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*Available on request. Please contact gambling@dhhs.tas.gov.au
Researched data

Tasmania. Forms of gambling 2004-2005. Adult per capita expenditure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form of Gambling</th>
<th>Per Capita Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gaming machines (pokies) not in casinos</td>
<td>$343.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casino games, e.g. roulette, including casino pokies</td>
<td>$278.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTE (not at the race track)</td>
<td>$70.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race betting (at the track)</td>
<td>$3.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lotteries, Lotto, Pools</td>
<td>$56.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keno</td>
<td>$54.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scratch tickets</td>
<td>$5.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports betting</td>
<td>$1.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(minor gaming, i.e. bingo, raffles etc. not recorded)

TOTAL $814.45


Discussion

• What surprises you about these results?
• What did you seem to already know?
• Why do you think you knew this fact?
• Do you think that some of these results may have changed since 2005? Why?
• Why do you think some forms of gambling are more popular than others?
The real mathematical odds

These are according to www.funny2.com/odds.htm and www.gambling.anu.edu.au/menu/factsheet.php (gambling odds)
Australian National University, Centre for Gambling Research 2006.

1. Suffering from asthma or allergy diseases: 1 in 6
2. Getting arthritis: 1 in 7
3. Getting the flu this year: 1 in 10
4. Fatally slipping in your bath or shower: 1 in 2,232
5. Injury from mowing the lawn: 1 in 3,623
6. Injury from shaving: 1 in 6,585
7. Injury from fireworks: 1 in 19,556
8. Dating a supermodel: 1 in 88,000
9. Being struck by lightning: 1 in 576,000
10. Winning Oz Lotto: 1 in 8,145,060
11. A meteor landing on your house: 1 in 182,138,880,000,000
Reasons for Gambling

(A) Reasons for commencing gambling

• Leisure/fun/entertainment/an outing.
• Relieving boredom.
• Wanting to, or feel I have to, do the same as my friends.
• Providing company for another person who is already gambling.
• Parents may encourage it.
• May be expected as ‘something we do in our family’.
• Hoping to win money.
• Wanting to do something dangerous or risky.
• Being around other people (easing loneliness).
• Wanting to do something ‘just for me’.

(B) Reasons that occasional or fun gambling moves into regular and compulsive gambling

• Person gambling finds that when they gamble they are able to ‘switch off’ or forget all their troubles for a while.
• As the person gets more and more worried by their gambling and the harm being caused, they increasingly have a need to try to ‘switch off’.
• Trying to catch up or win back money lost through previous sessions of gambling.
• Inbuilt characteristics (especially poker machines) which tend to cause a person to keep going, even when their instincts tell them they should stop.
• Misleading beliefs about luck or chance which can be intensified by the gambling itself (especially poker machines).
• In the extreme situation (where there may be huge amounts of money lost, family breaking down, etc.), a sense that there is nothing to lose by keeping going.
Young people and gambling. Information sheet

Key points*

- More than 60% of young people 15-17 years gamble, and at least 15% gamble weekly.
- Boys gamble more than girls.
- 3.5% of 15-17 year old people report symptoms of problem gambling (a 50% higher prevalence than adults).
- In Tasmania 11% of people 18-24 years are non-gamblers. 89% of people in this age bracket gambled at least once in the year surveyed.
- There is a significant overlap with other high-risk behaviours, especially alcohol and marijuana use.
- Young people who gamble regularly tend to be either socially isolated or in peripheral school social groups.
- Most youth gambling is on lottery products (scratch tickets) but also includes card games, track racing and sports events.
- Under-age machine gambling, TAB [TOTE] gambling, and internet gambling are less common, but development of portable gaming, utilising mobile phones, blue tooth technology and play station games such as Lara Croft is predicted as the future by gambling industry management (Plenary address, National Association For Gambling Studies Conference Queensland 2005). This will present new gambling risks for young people.
- Many young people hold unrealistic views about making money from gambling, particularly if they have had an early win.
- Young people may commence gambling due to peer pressure or family expectations, but other factors, e.g. convergence of life events, come into play which can lead to problematic gambling.
- The younger an adolescent is when they start gambling, the more likely it is that they will develop a problem.
- Only a very small proportion of young people with gambling problems seek professional help.
- The effects of problem gambling (the young person’s gambling or a family member’s gambling) on young people include depression, anxiety, isolation, low self-esteem, thoughts of and attempts at suicide, and poor academic achievement.

*These figures refer to Australia and aren’t specific to Tasmania unless otherwise stated.


Signs indicating a young person may have a gambling problem

- Organising sports betting with friends.
- Showing up in new clothes or with something else they have been wanting.
- Sometimes having plenty of money, but more often having none.
- Selling or pawning valuables.
- Stealing money.
- Skipping classes at school.
- Forgetting about homework assignments.
- Lying about where he/she is going.
- Mood swings and emotional withdrawal.
- Wanting to know the return on a particular poker machine.
- Irritability, aggression.
- Neglect in appearance and dress.

- I think I will win a prize in Tattslotto – over $10,000 – one day:
  10.8% agree.

- One day I’m going to strike it lucky at gambling:
  14.6% agree.

- To win at gambling you have to think positively:
  20.8% agree.

- I’m more likely to win at lotto/gambling if I use my lucky numbers:
  14.2% agree.

- You can win at gaming machines if you adopt the right system:
  8.5% agree.

Note. In reality gambling is based on random occurrences. By its very nature there can be no control by using systems or thinking positively.

Chuck-a-luck has a subtle trick that many people don’t recognise unless they analyse it. If the three dice always showed different numbers, the game would favour no one. To illustrate, say that each of six people bets $1 on a different number. If the three dice showed different numbers, the operator would take in $3 from the losers and pay out that same $3 to the winners. But often, the three dice will show a doublet or triplet: two or three of the dice will show the same number. That’s when the operator makes his money.

For example, say the dice show 3, 3 and 5. The operator collects $4 ($1 each from the people who bet on 1, 2, 4, and 6) but pays out only $3 ($2 to the person who bet on 3, and $1 to the person who bet on 5). Or say the dice show 4, 4, and 4. The operator collects $5 ($1 each from the people who bet on 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6) but still pays out only $3 (to the person who bet on 4).

The collections and payoffs change according to the bets (sometimes the house wins, sometimes the gamblers win), but with this game, you can still expect to lose about 8 cents with every $1 you bet over the long run.

www.ublib.buffalo.edu/libraries/projects/cases/chuckaluck/chuck.html

Oh darling!
You’re home early from poker...
...whatever do you mean, pack quickly...?
Gambling information and service organisations

Gambling Support Bureau
Department of Health and Human Services
gambling@dhhs.tas.gov.au
www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/gambling

- Tasmanian Gambling Helpline 1800 000 973.

The Helpline is a free crisis and referral service. Helpline staff will provide contacts for the Break Even Gambling Support Services, which provide free and confidential assistance for venue exclusions, counselling and support.

Different things influence how a person moves from one level to the next through this continuum, e.g. people’s knowledge of the dangers, the type of gambling product used, personal differences between people, people’s circumstances, whether they had an early win.

• As people move through the continuum from left to right, they are experiencing an increasing loss of control over their gambling – e.g. more time spent, more money spent, increasingly gambling alone.
• As loss of control increases, harm to themselves and others usually increases also, e.g. going without food, rent and bills not paid.
• As the person’s gambling reaches the excessive or compulsive level, the person often has a feeling of being out of control and has some awareness of the harm being caused, but may feel unable to stop. They may also (wrongly) believe that it’s all their fault and that there is no hope.
• When the gambling is at the compulsive level, the person is usually very distressed and does things which are very different from when they are in a normal state of mind, e.g. deceiving family and friends, criminal acts, bad temper.
• With professional help people can overcome the gambling problem – this is less difficult to do if the gambling problem is still in an early stage.
Treasury
• Receives revenue from taxation on gambling industry
• Distributes revenue to health, education, infrastructure, community services, welfare services, including those assisting people with gambling problems and those affected by them.
• Regulates the gambling industry in line with State Legislation - for example, decides how many poker machines allowed in venues, venue opening hours, placement of poker machines in venues, proximity of ATMs.
• Believes gambling is legitimate entertainment and is properly regulated by government and industry.

Gambling Support Services (Break Even Network)
• Provide counselling for people affected by problem gambling - the gamblers and their families and friends.
• Services paid for by government revenue from gambling
• See the negative effects of problem gambling on health and wellbeing of individuals and the community.
• Argue for more control over access to gambling, particularly poker machines, which they observe to be the most dangerous form of gambling for people with gambling problems

People who gamble
Money spent contributing to taxes and industry revenue

Occasional/recreational
Occasional ‘flutter’ on pokies, scratchies, the Melbourne Cup, for a bit of fun

Frequent and regular gambling
Daily or weekly gambling, losing money, may be lying to family to explain losses

Welfare organisations
• Housing, family support, drug and alcohol, and health services supporting people experiencing difficulties, including some affected by gambling
• See the negative effects of gambling on the community.
• Argue for tighter controls of the gambling industry.

Gambling industry - casino, pubs and clubs, lotteries, TOTE
• Owners receive profit
• Employ staff
• Provide gambling entertainment
• Pay taxes from gambling revenue
• Believe gambling is fun and legitimate recreation, but that some people can’t control their spending and develop gambling problems

Lobby groups
• Advocate for less gambling, less access to gambling, tighter controls over gambling venues.
• Criticise the government and the industry for profiting from people’s losses.
• Draw attention to the social and economic costs of gambling, for example family break down, neglect of family members, mental health problems, suicide, criminal behaviour (stealing to recover gambling losses).
• Argue for more control over access to gambling, particularly poker machines, which they observe to be the most dangerous form of gambling for people with gambling problems

Community
• Benefits from government services paid for by taxes on gambling, for example health, education, infrastructure, community projects

GOVERNMENT
Material written by people with gambling problems

Scratch lottery tickets*: Jackson’s** story

My uncle gave me a scratch lottery ticket for my 16th birthday. When I scratched it I won $50. ‘Wow’, I thought. ‘This is great!’ I went to the local newsagency and cashed in the ticket. No one asked me how old I was. I bought two more $5 tickets and put the $40 in my wallet. When I got home I scratched the two tickets. I didn’t win anything with the first one but I won $20 with the second. ‘How easy is this!’ I thought. I started buying more tickets. I went to different newsagencies so no one would know how many tickets I was buying; most didn’t ask me if I was over 18.* In the beginning I won on about half of the tickets. I guess it was just beginner’s luck, because after a while I wasn’t winning much, but I was sure a big win was getting close. I kept buying tickets and I’d scratch things like two $50 000 and one $5000. I was so close, I was convinced it was only a matter of a few more tickets and I’d win the big prize.

When I ran out of money I started stealing money from my mother’s wallet and from other students at school. I’d fake being sick so I could get out of PE. When everyone else was involved in sport I’d go through bags and clothes to steal money. One day I nearly got caught trying to take money from one of the teachers’ staffrooms. I said I was looking for my assignment book. They believed me and I was sure my luck had changed.

All I could think about was how to get the money to buy more tickets. I started being in trouble for not concentrating on my schoolwork and not doing my homework, but I wasn’t interested in school stuff. I knew I wasn’t really winning anything, but I couldn’t stop buying tickets. I knew I needed help but I didn’t know what to do. Then I got caught stealing money from bags in the library.

Jackson

* You must be 18 years of age or older to buy lottery products (including scratch tickets). It is against the law to sell lottery products to a person who is under 18.
** Jackson is not his real name.
Reproduced from What are the odds?: Understanding the risks education kit, Sue Thompson, Powerhouse Museum, 2004 © Powerhouse Museum
Internet gambling: Michael’s* story

Each week my family buys a Lotto ticket and we watch the draw on TV. Our numbers are our ages and our birthdays. Mum said these numbers would be lucky for us. It’s exciting watching the balls drop and hoping they will be our numbers. The family has won some small amounts of money but nothing big yet.

I have a computer connected to the internet in my bedroom and I like to surf the net. One night I found an overseas gambling site where I could play lotto on line. The trouble was that you had to have a credit card to play. I had money saved from my part-time job that I wanted to use, but I didn’t think Dad would let me use his credit card. Even though I wanted to play, I knew I couldn’t. So I tried to shut down the site. A few seconds after I shut the site it came back asking me to play. I shut it down and it kept coming back. I thought this had to be a sign that I would win if I played.

I decided to try. My plan was to use Dad’s credit card and pay him for what I’d used plus surprise everyone with the money I’d won. So I took Dad’s credit card number off one of his receipts and I started playing with $100 credit.

I didn’t win anything for a couple of games then I thought, I’d paid for them, so I should keep playing. Then I won a $15 then a $10 and a $20 prize. My luck was in. Then I changed my strategy. I decided that I should keep playing with the same set of numbers every time. I’d heard that I would be more likely to win this way. I kept playing and sometimes I was very close to winning. One time I got four numbers and all the other numbers were one off! I was so close I was sure I was going to win. One of my numbers is nine. In one game there was a 10 and an eight, so close to my nine. I was so sure I was going to win the big one that I used Dad’s credit card number again and again.

I couldn’t think about anything else except playing online and worrying about what I owed on Dad’s card. I couldn’t concentrate on my jobs at home and Mum started asking me what was wrong. I just couldn’t tell her what I’d done and that now I owed Dad more than I could pay him. I just kept playing to try to win Dad’s money back.

Then Dad checked internet banking and saw what he called ‘some unauthorised use of his card’. When he phoned the bank to complain about the $400 I knew I was in big trouble.

Michael, age 15

* Michael is not his real name.

Reproduced from What are the odds?: Understanding the risks education kit, Sue Thompson, Powerhouse Museum, 2004 © Powerhouse Museum
Material written by people with gambling problems

Poem

I can be a millionaire.
I should get a ticket, if I don’t…I’ll be poor.
I don’t want to be poor.
I feel excited.
I am going to win, and…
I wonder what I’ll do with the money.

I am trying so hard.
I must look like a freak.
I must look like a crazy person.
I think the machines have powers over me.
I cannot control them, they suck me in, and…
I am living in denial.

I stop eating because I think I am not worthy.
I don’t know why, but the machines make me feel good.
I need the machines to cover up my loneliness.
I am sorry with all my heart but I can’t help it.
I am lonely and I go back, and…
I love them.

I have a problem that I don’t know how to stop.
I hate myself so badly because I know I have a problem.
I am so mad with myself for being so weak I beat myself up every single time that I go.
I hate myself for beating myself up.
I want so badly to stop, and…
I cannot stop wanting to go.

I am not winning, I am losing, and…
I don’t want to lose any more.
I am not a horrible person, and…
I don’t need you anymore, ok? You machines!
I am going to walk past you today.
Material written by people with gambling problems

Gambler’s diary

Pay day: Friday.

7am    Shower. Wash hair. Thoughts of going to the ATM.


I placed my first bet of 20 cents at the Revesby Workers Club in Sydney, I was about 16.

9am   Make shopping list.

Feeling annoyed at self. Don’t go there. Stop it. Get it out of head.

I usually gamble when I get paid or have money available, when I am feeling down or pissed off with anyone or if I’m bored or if the news on the television is bad.

10am   Have taken out sufficient for groceries. Shopping at the supermarket.

I gamble for any reason and no reason.

10.45am  Through the checkout and arrange for my groceries to be delivered. Still a hundred left in my account and forty in my purse.

I realised I had a problem when I missed paying my rent and I had no money coming in until my next payday.

11.20am  Coffee and a cigarette in the mall. Stinking thinking is on the way. It was rampant as I was heading to the city.

11.30am  I’ll just do $20 and this time no more than that.

11.35am   I enter the closest pub and see the door to the gaming area. I am self-excluded* here and at most of the venues in the CBD. I walk through to gaming area. Feeling conspicuous. The colours of the machine make me feel as if I have an invitation to spend money, my money.

Go straight past the bar where the staff are changing money for the machines and tending to those who want drinks or are playing Keno. Feel as though they might notice I shouldn’t be there.

11.40am    Start by playing the machines away from the bar staff.
And the first push of the button; Reel one the first coin has come up and that made its sound; Reel two nothing; Reel three another coin and its sound.

Reel four and five nothing; Try again.

I don’t like this machine. It’s taken nearly all my $20. Move to the other side and blow the last of the $20. I have a $10 and $5 note in my purse. I change the $10 and move machines.

Getting a little more game. The attendants have not accosted me so move and play one of my favourite machines, The Cash Machine.

Lose my ten and change my last, the $5.

Reel four and five nothing; Try again.

Change machines again and put $1 in The Owl. Wow! A payout of $20. Move to the 2 cent machine next to it, Treasure Chest.

And get several free spins in a row.

Reel four and five nothing; Try again.

It must be very obvious that I have a habit.

12.40pm At the ATM around the corner. Take out $20 then back on my favourite machine, The Cash Machine.

A couple of free spins and all that is gone.

Reel four and five nothing; Try again.

My head is numb.

12.55pm Back to the ATM. This time $50. This time $50. This time $50. This time $50...

*Tasmania has a regulated scheme to help individuals to bar themselves from specific venues or activities (‘self-exclusion’) and allows venues or other interested persons to have them barred. See www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/gambling

Quotations

If I didn’t gamble I’d have time and money to shop for lovely clothes for me.

I can control my gambling by relaxing and doing other things that I enjoy.

Counselling has helped me to understand my feelings about gambling. Counselling has helped me to feel that I am not a horrible person when I gamble. Counselling has helped me with my underlying problems and my sadness about my life.
Decision-making steps

Step 1  THE DECISION
State the situation in simple terms. What is the decision you need to make?

Step 2  OPTIONS
What are all the possible options that you have?

Step 3  CONSEQUENCES
What are the possible consequences of each option?

Step 4  FEELINGS
How will each of those consequences make you feel?

Step 5  TIME TO CHOOSE
Choose an option and follow it through.

Step 6  EVALUATE
Was this the right decision for you? What will you do differently next time?
Photos by people with gambling problems

TRACY
Photograph, 2005
Photograph, 2006
Photos by people with gambling problems

top & bottom left – TRACY
Photographs, 2006

top right – NMC
Photographs, 2006
Collages by people with gambling problems

TRACY
Magazine collages, 2006
Collages by people with gambling problems

LINDA Magazine collage, 2006
Examples of gambling advertising – print

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Examples of gambling advertising – print

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