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Gambling as a major health issue impacting young people – Nature and extent of the issue, risk factors and protective factors

GambleAware

NSW
GOVERNMENT

Activity introduction

Quick summary
Students explore current research and information to identify the nature and extent of gambling amongst young people. Through research, literature analysis and group tasks, the class will be encouraged to consider why gambling has become an emerging health concern and identify the risk factors and protective factors connected to gambling.

Learning intentions

- To explore current research to identify the prevalence of and trends in gambling amongst young people

- To examine the risk factors that can contribute to young people gambling

- To understand why protective factors are a necessary skill to reduce the effects of gambling harm

21st-century skills

Communicating

Creative thinking

Problem finding

Personal and social skills

Problem solving

Syllabus outcomes

- **H2** analyses and explains the health status of Australians in terms of current trends and groups most at risk

- **H6** demonstrates a range of personal health skills that enables them to promote and maintain health

- **H15** critically analyses key issues affecting the health of Australians and proposes ways of working towards better health for all

- **H16** devises methods of gathering, interpreting and communicating information about health and physical activity concepts

General capabilities

Personal and social capability

Ethical understanding

Information and communication technology (ICT) capability

Relevant parts of Year 12 achievement standards

9.3 HSC Option 1: The Health of Young People

This module should occupy approximately 20% of total course time.

Module Description

This option module is concerned with the health needs of young people. In this module, students examine the nature of young people's lives and the developmental factors that significantly influence their health. They consider the health status of young people and examine a number of related health issues. Students discover that there is much that can be done to support the health of young people and they critically analyse the level of support currently available. Students are encouraged to develop a positive view of the future and a preparedness to contribute towards that future.

In this module, students investigate the following critical questions:

- What is good health for young people?

- To what extent do Australia's young people enjoy good health?

- What skills and actions enable young people to attain better health?

Topic
The major health issues that impact on young people – Gambling

Unit of work
Stage 6 Major health issue – Gambling

Time required
120 minutes

Level of teacher scaffolding
Medium

Resources required

- Internet access and laptops

- Appendix A: Analyse scaffold

- Appendix B: NSW Youth gambling study factsheet

- Gambling activity among Australian teenagers | Australian Institute of Family Studies (aifs.gov.au)

- Gambling in Australia – Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (aihw.gov.au)

- LSAC Annual Statistical Report 2018 Chapter 8 Gambling activity among teenagers and their parents (aifs.gov.au)

Keywords
Health status, gambling, prevalence, incidence, trends, risk factors, protective factors.

Teacher worksheet

Learning intentions

Students will:

- explore current research to identify the prevalence of and trends in gambling amongst young people.

- examine the risk factors that can contribute to young people gambling.

- understand why protective factors are a necessary skill to reduce the effects of gambling harm.

Success criteria

Students can:

- articulate the nature and extent of gambling as a major health issue impacting on young people.

- identify the protective and risk factors necessary to protect young people from gambling harm.

Teacher content information

Gambling can be a high-risk activity and is a priority concern for young people. Therefore, before conducting the lesson on gambling, it is recommended that teachers and parents read the Facilitator pack. The pack provides teachers and parents with essential information about gambling harm amongst young people and clarifies the nature of gambling-related behaviours and how to approach sensitive topics.

Teaching sequence

30 minutes - Part A: Researching and interpreting data

30 minutes - Part B: Dissecting gambling statistics

60 minutes - Part C: Risk and protective factors

5 minutes - Reflection: Complete practice HSC question (response or plan)

Part A: Researching and Interpreting data

Work through this resource material in the following sequence:

Step 1

Explain to students that in this first part of the lesson, they will be investigating the trends and health effects of gambling among young people living in Australia.

The focus of this part of the lesson, from a syllabus perspective, is to determine the 'nature and extent' of trends affecting the health of young people.

Discuss:

- Do you feel gambling is an issue for young people? Why or why not?

- What are the most common forms of gambling they see in their lives?

Step 2

To measure the nature and extent, students will be examining the data on the prevalence and incidence of specific health trends.

Ask your class if they can suggest what 'prevalence' and 'incidence' means in the context of health?

So that students can refer to it later, write definitions of each term on the board. If students are having a tough time defining these words in the context of health, here is a suggested definition:

"Prevalence is a measure of the frequency of a disease or health condition in a population at a particular point in time".

"Incidence is a measure of the number of newly diagnosed cases within a particular time period of time".

Spend some time making sure your students are happy with the use of these terms as they will be using them frequently moving into the next steps of the lesson. Ask students to take a note of these definitions on their student worksheet.

Step 3

Group your students into pairs and share the following documents with students (you might want to share these electronically or print them out for students). Ask the students to read the articles and record dot-point notes under the headings posed in part 2 of their worksheet.

Gambling activity among Australian teenagers | Australian Institute of Family Studies

Gambling in Australia – Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

LSAC Annual Statistical Report 2018 Chapter 8 Gambling activity among teenagers and their parents (aifs.gov.au)

Step 4

Students then answer the following questions (also available on the Student worksheet).

Students then discuss their answers.

- How prevalent is gambling among young people?

- Is the prevalence of gamling higher among those identifying as male or female?

- Comparing the numbers of young people gambling across three to five years at 3-5, is the trend is increasing or decreasing?

- Did Covid have an impact on the numbers of young people gambling?

- Was there anything that surprised you about this data?

- Did the reading confirm or go against the points made about gambling when you started the discussion at the top of the lesson?

Part B: Dissecting gambling statistics

Continue the discussion from Part A – Gambling harm is on Australia's radar and is considered an emerging and concerning health issue for young people. Students will be aware of this based on their earlier research, and when presented (as a handout or projected on the board) with information form the NSW Youth Gambling Study (below), they will be more aware of the issue.

NSW Youth Gambling Study

About the study

The study aimed to increase understanding of gambling and simulated gambling by young people in NSW aged 12–17 to prevent and reduce gambling harm.

How young people are engaging with gambling is changing. This change is being driven by rapid technological changes, the high-level of engagement of young people with mobile technology and gaming, the increase in traditional and online gambling advertising and the expanding variety of games with gambling-like components and monetary gambling.

The methodology

- A review of Australian and international peer reviewed and grey literature (from 2003 to 2019).

- 16 focus groups with 104 participants, held across 8 locations in NSW.

- An online survey of 2,220 young people recruited via flyers delivered to household letterboxes, a Qualtrics panel and email/ online advertising.

Key findings

- On average, young people started simulated gambling and monetary gambling at much the same age (11–12 years).

- In the previous year, 29.8% had participated in monetary gambling and 40.1% had played games with gambling components.

- The past-year problem-gambling rate was 1.5%, and another 2.2% were at-risk gamblers.

- Gambling usually occurred with parents or guardians (53.7%), followed by friends aged 17 or under (26.8%), relatives aged 18 years or over (20.7%), relatives under 18 years (20.1%) and grandparents (19.5%). Relatively few (9.1%) gambled alone.

- Nearly half (46.1%) reported noticing gambling advertising on TV during sports and racing events at least weekly.

- Parents were the strongest influence on youth gambling. Young people were more likely to have gambled in the past year if they'd gambled with their parents during childhood and had parents who approved of gambling. A problem-gambling adult in the household when the young person was growing up was also found to uniquely predict problem or at-risk gambling among youth survey respondents.

- Exposure to gambling advertising in both traditional and digital media and thinking more positively about gambling due to seeing gambling advertisements were associated with gambling participation, intentions and problems.

Part B: Dissecting gambling statistics

Step 1

Once students have understood the main reasons young people gamble and why it is concerning, divide your class into groups and present each group with a fact sheet on gambling (see Appendix B). Ask each group to develop three reasons why they believe young people gamble and how this may **negatively impact their health**.

Prompt students with the following points and ask them to choose which of the following statements they feel comfortable discussing:

- How have technological advancements contributed to the increase in gambling?

- How has COVID-19 contributed to this?

- How has gaming contributed to this?

- How has Australian culture contributed to this?

- How does mental health contribute to the increase in gambling?

Once groups have established reasons, go around the room and ask the class to share their opinions and justifications.

Part C: Risks and protective factors

Step 1

Once the class has understood and can elaborate on the increase in gambling activities amongst young people, present fact sheets (see Appendix B) outlining the nature and extent of how gambling occurs in Australia. Ask students to read through the fact sheets and to highlight any definitive statements, data or statistics.

Upon reading the facts, you may come across information that could be difficult for students to read and comprehend. Please read through the article first and discuss sensitive topics with your class. Specific statements and statistics may require warning and an opportunity to debrief.

Factsheet links: gambleaware.nsw.gov.au/resources-and-education/check-out-our-research/published-research/nsw-youth-gambling-study-2020

Relevant fact sheet titles:

Fact sheet: Young people and gambling

Fact sheet: Young people and problem gambling

Fact sheet: What influences young people to gamble?

Fact sheet: Young people's use of gambling-like products

Step 2

Once the class has highlighted the essential facts, discuss which protective factors and risk factors associated with gambling.

Risk Factors are defined as conditions that are associated with an increase in the likelihood of problem gambling.

Some risk factors may include:

- early gambling onset
- impulsive behaviour
- sensation seeking
- poverty
- debt
- life stress
- substance use
- anxiety
- depression
- emotional distress
- school difficulties
- peer problem gambling
- cultural gambling norms
- worldwide trends in gambling (e.g., internet gambling)

You must explain to students that although there are associations between these factors and gambling harm, many young adults exposed to the above risk factors do not develop gambling problems.

Explain to students that gambling prevention and intervention programs aim to reduce risk factors and increase protective factors to prevent gambling harm.

Step 3

Once students have developed an understanding of risk factors, ask students to work in groups to create a mind map of the protective factors associated with gambling. Provide students with 5 minutes to develop their mind map and an example of some protective factors to help them work through the task.

Protective factors are conditions that are associated with a decrease in the likelihood of gambling harm, regardless of exposure to identified risk factors. You need to explain that even if a person has a strong sense of self and social support, it does not mean that they will not experience gambling harm.

Some protective factors may include:

– strong coping strategies

– emotional intelligence

– wellbeing

– self-monitoring

– resilience

– interpersonal skills

– social bonding

– understanding of randomness and odds (gambling is high-risk, random, and there is no guaranteed return)

– parental monitoring

– social competence

– social support

Step 4

Once the groups have finished their mind map, give students 20 minutes to produce a piece of writing that explains how protective factors can be used to resist gambling harm.

Ask students to:

• discuss at least three protective factors concerning gambling harm.

• include facts and examples where possible to show why these protective factors are important.

• explain how an individual might be able to control or modify their gambling behaviour using this protective factor.

Reflection

Ask students to choose one protective factor essential to their happiness and wellbeing and discuss how they use this protective factor to promote and live a healthy lifestyle.

• Explain why you chose this protective factor.

• Provide one or more examples of when it has been helpful.

• Consider if it connects with any other protective factors.

Differentiated learning

Extension – Analyse the nature and extent that gambling impacts on young people.

Provisions for Learning Support – come up with a plan on how you would answer the question, analyse the nature and extent that gambling impacts on young people.

OR

Use the analyse scaffold (Appendix A) to help write or plan a response.

Teacher reflection

Take this opportunity to reflect on your own teaching:

What did you learn about your teaching today?

What worked well?

What didn't work so well?

What would you share?

Where to next?

How are you going to get there?

Student worksheet

Thought starter

Young people experience higher gambling harm rates than the general NSW community (Hing et al., 2020). So, where's the harm?

1. Define the following terms:

    Prevalence:

    Incidence:

2. Using the articles below (your teacher may have shared these or printed them out for you), record dot-point notes the under the headings below.

    Gambling activity among Australian teenagers | Australian Institute of Family Studies

    Gambling in Australia – Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

    LSAC Annual Statistical Report 2018 Chapter 8 Gambling activity among teenagers and their parents

    How prevalent is gambling among young people?

    Is the prevalence of gambling higher among those identifying as male or female?

    Comparing the numbers of young people gambling across three to five years at 3-5, is the trend is increasing or decreasing?

    Did Covid have an impact on the numbers of young people gambling?

Appendix A: Analyse scaffold

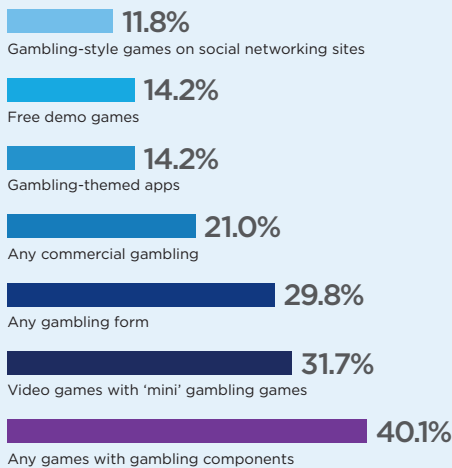|	Points to note:
Analyse – identify components and the relationship between them; draw them out and relate implications.	
Topic to be analysed:	Statement of topic taken from the question. Preview of components and the relationships.
Component Elaboration and support:	Topic sentence at the beginning of each paragraph followed by explanation and examples to illustrate each component.
Component Elaboration and support:	Use linking words between each point, such as *therefore, thus, as a result, leading to*, in order to illustrate the relationship between each of the components.
Relationship Point: Elaboration and support:	Identifying the relationship between the various relationships is essential in answering these questions.
Component Elaboration and support:	
Relationship Point: Elaboration and support:	
Implications of the relationship between each of these components:	The implications of the relationship (what happens/what effect it has) can be dealt with in each of these paragraphs or a concluding paragraph.

Appendix B: NSW youth gambling study factsheet

Young people's use of gambling-like products

The NSW Youth Gambling Study 2020[1] explored gambling and simulated gambling by young people aged 12-17 years in NSW. It found that participation in simulated gambling (gambling-like products)[2] by young people is widespread and that it appears to be increasing.

Participation in gambling and simulated gambling in the last 12 months

11.8%
Gambling-style games on social networking sites

14.2%
Free demo games

14.2%
Gambling-themed apps

21.0%
Any commercial gambling

29.8%
Any gambling form

31.7%
Video games with 'mini' gambling games

40.1%
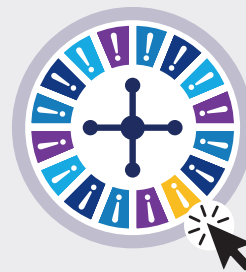Any games with gambling components

Around two-fifths (40.1%) of the 551 survey participants had played games with gambling components in the last year.[3]

> " Looking back at childhood games, a lot of them had very gambling-based mini games and stuff. It's kind of scary, because it's getting kids hooked in at a young age. "
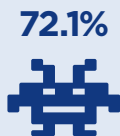>
> - Male, aged 15-17, Dubbo

The most common type of gambling-like component played was wheel spinning.

Wheel spinning:
62.8%

Pokies: 51.9%

Casino games: 49.8%

Poker: 41.0%

Bingo: 37.1%

A majority of the 291 survey respondents who play games with gambling components played them in video games (72.1%).

72.1%
Video games

36.8%
Gambling-themed apps

32.5%
FREE
Free demo or practice games on real gambling sites or apps

22.4%
Social networking sites

[1] Hing, N., et al., 2020 *NSW Youth Gambling Study 2020*. Sydney: NSW Responsible Gambling Fund.

[2] Games with gambling-like features, or simulated gambling, are defined as games which imitate many core characteristics of gambling (e.g., the look, sound and actions) but which do not provide an opportunity for a cash payout.

[3] Based on responses to a survey of young people (n=551) recruited via flyers delivered to household letterboxes. To improve representativeness, survey results were weighted for age, gender and location based on ABS population projections for 2020.
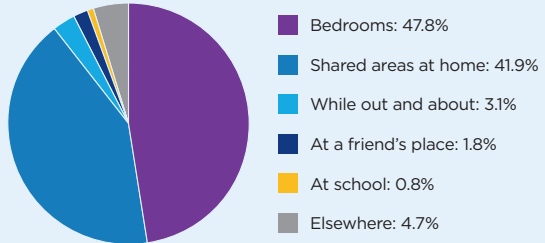
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Appendix B: NSW youth gambling study factsheet

More young males (48.2%) than females (31.3%) reported playing games with gambling components.

Most respondents reported first playing games with gambling components from the age of 10 (86.1%).

The vast majority play these games at home, mostly in their bedrooms.

Where respondents play games with gambling like components (n=291)

- Bedrooms: 47.8%
- Shared areas at home: 41.9%
- While out and about: 3.1%
- At a friend's place: 1.8%
- At school: 0.8%
- Elsewhere: 4.7%

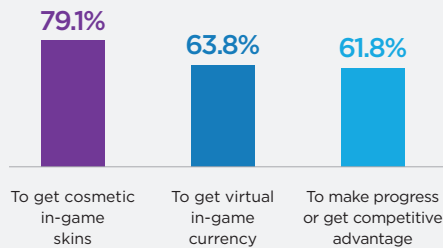## Young people engage in various gaming activities that are similar to gambling

Loot boxes

Most respondents (72.2%) had opened loot boxes in the last year, and over one-third (36.5%) had spent money on them. Median expenditure was $10 per month but focus group participants reported that some young people regularly spend over $100.

The majority (79.1%) of those who had ever purchased loot boxes did so to get skins:

Reasons for purchasing loot boxes (n=272)

- 79.1% To get cosmetic in-game skins
- 63.8% To get virtual in-game currency
- 61.8% To make progress or get competitive advantage

Participants who engaged with loot boxes reported first opening loot boxes at a relatively young age: 18.6% first engaged with loot boxes between the ages of 5 and 9.

In-game microtransactions

Around one-third (33.4%) of respondents reported spending money on in-game microtransactions in a typical month. **Median monthly expenditure was $10.**

Betting with in-game items

One in seven respondents (14.5%) had gambled with in-game items in the last year.

Of these respondents:

- 7.9% bet privately with friends
- 6.2% bet on esports
- 5.8% bet on another site ('skin betting')
- 4.8% bet on other events

Most respondents first started betting with in-game items at the age of 13 – 15.

Betting with in-game items (14.5%) was less common than the most common form of gambling activity - informal private betting (17.1%), but it was more common than the next most popular form of gambling: scratchies/lotteries (11.0%).

Who is most likely to participate in simulated gambling?

The study found that young people most likely to participate in simulated gambling were male, had lower wellbeing, had higher impulsiveness, gambled during the last 12 months, had parents who do not talk about safety online, had parents who don't set rules about internet use, and felt a stronger sense of belonging to an online community.[4]

[4] Based on bivariate analysis of combined Qualtrics (n=826) and Emails & Ad (n=842) samples surveyed as part of the broader Youth Gambling Study.

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