Gambling and Other Problem Behaviors Among Nebraska Youth

Findings from the Nebraska Risk and Protective Factor Student Survey (NRPFSS)
NRPFSS is administered biannually on a census basis to public and private school students in grades 6, 8, 10 and 12.

The survey uses a passive consent protocol, meaning all students participate unless they or their parents actively decline their participation.
The NRPFSS Measures Substance Abuse and Anti-Social Behaviors

- Incidence and prevalence of youth alcohol, tobacco and other drug (ATOD) use;
- Sources and places of youth alcohol and tobacco use; and
- Incidence and prevalence of anti-social behavior (ASB) by youth.
NRPFSS also Measures Rates of Youth Gambling

- Incidence and prevalence of gambling and probable problem gambling among youth; and
- Correlations between gambling, ATOD use and anti-social behavior among youth.
Uses of the NRPFSS Data

NRPFSS data reports and analyses are generated and provided at the local, regional and state levels.

The data provides actionable information that stakeholders and policy makers at all levels are using to guide strategic planning, policy development, strategy implementation and resource allocations.
Benefits to Communities

The survey offers comprehensive information on student participation in high risk, anti-social and other problem behaviors.

Survey data provides communities with an individualized profile of local underlying causal conditions (e.g. risk and protective factors).
NRPFSS Participation

2005 Nebraska Risk and Protective Factor Student Survey (NRPFSS) Participants

Map Created: October 2005

Nebraska Partners in Prevention - www.nebraskaprevention.gov
# 2005 NRPFSS Demographics

## Table 1. Characteristics of Participants

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<th></th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2005</th>
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<td><strong>Number</strong></td>
<td><strong>Percent</strong></td>
<td><strong>Number</strong></td>
<td><strong>Percent</strong></td>
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<td>100</td>
<td>27625</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>5951</td>
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<td>Hispanic</td>
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<td>2993</td>
<td>9.8</td>
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<td>African American</td>
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<td>1.7</td>
<td>505</td>
<td>1.6</td>
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<td>Asian</td>
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<td>1.2</td>
<td>286</td>
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<td>American Indian</td>
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<td>4.0</td>
<td>1065</td>
<td>3.5</td>
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<td>130</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>101</td>
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<td>21823</td>
<td>77.5</td>
<td>23356</td>
<td>76.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1961</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>2335</td>
<td>7.6</td>
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Validity of the NRPFSS Data

The survey was carefully designed to ensure honest responses from participants.

Many studies have shown that students are truthful in their responses.

State alcohol, tobacco, and other drug usage trends tend to be very similar to national trends.
Confidentiality of the survey is stressed through instructions and administration procedures. Because the survey is anonymous, most of the reasons to exaggerate or deny behaviors are eliminated.
NRPFSS Data Validity

Checks are built into the survey so that surveys deemed “untruthful” can be thrown out of the results. This provides a more accurate set of results.

Student surveys are eliminated if they:
- Reported an impossibly high level of substance abuse
- Claimed to use a non-existent drug included in the survey
- Reported that they were not honest in completing the survey.
The Emerging Science of Syndemics
“A syndemic is two or more afflictions, interacting synergistically, contributing to excess burden of disease in a population.”

A Nebraska Syndemic

Nebraska data has shown that there is a synergistic relationship between youth substance abuse, anti-social behavior and gambling that results in highly correlated behavior patterns.
Preventing Syndemics

“To prevent a syndemic, one must prevent or control not only each affliction but also the forces that tie those afflictions together.”

The Risk and Protective Factor Framework
The Premise of the Risk and Protective Factor Framework

To prevent problems from happening, you need to identify the factors that increase the risk of those problems developing, and find ways to reduce those risks.
What are Risk and Protective Factors?

**Risk factors** are those conditions or situations that increase the likelihood that a youth will develop one or more health and/or behavior problems in adolescence.

**Protective factors** are the conditions or situations which decrease the likelihood of future behavior problems.
Research Shows…

There is an connection between identified risk factors and the following behaviors:

- Adolescent drug abuse
- Violence
- Delinquency
- School drop out
- Teen pregnancy

In other words, risk factors can be used to predict subsequent risky behaviors in youth.
The Relationship Between Gambling, Substance Abuse and Anti-Social Behavior

Although specific Risk and Protective Factors have not yet been validated for gambling and problem gambling in youth, gambling behavior has a profound effect on the Risk and Protective Factor profiles of youth who gamble.

Nebraska youth who gamble present markedly higher risk and lower protection for ATOD use and anti-social behaviors, and report engaging in those behaviors at significantly higher rates than non-gambling youth.
Risk and Protective Factors are found in four “Domains”

- Community
- School
- Family
- Peer/Individual
Generalizations about Risk Factors

Risk Factors show much consistency in effects across different races, cultures, and classes.

Reduce one Risk Factor, and you’ll affect a number of different problem behaviors. Reducing Risk Factors has been shown to result in decreased anti-social and high risk behaviors, improved school performance, and enhanced life outcomes.
Generalizations about Protective Factors

Protective Factors, at their core, involve pro-social bonding.

In order for pro-social bonding to occur, three conditions must be met:

- There must be meaningful opportunities for youth;
- The youth must have the skills required to utilize the opportunities; and
- The youth must receive recognition.
Using a Community-Based Systems Approach

Using a Risk and Protective Factor orientation is an important component of a community-based systems approach that:

- affects the entire social environment;
- develops a broad base of support and teamwork - no one solves the problems alone; and
- achieves outcomes that are long lasting.
Youth Gambling Questions from the NRPFSS
16. How old were you the first time you gambled (bet money or something of value on sports, a game of chance or skill, played the lottery or bet cards or dice games)?

Options:
- Never
- 10 or Younger
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14
- 15
- 16
- 17 or Older
Incidence and Prevalence of Youth Gambling

17. In the past year, have you gambled for money or anything of value?
   - Yes   - No

18. In the last 30 days, have you gambled for money or anything of value?
   - Yes   - No
Indicators of Probable Problem Gambling among Youth

19. In the past year, have you often found yourself thinking about gambling or planning to gamble?
   - Yes □ No □

20. In the past year, have you ever spent more than you meant to on gambling?
   - Yes □ No □

21. In the past year, has your gambling ever led to lies to your family?
   - Yes □ No □
Sources and Places of Youth Gambling

22. In the past year, how many times (if any) have you:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Almost every day</th>
<th>Once or twice a week</th>
<th>Once or twice a month</th>
<th>A few times in past year</th>
<th>Gambled, but not in past year</th>
<th>Never</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Gambled at a casino</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
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<td>b. Played the lottery or scratch-off tickets</td>
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<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
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<td>c. Bet on team sports</td>
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<td>d. Played cards for money</td>
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<td>e. Bet money on horse races</td>
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<td>f. Played bingo for money or prizes</td>
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<td>g. Gambled on the Internet</td>
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<td>h. Bet on dice games (such as craps)</td>
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<td>i. Bet on games of personal skill (such as pool, darts or bowling)</td>
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<td>j. Gambled at a school, church, or community event</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
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</table>
Key Youth Gambling Findings from the NRPFSS
Gambling Age of Initiation

Average Age of Gambling Initiation

Percent of students indicating they had gambled

2003

2005

Never

10 or younger

11

12

13

14

15

16

17 or older
Problematic Gambling

Problematic Gambling Behavior by Grade

Percent of students indicating problematic gambling behaviors

- Have You Thought About or Planned to Gamble?
- Have You Ever Spent More Than You Planned Gambling?
- Has Gambling Led to Lies in Your Family?
Severe Gambling Problems

Percent of Students With Severe Gambling Problems, By Grade

2003

2005
Gambling Activities

Percent of Students Engaging in Gambling in Past 30 days

- Gambled at a Casino
- Played the Lottery
- Bet on sports
- Bet on Cards
- Bet on Horses
- Played Bingo for Money
- Gambled on the Internet
- Bet on Dice
- Bet on Games of Skill
- Gambled at a Community Event

6th Grade Gamblers
8th Grade Gamblers
10th Grade Gamblers
12th Grade Gamblers
Gamblers vs. Non-Gamblers
ATOD Use and Antisocial Behavior - Grade 6
ATOD Use and Antisocial Behavior - Grade 8
ATOD Use and Antisocial Behavior - Grade 10
ATOD Use and Antisocial Behavior - Grade 12
Risk Profile – Grade 10
Protective Profile – Grade 10
Gender Differences in Youth Gambling
Gender Differences in Initiation

Average Age of Gambling Initiation, by Gender:

- Male 2003
- Male 2005
- Female 2003
- Female 2005

Percent of students indicating they had participated in activity at least once in their lifetime:

- Never
- 10 or younger
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14
- 15
- 16
- 17 or older
Gender Differences in Gambling Activities

Student Participation in Gambling Activities:
Past 30 Days by Gender
(Of Students Who Indicated That They Had Gambled in the Past 30 Days)

- Cashed at a Casino
- Played the Lottery
- Bet on Sports
- Bet on Cards for Money
- Bet on Horse Races
- Bet on Bingo for Money
- Played on the Internet
- Bet on Dice Games
- Bet on Games of Skill
- Attended a Community Event

[Graph showing participation rates for male and female students for various gambling activities.]
Gender Differences in Severe Gambling Problems

Percent of Students With Severe Gambling Problems, By Gender

2003  2005

No Items  One Item  Two Items  Three Items

Male  Female  Male  Female  Male  Female  Male  Female
Turning NRPFSS Data into Actionable Information
Expanded Awareness

- Legislative Appropriations
- Heightened Media Coverage
- Pilot Youth Problem Gambling Prevention Initiative
- Comprehensive Community Plans Concerning All Problem Behaviors
- Collaboration with Gaming Community
Recent Media Coverage

More kids taking a gamble
Taking a Systems Approach to Problem Solving

When a problem extends beyond the boundaries of a single organization and involves others, solutions require activity across—and on the edge of—the organizational boundaries.

~L.K. Bradshaw
A Syndemics Outcome Network
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