



MASSACHUSETTS CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

# The Intersection of Problem Gambling and Violence Prevention

**January 27, 2026 | 10:00 – 12:00 pm**

**Jennifer Myers, MA, LPC | Trainer**

**Carol Musallam, MS | Trainer**



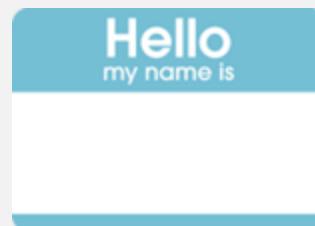
# Introduce Yourself

1

Insert your organization

2

Add your response to this question:



If you had to name one professional  
“superpower,” what would it be?

# Introducing Today's Presenters



**Jennifer Myers, MA, LPC**  
Trainer



**Carol Musallam, MS**  
Trainer



# The Intersection of Problem Gambling and Violence Prevention



Describe socioecological approaches to violence prevention that apply to problem gambling prevention.

Understand the intersections between problem gambling and violence, including shared risk and protective factors.

Identify 2-3 strategies for violence prevention and problem gambling prevention.

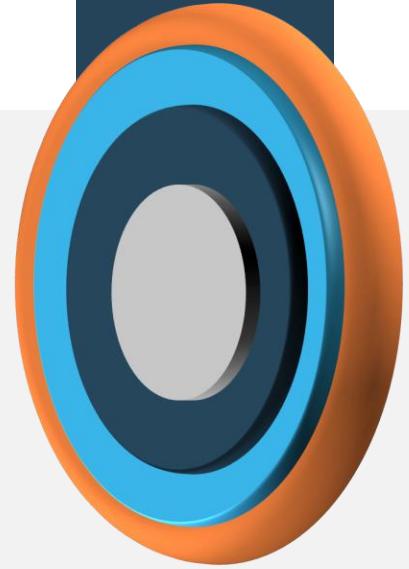
Apply resources and tools for violence prevention.

01

02

03

04



# AGENDA

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- Introductions
- Approaches to Violence Prevention
- Review of Data
- Risk Factors
- Strategies to Address Violence Prevention
- Resources and Tools
- Take-Home Messages



# Group Agreements

- ✓ Speak from your experience
- ✓ Please avoid sharing graphic details of stories
- ✓ Experience discomfort as learning
- ✓ Share airtime, make space
- ✓ Listen for understanding
- ✓ Think with a both/and frame
- ✓ Expect non-closure
- ✓ Confidentiality
- ✓ Stay curious beyond this training



# POLL #1

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**Have you ever attended a training focused on the intersection of problem gambling and violence prevention?**

**Yes**

**No**



# POLL #2

## What are you most interested in learning today?

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**Approaches to violence prevention**

**Intersection of risk factors**

**Strategies to address violence within problem gambling**

**Resources on violence prevention that can be applied in problem gambling**

**Other: type in the chat**



# 6 Key Principles of a Trauma-Informed Approach



**Safety**



**Trustworthiness  
and Transparency**



**Peer Support**



**Collaboration and  
Mutuality**



**Empowerment,  
Voice, and Choice**



**Cultural, Historical,  
and Gender Issues**

# A Trauma-Informed Lens



# Section 1: Approaches to Violence Prevention

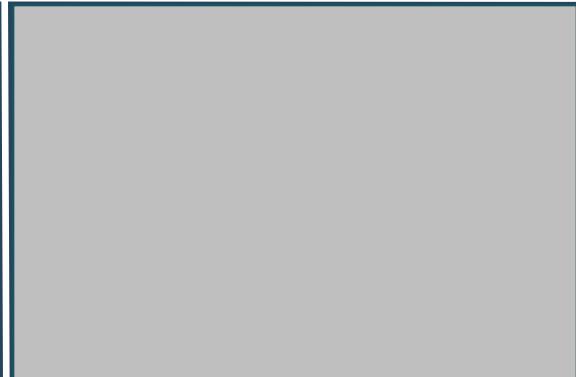
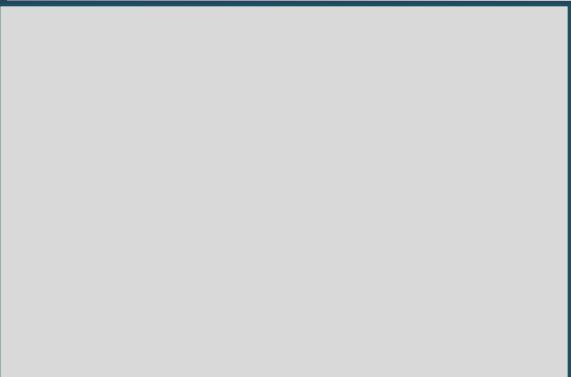


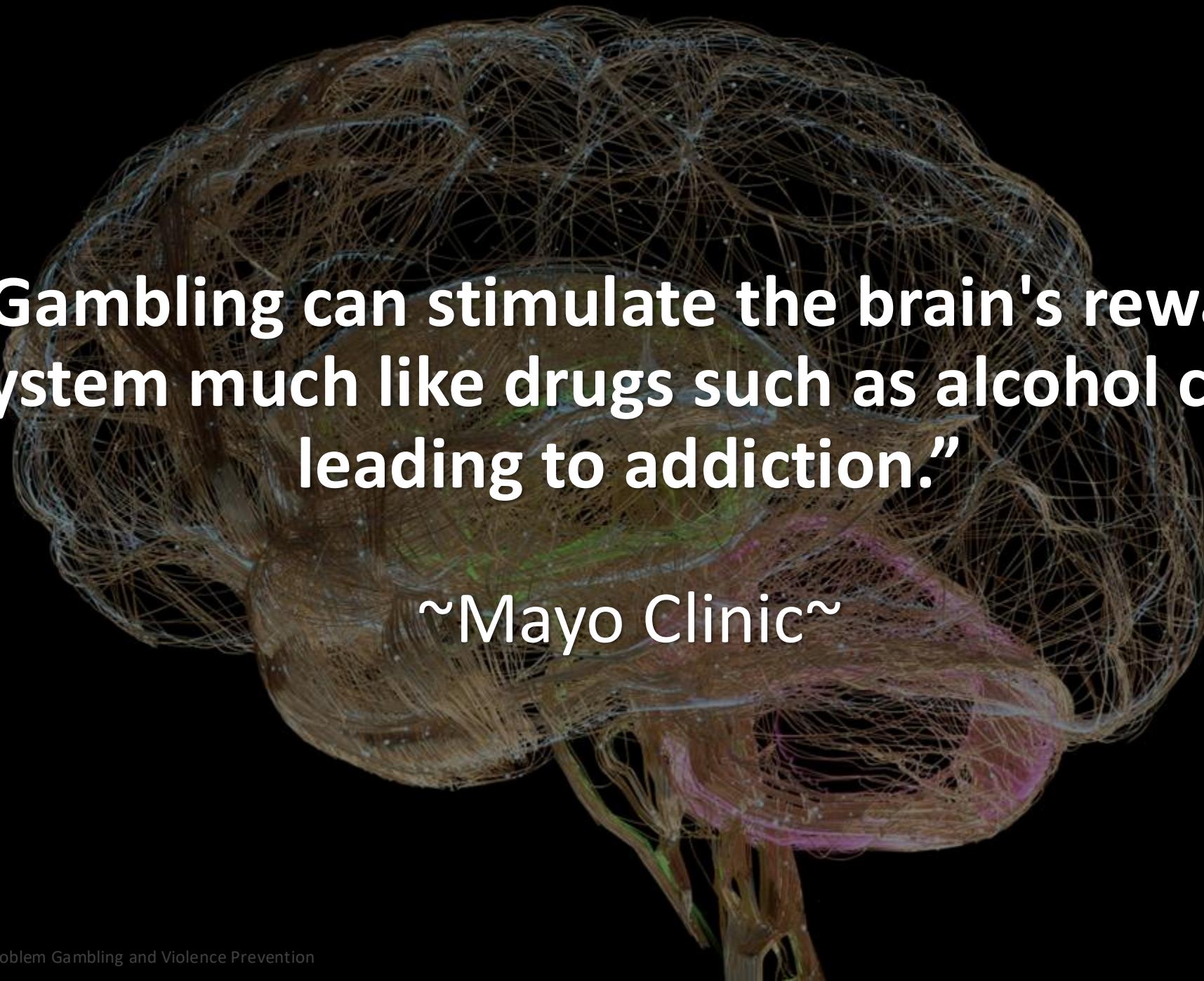
Image Source: <http://www.i-fink.com/building-sustainably/>

# Definition of Gambling

“Betting money or material goods on an event with an uncertain outcome in the hope of winning additional money and/or material goods.”

Source: (Williams, et al., 2017)





**“Gambling can stimulate the brain's reward system much like drugs such as alcohol can, leading to addiction.”**

~Mayo Clinic~

# Definitions

**Violence:** the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development or deprivation.

Source: World Health Organization [WHO](#)

# Definitions

**Intimate Partner Violence:** behavior within an intimate relationship that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm including acts of physical aggression, sexual coercion, psychological abuse and controlling behaviors. This definition covers violence by both current and former spouses and partners.

Source: World Health Organization [WHO](#)

**Domestic Violence:** the mistreatment of one family member or intimate partner by another. The abuse can be physical, sexual, verbal, emotional and psychological.

Source: [People's Law Library of Maryland](#)

# Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)

IPV can include any of the following types of behavior:

- **Physical violence** is when a person hurts or tries to hurt a partner by using physical force.
- **Sexual violence** is forcing or attempting to force a partner to take part in a sex act, sexual touching, or a non-physical sexual event (e.g., sexting) when the partner does not or cannot consent.
- **Stalking** is a pattern of repeated, unwanted attention and contact by a partner that causes fear or concern for one's own safety or the safety of someone close to the victim.
- **Psychological aggression** is the use of verbal and non-verbal communication with the intent to harm a partner mentally or emotionally or to exert control over a partner.

Source: Center for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC](#)

# Definitions

**Community Violence:** Community violence happens between unrelated individuals, who may or may not know each other, generally outside the home.

Source: Center for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC](#)

# CDC/Veto Violence



## Preventing IPV

Strategy	Approach
Teach safe and healthy relationship skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Social-emotional learning programs for youth</li><li>Healthy relationship programs for couples</li></ul>
Engage influential adults and peers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Men and boys allies in prevention</li><li>Bystander empowerment and education</li><li>Family-based programs</li></ul>
Disrupt the developmental pathways toward partner violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Early childhood home visitation</li><li>Preschool enrichment with family engagement</li><li>Parent skills and family relationship programs</li><li>Treatment for at-risk children, youth, and families</li></ul>
Create protective environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Improve school climate and safety</li><li>Improve organizational policies and workplace climate</li><li>Modify the physical and social environments of neighborhoods</li></ul>
Strengthen economic supports for families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Strengthen household financial security</li><li>Strengthen work-family supports</li></ul>
Support survivors to increase safety and lessen harms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Victim-centered services</li><li>Housing programs</li><li>First responder and civil legal protections</li><li>Patient-centered approaches</li><li>Treatment and support for survivors of IPV, including TDV</li></ul>

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [VetoViolence | Resources for violence prevention](#)

# CDC/Veto Violence

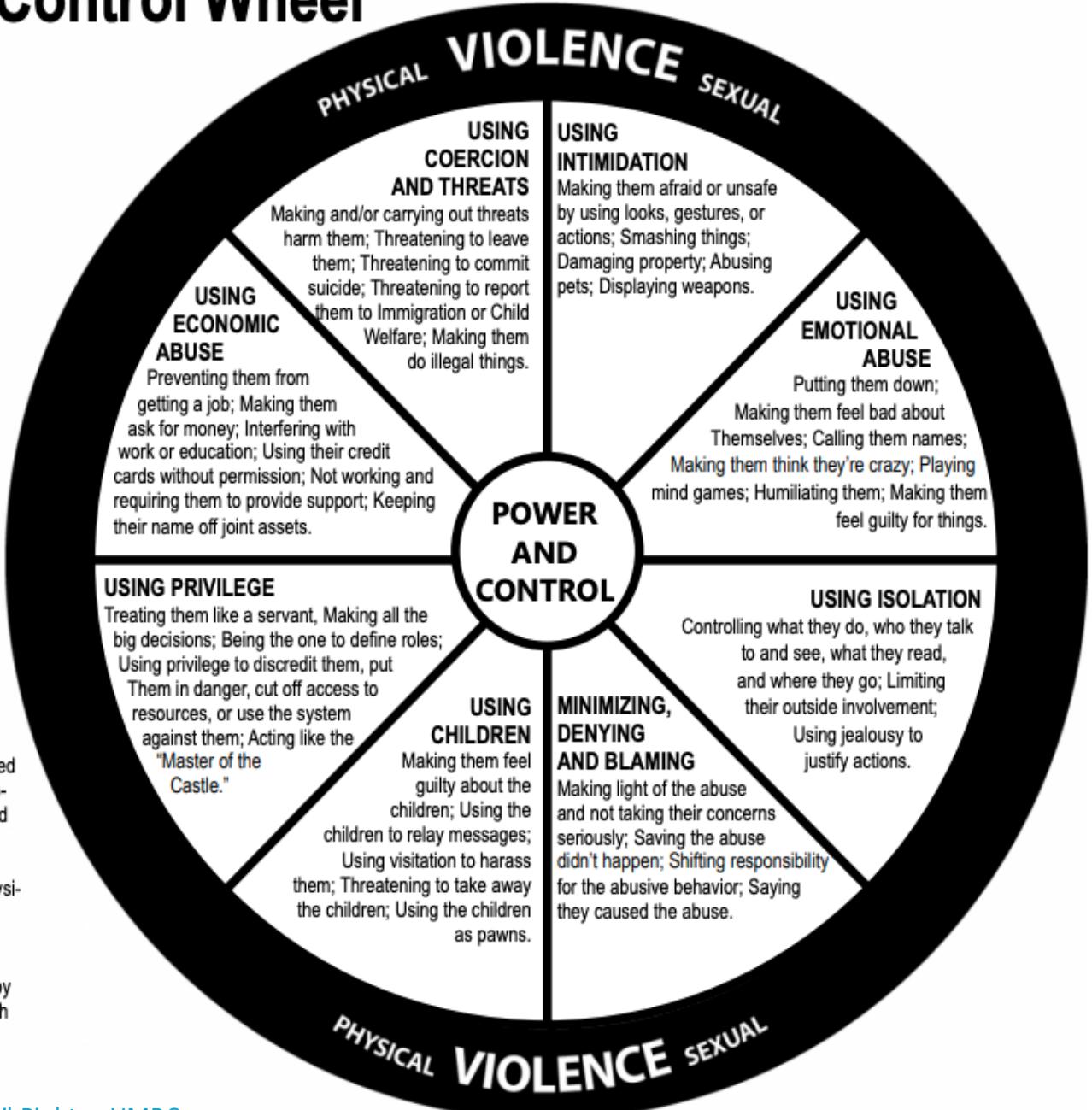


## Strategies and Approaches to Stop SV

	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Approach</b>
<b>S</b>	Promote <b>Social Norms</b> that Protect Against Violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Bystander approaches</li><li>▪ Mobilizing men and boys as allies</li></ul>
<b>T</b>	<b>Teach</b> Skills to Prevent Sexual Violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Social-emotional leaning</li><li>▪ Teach healthy , safe dating and intimate relationship skills to adolescents</li><li>▪ Promote healthy sexuality</li><li>▪ Empowerment-based training</li></ul>
<b>O</b>	Provide <b>Opportunities</b> to Empower and Support Girls and Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Strengthening economic supports for women and families</li><li>▪ Strengthening leadership and opportunities for girls</li></ul>
<b>P</b>	Create <b>Protective</b> Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Improving safety and monitoring in schools</li><li>▪ Establishing and consistently applying workplace policies</li><li>▪ Addressing community-level risks through environmental approaches</li></ul>
<b>SV</b>	<b>Support Victims</b> / Survivors to Lessen Harms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Victim-centered services</li><li>▪ Treatment for victims of SV</li><li>▪ Treatment for at-risk children and families to prevent to prevent problem behavior including sex offending</li></ul>

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [VetoViolence | Resources for violence prevention](#)

# Power and Control Wheel



The Power and Control Wheel Developed by the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project in Duluth, Minnesota, the Power and Control Wheel illustrates the tactics an abuser uses on their victim. Constantly surrounded by threats and/or actual physical and sexual abuse, the victim is subjected to the various tactics listed in the spokes as the abuser attempts to exert complete power and control. \*adapted by Jen Snider to be gender neutral and with slight modifications not included in the original.

Source: [Office of Equity and Civil Rights - UMBC](#)

# In the Chat:

How would you rank your knowledge in the intersections of Problem Gambling (PG) and Violence Prevention/Domestic Violence/Intimate Partner Violence (DV/IPV)?

- Very Comfortable
- Knowledgeable
- Somewhat Aware
- New to This
- Not Familiar Yet



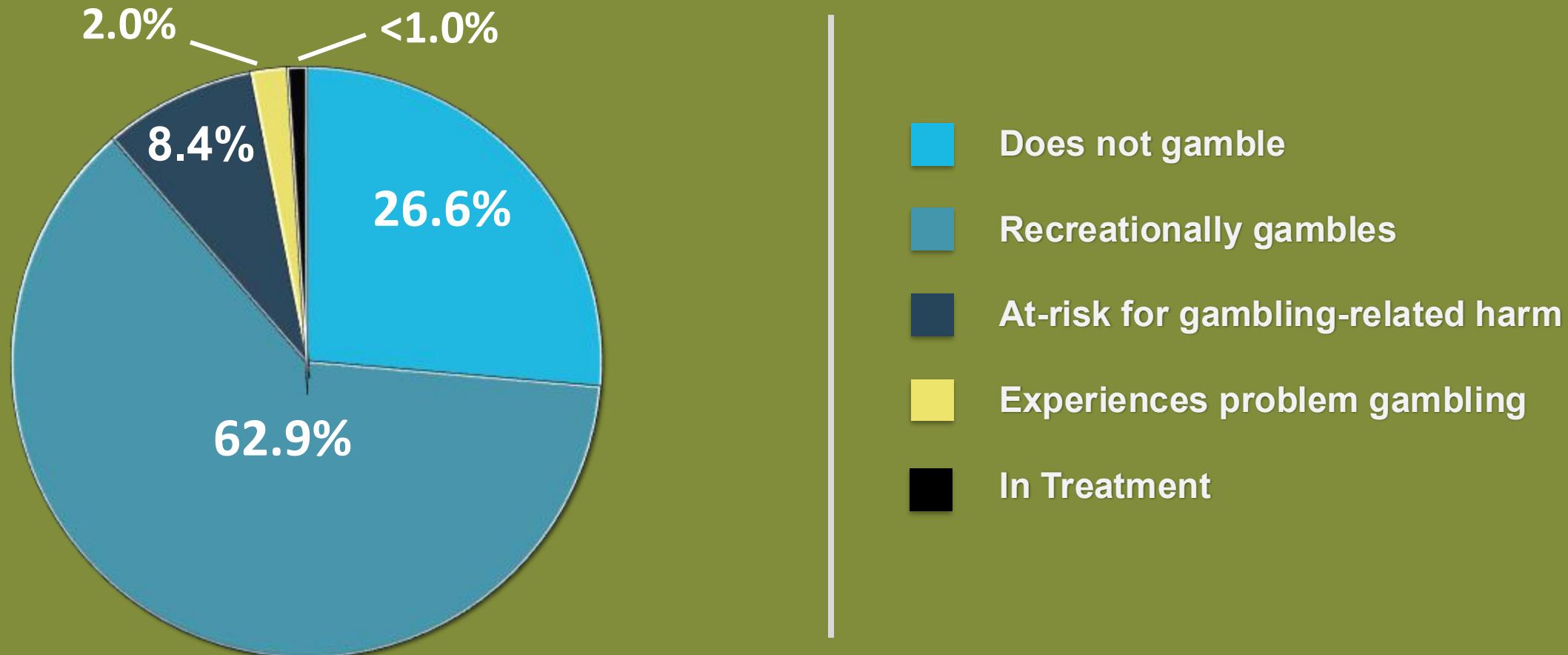
# Section 2: Review of Data



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# U.S. Problem Gambling Prevalence

(Percent of surveyed participants)



Adapted from SEIGMA Survey, 2017, UMass School of Public Health & Health Sciences

# Data

- About 41% of women and 26% of men experienced contact sexual violence, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner during their lifetime and reported a related impact.
- Over 61 million women and 53 million men have experienced psychological aggression by an intimate partner in their lifetime.

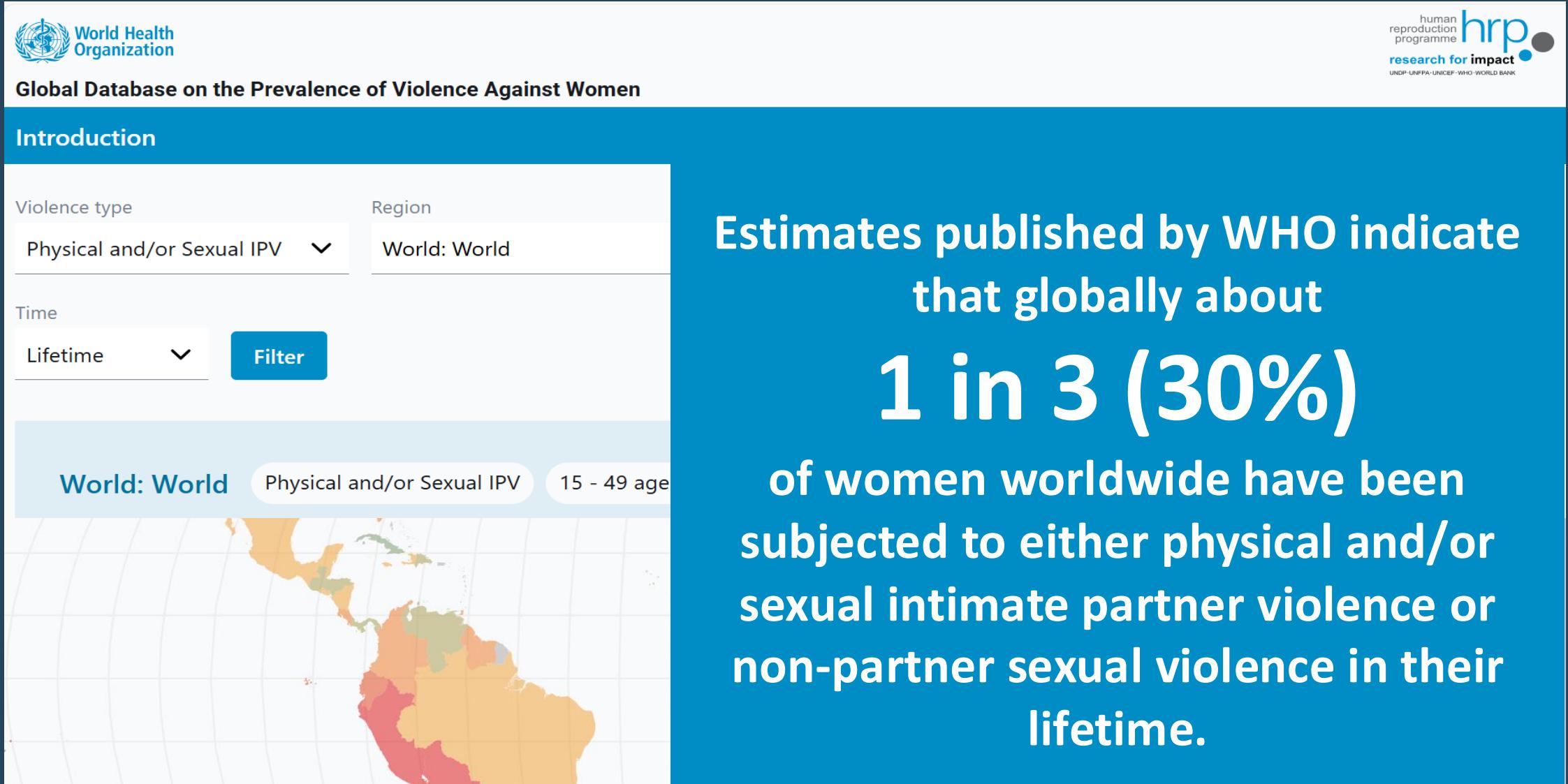
Source: Center for Disease Control and Prevention, [CDC](#)

# Data

- For youth ages 10 to 24, homicide is the second leading cause of death.
- For people 25 to 34, homicide is the third leading cause of death.
- Over 700,000 young people are treated and released in U.S. emergency departments each year for injuries resulting from violence.



# Data on Violence Against Women



Source: WHO, Global Database on the Prevalence of Violence Against Women, [vaw-data.srhr.org/map](http://vaw-data.srhr.org/map)

# Intersections

- One-third of those with problem gambling behaviors reported being a victim of or perpetrator of physical intimate partner violence.
- The odds of intimate partner violence increased 10.5 times when a person's partner was addicted to gambling.

Source: Dowling et al. (2016); Muelleman et al. (2002)

# Sports Betting and Increased Crime

- Research found in states that legalized sports betting after the 2018 Supreme Court decision saw significant increases in assaults, larceny, and vehicle theft during and immediately following professional sports games.
  - Assaults see the largest jump—up to 93% after unexpected home team outcomes.
- Crime levels rose the most when betting outcomes defied expectations such as an underdog winning.

# 'Stop betting on our children:' Gambling led to violence at games, officials say



**Cameron Knight**

Cincinnati Enquirer

Updated April 17, 2025, 2:17 p.m. ET

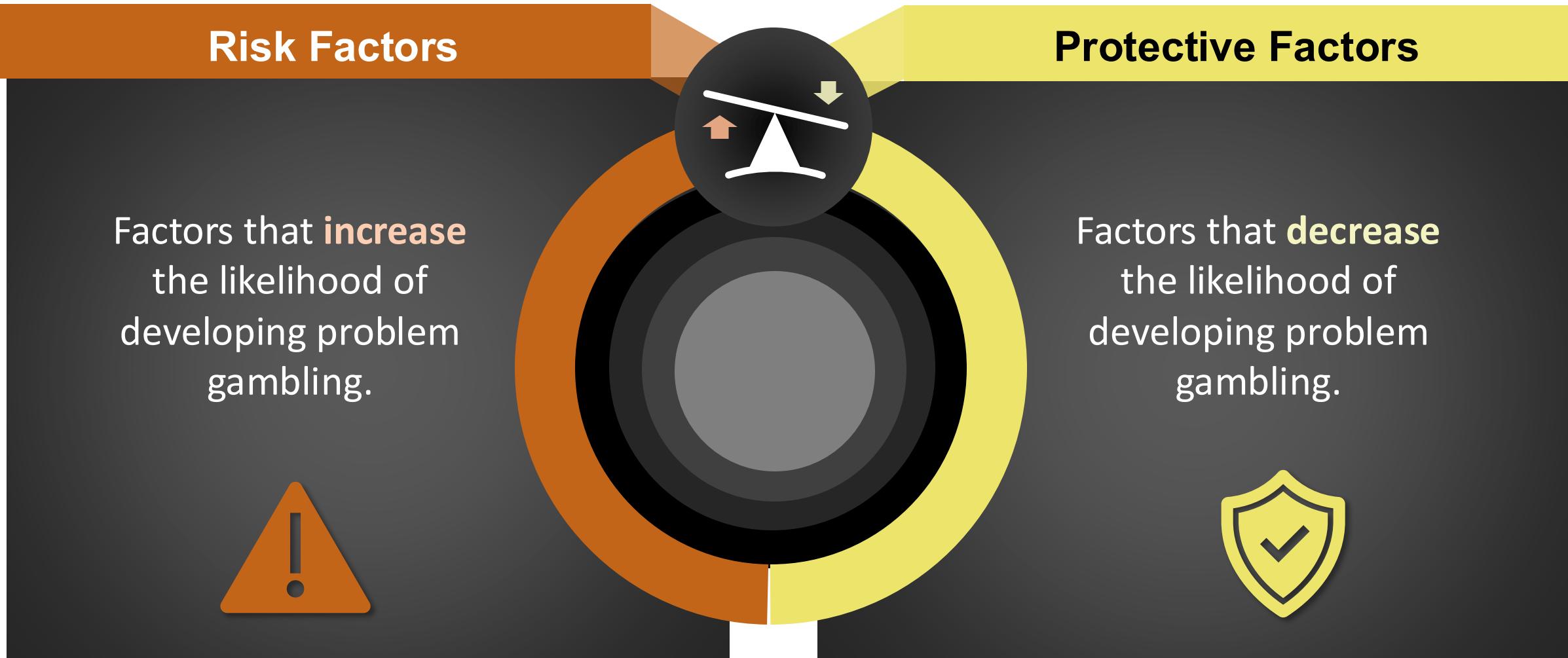
Gun violence at youth sports games like peewee football has been spurred on by gambling, according to Cincinnati City Councilman Scotty Johnson.

# Section 3: Risk & Protective Factors

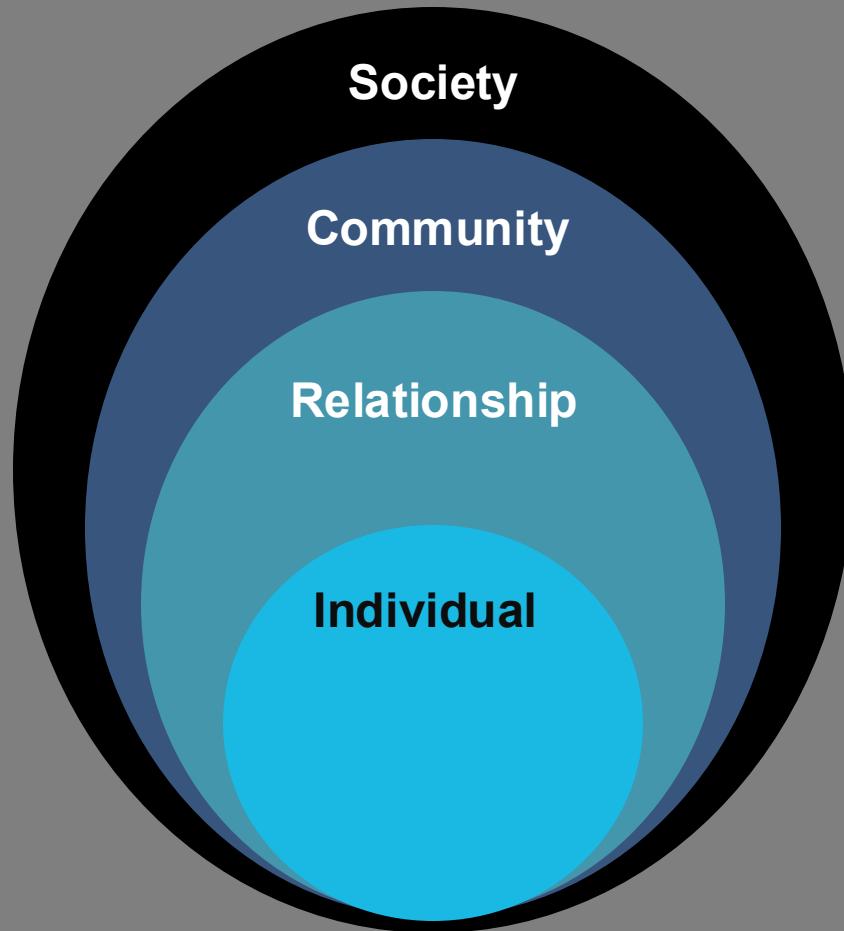


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# Risk and Protective Factors



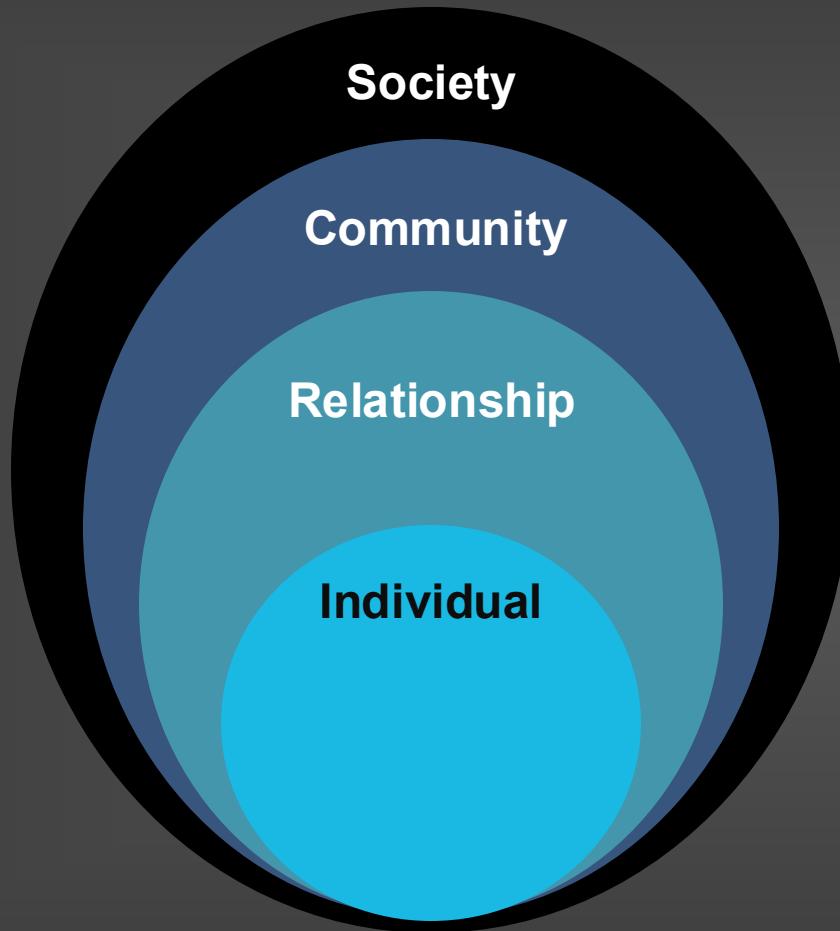
# Risk and Protective Factors Exist in Multiple Contexts: The Social Ecological Model



This model considers the complex interplay between individual, relationship, community, and societal factors.

Helps us understand the range of factors that put people at risk for problem gambling or protect them from experiencing negative consequences of problem gambling

# Risk and Protective Factors Exist in Multiple Contexts: The Social Ecological Model



**Policy:** policy and regulatory climates and associated corporate norms and practices that may influence the development of gambling problems.



**Community:** characteristics of local areas and cultures within local spaces or broader social groups, like schools and workplaces, that may influence development of gambling problems.

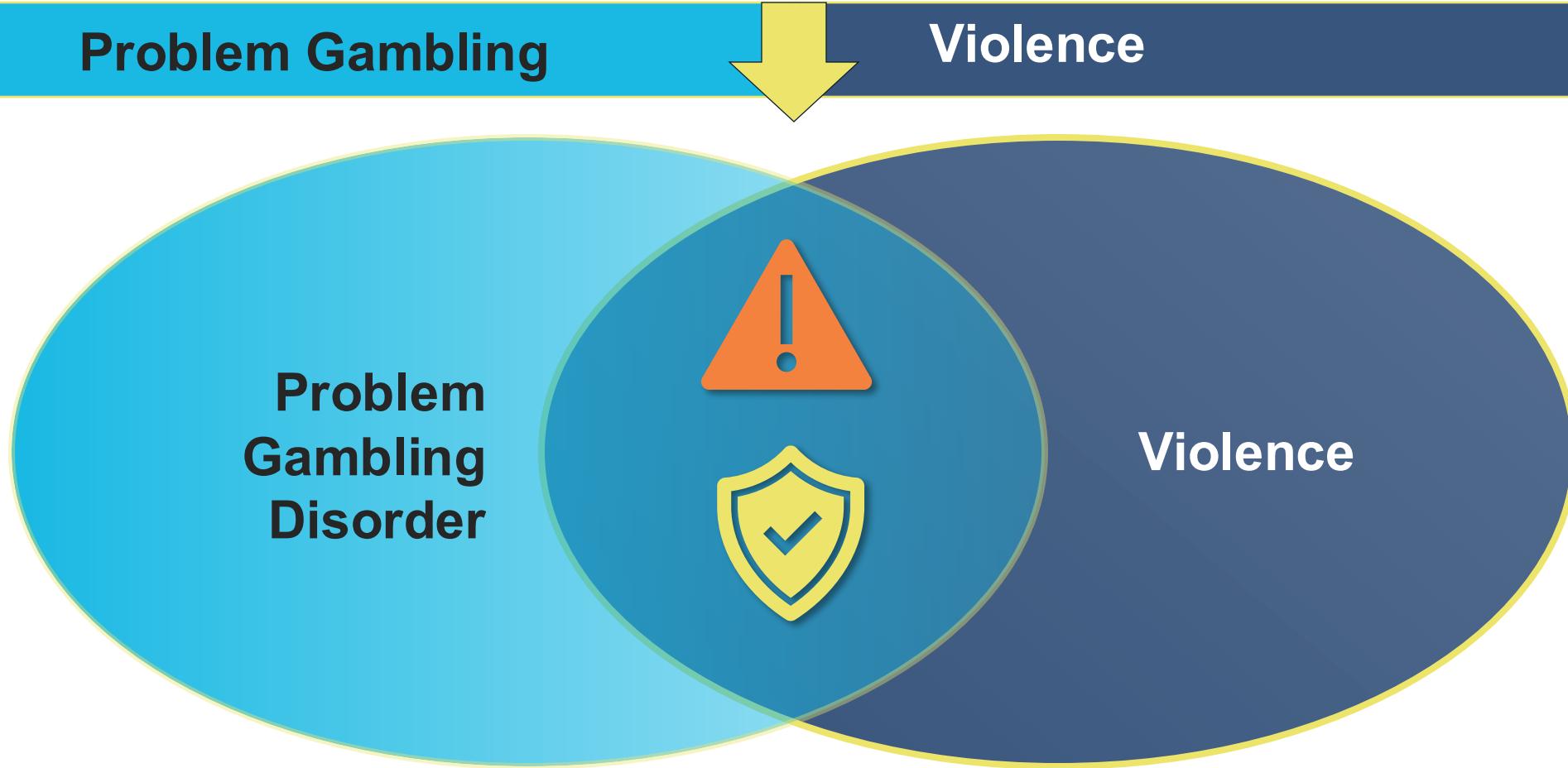


**Family, Friends, and Groups:** factors within an individual's closest relationships, such as family, partners, peers that influence development of gambling problems.



**Individual, Phycological, and Biological:** characteristics, life events, personal history, and cognitive characteristics that influence development of gambling problems.

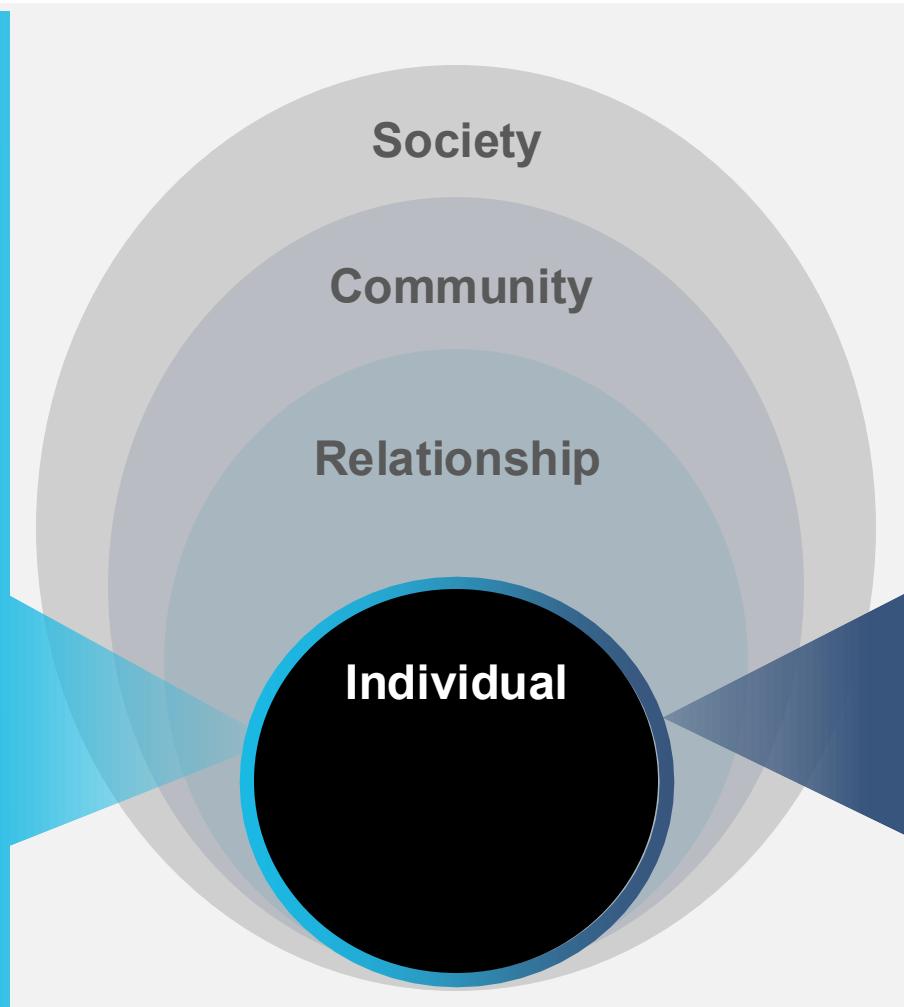
# Shared Risk and Protective Factors



# Risk Factors Exist in Multiple Contexts:

## Problem Gambling

Early experiences & behavior  
Poor impulse control  
Behavioral problems  
Sensation seeking  
Attitude favorable to problem gambling  
Mental health problems  
Being male  
Traumatic life events  
Genetic predictors



## IPV/Violence

Substance misuse  
History of violence  
Belief in strict gender roles  
Low self-esteem  
High aggression  
Low education  
Low income



# Risk Factors Exist in Multiple Contexts:

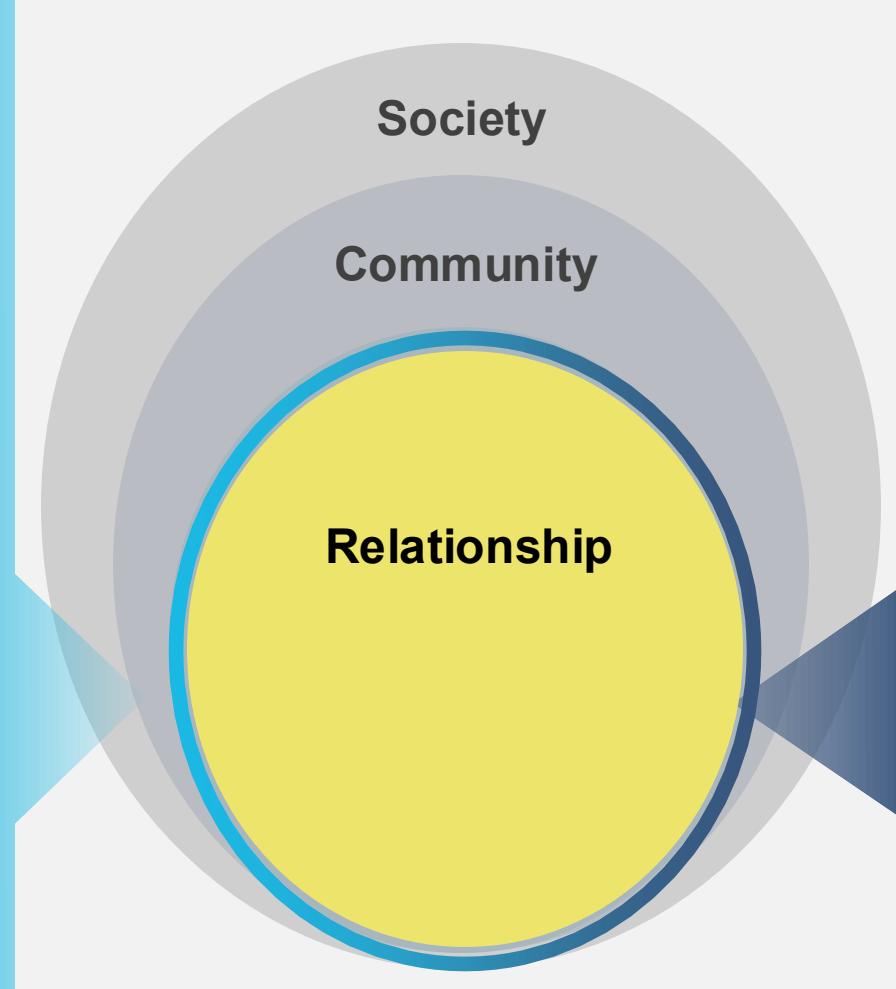
## Relationship

### Problem Gambling

Parents or siblings with gambling problems

Friends who gamble

Peer pressure



### IPV/Violence

Exposure to violence

Poor social support

Power imbalances

Conflict

Unplanned pregnancy

Having parents with less than a high school education



# Risk Factors Exist in Multiple Contexts: Community

## Problem Gambling

High availability and convenience

Low regulation

Proximity to venue

Low socioeconomic status (education, income, and occupation)



Society

Community

## IPV/Violence

Poverty

Lack of resources

High rates of violence

Negative Social Norms



# Risk Factors Exist in Multiple Contexts: Society

## Problem Gambling

Ineffective regulation

Advertising and exposure to  
gambling

Gambling availability



Society

## IPV/Violence

Cultural norms that  
normalize violence

Laws and policies that do not  
adequately address  
IPV/Sexual  
Violence/Community  
Violence/Bullying and  
Harassment

Systemic inequalities



# Problem Gambling Violence

Problem gambling can be risk factor for intimate partner violence.

Problem gambling can be a warning sign also  
– at times preceding intimate partner violence.

# Protective Factors

## Individual

### Problem Gambling

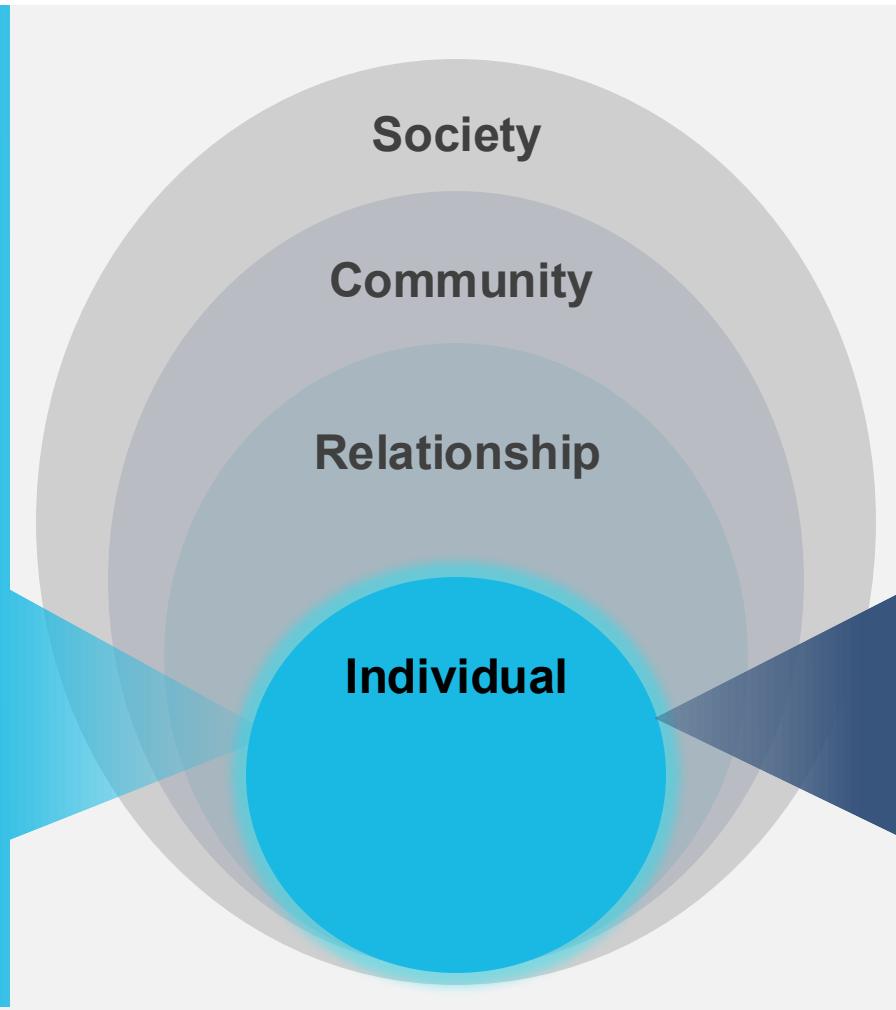
Adaptive coping

Emotional intelligence

Well-being

Personal competence

Resilience



### IPV/Violence

High empathy

Positive sense of self

Resilience

Conflict resolution skills

Positive physical, mental, and emotional health

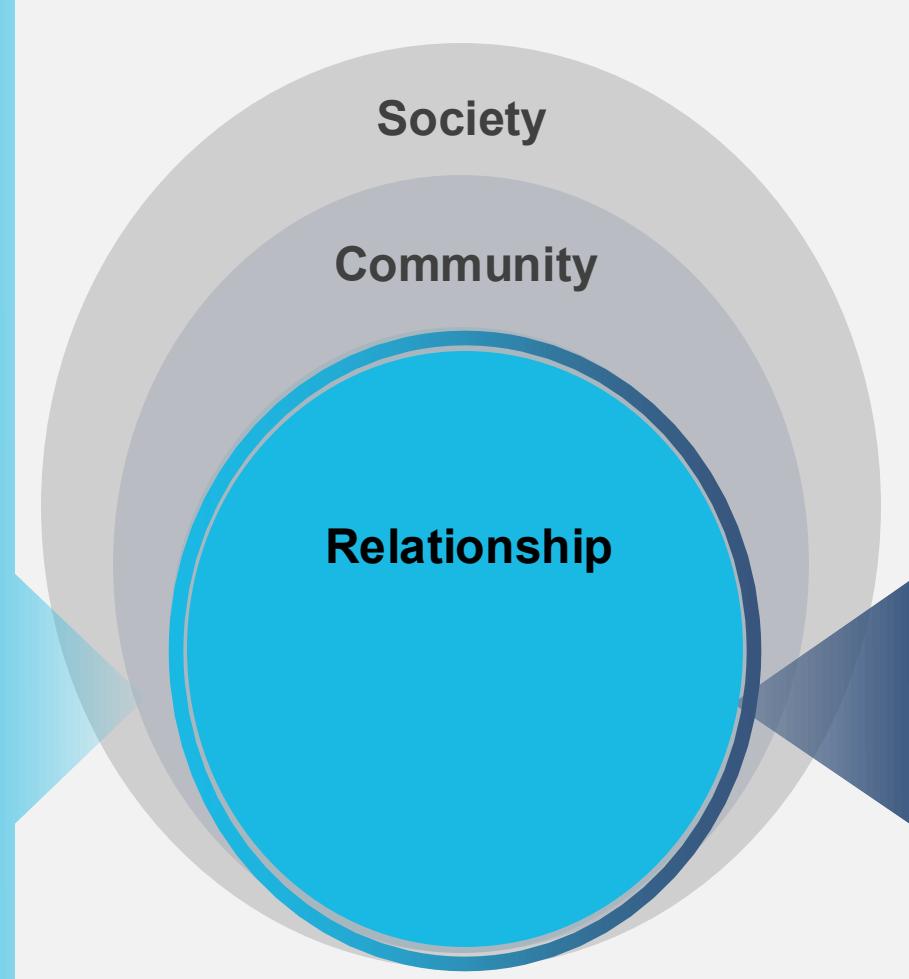


# Protective Factors: Relationship

## Problem Gambling

Social Support

Quality of life



## IPV/Violence

Strong social support network

Healthy communication including conflict resolution

Equal power dynamics

Lack of gender inequality



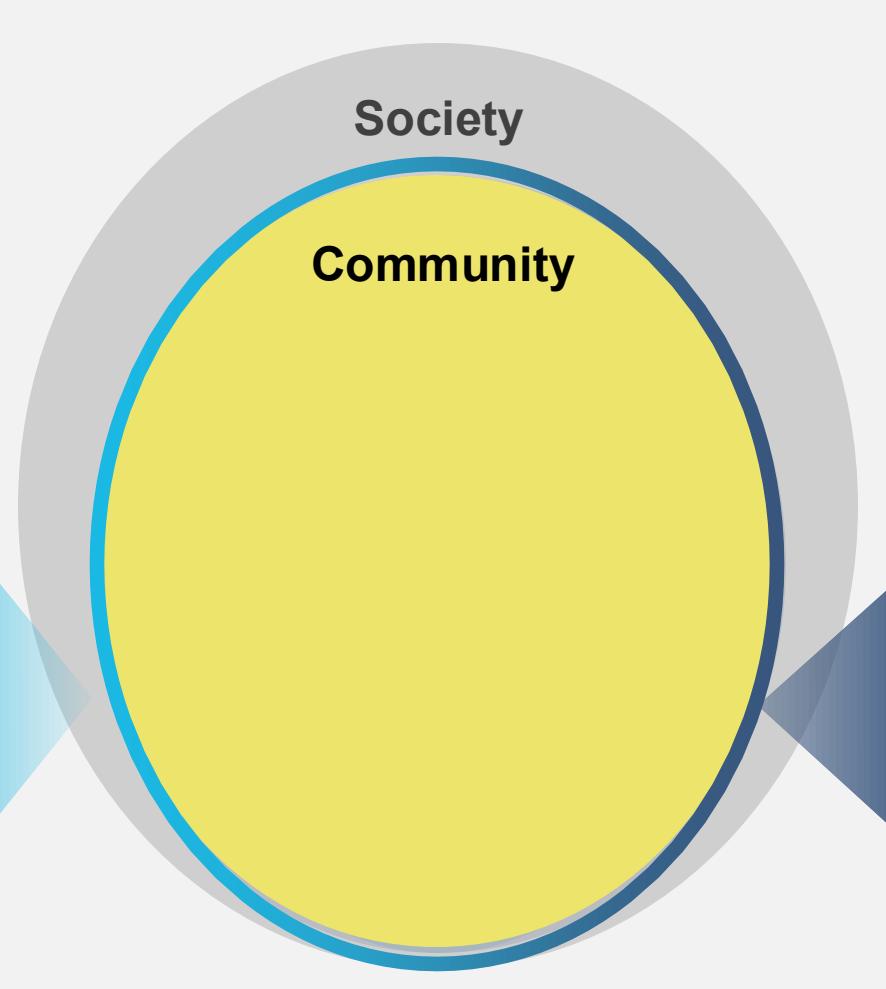
# Protective Factors: Community

## Problem Gambling

Regulations

Self efficacy programs  
across sectors

Health and policy  
involvement



## IPV/Violence

Communities with access to safe  
and stable housing, medical  
care, and economic assistance  
Safe and supportive  
communities

Communities with strong  
sanctions against violence

Neighborhood collective efficacy

Coordination of resources and  
services among community  
agencies



# Protective Factors: Society

## Problem Gambling

Supply reduction

Legal age restrictions

Demand reduction

Restrictions advertising

Policies



Society

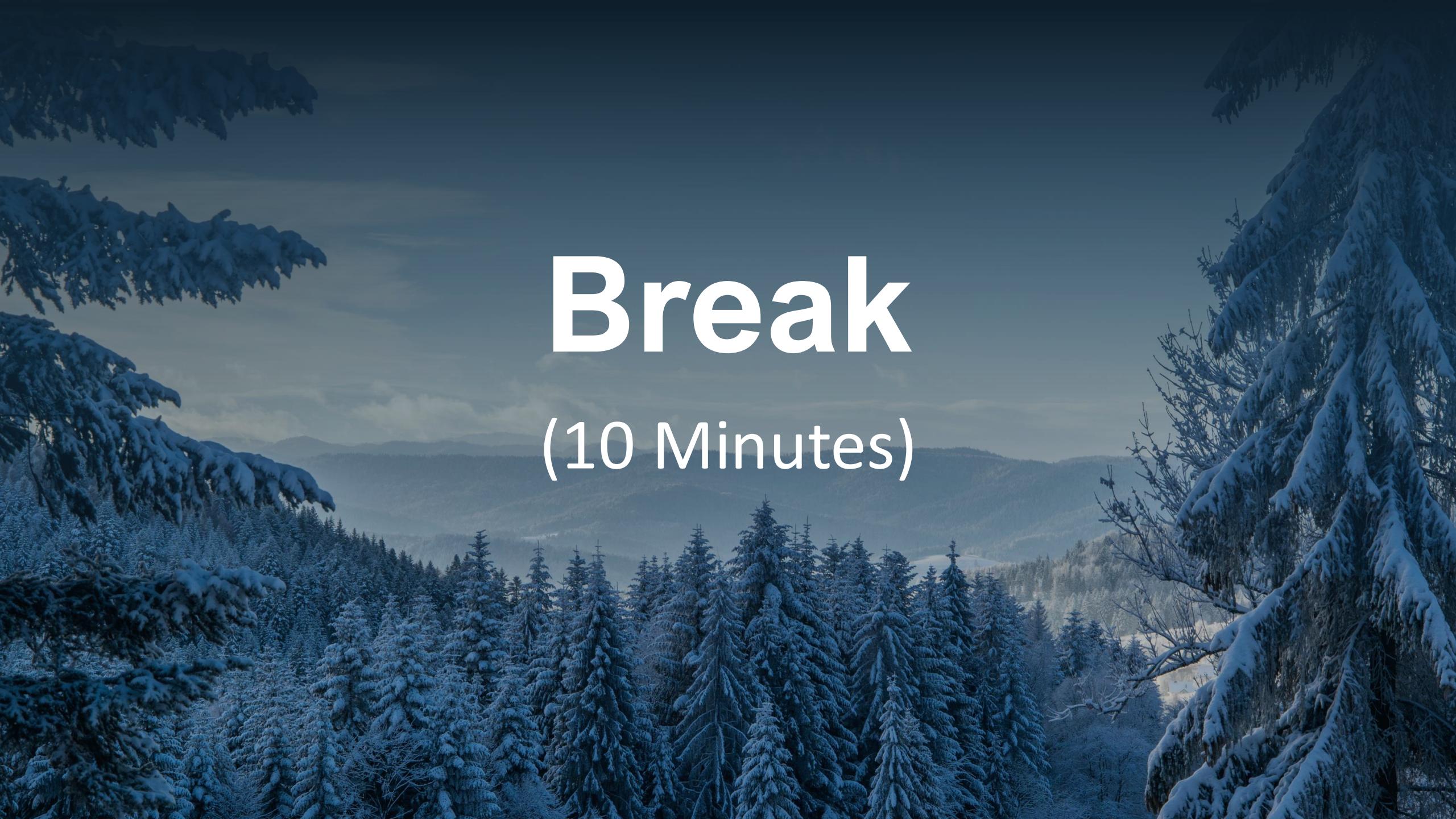
## IPV/Violence

Laws that protect against violence and hold perpetrators accountable

Societal intolerance of forms of oppression

Media that portrays violence ethically and responsibly



A wide-angle photograph of a snowy mountain landscape. In the foreground, several tall evergreen trees are heavily laden with snow, their branches bending under the weight. The middle ground shows a vast valley filled with more snow-covered trees and rolling hills. In the background, a range of mountains is visible, their peaks obscured by a light blue sky with scattered clouds. The overall scene is serene and cold.

# Break

(10 Minutes)

# Section 4: Applying Violence Prevention Strategies in Problem Gambling

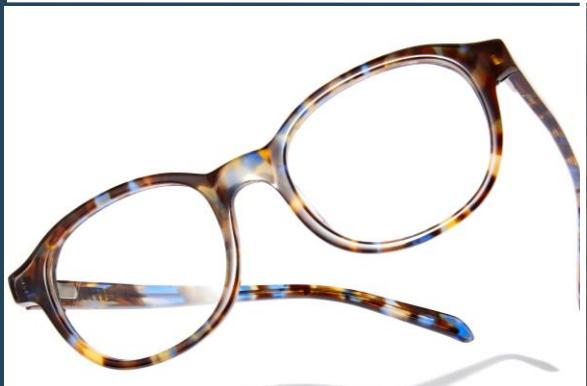


Image Source: <http://www.i-fink.com/building-sustainably/>

# Strategies

- Address intersections and include violence prevention/DV/IPV/SA information in prevention programs
- Include screening for violence in identification for problem gambling
- Include problem gambling screening in identification and treatment for IPV/DV
- Train on how to identify signs of IPV/DV/Violence
- Train staff on Bystander Intervention
- Those working with IPV/DV Survivors - can include information about problem gambling/spikes in violence related to this for survivors to include in their safety planning
- Include information for hotlines/crisis lines/shelters in casinos, hotels, stadiums, etc.

# Strategies

Increase protective factors while working to decrease risk factors

- Economic and financial stability and support
- Safe and supportive communities
- Coordination of resources
- Strong sanctions / culture against violence
- Flexible gender roles
- Conflict resolution

# DV Screening Tool

1. How often does your partner physically **hurt** you?
2. How often does your partner **insult** you or talk down to you?
3. How often does your partner **threaten** you with harm?
4. How often does your partner **scream** or curse at you?

# Safety Planning Tool

## Interactive guide to safety planning

- Collaborative
- Personalized
- Trauma-informed
- All decisions are driven by the person impacted by violence
- Interactive Safety Planning:

<https://www.thehotline.org/plan-for-safety/create-your-personal-safety-plan/>

Introduction Basics Home School Job Technology Partner Children Emotional

### HAVE YOU TOLD SOMEONE IN YOUR FAMILY ABOUT YOUR RELATIONSHIP?

Yes  No

### WHAT WORD OR PHRASE CAN YOU USE AS A CODE IN A PHONE CALL, TEXT, OR INSTANT MESSAGE TO ASK YOUR FAMILY, FRIENDS, OR NEIGHBORS TO CALL FOR HELP WITHOUT YOUR PARTNER KNOWING?

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### DURING TIMES WHEN YOU ARE HOME ALONE, WHO CAN STAY WITH YOU IF YOU DON'T WANT TO BE ALONE?

Write this person's phone number on your emergency card and keep it in your wallet or another safe place. This way you can reach your friends and family even when you do not have your cell phone. This is especially important if your partner has ever threatened or tried to take or break your cell phone.

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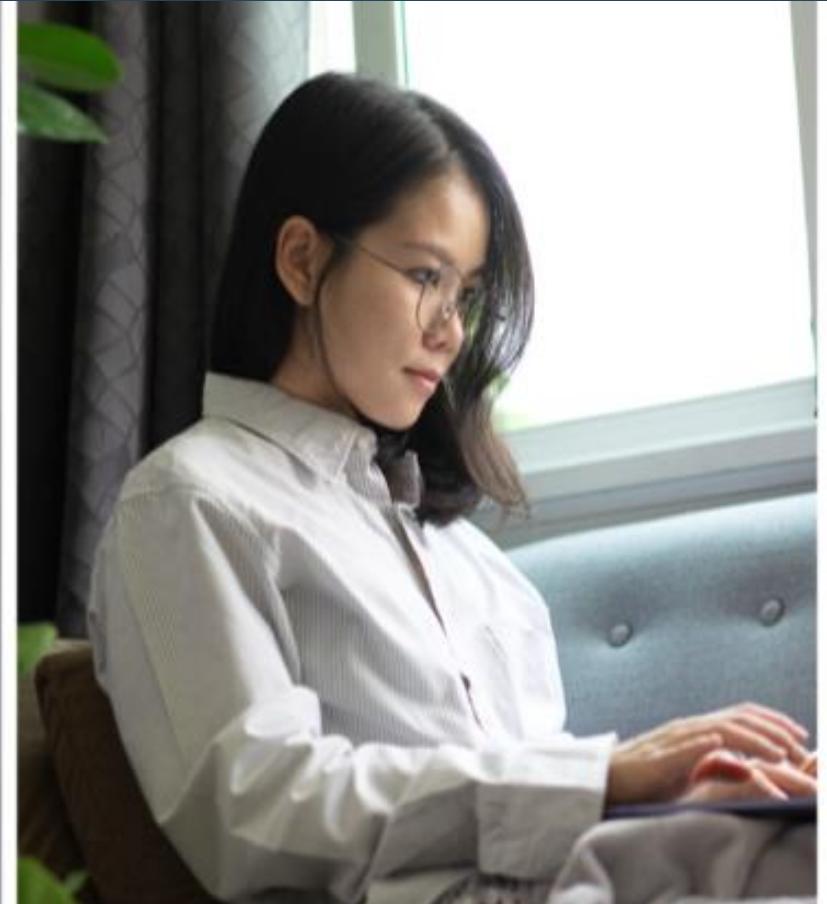
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### IF YOU'RE NOT COMFORTABLE BEING AT HOME, WHERE ELSE COULD YOU GO TO STAY SAFE?

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# Application



- 1. Thinking of your role, what are 1-2 strategies for violence prevention that could apply?**
  - This can be at any level of the socioecological model – individual, relational, community, societal
- 2. Is there anything you are already doing that focuses on the intersection of gambling and violence prevention?**
  - If so, share this with your group and any lessons learned or barriers you have faced.

# RESOURCES

## Massachusetts Problem Gambling Helpline

- Call 1-800-327-5050
- Visit [gamblinghelplinemma.org](http://gamblinghelplinemma.org) to speak with a trained Specialist to receive support. Specialists are available 24/7.

## MCOE PGP Resource Library

- Visit [mcoepgp.org/resources](http://mcoepgp.org/resources)

## The Massachusetts Council on Gaming and Health

- Visit [macgh.org/resources-research](http://macgh.org/resources-research)

# NATIONAL RESOURCES

## National Domestic Violence Hotline

- Visit <https://www.thehotline.org>  
(Site has numerous resources)
- Call: 1.800.799.SAFE (7233)
- Chat: [Live on website](#)
- Text: ["START" to 88788](#)
- AI Chat: [Live on website](#)

## National Sexual Assault Hotline

- Visit <https://rainn.org> (Chat links and Resources)
- RAINN's National Sexual Assault Hotline offers free, confidential, 24/7 support in English and en Español.
- [Call 800.656.HOPE \(4673\)](#)
- [Chat at RAINN.org/hotline](#)
- [Text HOPE to 64673](#)

# HOW TO GET HELP

## AskMOVA

- AskMOVA is a free online resource offered by the Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance (MOVA). MOVA supports free and accessible direct services throughout Massachusetts that help crime victims and their families recover from the impacts of violent crime. AskMOVA allows victims, survivors, and service providers to find these free services in an area that is convenient, accessible, and safe for the victim or survivor.  [www.mass.gov/orgs/askmova](http://www.mass.gov/orgs/askmova)

## SafeLink

- SafeLink is Massachusetts' statewide 24/7 toll-free domestic violence hotline and a resource for anyone affected by domestic or dating violence.  877-785-2020





# Wrap-Up

What are you taking away from today?

- ✓ Any insights you had?
- ✓ Anything important and/or new?
- ✓ How can you address Problem Gambling and Violence Prevention in your role?

# Word Waterfall

**What is one word that stands out  
to you from today's training?**

# Upcoming MCOE PGP Trainings and Webinars

Name	Date and Time
Be Part of the Winning Team with Sports Betting Prevention	Thursday, February 5, 2026 1-2:30pm EST
Stronger Together: Partnering to Prevent Problem Gambling at Its Roots	Wednesday, February 19, 2026 1-3pm EST
Empowerment Through Data: Using What We Know to Make Smart Decisions	Wednesday, February 25, 2026 10-12pm EST



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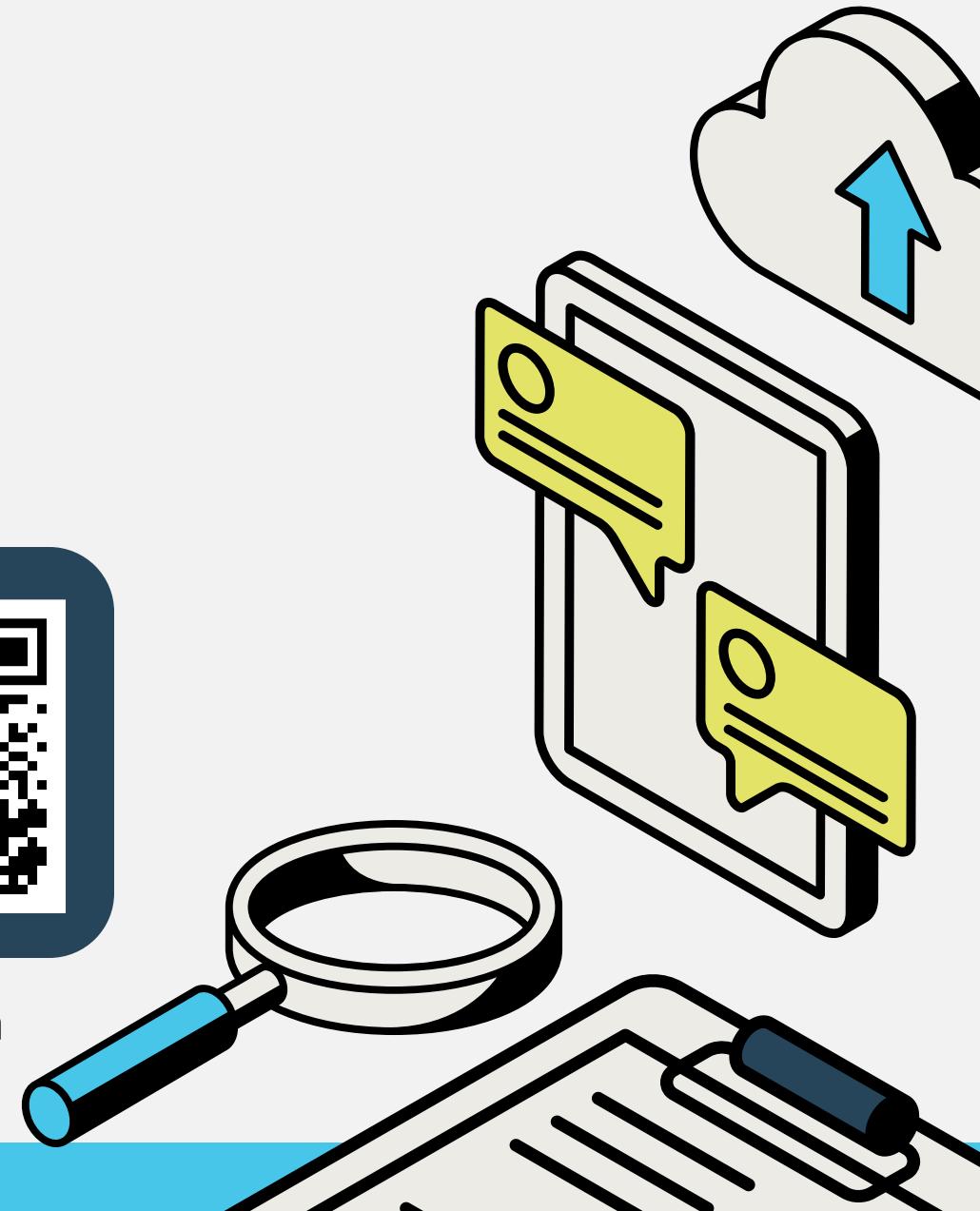
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# PROBLEM GAMBLING PREVENTION

MASSACHUSETTS CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

# THANK YOU

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