

# **PROBLEM GAMBLING SPORTS BETTING PREVENTION**

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**For**

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Development Center**

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# LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Review sports betting prevalence and factors influencing sports fans participation and sports betting.
- Hear from a person with lived experience of gambling addiction and sports betting addiction/risky gambling.
- Identify prevention recommendations and resources for targeting sports fans and sports bettors.

# QUICK POLL: YES OR NO?

- Are you a sports fan?
- Do you understand how to develop sports betting prevention?

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WE HAVE TO  
UNDERSTAND  
SPORTS FANS!!!

•GAME DAY!!!!!!





# HOW DID WE GET HERE?

In 2018, Landmark ruling by the Supreme Court legalized sports betting.

As of 2025: **38 states and the District of Columbia** have legalized sports betting in some form, allowing single-game wagers at retail or online sports books.

Legal sports betting varies widely between states, with some maintaining restrictions such as betting limits or age requirements.



# FIRST, WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF SPORTS? SPORTS BETTING?

## Sports

- Entertainment
- Competition
- Fun

## Sports Betting

- Entertainment
- Competition
- Fun
- Money!!!

# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT ILLEGAL SPORTS BETTING?

- [New AGA Report Shows Americans Gamble More Than Half a Trillion Dollars Illegally Each Year - American Gaming Association](#)
- **49% of past-year sports bettors have placed a bet with an illegal operator.**
- **Prior AGA research shows more than half of Americans that bet on sports with illegal operators believe they are wagering legally**



# DID YOU KNOW.....

- **Basketball (53%), soccer (51%), and football (46%)** ranked as the **top 3 sports Americans bet on, per 2023 Sports Betting statistics** from Drive Research.
- Other sports enjoying popularity among bettors:
  - ✓ Baseball (22%)
  - ✓ Tennis (21%)
  - ✓ Horse racing (20%)
  - ✓ Golf (17%)
  - Motorsports (12%)
  - Hockey (11%)
  - Mixed martial arts (8%)

# WHAT IS SPORTS BETTING NOT DESIGNED FOR?

- **A financial strategy!!!!**
- **A solution to challenges in living?**
- **This is the prevention message to share....**



## • **Loot Boxes are**

in many video-games and offer prize features that generate outcomes based on chance-based algorithms (Drummond & Sauer, 2018; Zendle et al., 2020).

- Can be earned in regular gameplay and purchased for real money.
- Outcomes can include items that benefit the player in games, or can be cosmetic (skins) (Wardle, 2019).
- In some games, some items are only of value within the game, while others may be of value outside the game (open economy).
- Offers prize features that generate outcomes based on chance-based algorithms (Drummond & Sauer, 2018; Zendle et al., 2020).



# **WHAT IS THE LINK BETWEEN YOUTH GAMING AND GAMBLING, INCLUDING SPORTS GAMING/GAMBLING?**

- <https://doi.org/10.1080/14459795.2020.1822905>





# RESOURCE FOR YOUTH GAMING PREVENTION

- Share this Teen with Lived Experience of Internet Gaming Addiction
- [https://www.espn.com/espn/feature/story/\\_/id/18510975/how-counter-strike-turned-teenager-compulsive-gambler](https://www.espn.com/espn/feature/story/_/id/18510975/how-counter-strike-turned-teenager-compulsive-gambler)
- Develop reflection questions and facilitate a discussion: if you are a youth with risky gaming behaviors or you are concerned about a peer showing risky gaming behaviors....
- Nova Scotia Social Work Association trained youth peers in gambling addiction as ambassadors to recognize warning signs and get them more support.
- Educate educators to recognize signs/symptoms.

# E-SPORTS....

(MARK LEROUX-PARRA, 4/24/2020, HIR.HARVARD.EDU)

- Are video games that are played in a highly organized competitive environment.
- Draw more than 1 million concurrent viewers
- Games range from popular, team-oriented multiplayer online battle arenas (MOBAs) to single player first person shooters, to survival battle royales, to virtual reconstructions of physical sports.
- Highly attractive to youth, young adults and an international phenomena
- Creates research challenges (Tang, et al., 2023)

# 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)



# GAMBLING IN COLLEGE??

Prevalence Among College Athletes



Think of the prevention needed.....

- 58% wagered in sports at least once

- NCAA releases sports wagering survey data - [NCAA.org](https://www.ncaa.org)



# LET'S LISTEN TO A PERSON WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE OF SPORTS BETTING NOW....."GAMBLING RUINED MY LIFE!!"

- Rob, a social influencer,  
of ODATT Gambling Awareness
- <https://youtu.be/6TxTqhXIOcQ>



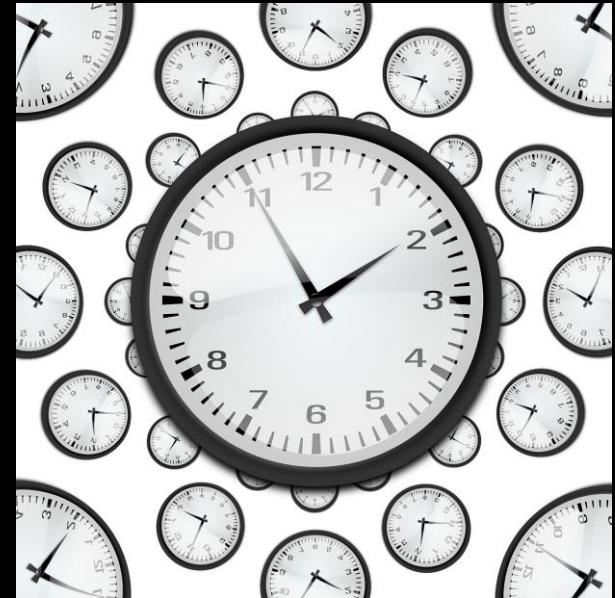
# ***VIDEO REFLECTIONS***

- Why did Rob say:
  - Odds are against you!
  - Bankroll Strategy is a flawed strategy?
  - “There is no way for you to be profitable for the long run!”
  - “It is a delusion!”
- What are 3 points you learned?
- This is a very good video to share in your prevention (10.12 min).

# BOTTOM LINE?

Rob spent the following time in his 6 year “career” gambling 6-8 hours a day:

- 16,128 hours



- How could that time be better spent for an 18-23 year old (“emerging adult”)?

# WHO ARE THE RISKY SPORTS BETTORs? – PROFILE?



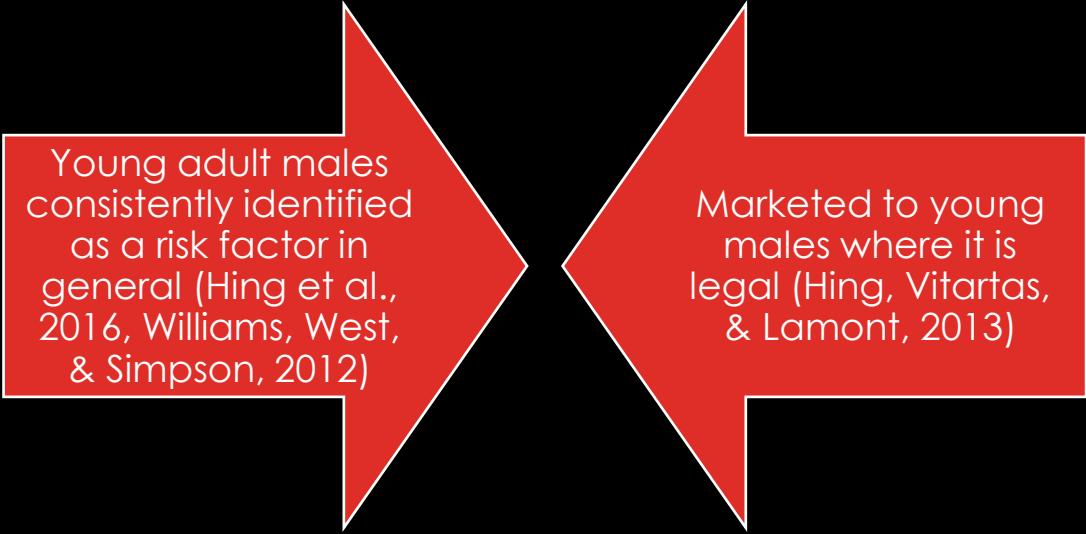


# PROBLEM GAMBLER SPORTS BETTORS (PGSBS)...

(WINTERS & DEREVENSKY, 2019)

## Being male and young

## Marital Status



Young adult males consistently identified as a risk factor in general (Hing et al., 2016, Williams, West, & Simpson, 2012)

Marketed to young males where it is legal (Hing, Vitartas, & Lamont, 2013)

- Being single linked to PGSBs
- Have fewer financial and family responsibilities that could restrain gambling
- PGSBs more likely to watch and bet on sports with friends who also favor sports betting
- Higher chance of frequenting social settings (i.e., bars) where sports betting among male peers is common (Gordon, Gurrieri, & Chapman, 2015)



# MALES OF COLOR ARE AT RISK TOO....

*Sports provide identity in a world that  
constantly treats you as invisible....*

# JONTAY PORTER BANNED FOR LIFE FROM NBA: GETTING TREATMENT FOR A GAMBLING DISORDER AND AWAITING SENTENCING





# WE HAVE GOT TO EXPAND PREVENTION...

- Survey: American Men Reveal Sports Betting Habits in 2023  
([menshealth.com](https://www.menshealth.com))

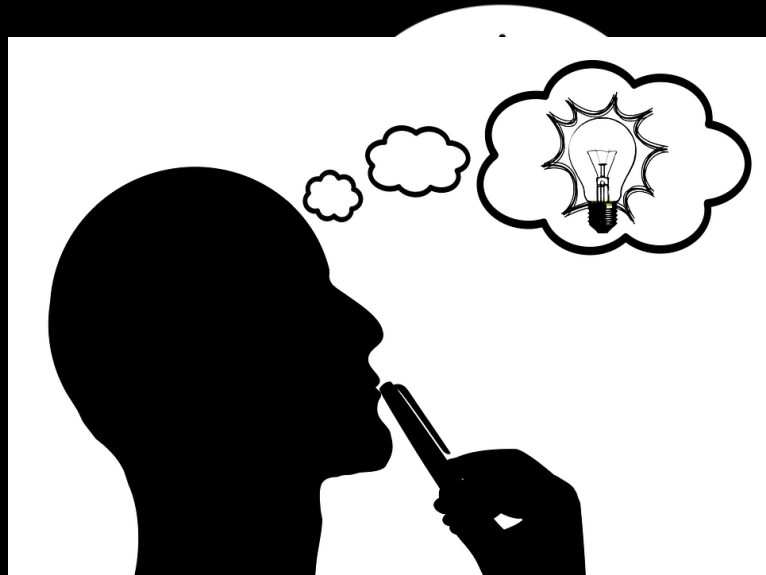




# RISKY PROFILES...

***“If In Your Head All you’re thinking about is sports betting...you need help!!!”***

- <https://www.youtube.com/shorts/Ef0W11L3r68?feature=share>



***“I knew as a Muslim I’m not supposed to be spending \$ in this way....”***

- [https://www.youtube.com/shorts/Hbj19IRhQ\\_s?feature=share](https://www.youtube.com/shorts/Hbj19IRhQ_s?feature=share)





**LET'S REDUCE RISKY SPORTS BETTING BY  
EDUCATING ALL SPORTS FANS/PUBLIC  
HOW TO ENJOY THE GAME & GAMBLE  
SAFELY...**

**What are Prevention Strategies?**

- Preventing problems before they begin
- Target general population (universal prevention)

# PRIMARY PREVENTION STRATEGIES

## Primary Prevention

Interventions designed to prevent the onset or future incidence of a specific problem

## Secondary Prevention

An early intervention that decreases the prevalence of a specific problem

## Tertiary Prevention

Treatment designed to improve quality of life and reduce the symptoms after a

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disease or disorder has developed

Does not reduce incidence or prevalence

# SECONDARY PREVENTION STRATEGIES

What is it?

Aims to identify and address gambling problems early

Targets at-risk individuals

(selective prevention)

Examples

Self-Exclusion Programs

- **Early Warning Systems identifying high-risk bettors**
- Pop-Up Messages and Spending limits alerting users about their betting patterns and encouraging responsible gambling.
- 1-800-GAMBLER Helpline or crisis helplines across jurisdictions



# TERTIARY PREVENTION STRATEGIES

Focuses on minimizing harm and aiding recovery for persons with established gambling problems.

Targets those directly affected (indicated prevention): Treatment programs such as counseling or CBT

- Support for families affected by problem gambling
- Harm Reduction Strategies on sports betting (i.e., using GAM-BAN to prevent/limit online sports bets)
- Regulating online and in-person gambling operations (policy/regulation)
- Taxing gambling revenues to fund prevention and treatment programs (policy/regulation)

# TERTIARY PREVENTION

16-week CBT abstinence treatment (90 min sessions) 2 therapists co-leaders

Marcos (2020)

(Mestre-Bach, et al., 2022)

- **Deconditioning gambling situations**

- Provide info on gambling risks
- Teach **relapse prevention skills**
- Work on **changing one's attitude** towards gambling
- Promote a **healthy lifestyle compatible** with gambling treatment/recovery
- Case Study: Client with severe sports betting addiction improved in gambling disorder criteria (used the *Symptom Severity Scale*)

- **Psychoeducation** on disordered gambling (course, vulnerability factors, diagnostic criteria)

- **Stimulus control** (e.g., money management, avoidance of potential triggers, self-exclusion programs)

- **Response prevention** (e.g., alternative & compensatory behaviors)

- **Cognitive restructuring** focused on illusions of control over gambling and magical thinking, emotion-regulation skills training and other relapse prevention techniques

# APPLICATION EXERCISE

- Split into breakout groups: primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention
- What are creative ideas you can brainstorm for that prevention focus.
- If you are in tertiary prevention group, how can you expand opportunities for folks to know treatment is available and feel less stigma?

# WRAP UP: HEALTHY SPORTS BETTING ADVICE FROM AN AVID SPORTS FAN, BETTOR, AND FORMER COLLEGE BASKETBALL ATHLETE (MR. K)

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# PREVENTION FOCUSING ON BIPOC...DR. HASKINS

- Tavis Smiley Show (2/09/2024) [Scroll down, Featured Guest to talk about gambling in the Black community.](#)

[Tavis Smiley | Insightful conversations \(tavissmileyshow.com\)](#)

# ROBBIE SPORTS FAN SPORTS BETTOR RECOVERY TOOLS

<https://www.odaatgamblingawareness.com/>



# RESOURCES: PODCASTS

Broke Girl Society – Host Christina Cook (2700+Diverse Community)



All In – Host Brian Hatcher







# THE GAMBLING DISORDER TREATMENT HANDBOOK

A Guide for Mental Health Professionals

JODY BECHTOLD AND ALYSSA WILSON

## RESOURCES

### NEVER ENOUGH ZEROES



*A tale of tragedy and inspiration  
in the struggle against  
gambling addiction...*

Joel Soper  
with Philip Wyeth



# RESOURCES

Podcast for Black, Brown, Other  
People of Color with Addiction  
Journeys



Gaming ...Dr. Daniel Kaufman



# SAM DEMELLO AND SPORTS GAMBLING ADDICTION FOUNDER OF EVIVE – GOAL IS TO CREATE A DIGITAL HEALTH RECOVERY SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

- <https://youtu.be/HSuyubDYS0M>
- (1.03.53 minutes)



# REFERENCES

- Drummond, A. & Sauer, J. D. (2018). Video game loot boxes psychologically akin to gambling. *Nature Human Behavior*, 2, 530-532.
- Zendle, D., Meyer, R., Cairns, P., Waters, S., & Ballou, N. (2020). The prevalence of loot boxes in mobile and desktop games. *Addiction*, 115(9), 1768-1772. [hrrpa://doi.org/10.1111/add.14973](https://doi.org/10.1111/add.14973)



***THANK YOU FOR LEARNING!!!***

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