

# General Gambling Fact Sheet

## Problem Gambling Prevalence Rates

### Disordered gambling rate:

- Research estimates that approximately 1.4% of the Connecticut adult population had a gambling problem in the past year. <sup>1</sup>

### At-Risk gambling rate:

- Research estimates that approximately 4.1% of Connecticut adults demonstrated gambling behaviors in the past year that put them at risk of developing a gambling disorder. <sup>1</sup>

### Higher Frequency of Gambling Disorder <sup>1, 2, 3</sup>

- Males
- Black
- Unemployed
- Unmarried adults
- High school education or less
- Those exposed to gambling environments (friends and family who gamble)
- Those who started to gamble at a younger age
- Those with excitement-seeking personality traits
- Those with mental health indicators
- Those who experienced childhood maltreatment
- Those who experienced parental gambling involvement
- College students 4-6
- People who smoke cigarettes
- People with alcohol or drug dependence
- People with obsessive-compulsive disorder
- People with higher anxiety or depression
- People with higher impulsivity and antisocial personality traits
- People who report gambling on electronic gambling machines (e.g. slot machines)

## CONNECTICUT COUNCIL on **PROBLEM GAMBLING**

### What is gambling?

Gambling is risking something of value on the outcome of an event when the probability of winning is less than certain.

### What is problem gambling or gambling disorder?

Problem gambling/gambling disorder is characterized by behavior that leads to adverse consequences for the gambler, others, and the community.

### What is social gambling?

Social gamblers gamble for entertainment, typically will not risk more than they can afford to gamble with friends, chase losses briefly, gamble for limited periods of time, and are not preoccupied with gambling.

*See DSM-5 for more complete clinical definitions.*

### The Connecticut Council's Helpline: [\(888\) 789-7777](tel:8887897777)

### Helpline workers provide:

- Live, confidential, and compassionate support 24-hours a day, 7-days a week
- Referrals to self-help groups, treatment providers, and other community resources

For more information, visit:  
<http://www.ccp.org>

## Who is at Risk for a Gambling Disorder?

Anyone can develop a problem with gambling, regardless of age, gender, race, ethnicity, or socio-economic status. Though disordered gambling does not discriminate, research shows that the following groups are more susceptible.

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## Signs of a Gambling Disorder\*

A person shows signs of gambling disorder if he/she:

- Needs to gamble with increasing amounts of money to achieve the desired excitement.
- Exhibits restless or irritable behavior when attempting to cut down or stop gambling.
- Is preoccupied with thoughts about gambling.
- Gambles when feeling distress (e.g., helpless, guilty, anxious, depressed).
- Chases one's losses/returns another day to get even.
- Lies to conceal the extent of gambling.
- Jeopardizes a significant relationship, job, or opportunity because of gambling.
- Relies on others to provide money to relieve desperate financial situations caused by gambling.

*\*For more information about gambling disorder, please refer to evaluation tools provided by the DSM-5.*

**Potential Consequences of Disordered Gambling**  
Disordered gambling is associated with a number of negative consequences. <sup>10, 11</sup>

- Family dysfunction and domestic violence, including spousal/child abuse and neglect <sup>12</sup>
- High divorce rates <sup>12</sup>
- Other excessive gamblers in family <sup>12</sup>
- Suicide, suicide ideation and suicide attempts <sup>13-16</sup>
- Significant financial troubles including bankruptcy, loss of property and poverty as a direct result of wagering <sup>12</sup>
- Criminal behavior ranging from prostitution and theft to drug trafficking and homicide <sup>17-19</sup>

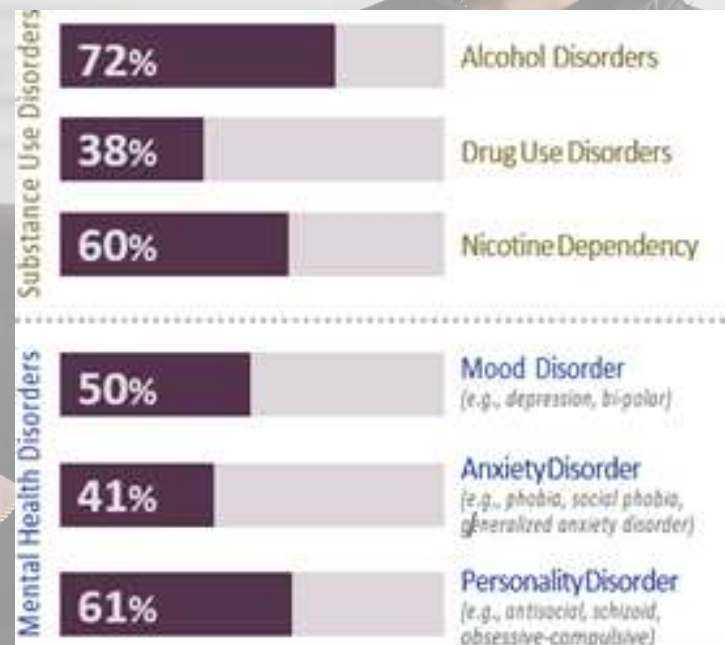
## Relationships Between Gambling Disorders, Substance Use Disorders, and Mental Health Disorders

People with a gambling disorder are significantly more likely to have mental health disorders and/or substance use disorders compared to those without gambling disorders. <sup>20</sup>

Research examining a large, representative sample of U.S. citizens found the following lifetime rates among those with a gambling disorder:

People with gambling disorder who also experience:

<sup>20</sup>





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## Other Disorders with Prevalence Rates Similar to Disordered Gambling

The following research shows estimated 12-month prevalence rates of other equally serious public health disorders with similar rate estimates of disordered gambling among adults. <sup>21-23</sup>

Major depressive disorder	6.7%
Bipolar disorder	2.6%
Gambling disorder <sup>1</sup>	1.4%
Schizophrenic disorders	1.1%
Anti-social personality disorder	1.0%
Bulimia nervosa	1.0%
Obsessive-compulsive disorder	1.0%
Anorexia nervosa	0.6%

## How Does Disordered Gambling Impact Special Populations?

### Adolescents/College Age

- Research shows that those who gamble at a young age are more susceptible to gambling problems. <sup>24, 25</sup>
- Adolescents with a family history of gambling problems are more likely to experience problems with gambling. <sup>12, 19</sup>



Compared to college students without a gambling disorder, college students with a gambling disorder are more likely to: <sup>24-26</sup>

- Use tobacco
- Use alcohol, drink heavily or binge drink, get drunk
- Use marijuana or other illegal drugs
- Drive under the influence
- Be arrested for non-traffic offenses
- Binge eat
- Have a low GPA
- Experience depression and stress and consider and attempt suicide <sup>24-26</sup>

### Older Adults

- Among older adults, those who gamble more frequently are also more likely to have mental health disorders and/ or substance abuse disorders.

### Corrections

- Among those in the corrections population, a meta-analysis reported that 33% of criminal offenders meet criteria for disordered gambling. <sup>28</sup> Compared to other population segments, this represents a disproportionately higher rate.
- Of those incarcerated who have a gambling disorder, 50% say that they committed crimes to support their gambling. <sup>28</sup>

### Internet Gambling

- In adults, frequency of online gambling has been associated with gambling problems. <sup>29-31</sup>
- Internet gambling has also been associated with heavy alcohol consumption in adults. <sup>31</sup>
- Adolescent Internet gamblers are more likely to exhibit at-risk disordered gambling behavior than non-internet gamblers. <sup>31</sup>

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## Endnotes

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