As of October 4, 2026. Latest monthly revenue release located: August 2026.

[1] Massachusetts Gaming Commission, August 2026 revenue release (Sept. 21, 2026).
[2] NORC / MGC, Perspectives on Sports Betting among Young Adults (Aug. 27, 2026).
[3] State House News Service / WWLP, "Young adults mostly shrug at sports betting risks" (Aug. 28, 2026).

What's Happening in Massachusetts?



[Check out the NORC and Massachusetts Gaming Commission Study and share in your prevention efforts]

[Third Evaluation Report – Findings at a Glance]

What do the numbers say? Trends in the U.S.

(Rutgers Addiction Research Center, addiction.rutgers.edu)

- More than 86% of young adults aged 18-24 recently played online games.
- More than 65% of all adults recently played online games.
- Approximately 0.3% to 1.0% of the general population may qualify for diagnosis of Internet Gaming Disorder (IGD).



Good Reads on E-sports

- Are esports bettors a new generation of harmed gamblers? A comparison with sports bettors on gambling involvement, problems, and harm. (apa.org)
- Esports Part 1: What are Esports? (harvard.edu)
- Esports Part 2: The Evolving Rules of Esports (harvard.edu)
- Esports Part 3: League of Legends, The Esport That's Rivaling Giants (harvard.edu)
- Esports Part 4: Developer Control (harvard.edu)

Rutger's Clinical Considerations for Gambling Disorder (GD)

High-Risk Populations

- Adolescents and emerging adults
- Men
- Disadvantaged racial groups
- Those living at lower income levels
- Unmarried individuals

Treatment Issues

- 70-90% of clients never receive treatment for GD
- In their lifetime, 95% of clients with GD will also have a co-occurring disorder
- Few practitioners are given an opportunity to learn about gambling during academic or clinical training

Correcting Clinical Misconceptions

- GD is caused by bio-psychosocial factors, rather than bad choices or character flaws
- GD shares similar symptoms with SUDs, even without the ingestion of a substance
- GD, like SUDs, often leads to severe consequences

RUTGERS
Center for Gambling Studies
School of Social Work

Lister, J., van der Maas, M., & Nower, L. (2020). Shedding light on gambling disorder as an addiction. ATTC Messenger.



How Has Online Gambling/AI Technology "Blown Up?" (Reichert, et al., 2025)

- Advancement of digital platforms expanding access using mobile devices
- Global audiences can now engage in different types of betting/gambling (Hing et al., 2023, 2024a; Otis et al., 2022)
- Artificial Intelligence
- All combine to increase significant engagement (Bengel & McCarriston, 2022; Vieira et al., 2023) especially in North America.

Art by Yuko Shimizu

Understand Sports Fans Are Part of a Lifestyle Consumption Community (LCC)

- LCC is a group of individuals connected through shared lifestyles, identities, values and consumption practices, where participation in certain activities or products contributes to social belonging and self-definition.
- Current research is examining how **consumption behaviors are tied to identity, social belongings, online communities, and lifestyle expression** (Vargas-Bianchi, 2021).



Let’s Look at the Numbers….

Take a look at this article and share in your prevention/treatment activities/services:

[Survey: American Men Reveal Sports Betting Habits in 2023]



Higher-Risk Profiles

Features...



Higher-Risk Profiles?

(Rutgers Addiction Research Center: Center for Gambling Studies)

- Adolescents
- Young men aged 18-24
- Males aged 18-34
- Peer influence—gamble with friends
- Single status
- Men of Color
- Perceived skills in sports; therefore, I can gamble because I know what I'm doing!

Note: While men are sports betting more; women also sports bet (i.e, In Africa, the stats are 50/50% especially in Nigeria—Why: "Its fast money" and material poverty prevalent…





Women Bet on Sports Too!

2 Time WNBA Champion – Minnesota Lynx; Univ of Notre Dame Starter and Final 4, Champion Game NCAA



Listen and Learn: Let's Hear From Matt S. Sharing His Sports Betting

(Maryland Council on Problem Gambling, *Voices of Recovery, March Problem Gambling Awareness, March 2026*)

Feel free to share in your prevention efforts

Reflections

1. What stood out for you about Matt S. progression into sports betting?
2. What are risks for this age profile?
3. Identify the cognitive distortions he shared: How would you address these?
4. Think about the unique gambling disorder treatment considerations for the person addicted to sports betting (or exhibiting risky sport behaviors).

What Does Gambling Disorder Treatment Look Like?

Limited Clinical Research on Best Treatment Models for Sports Betting/Online Gambling

- Current research uses EGM (electronic gaming machine)-based findings for sports betting and/or online gambling.
- Not the same
- Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (Pfund, et al., 2026)
- Motivational Interviewing (Forman, et al., 2025) but meta-analysis report use of MI but mixed results regarding efficacy.







Prevention Practical Strategies

Think of these as different coaches working to support players after assessing strengths and weakness/development. Coaches attempt to eliminate game problems, injuries, penalties, etc.

Primary, Secondary, Tertiary

Primary Prevention: Action Taken To Stop A Disease/Injury/Harm

Gambling Disorder…Risky Gambling Behaviors

- Conduct Screenings
- “We lack screens specifically for sports gambling…existing GD screens do not include questions about sports betting.” (Dr. Tim Fong, Joanna Franklin Annual Problem Gambling Conference, June, 2026)
- Must begin prevention education much younger (i.e., Dr Haskins Spring 2026 Catholic All-Boys High School Assembly)

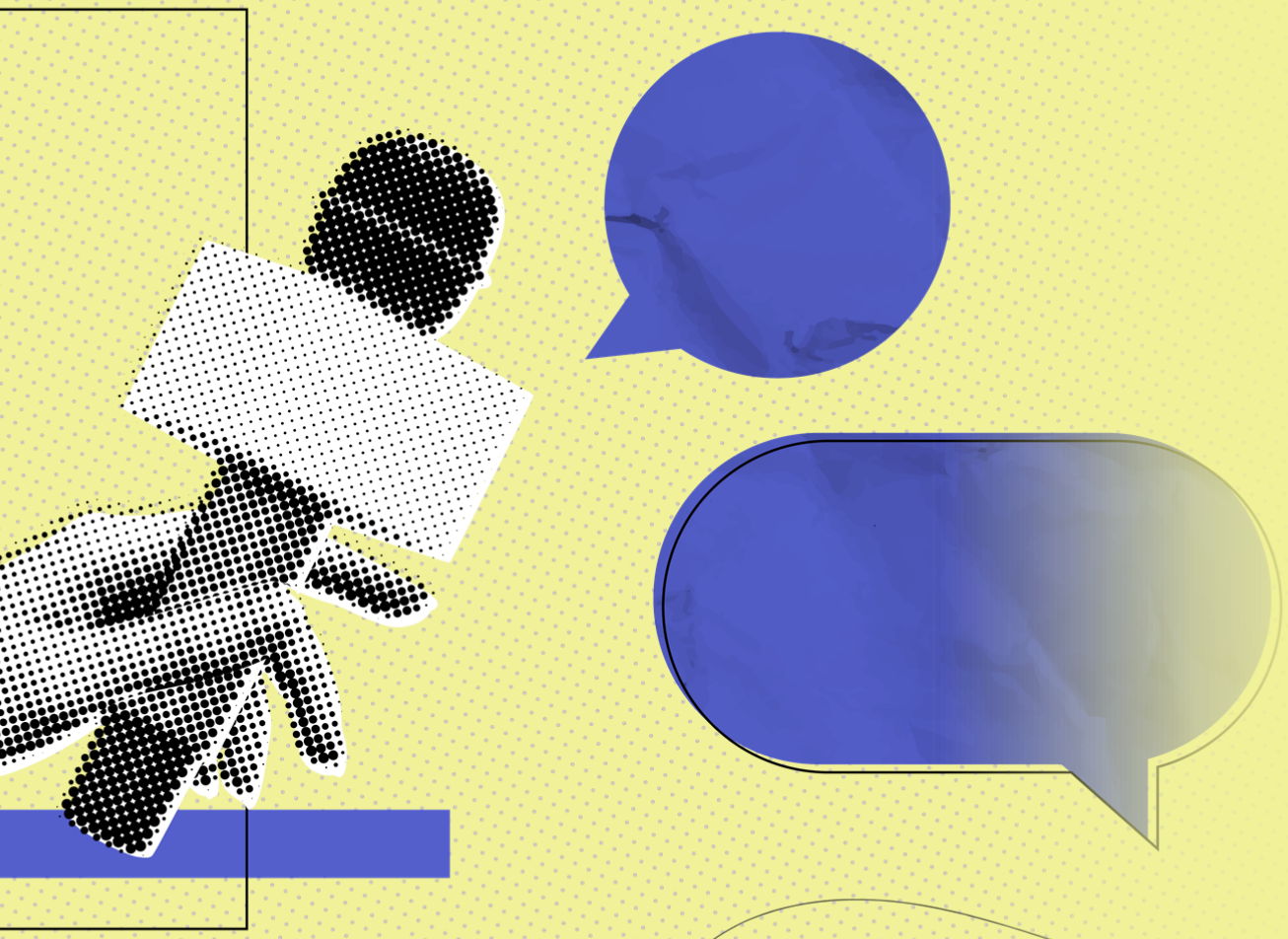


Educating Youth Prevention Strategies

- Start early/younger
- By high school, research documents risky behaviors (include author, yr), example: programs in middle and high schools (e.g., created a Jeopardy game using AI and every student got a public awareness giveaway (e.g., MCPG pens with gambling helpline #)
- Has to be engaging
- Use language they can understand (avoid psychological jargon)
- Educate parents/caregivers
- Collaborate with schools, recreation programs, athletic programs



Secondary Prevention: First, Begin with Assessment/Screenings



- Go where the sports fans are (i.e., one church had Football game night and provided screening there)
- Specifically ask: “Do you bet on sports?”
- Many do not view sports gambling as gambling (Fong, 2025)
- No sports betting addiction assessment currently exists

Use this tool that Tim Fong, MD and Mark Leftowich created for *Men’s Health* magazine:

The Signs of Sports Betting Addiction: A Quiz

Suggest using in community wellness prevention (See page 102 of article).

Clinical Application: Rob ODAAT

The Dream World of a Gambling Addict
(8:34 min.)



Activity/Intervention/Prevention

1. (Tertiary Prevention)

Sharing Rob's YouTube Channel can be an effective intervention. Debrief with client what he heard and does he relate to any of Rob's dream world and cognitive distortions.



Tertiary Prevention: Gambling Disorder Sports Betting Treatment (Dodd, et al., 2015)

Focuses on reducing further gambling-related harm among persons who have developed significant problems associated with sports betting. Includes treatment, relapse prevention, recovery support (i.e., GA, Smart Recovery, Evive Gambling App), and harm-reduction strategies designed to prevent worsening of the disorder.

Where is Help in Massachusetts for Treatment and Gambling Care/Prevention?



Office of Problem Gambling Services | Mass.gov

What are Updates on Sports Betting Gambling Disorder Treatment?

- Understand that many are ambivalent about seeking professional help.
- Offer them a menu of options:

✓ **Gambling Disorder Treatment**

✓ **Evive Gambling App** (Founder, Sam DeMello)

✓ **Peer Recovery Supports** (i.e., Gamblers Anonymous, Gam-Anon, Smart Recovery, Celebrate Recovery)

✓ **Peer Recovery Podcasts**: All In (Brian Hatcher); Broke Girl Society (Christina Cook, For Women with 3000 diverse, international community; Modern Meeting (Adam Lyons);

✓ **Community Stakeholder Opportunities**: Faith/Spiritual/Indigenous Leaders/Supporters offering problem gambling spiritual outreach (i.e., Maryland Council on Problem Gambling; American Baptist College, Dr. Paulette O'Gilvie's HBCU increasing capacity among faith-based in Tennessee and among students)



Chain Analysis Technique
(Reichert, et al., 2024)

- Chain analysis is a technique used to **identify and correct thoughts, beliefs, and feelings** to dependent behaviors, such as sports betting and gambling.
- This process aids in **examining the triggers, thoughts, emotions, and behaviors** associated with the functioning of risk behaviors.

Specific Cognitive Processes in Behavioral Addictions Related to Sports Betting and Gambling

Process	Definition	Examples
Self-efficacy	Assessments by persons regarding their abilities to perform specific tasks or achieve particular goals	Persons gambling believe they can control their ability to limit time spent on betting.
Outcome Expectations	Thoughts/beliefs about the consequences associated with specific addictive behaviors	Individuals may believe they will win large prizes if they bet more frequently on sporting events.
Permissive Beliefs	Beliefs arise during times of greater vulnerability, where people tend to justify or minimize addictive behaviors	A person who gambles may think that “today is a special day” and therefore “deserves” to make an extra bet, ignoring the consequences.
Instrumental Thoughts	Guide the logistics or mechanics of addictive behaviors, addressing the “how” of performing these behaviors	Considering the odds and statistics, a gambler may plan the best strategy for betting on a sporting event.

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on Beck & Liese (2024)

Sports Betting Gambling Disorder Treatment Recommendations

(Bechtold & Wilson, 2021)

Recommendations include:

- Setting limits
- Creating breaks in play
- Increasing self awareness is key
- Develop a plan incorporating the types of sports (football, baseball, basketball, soccer) and frequency of the games
- Consider the buddy system where betting cannot occur alone or in isolation.
- Creating a plan targeting access/availability/frequency/quantity while increasing participation in non-gambling leisure.
- Helping clients find ways to engage in activities nourishing their competitive desires and lower boredom w/o gambling.

Prevention Application



Discussion/Brainstorming

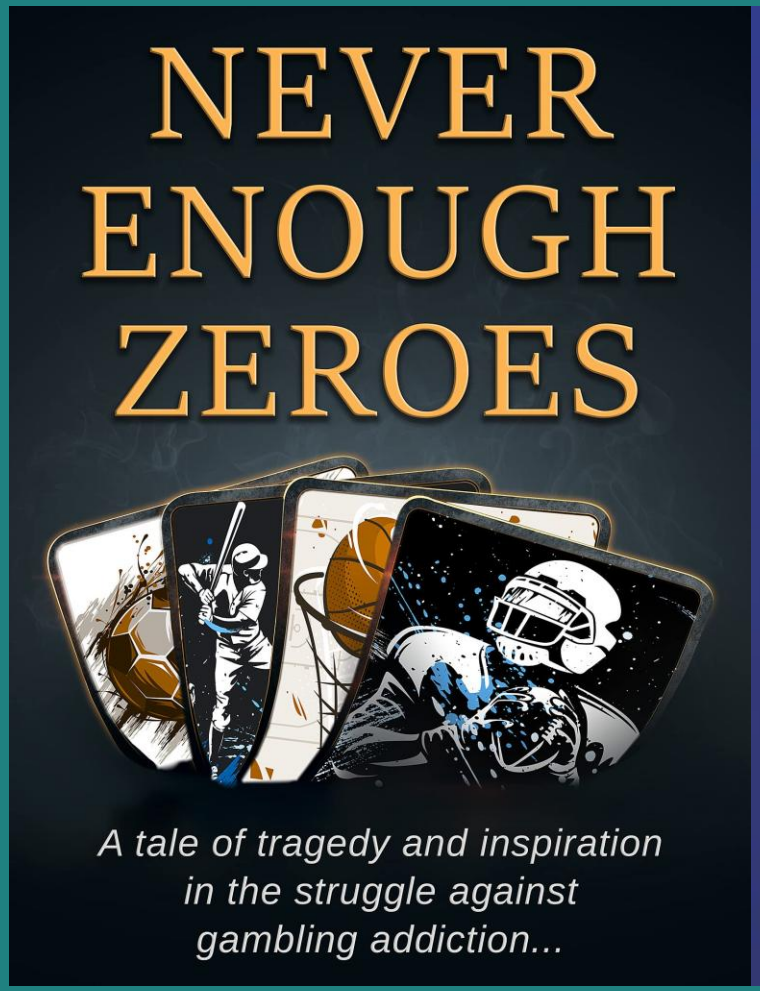
- What is 1 sports betting/online gambling prevention activity you can implement in the community/ties you serve/support?
- How can you move away from “one and dones” and create a sports betting strategic plan?

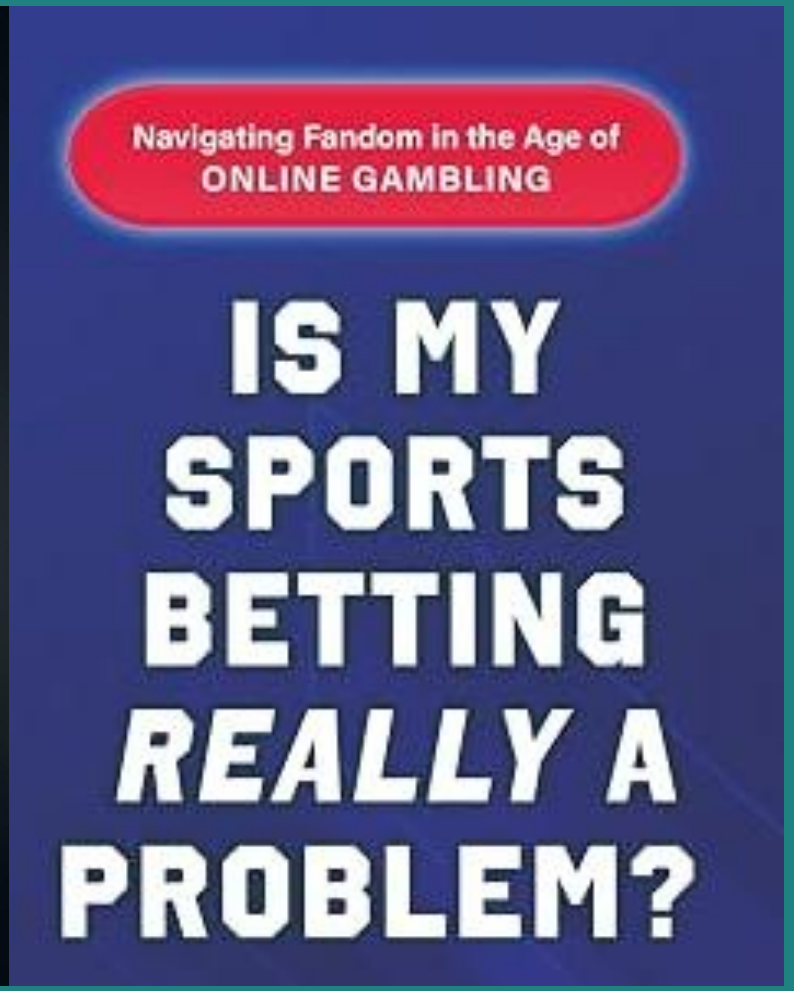
We Are In the Final Quarter – How Can We Make the Win?

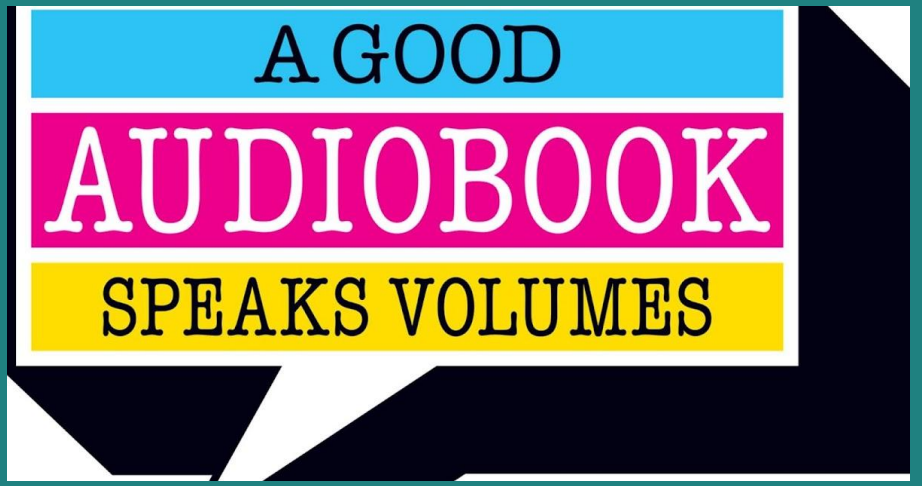
Only 1-3% seek gambling disorder treatment

Better Outcomes? Prevent vs Treat!

Good Reads to Use



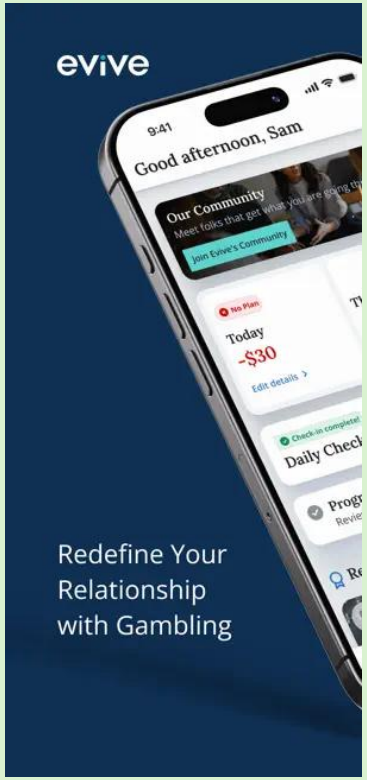




Never Enough Zeroes is Available on Audio

Gambling Advocacy/Care Resources

Evive Gambling App



Families and Friends of Gamblers (FFOG)



- [Gambling Advocacy | Families and Friends of Gamblers]
- **Free Membership:** Gambling Advocacy | Families and Friends of Gamblers

Gambling Harm Affects More Than the Gambler



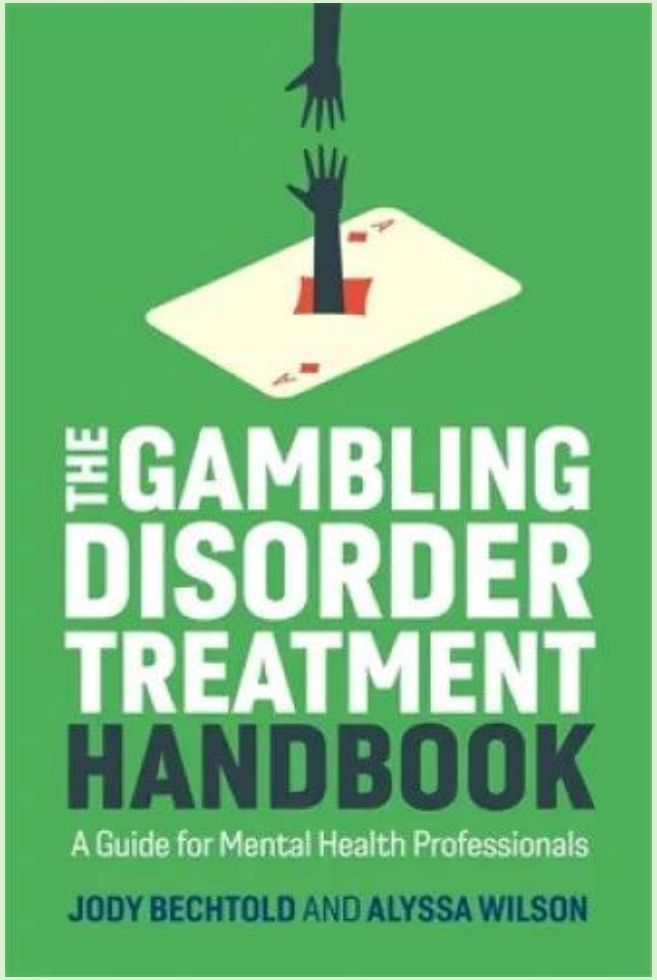
For every person addicted/experiencing gambling harm, 8-10 persons are affected.

New Advocacy Movement: Families and Friends of Gamblers (FFOGs)

Senators advance bill banning in-play, prop sports bets

References

Bechtold, J., & Wilson, A. (2021). *The gambling disorder treatment handbook: A guide to mental health professionals*. UK: Jessica Kingsley Publications.



References

Dodd, D. R., Sugarman, D. E., & Greenfield, S. F. (2015). Tertiary prevention. Wiley Online Library. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118625392.wbecp289

Forman, D. P., Boughter, J. R., McAfee, N. W., Ginley, M. K., Whelan, J. P., & Pfund, R. A. (2025). Motivational-interviewing-informed interventions for problem gambling and gambling disorder: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors, 39*(4), 365-374. https://doi.org/10.1037/adb0001069

References

Pfund, R. A., Rodda, S. N., & Weinstock, J. (2026), Cognitive-behavioral therapy for gambling disorder: Clinical directions. 10.1016/j.cbpra.2026.05.006

High Risk Profiles: Aged 18-24

Use in your prevention efforts....



aibm
AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR BOYS AND MEN

Thank you for learning and helping to heal the world!

Contact:

Dr. Deborah Haskins: Mosaic Consulting and Counseling Services

hello@drdeborahhaskins.com

