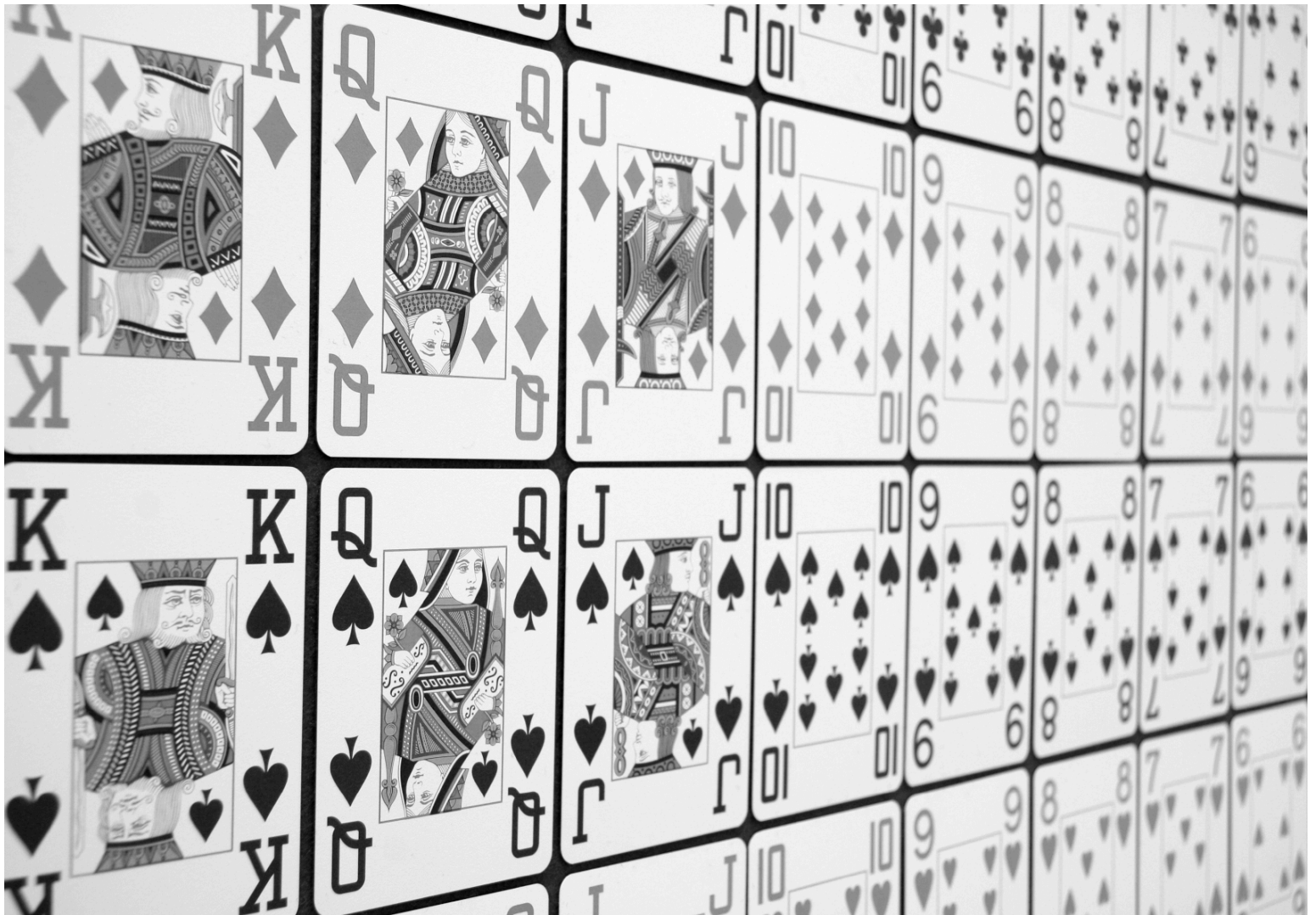


# PARENTS AS PARTNERS

QUANTITATIVE NATIONAL FINDINGS  
JULY 1, 2009



**DECODE**

DECODING YOUTH, YOUNG ADULTS  
AND YOUNG FAMILIES



International Centre for  
Youth Gambling Problems  
and High-Risk Behaviors

[WWW.YOUTHGAMBLING.COM](http://WWW.YOUTHGAMBLING.COM)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures .....	3
Introduction to the National Parents as Partners Study .....	4
Study Methodology .....	4
Age of Parents .....	5
Canadian Status .....	5
Employment Status .....	5
Education Level .....	5
Parental Perceptions of Youth Issues .....	5
Primary Youth Issues .....	8
Youth Access to Funds .....	9
Parental Monitoring of Their Teen's Online Behaviour .....	9
Discussing Youth Issues .....	10
Conversations About Underage Gambling .....	12
Parental Gambling Behaviour .....	13
Parental Attitudes Toward Gambling and Underage Gambling .....	14
Parental Attitudes Toward <u>Their Child</u> Participating in Gambling Activities .....	16
What Amount of Money Concerns Parents? .....	17
Parents' Participation in Gambling Activities for Money With Their Children .....	18
Lottery Tickets as Gifts .....	19
Child's Participation in Gambling Activities .....	20
Information for Parents About Youth and Gambling Prevention/Problem Identification .....	22
Parental Knowledge of the Legal Gambling Age .....	24
Resources for Gambling Help .....	26
Summary of Key Findings .....	27

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Serious Youth Issues

Figure 2: Percentage of Teens With a Computer With Internet Access in Their Bedroom

Figures 3 & 4: Comparison of Mothers & Fathers' Attitudes Toward "Serious" Youth Issues

Figure 5: Youth Issues Impacting Parent's Children

Figure 6: Steps Parents Take to Monitor Child's Online Activities

Figure 7: Frequency of Conversations Parents Have With Their Child About Youth Issues

Figure 8: Frequency of Conversations Parents Have With Their Child About Youth Issues

Figure 9: Barriers Parents Feel Limit Their Child From Discussing Youth Issues

Figure 10: Situations/Instances That Would Prompt a Conversation

Figure 11: Gambling Activities Personally Participated in With Money in the Past Year

Figures 12 & 13: Parents' Attitudes Toward Gambling & Teen Gambling

Figure 14: Parents Disagree That Gambling has "Benefits"

Figure 15: Parents Believe Experimentation in Teenage Years Leads to Serious Problems

Figure 16: Level of Concern for Child's Participation in Poker Play (for money versus for free)

Figure 17: Concern Associated With Child Gambling for Money

Figure 18: Gambling Activities Parents Participate in With Their Child for Money

Figure 19: Frequency of Participation in Gambling Activities for Money With Child

Figure 20: Age of Child When Parent First Gave Lottery Ticket

Figure 21: Number of Times Child has Received Lottery (or other) Gambling Tickets as a Gift

Figure 22: Gambling Activities Parents Believe Their Child has Participated in for Money

Figure 23: Level of Concern for Child's Involvement in Specific Gambling Activities for Money

Figure 24: Preferred Channels/Type of Informational Material About Teen Gambling Issues

Figure 25: Types of Educational Materials Children Have Brought Home from School

Figure 26: Parents Rate the Quality of Information Available About Youth Issues

Figure 27: Parents Allocate Responsibility for Preventing Teen Gambling

Figure 28: Parents who Know the Correct Legal Gambling Age in Their Province

Figure 29: Parents' Preferred Legal Ages for Gambling by Type

Figure 30: Resources Parents Hypothetically Would Seek for Help

## INTRODUCTION TO THE NATIONAL PARENTS AS PARTNERS STUDY

DECODE, in collaboration with Dr. Jeffrey Derevensky (McGill University), initiated the Canadian “Parents as Partners” study to enhance our knowledge and understanding of parental awareness and attitudes toward youth gambling. The study was also designed to generate fact-based direction for the development of communications, support materials, services and programs that will effectively engage parents as partners in youth-centered responsible gambling awareness and problem gambling prevention. Provincial prevalence studies indicate that underage youth engage in gambling, both regulated and unregulated (i.e., informal games and wagering amongst peers). As well, there is research that consistently suggests underage excessive youth gambling is highly problematic and concomitant with a host of negative interpersonal, financial, academic, legal and mental health problems.

There were six funding partners in the study:

- Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission
- British Columbia Lottery Corporation
- Nova Scotia Gaming Corporation
- Saskatchewan Health
- Fondation Mise sur toi
- Ontario Problem Gambling Research Centre

Project Phases:

- Phase One – Interim National Quantitative Summary Report
- Phase Two – Province-Specific Qualitative Research
- Phase Three – Final Report (including national quantitative, provincial quantitative and provincial qualitative findings)

This report includes national quantitative findings as well as findings from the qualitative research phase, and is designed to serve as a resource for various stakeholders and practitioners involved in youth-related prevention initiatives and programs. This study is not intended to identify the underlying causes or incidence of problem gambling amongst youth or adults in Canada.

## Study Methodology

In August of 2008, DECODE, in collaboration with Dr. Derevensky and his research team, executed an online quantitative study with 2,710 Canadian parents. The respondent sample was drawn from an online panel of 400,000 Canadians sourced from Sympatico.MSN.ca, and the survey instrument was programmed and hosted by *Research Now*. The estimated margin of error for this study is calculated at 3%, 19 times out of 20 (95% confidence level).

An oversample of respondents was included for each of the study partners to provide a basis for further custom analyses that explore parental attitudes and behaviours as they relate to gambling prevention.

All parents were screened prior to their participation in order to ensure an equal representation and distribution of parents with children of varying ages and an equal

ratio of sons and daughters. In order to participate, parents were required to have at least one child living at home between the ages of 13 and 18. Of parents surveyed, most (75%) have just one or two children living at home: 29% have one, 45% have two, 17% have three and 6% have four or more. Parents were instructed to refer to one specific child of a designated age when answering the questions in the online survey. This resulted in the following age distribution: 13 years old (17%), 14 years old (18%), 15 years old (18%), 16 years old (18%), 17 years old (17%) and 18 years old (12%).

(Please note: the minimum legal age to gamble on regulated forms of gambling varies between jurisdictions. In Alberta and Quebec it is 18 while in other provinces it is 19. Accordingly, to participate in the study, parents surveyed from Alberta and Quebec were required to have a child living at home between the ages of 13 and 17 while in the other provinces the child was between the ages of 13 and 18.)

The data was weighted to reflect, as closely as possible, the Canadian population distribution by region as outlined by Statistics Canada.

### Age of Parents

The majority of parent respondents in the study are between the ages of 35 and 54 years old (86%), 4% of parents are within the 25 to 34 age range, 8% within the 55 to 64 age range and 1% are 65 or older.

### Canadian Status

Of the entire sample, 69% are two-parent families (both of which were born in Canada), 14% are second-generation Canadians and 18% are first-generation Canadians.

### Employment Status

Sixty-five percent of parents surveyed reported having full-time employment (80% of fathers and 50% of mothers). The results suggest that 23% of mothers surveyed are “stay at home parents” versus 2% of fathers.

### Education Level

Based on their highest level of education completed, 6% did not complete high school, 25% completed high school, 15% earned a trade school degree or certificate, 35% completed some College/CEGEP or University courses, 14% attained an undergraduate degree and 5% attained a post-graduate degree (Masters, Ph.D., or other professional designation).

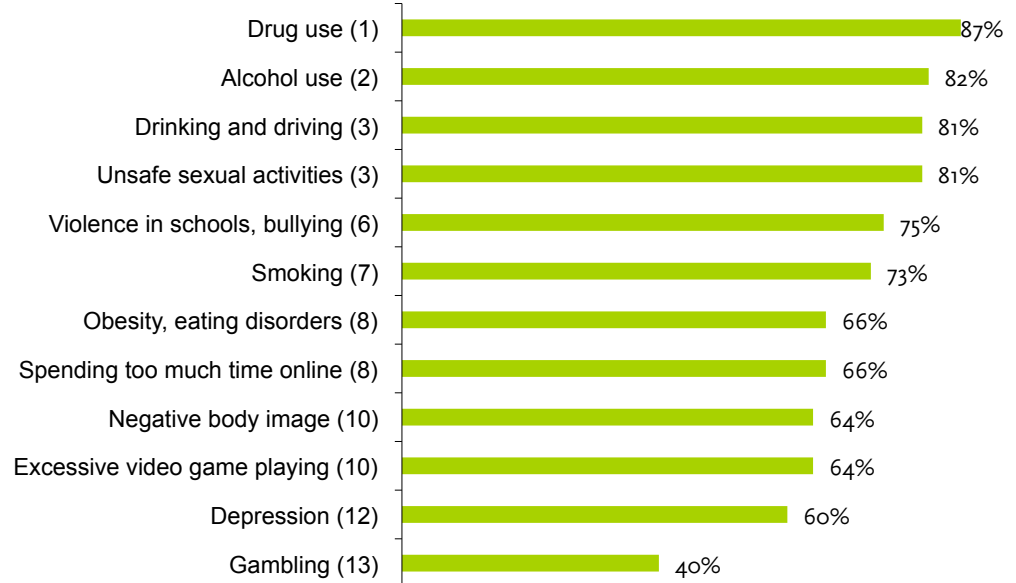
## PARENTAL PERCEPTIONS OF YOUTH ISSUES

Parents have numerous concerns about the safety and well-being of their children. The challenge for parents is to manage these concerns while identifying reoccurring and relevant youth issues. While prioritizing youth issues is inherently complex, parents and society as a whole tend to fund and support prevention initiatives associated with public

health issues. As a result, some youth issues that are not considered as pressing effectively become invisible, and education and prevention efforts suffer accordingly.

Similar to youth attitudes in previous DECODE gambling research, parents also do not perceive underage gambling as serious as various other youth issues such as drug and alcohol use, drinking and driving and unsafe sexual activities (See Figure 1 for a complete list of risky adolescent behaviors).

**FIGURE 1: SERIOUS YOUTH ISSUES**

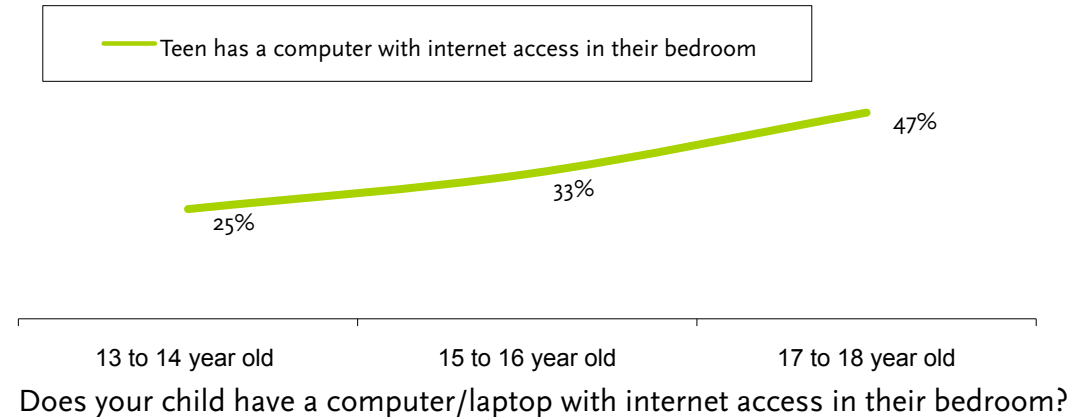


In your opinion, how **serious** of an issue are the following for teens today? Note, figures represent top two box responses: “serious” and “very serious.”

Of the 13 youth behaviors in Figure 1, parents ranked gambling as the least serious youth issue. With over a dozen high profile youth issues posing potential harm to their child, parents are likely not aware and/or may not be allocating time to properly educate themselves and their children about youth gambling problems.

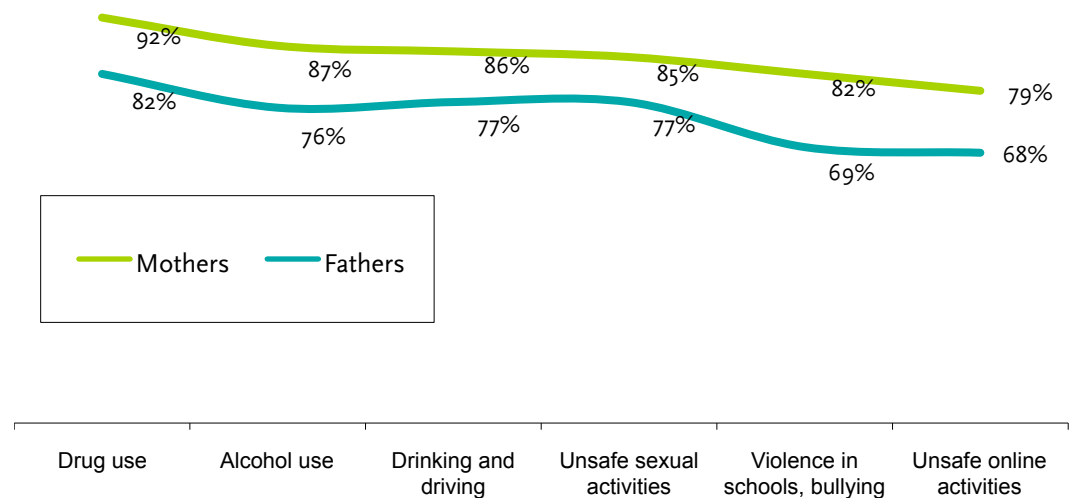
Parents ranked spending too much time online as equally concerning with obesity and eating disorders. This may be explained by the fact that 34% of parents reported their teen has a desktop computer or laptop in their bedroom with Internet access. The proportion of parents who report having a teen with a computer with internet access in their bedroom increases proportionally with the child’s age.

**FIGURE 2: PERCENTAGE OF TEENS WITH A COMPUTER WITH INTERNET ACCESS IN THEIR BEDROOM**



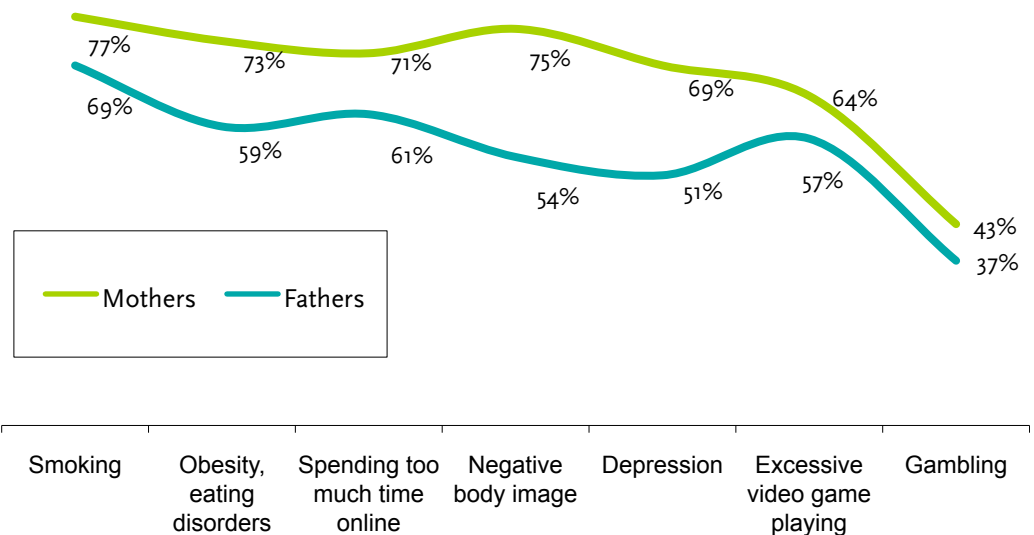
A gender split in the perceived severity of risk emerged in reference to the list of 13 youth issues. For every issue, mothers perceived the severity to be significantly higher than fathers. This difference in perspective between mothers and fathers is consistent throughout the study and may have significant implications for preventative gambling messaging aimed at parents (Figures 3 and 4).

**FIGURE 3: COMPARISON OF MOTHERS' & FATHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD "SERIOUS" YOUTH ISSUES**



In your opinion, how serious of an issue are the following for teens today? Note, figures represent top two box responses: "serious" and "very serious."

**FIGURE 4: COMPARISON OF MOTHERS & FATHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD "SERIOUS" YOUTH ISSUES**

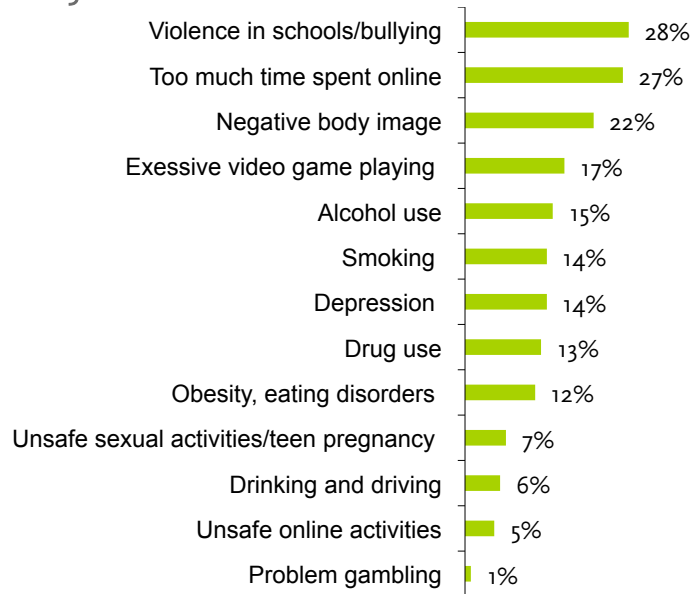


In your opinion, how **serious** of an issue are the following for teens today? Note, figures represent top two box responses: "serious" and "very serious."

### PRIMARY YOUTH ISSUES

According to the parents surveyed, violence in schools is the most common issue that has affected their children. Approximately one-third of parents believe violence in schools/bullying has negatively affected their child. The second most common issue parents report selected is the amount of time they spend online (27%). Only 1% of parents reported that problem gambling has been an issue for their child (Figure 5).

**FIGURE 5: YOUTH ISSUES IMPACTING PARENT'S CHILDREN**



To your knowledge, which of the following have personally impacted your child?



Approximately one-third of parents (32%) reported that their child had not had negative experiences with any of the listed youth issues. Parents with daughters are significantly more likely to indicate their child has not been affected by one or more of the aforementioned 13 youth issues (37% versus 28%). Further research would be necessary to identify whether this response is based on biased perceptions parents may have about their daughter's life, or whether teenage girls are in fact less likely to have experienced problems related to these issues. Perhaps parents have greater trust in girls given that they are less prone to engage in risky behaviors.

### YOUTH ACCESS TO FUNDS

The amount of money youth are given by their parents can be used to gauge the number of youth who have discretionary funds which could be used to gamble. Findings revealed that approximately four out of 10 parents give their child an allowance (39%) which is likely to be used without considerable guidance, supervision or oversight. Younger children (aged 13-14) are significantly more likely than older children (aged 15-18) to receive an allowance. While 52% of parents with children aged 13-14 report providing their child with an allowance, only 22% of parents of older children, ages 17 and 18 do so.

Amongst those parents who provide their child with an allowance, the average amount of money given to youth above the age of 12 is \$21 per week. The average amount of money increases in a linear manner with age. On average, parents with children aged 13-14 give a weekly allowance of \$17 versus parents with children aged 17-18 who give their child \$27 per week.

The majority of parents (67%) report their child has access to a personal debit card, with daughters more likely than sons to have such a card (70% versus 64%). Adolescent females also appear to receive personal debit cards earlier than males: 52% of parents with daughters aged 13-14 report their child has a debit card in comparison with 42% of parents with a son aged 13-14. This difference is maintained across all ages.

Few parents, however, allow their child to have access to a family credit card (4%) or personal credit card (5%).

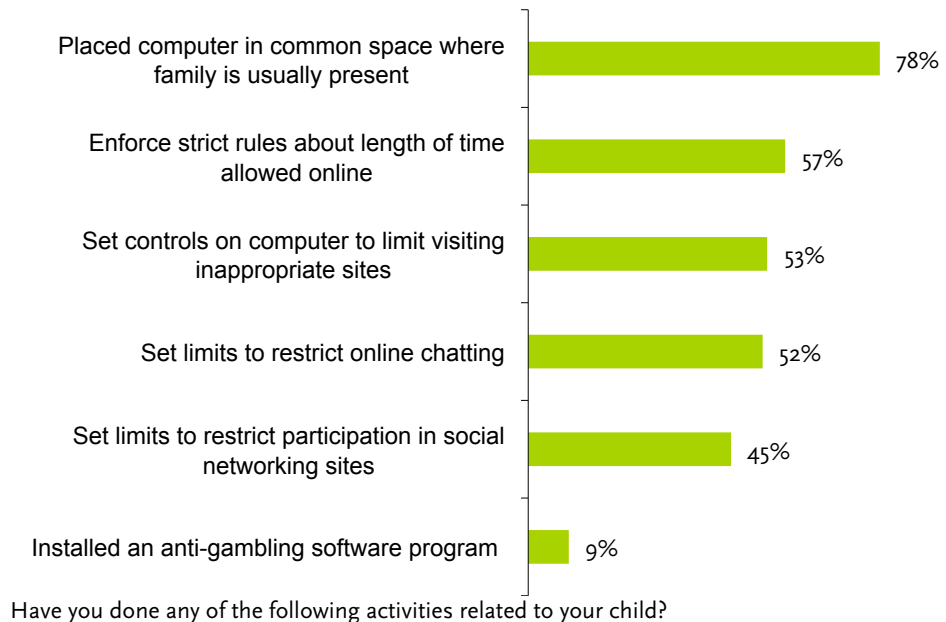
### PARENTAL MONITORING OF THEIR TEEN'S ONLINE BEHAVIOUR

Since more than one-third of parents report there is a computer in their child's bedroom with internet access, monitoring online behaviour is relevant, especially given the ease of access and growth of the internet gambling market.

Overall, 72% of parents indicate they usually monitor their child's online activities. Mothers are significantly more likely to report monitoring their child's online activities (76% of mothers versus 68% of fathers). Both gender and age of child influence parental behaviors. Parents with daughters are significantly more likely to monitor their child's online activities as are parents with younger children: aged 13-14 (86%), aged 15-16 (78%), aged 17 (56%) and aged 18 years (35%).

While many parents indicate they usually monitor their child's online activities, a significant portion of those parents do not set controls on their computer (Figure 6). Approximately half of parents report actively monitoring and setting security controls on the computer to limit their child from visiting inappropriate sites. However, only 9% of parents reported installing anti-gambling software on their child's computer. Parents of younger teens (aged 13-14) are significantly more likely to have taken active steps to monitor or restrict their child's online activities. This may be related to issues concerning Facebook, MSN chat rooms or video-gaming, as opposed to internet wagering.

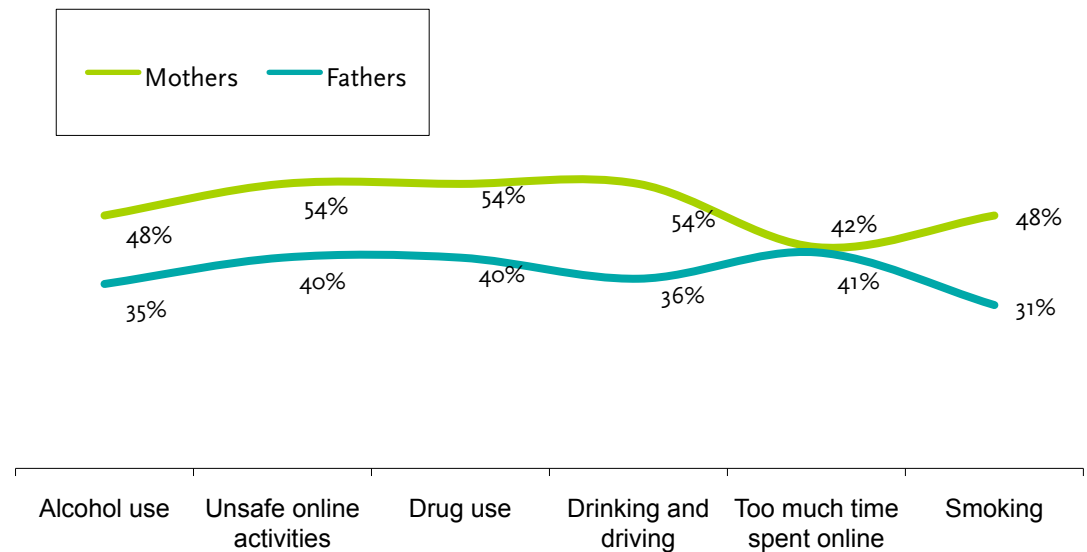
**FIGURE 6: STEPS PARENTS TAKE TO MONITOR CHILD'S ONLINE ACTIVITIES**



### DISCUSSING YOUTH ISSUES

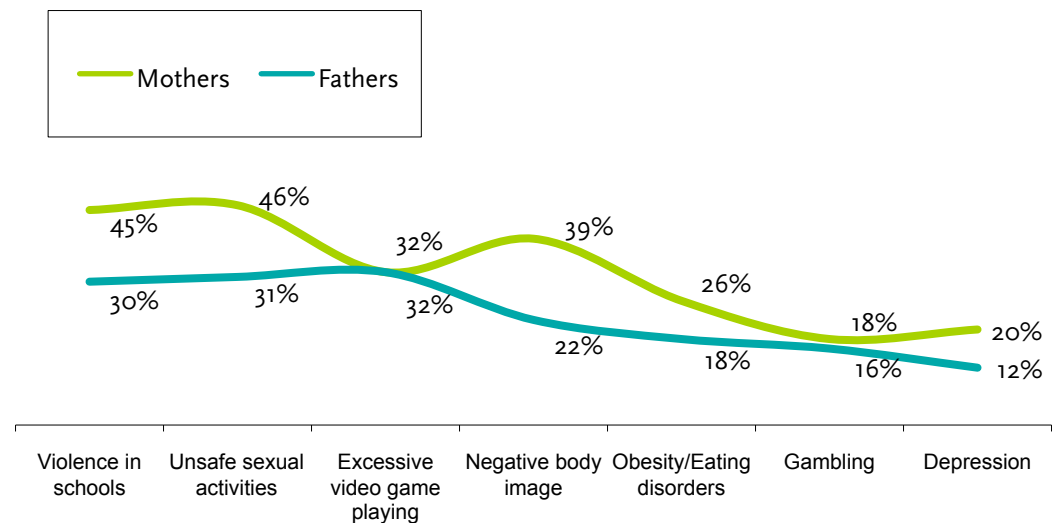
Figures 7 and 8 depict the percentage of parents who report discussing various youth issues with their child either "often" or "regularly." In almost every instance, mothers are significantly more likely to report having these discussions. Youth issues discussed most frequently include: alcohol use, unsafe online activities, illicit drug use/drug abuse and driving under the influence of alcohol.

**FIGURE 7: FREQUENCY OF CONVERSATIONS PARENTS HAVE WITH THEIR CHILD ABOUT YOUTH ISSUES**



How frequently do you have conversations with your child about . . . ? Note, figures represent top two box responses: “often” and “regularly.”

**FIGURE 8: FREQUENCY OF CONVERSATIONS PARENTS HAVE WITH THEIR CHILD ABOUT YOUTH ISSUES**

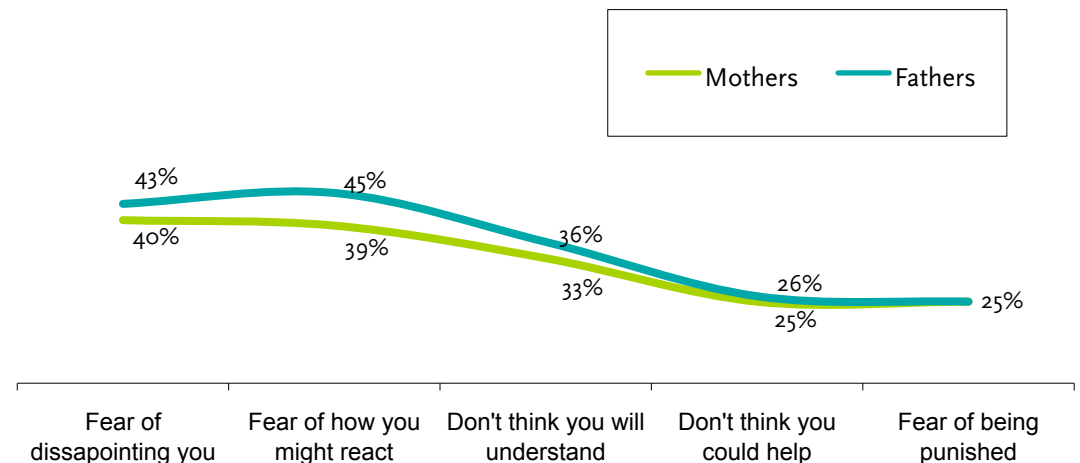


How frequently do you have conversations with your child about . . . ? Note, figures represent top two box responses: “often” and “regularly.”

Consistent with ranking underage gambling as a less serious youth issue, the majority (66%) of parents report they “rarely” or “never” have conversations with their child about gambling.

As Figure 9 suggests, parents believe barriers that may limit their child from discussing these issues are fear of disappointing them (42%) or fear of how their parent might react (42%). Parents do not perceive their child's fear of punishment to be a significant barrier. Overall, there is little discrepancy between mothers and fathers' opinions about the barriers in discussing teen issues. The exception being that fathers are significantly more likely to believe their child may fear their reaction.

**FIGURE 9: BARRIERS PARENTS FEEL LIMIT THEIR CHILD FROM DISCUSSING YOUTH ISSUES**



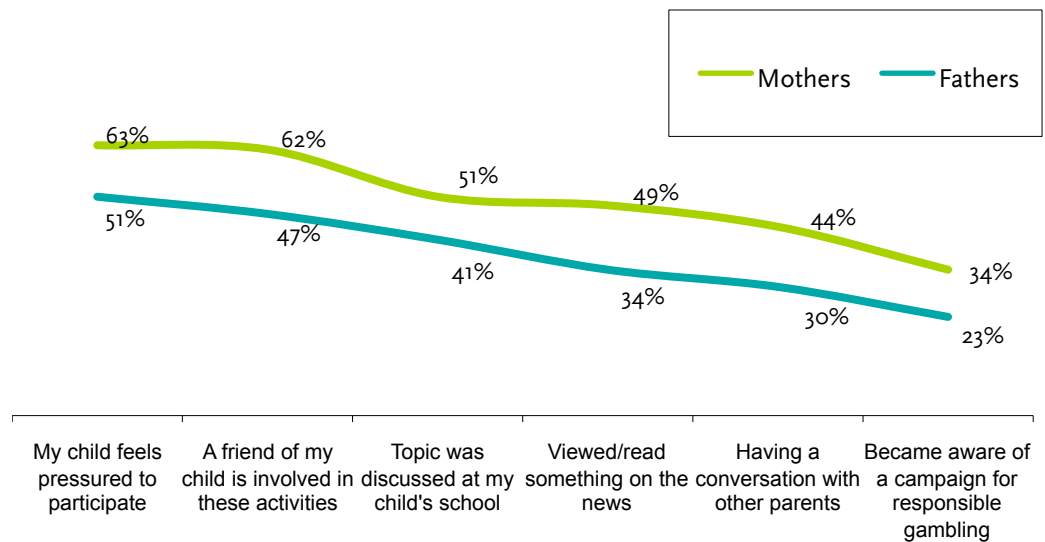
How much do you agree or disagree that the following limit your child from having discussions with you about serious teen issues? Note, figures represents top two box responses "agree" and "strongly agree."

### CONVERSATIONS ABOUT UNDERAGE GAMBLING

The findings reveal that 67% of parents believe their child would be receptive to discussions about gambling and excessive gambling. Yet, as noted earlier, 66% of parents report they "rarely" or "never" discuss gambling-related issues with their child, reflecting its low priority (21%).

Parents report that they would initiate a conversation about underage gambling if (1) their child was feeling pressured to participate in these activities, and/or (2) they realized that their child's friend/peer was involved in gambling (Figure 10). Merely being aware of a responsible gambling campaign would not be sufficient to have a conversation with their child about gambling.

**FIGURE 10: SITUATIONS/INSTANCES THAT WOULD PROMPT A CONVERSATION**



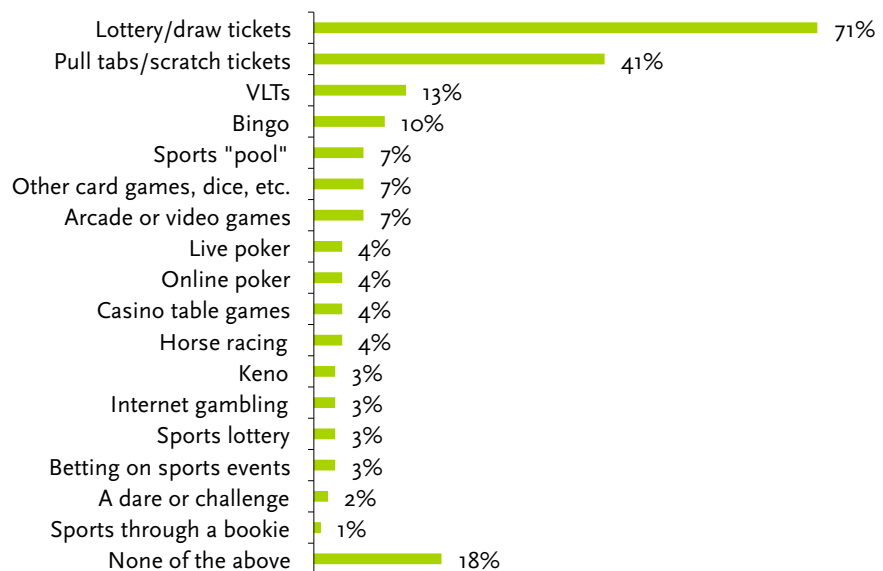
How likely are any of the following to prompt you to initiate a conversation with your child about underage gambling? Note, figures represent top two box responses: "likely" and "very likely."

In each scenario, mothers are significantly more likely to initiate a discussion with their child about gambling, as they still appear to be the primary child-rearer.

#### PARENTAL GAMBLING BEHAVIOUR

Amongst participating parents, 82% report engaging in some form of gambling during the past 12 months (See Figure 11). Overwhelmingly, lottery/draw tickets were the most common gambling activity, and this finding is similar to many other studies examining adult gambling behavior in Canada and the U.S.

**FIGURE 11: GAMBLING ACTIVITIES PERSONALLY PARTICIPATED IN WITH MONEY IN THE PAST YEAR**

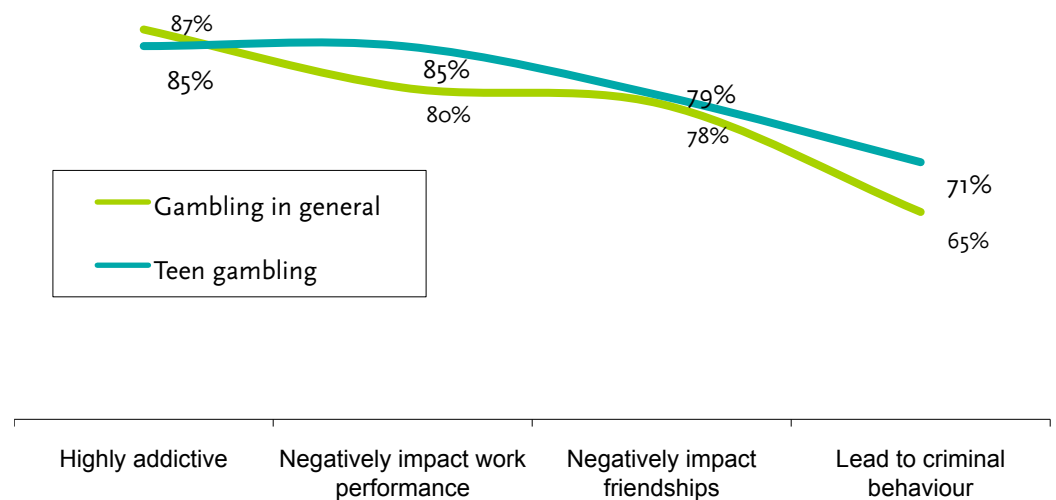


## PARENTAL ATTITUDES TOWARD GAMBLING AND UNDERAGE GAMBLING

While parents may rank gambling as less serious when compared to other youth issues, they recognize potential negative consequences and problems associated with gambling and excessive gambling. This might explain why approximately half of parents (46%) feel that lottery and scratch tickets in convenience stores should be kept out of sight from underage minors.

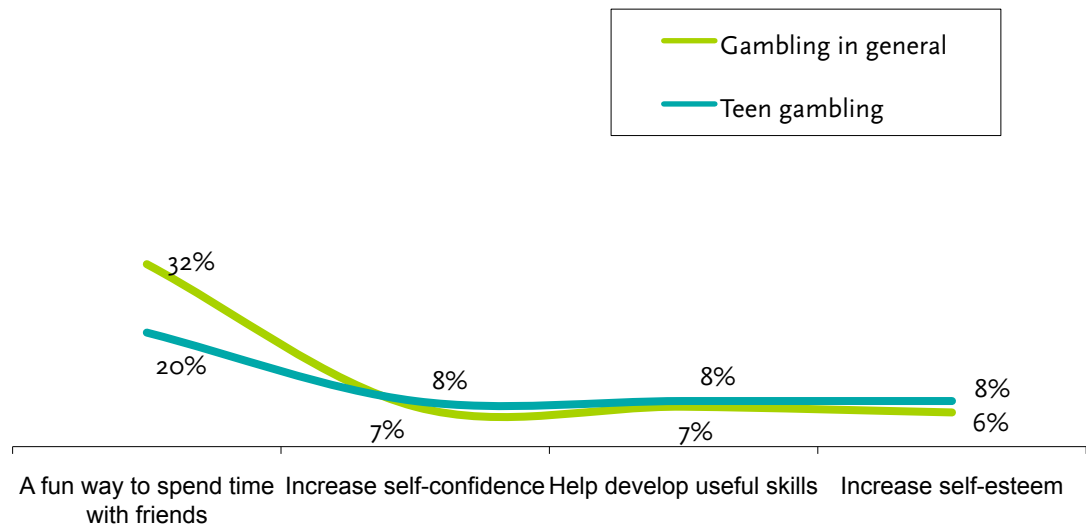
The majority of parents strongly believe that gambling can become highly addictive and has the potential to interfere with work and school performance along with peer relationships. Many parents also believe that gambling can lead to criminal behavior. Parental opinions about gambling in general and teen gambling are, in fact, quite similar (Figures 12 & 13).

FIGURE 12: PARENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD GAMBLING & TEEN GAMBLING



Please indicate your agreement with the following statements (strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, strongly agree): Gambling can . . . Note, figures represent top two box answers: "agree" and "strongly agree."

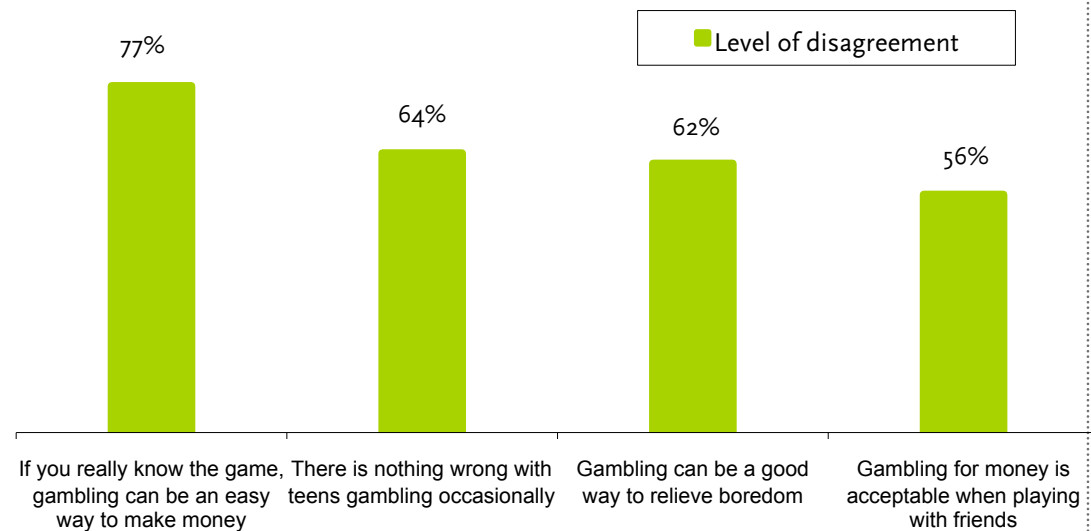
FIGURE 13: PARENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD GAMBLING &amp; TEEN GAMBLING



Please indicate your agreement with the following statements (strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, strongly agree): Gambling can . . . Note, figures represent top two box answers: "agree" and "strongly agree."

Parents are clearly aware of the negative aspects of gambling and readily understand that these are games of chance and are not an easy way to make money. Thus, 64% of parents suggest this is not an appropriate activity for their teen.

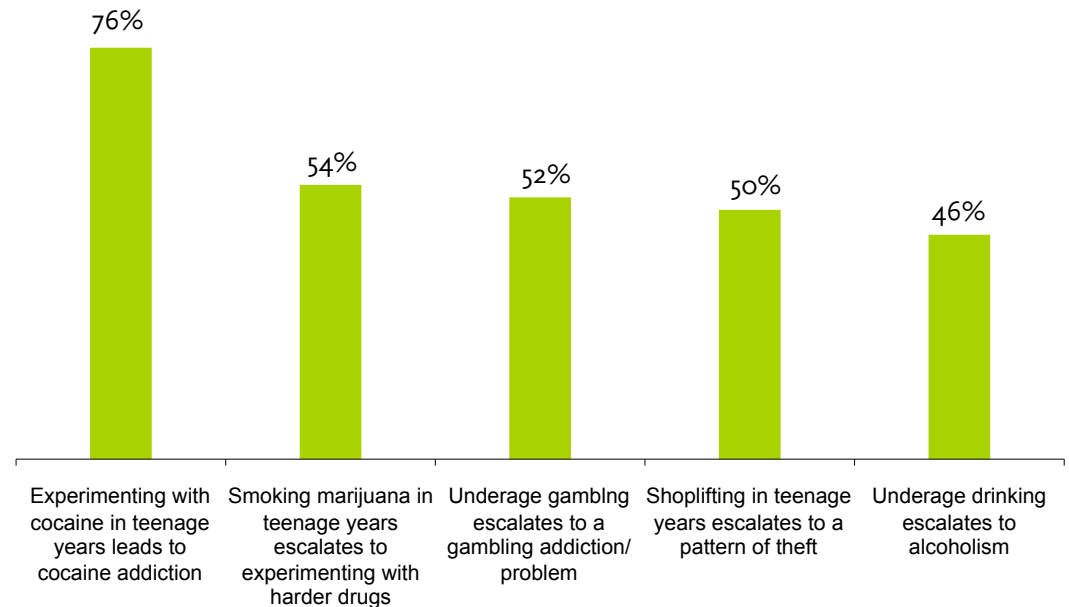
FIGURE 14: PARENTS DISAGREE THAT GAMBLING HAS "BENEFITS"



Please indicate your agreement with the following statements (strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, strongly agree). Note, figures represent bottom two box answers: "disagree" and "strongly disagree."

Illustrated in Figure 15, many parents believe youth involvement in various risky and/or dangerous behaviours is likely to lead to more serious problems in the future. Fifty-two percent of parents report that underage gambling can escalate to a gambling addiction/problem. This highlights an incongruity between parental perceptions about the negative consequences of youth gambling and their commitment to discussing gambling issues with their children.

**FIGURE 15: PARENTS BELIEVE EXPERIMENTATION IN TEENAGE YEARS LEADS TO SERIOUS PROBLEMS**



In your opinion, how likely is the following to happen? Note, figures represent top two box responses: “likely” and “very likely.”

Amongst respondents, 5% report having personally experienced a gambling problem, and 33% indicate they know someone who has experienced a gambling problem.

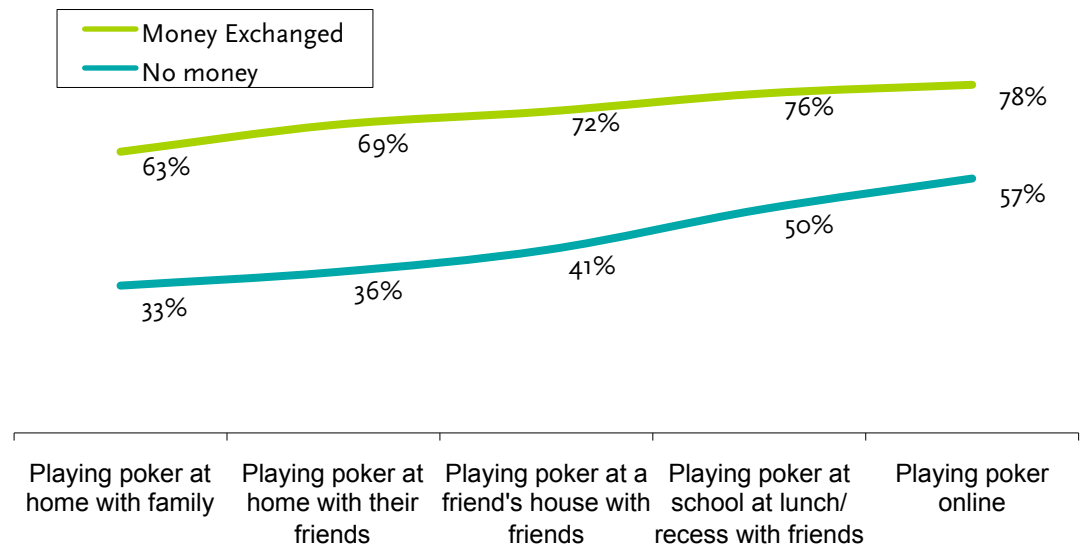
### **PARENTAL ATTITUDES TOWARD THEIR CHILD PARTICIPATING IN GAMBLING ACTIVITIES**

Findings reveal that parents become very concerned about their child’s involvement in gambling activities when money is involved. For many parents, their child’s involvement in playing poker with friends (either at school, in their home or in a friend’s home) is not viewed as problematic. In terms of online poker playing, 57% of parents noted they would be concerned/very concerned if their child was playing poker online for free, while 28% reported this would not be problematic. Once gambling for **money** enters into the mix, parental concern significantly increases (Figure 16).

Focusing solely on the question of where youth play poker suggests that parents would be most concerned if their child was playing 1) online, 2) at school, 3) at a friend’s house, followed by 4) at their home.



**FIGURE 16: LEVEL OF CONCERN FOR CHILD'S PARTICIPATION IN POKER PLAY (FOR MONEY VERSUS FOR FREE)**

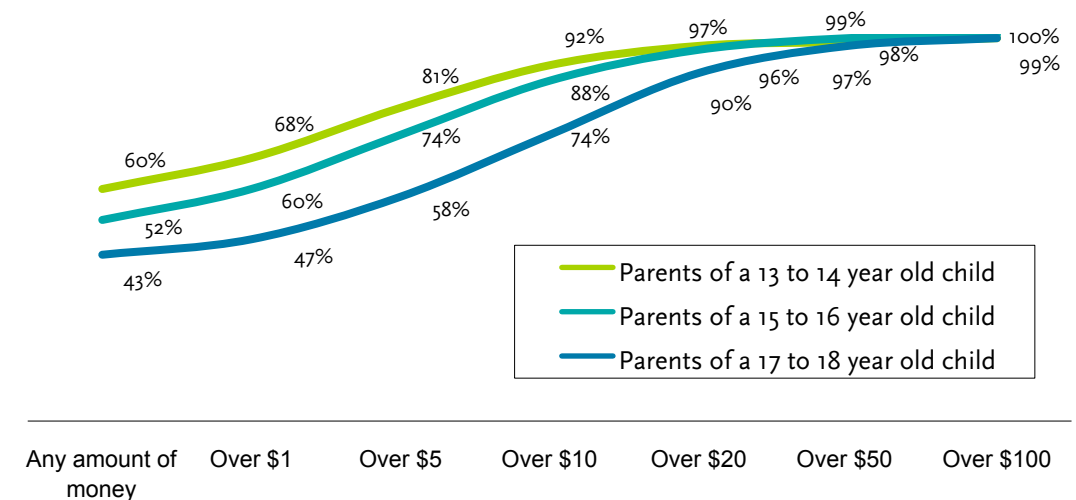


Focusing on poker play specifically, please share your level of comfort with your child taking part in the following activities FOR MONEY and FOR FREE. Note, figures represent top two box responses: "concerned" and "very concerned."

#### WHAT AMOUNT OF MONEY CONCERNS PARENTS?

Fifty-two percent of parents remain concerned if their child gambles for any amount of money. Parents of younger teenagers are significantly more likely to share this view: 60% of parents with children aged 13-14 versus 43% of parents with children aged 17-18.

**FIGURE 17: CONCERN ASSOCIATED WITH CHILD GAMBLING FOR MONEY**

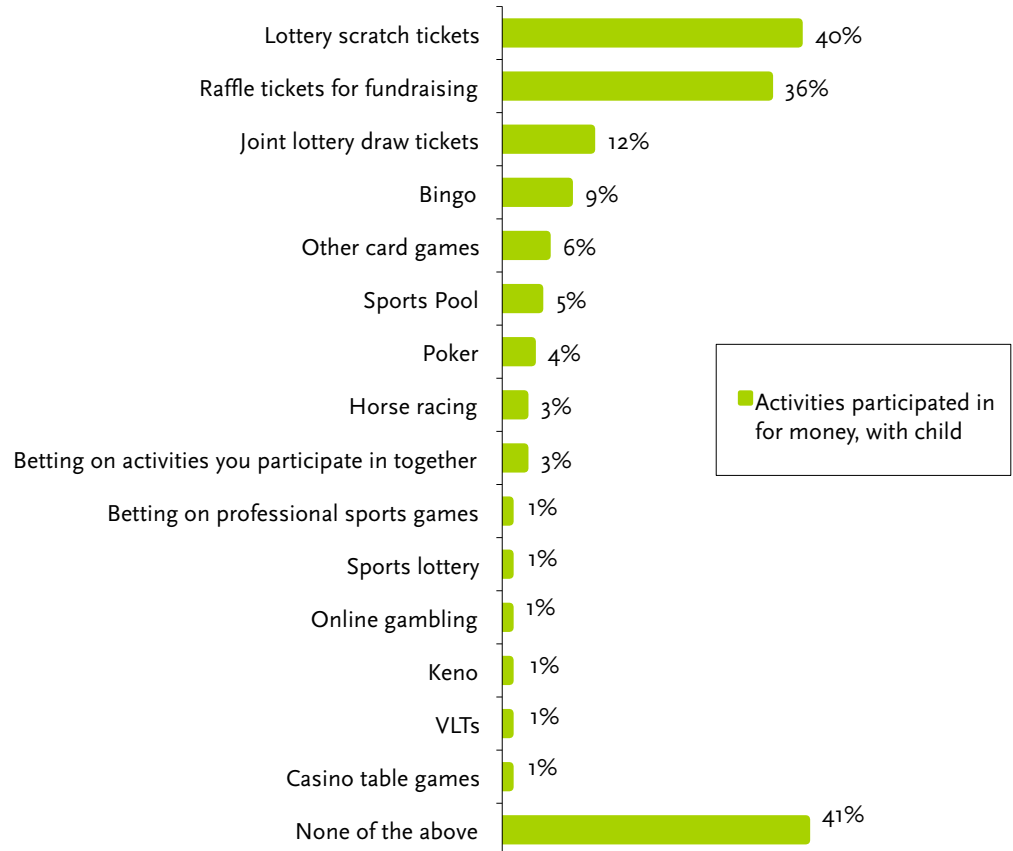


If your child did gamble with money, at what amount would it concern you? Note: figures represent cumulative percentages.

## PARENTS' PARTICIPATION IN GAMBLING ACTIVITIES FOR MONEY WITH THEIR CHILDREN

Overall, 59% of parents report participating in at least one of the following gambling activities (Figure 18) for money with their child. This finding does not vary significantly with the child's age or gender. The two most common activities parents partake in with their child are lottery scratch tickets and raffle tickets for fundraising.

**FIGURE 18: GAMBLING ACTIVITIES PARENTS PARTICIPATE IN WITH THEIR CHILD FOR MONEY**

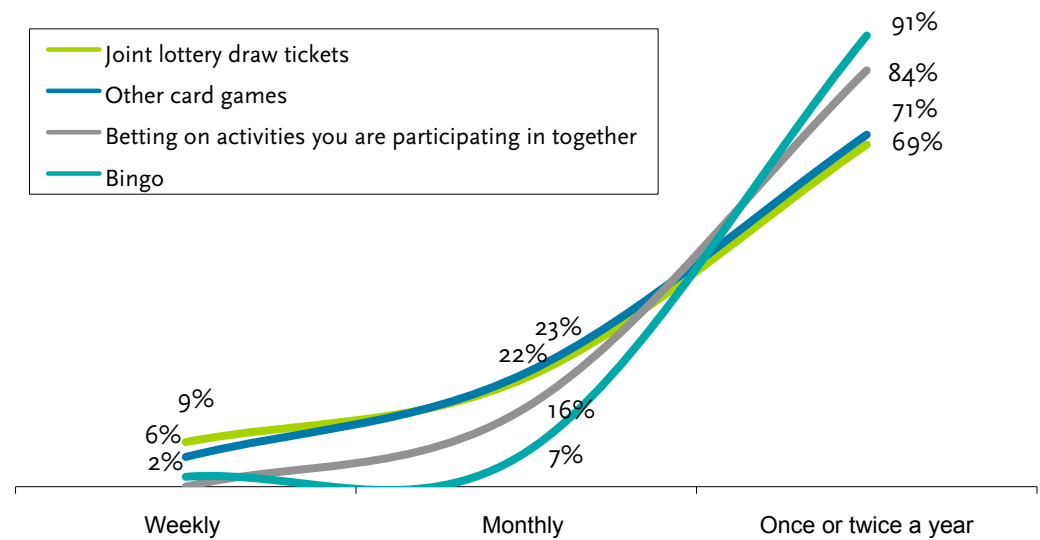


Have you ever participated in any of the following activities for money with your child?

With the exception that mothers are statistically more inclined to purchase raffle tickets for fundraising and fathers are statistically more inclined to play poker or bet on activities, the type of gambling activities parents participate in with their child are relatively similar.

For the majority of activities listed, parents report that participation in the activity happens once or twice a year. However, in the case of gambling on joint lottery tickets, card games other than poker, betting on activities participating in together and bingo, a significant number of parents noted that the activity occurs monthly or even weekly.

**FIGURE 19: FREQUENCY OF PARTICIPATION IN GAMBLING ACTIVITIES FOR MONEY WITH CHILD**

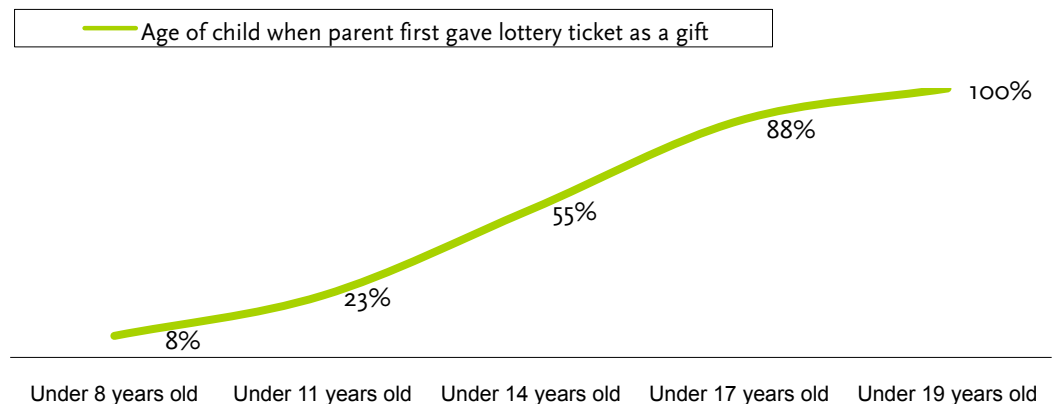


How often have you participated in this activity with your child? Note: figures represent cumulative percentages.

### LOTTERY TICKETS AS GIFTS

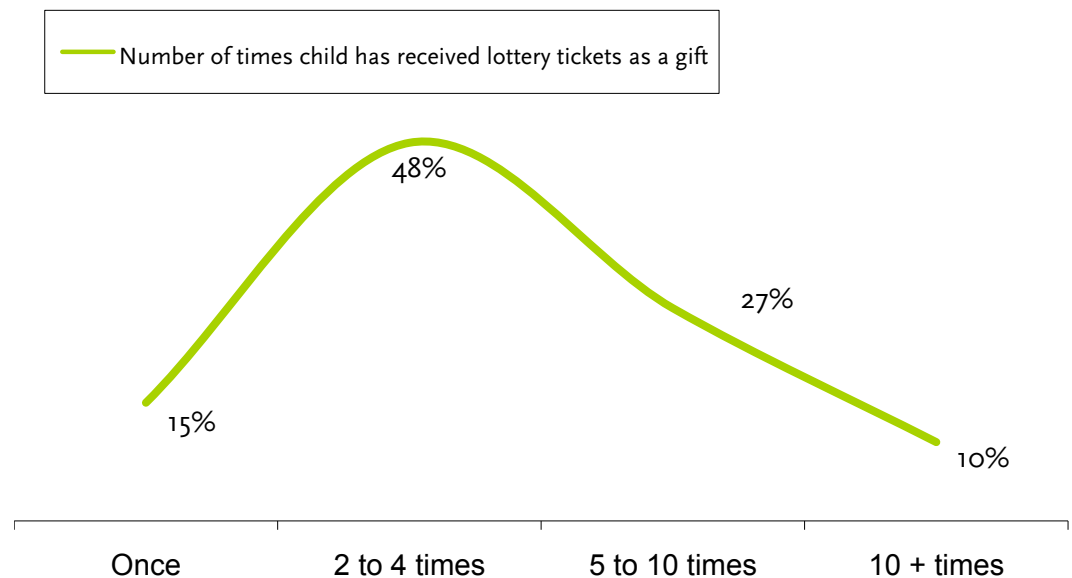
Twenty-four percent of parents say their child has received a lottery ticket, scratch ticket or sports lottery ticket as a holiday, birthday, or other gift from a family relative or friend. A similar number of parents (21%), report giving their child one of these types of lottery tickets as a gift. Mothers are as likely to give lottery tickets as gifts to their daughters or sons, while fathers are more likely to give lottery tickets to their sons. The likelihood that parents give their children these types of lottery tickets as a gift increases with the child's age: 13 to 14 years old (16%), 15 to 16 years old (21%), 17 to 18 years old (28%). As outlined in Figure 20, 55% of parents who report giving their child a lottery ticket say they first did so when their child was age 13 or younger.

**FIGURE 20: AGE OF CHILD WHEN PARENT FIRST GAVE LOTTERY TICKET**



Approximately what age was your child when you first gave them this as a gift? (Sample: amongst parents who report giving their child a lottery ticket as a gift.) Note: figures represent cumulative percentages. As illustrated in Figure 21, within the sample of parents who have given their child a lottery ticket as a gift, 27% report their child has received this type of gift between five to 10 times and 10% indicate this number exceeds 10.

**FIGURE 21: NUMBER OF TIMES CHILD HAS RECEIVED LOTTERY (OR OTHER) GAMBLING TICKETS AS A GIFT**



Approximately how many times has your child received a lottery ticket, scratch ticket or sports as a holiday, birthday, or other gift?

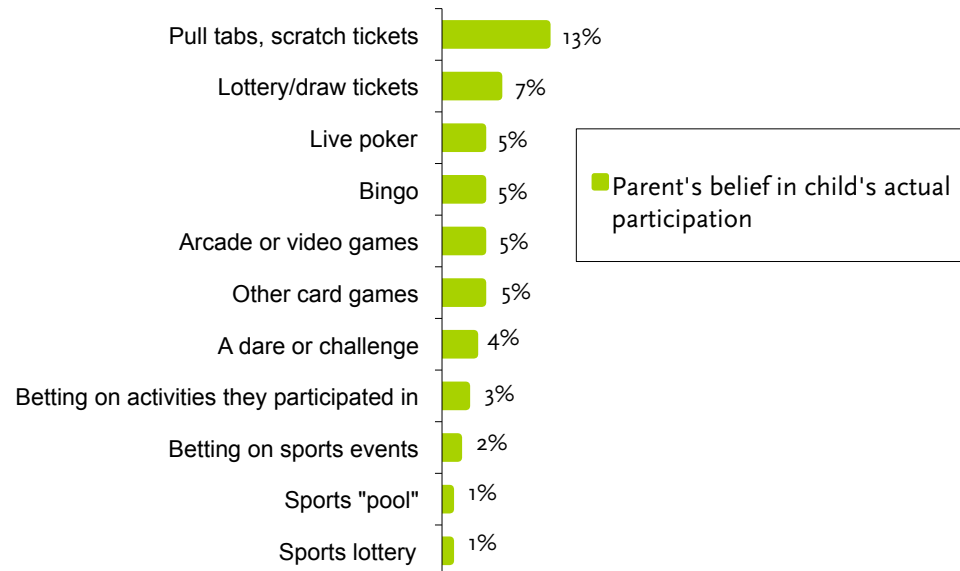
### CHILD'S PARTICIPATION IN GAMBLING ACTIVITIES

When asked specifically about their child's participation in gambling activities, 13% of parents indicated their child had taken part in a gambling activity for money. Recent youth research reveals the number of underage youth who report participating in these activities is four to six times higher, illustrating the gap in parents' awareness. Mothers and fathers share similar beliefs on this topic, the main variance in responses emerge in relation to the child's gender. While 18% of parents with a son believe their child has participated in a gambling activity only 7% of parents with a daughter endorse this belief.

Of parents who believe their child has gambled for money, 60% report their child readily admitted doing so, 29% report being present at the time, 19% indicate they are not certain but think their child may have taken part in a gambling activity, and 5% report someone else informed them of their child's participation. Parents of younger teens (13-14) are significantly more likely to report being present when their child was gambling (43%). Parents of 17-18 year olds are significantly more likely to report their child informed them about their participation in gambling (70%). Mothers are significantly more likely to have become aware of their child's participation in gambling because

their child told them directly (74% of mothers versus 49% of fathers). Figure 22 illustrates parents' belief in their child's involvement in specific gambling (for money) activities.

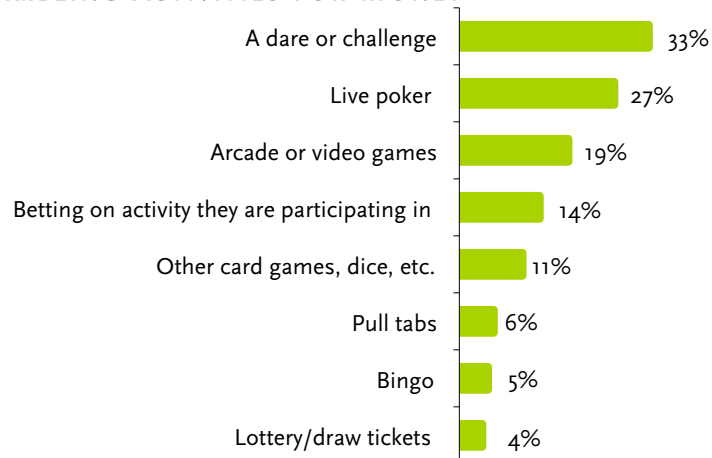
**FIGURE 22: GAMBLING ACTIVITIES PARENTS BELIEVE THEIR CHILD HAS PARTICIPATED IN FOR MONEY**



What types of gambling activities do you believe your child has participated in where there was an exchange of money? Select all that apply.

Amongst parents who believe their child participates in one of the above gambling activities for money, those who believe their child participates in a dare or challenge, live poker, and arcade or video games report the most concern about their child's involvement in this particular activity. The level of concern parents report is evident in Figure 23.

**FIGURE 23: LEVEL OF CONCERN FOR CHILD'S INVOLVEMENT IN SPECIFIC GAMBLING ACTIVITIES FOR MONEY**

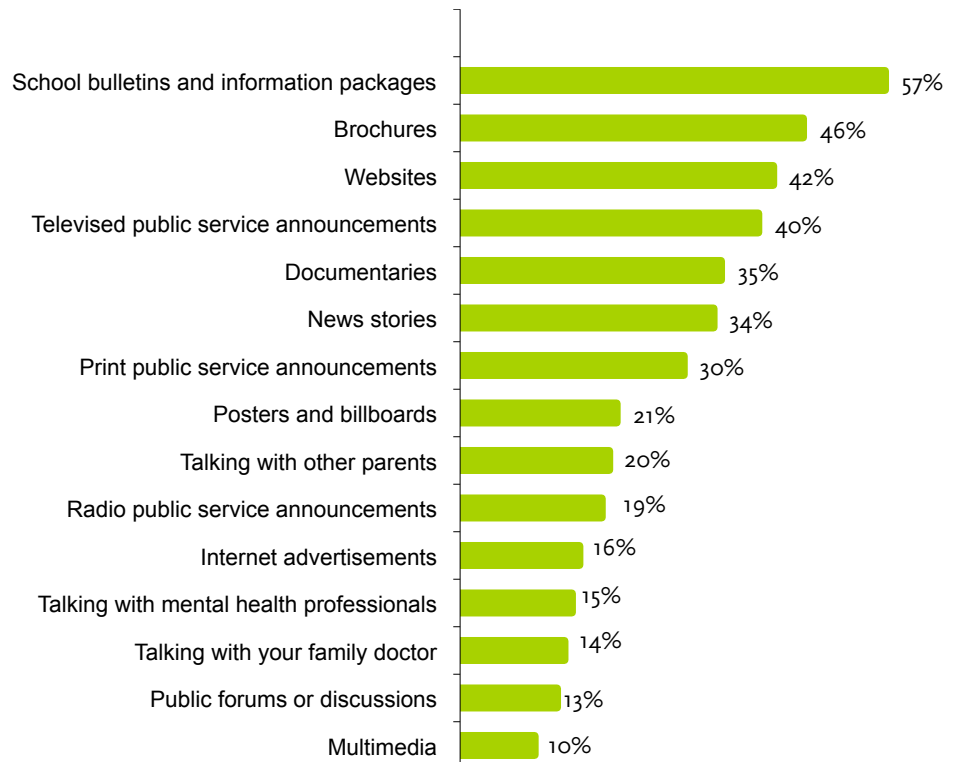


How concerned are you about their participation in this activity? Note, figures represent top two box responses: "concerned" and "very concerned."

## INFORMATION FOR PARENTS ABOUT YOUTH AND GAMBLING PREVENTION/PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

Findings reveal that parents would prefer to receive information about teen gambling issues from their child's school.

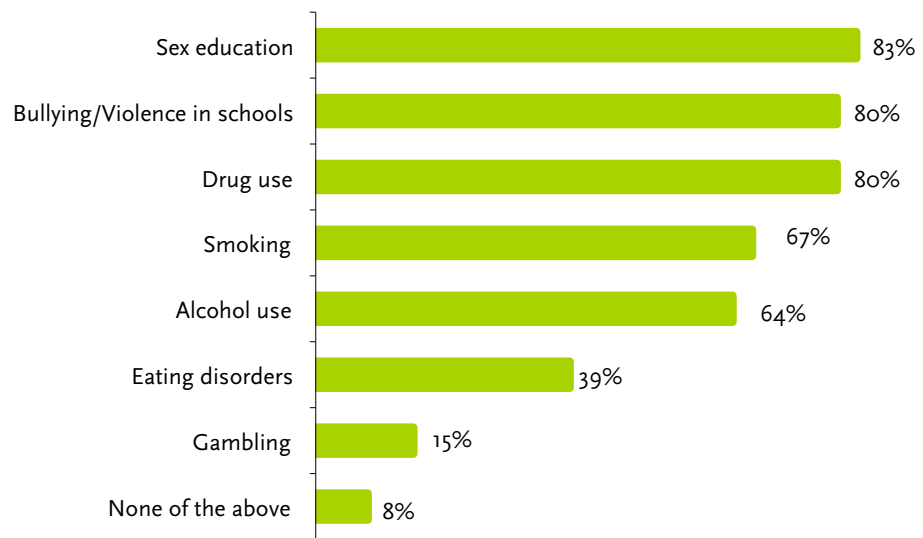
**FIGURE 24: PREFERRED CHANNELS/TYPE OF INFORMATIONAL MATERIAL ABOUT TEEN GAMBLING ISSUES**



How would you most prefer to receive information concerning teen gambling issues? Respondents selected their top five answers.

While parents prefer to receive gambling prevention information through their child's school, their children are either not receiving this information or not bringing this information home. As shown in Figure 25, only 15% of parents reported their child has brought home information concerning the risks associated with gambling. A similar proportion, 10%, noted that their child participated in a gambling prevention and/or education program at school. While parents are receiving a variety of informative materials concerning other youth issues, it does not appear that gambling prevention and education are a priority or available in schools.

**FIGURE 25: TYPES OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS CHILDREN HAVE BROUGHT HOME FROM SCHOOL**

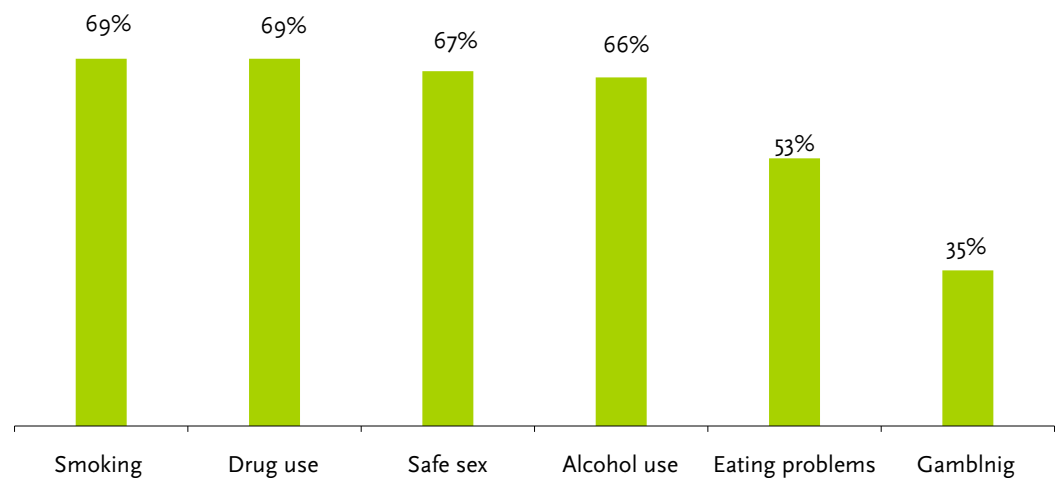


To your knowledge, has your child's school ever provided prevention programs or educational material in any of the following areas? Select all that apply.

Parental ratings of the quality of information available about teen issues were highest for issues related to smoking and illicit drug use (69%) while gambling received the lowest (35%).

**FIGURE 26: PARENTS RATE THE QUALITY OF THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE ABOUT YOUTH ISSUES**

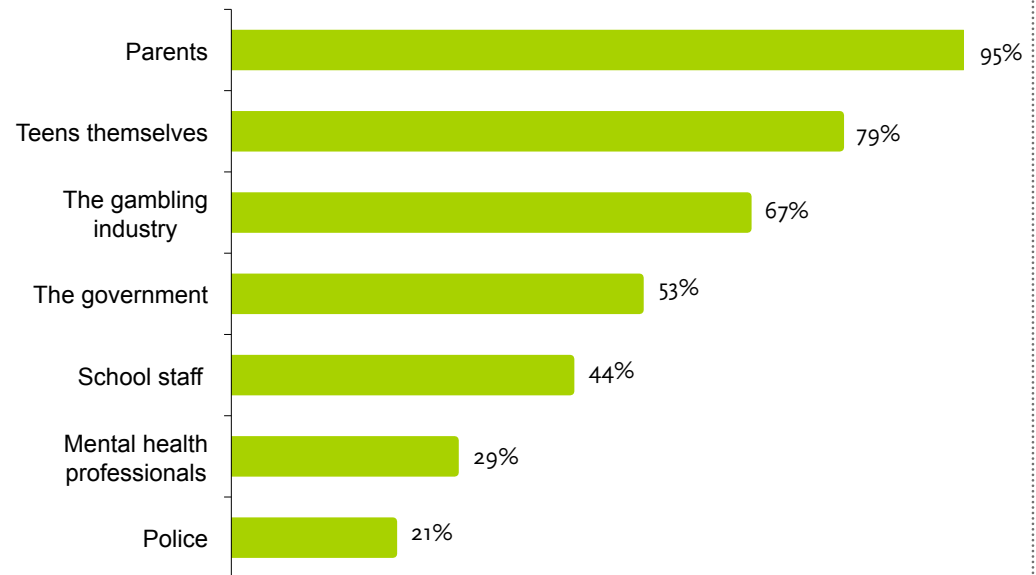
(0 – poor, 100% excellent)



How would you rate the information available for parents about the following teen issues? Note, figures represent top two box responses: "good" and "excellent."

These data suggest that parents may not be adequately informed to identify or take action to prevent youth gambling problems. Nevertheless, 75% of parents remain confident they could help their child if they became aware of a gambling problem. Given that 21% of parents do not believe it is a priority to discuss gambling issues with their teen, it is interesting that 95% of parents nevertheless believe that they are primarily responsible for preventing teen gambling. Parents contend that they, along with their child, have the primary responsibility for preventing teen gambling.

**FIGURE 27: PARENTS ALLOCATE THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR PREVENTING TEEN GAMBLING**



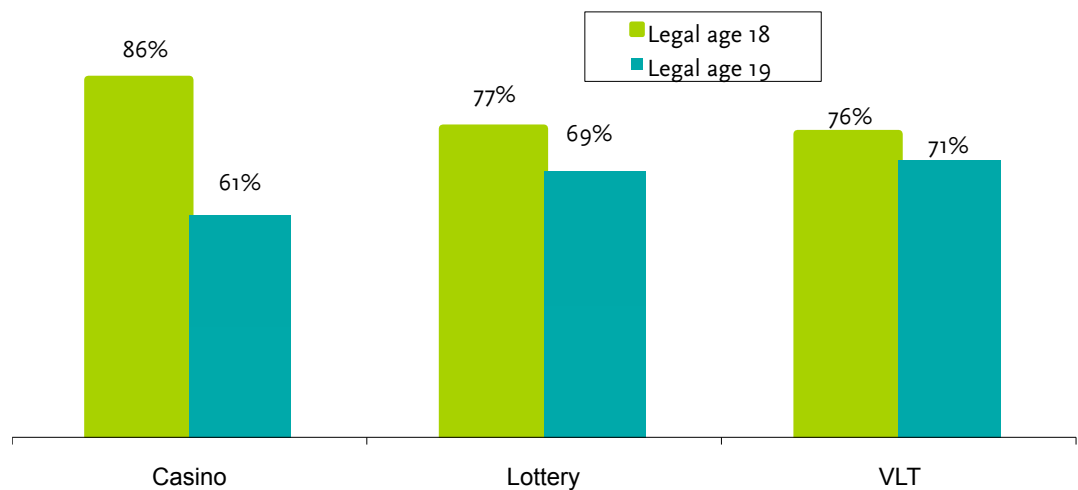
The responsibility of preventing teen gambling lies with . . .

#### PARENTAL KNOWLEDGE OF THE LEGAL GAMBLING AGE

The minimum age required in order to legally gamble varies from province to province and can also vary within provinces by activity type. When asked about lottery tickets, casino gambling and VLT play, parents appear to be fairly knowledgeable about the legal age to gamble in their respective province.



**FIGURE 28: PARENTS WHO KNOW THE CORRECT LEGAL GAMBLING AGE IN THEIR PROVINCE**

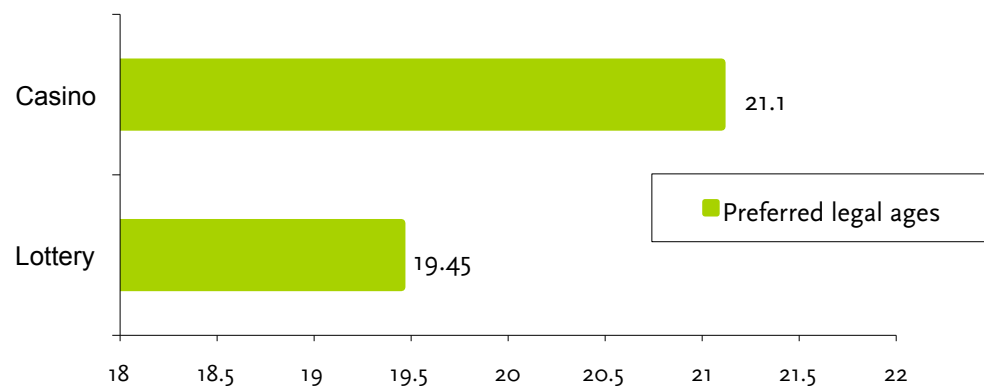


*To your knowledge, what is the legal age for the following in your province?*

Although parents seem to be aware of the legal gambling age in their home province, parents in provinces where 19 is the legal age to participate in regulated forms of gambling were more likely to believe that the legal age was less than 19 years of age.

Parents were also given the opportunity to indicate what they thought the legal age for purchasing lottery tickets or gambling in a casino should be. With respect to lottery and scratch ticket sales, parents on average were more likely to think that the current age or even a younger age was appropriate. However, there were many parents who thought that the legal age to purchase these products should be raised. Overall, the average age suggested by parents for acceptable lottery participation was 19.5 years. With casino gambling, meanwhile, almost all parents thought that the legal age to participate in this activity should be raised. The average age provided by parents to participate in casino gambling was approximately 21 years.

**FIGURE 29: PARENTS' PREFERRED LEGAL AGES FOR GAMBLING BY TYPE**

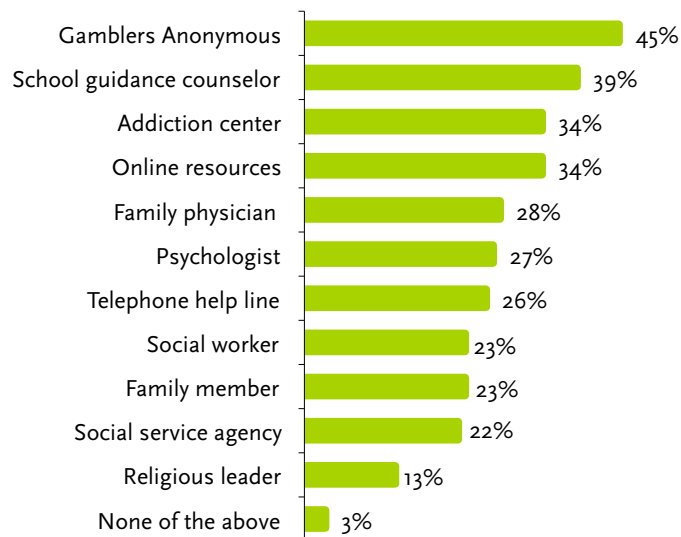


*In your opinion, what SHOULD the legal age for the following activities be?*

## RESOURCES FOR GAMBLING HELP

According to Figure 30, if a parent found themselves in a situation where their child was experiencing a gambling problem they would seek help from Gamblers Anonymous (45%), a school guidance counselor (39%), an addiction center (34%), or consult online resources (34%).

FIGURE 30: RESOURCES PARENTS HYPOTHETICALLY WOULD SEEK FOR HELP



If your child had a problem with gambling, where would you most likely seek help?

## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

This research highlights the paradoxes of parental attitudes toward youth gambling. While parents express strong opinions against underage gambling, their actions contradict this stance. The majority believe that, in addition to being highly addictive, gambling can also adversely affect work performance and friendships. Over half of parents believe underage gambling can escalate to a gambling addiction/problem, and approximately two-thirds of parents do not condone teenage gambling. Despite this, most parents report they rarely or never have conversations with their child about gambling and/or gambling-related issues. This may explain why other DECODE research shows that among underage youth reporting gambling activity in the last 12 months, a majority believe their parents were “indifferent” to their participation in these activities. Without clear anti-gambling messaging from parents, it is unclear where teens will get them. This report highlights the importance of educating parents about their role.

There is an additional discrepancy between parental attitudes and behaviours. Findings reveal that 95% of parents believe they are primarily responsible for preventing teen gambling and teen gambling problems, yet 59% have participated in a gambling activity with their child for money. Additionally, 24% of parents have given their child a lottery ticket or scratch ticket as a gift. Recent DECODE youth research reveals that parents are the most common source of lottery tickets for teens. Many parents fail to convey messages about gambling while others send mixed or even positive signals. Parents have a key role in preventing teen gambling and teen gambling problems. This research shows that many will first need to reflect upon or examine their own behaviours.

Many parents report regularly monitoring their child’s online use, but a significantly fewer number have set controls to limit their child’s access to inappropriate sites. (For example, only 9% of parents have installed anti-gambling software at home.) Given that over one-third of parents report their child has a computer in their bedroom with internet access, monitoring online behaviour requires active steps and controls. Youth involvement in online gambling activities is becoming increasingly common as many social networking sites geared to youth such as Facebook include free gambling applications. Parents are likely unaware of their child’s participation these activities.

Relative to a list of 13 youth problem issues, parents believe gambling is the least serious issue teens face today. This is one of the main challenges for engaging parents as partners in preventing teen gambling. The primary reason parents cited for not having conversations with their children about gambling stems from their belief that it is not a priority issue. Rather, their attention and energy is focused on educating their children about other youth health-related issues such as alcohol and illicit drug use.

Parent responses show a significant gap in parent awareness of youth gambling behaviour and studies on youth gambling. It would appear that many parents either condone this behaviour or are unaware of their child’s gambling behaviours. Parents report their level of concern about their child’s participation in gambling activities spikes when money is exchanged.

While the majority of parents report that their child has brought home educational material from school about sexual education, drug use and violence in schools, 85% of parents report their child has *not* brought home any educational or prevention material

from school about gambling. With only 17% of parents usually having conversations with their child about gambling issues and 15% of parents reporting their child has brought home information from their school about gambling, it appears that less than two out of 10 teens have received any guidance and information about gambling-related issues.

A key theme that emerged throughout this research is the significant gender difference in parental attitudes. In general, mothers are more concerned about all types of youth-related risky behaviours and report more often engaging in conversations with their child about multiple issues. Furthermore, when asked if various stimuli would prompt them to have a conversation with their child about gambling, mothers were significantly more likely to be in agreement.

For further information, please contact:

Eric Meerkamper  
[eric@decode.net](mailto:eric@decode.net)

Dr. Jeff Derevensky  
[jeffrey.derevensky@mcgill.ca](mailto:jeffrey.derevensky@mcgill.ca)

Joanna Cutajar  
[jo@decode.net](mailto:jo@decode.net)