

A Presentation to
Justice System and
Behavioral Health
Professionals

Speakers:
Anita Pindiur &
Elizabeth Thielen

Gambling Disorder & Criminal Behavior

Illinois Association of
Problem Solving
Courts Annual
Conference 2023

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Meet
Your
Presenters



Anita Pindiur
MS, LCPC, CADC, PCGC



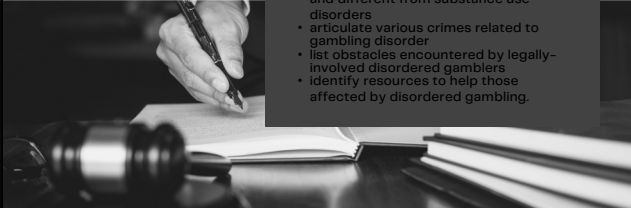
Elizabeth Thielen
LPC, PCGC

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Presentation Objectives

Attendees will be able to:

- identify signs and symptoms of gambling disorder
- list how gambling disorder is similar to and different from substance use disorders
- articulate various crimes related to gambling disorder
- list obstacles encountered by legally-involved disordered gamblers
- identify resources to help those affected by disordered gambling.



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Why are we talking about this?

Though gambling disorder isn't talked about widely in many settings, it has a significant impact on individuals, families and communities. Healthcare, criminal justice, and other fields are beginning to recognize the need to learn how the people they encounter in their daily work may be impacted.

\$ billions lost annually on gambling in Illinois

40K+ video slot/poker terminals in Illinois

1.1 million Illinoisans affected

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Gambling In Illinois:

1974
Illinois Lottery
The Illinois Lottery began July 1, 1974 amid great excitement across the state. During its first years, it sold "passer" games via weekly drawings.

1990
Riverboat Gambling Act
Illinois was the second state in the nation to legalize riverboat gambling with passage of the Riverboat Gambling Act in February 1990. In September 1991, the first riverboat casino opened in Alton.

2009
Video Gaming Act
The Video Gaming Act was enacted in July 2009, authorizing the placement of Video Gaming Terminals (VGTs) in Licensed Retail Establishments, Truck Stops, and Veteran and Fraternal Establishments. The VGTs are all connected to and monitored by a Central Communications System. Today, more than 43,000 licensed video gaming locations operate over 43,000 VGTs across the State - comprising the largest video gaming network of its kind in the world.

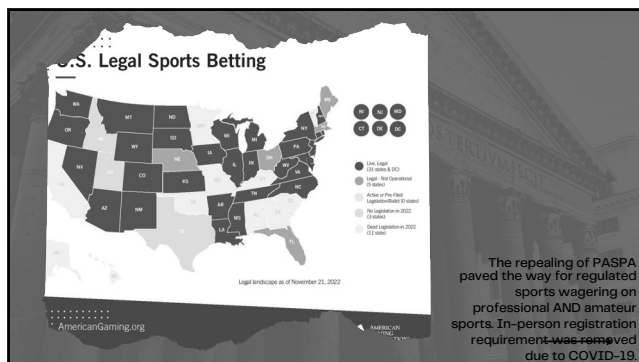
2019
Riverboat Gambling Act
The Illinois Gambling Act was enacted on June 28, 2019. Among other major changes to Illinois gaming law, the Act legalized sports wagering (online and in retail locations) and significantly expanded casino gambling and video gaming across the State.
Press Releases

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Gambling in Illinois

What other recent development do you think is important?

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Types of Gamblers

Casual Social Gambler: Gambling is one of many forms of entertainment; gambles frequently

Serious Social Gambler: Gambles as a major source of entertainment; plays regularly at one or more types of gambling, and does so with great absorption and intensity.

Professional Gambler: Gambling is his / her primary source of income; makes a living gambling

Relief-and-Escape Gambler: Major activity in persons life of equal importance with family and business; but rest of life goes on without integrity being seriously impaired; more than a pastime

Compulsive Gambler: Gambling is only thing in life; ignores family and business, and often turns to crime to support his/her habit

When gambling becomes problem gambling →

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Gambling Disorder

AKA: problem gambling, compulsive gambling, pathological gambling--

Persistent and recurrent problematic gambling behavior leading to clinically significant impairment or distress, as indicated by the individual exhibiting four or more symptoms (to follow) in a 12 month period.

Symptoms →

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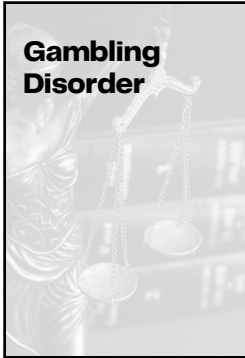
Gambling Disorder

Symptoms

- needing to increase amounts gambled
- restless or irritable* when cutting down/quitting
- repeated unsuccessful attempts to control/cut back/quit
- often preoccupied with gambling
- gambles when distressed

DSM-5 - American Psychiatric Association

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Gambling Disorder

Symptoms

- chasing losses
- lies to conceal extent of gambling
- gambling causing problems at work, home or school
- relying on others to relieve desperate financial problems
- Not better explained by manic episode

DSM-5 – American Psychiatric Association

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Similarities & Differences

Are we talking about substance use disorders or gambling disorder?
You be the judge:

SUD or GD?

- Genetic heritability
- early exposure increases risk
- brain reward center activation
- impairment in judgment/future planning areas of the brain
- trauma history increases risk for development of the disorder
- accessibility and acceptability affect use
- follows a predictable path
- responds to CBT, MI, DBT, and medications

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Similarities & Differences

Substance Use Disorders & Gambling Disorder

There are many similarities between gambling disorder and substance use disorders, including etiology, clinical presentation, consequences, and treatment.

SUD

- Genetic heritability
- early exposure increases risk
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Gambling Disorder

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Similarities & Differences

Similar Consequences

- financial problems
- divorce, estrangement
- problems at work, home, or school
- legal problems/incarceration
- health problems
- substance use/mental health problems
- housing problems/homelessness
- suicide

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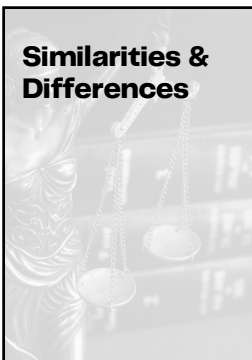


Similarities & Differences

Differences

- Hidden addiction – could go on for years before seen as a problem
- Cannot overdose, no saturation point
- Tremendous financial problems which require immediate attention
- Can appear to function more at work
- Cannot be tested for, like drug testing
- No ingestion of chemicals
- Fewer resources available for gamblers who seek help
- Level of awareness ↓
- Stigma/Shame/Misunderstanding ↑

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Similarities & Differences

A word about comorbidity:

Though gambling disorder can lead to mental health problems, mental health diagnoses more often pre-date the gambling disorder diagnosis

- 54% of problem gamblers reported having been diagnosed with anxiety or depression, compared to 14.8% of recreational gamblers.
- 60% of problem gamblers reported an alcohol problem, compared to 11.6% of recreational gamblers.
- 32.3% of problem gamblers self-reported a drug problem, compared to 4.3% of recreational gamblers.
- Workaholism and exercise addiction were the most commonly reported behavioral conditions among problem gamblers in the IL study.

©2021 Statewide Assessment of Gambling and Problem Gambling in Illinois.

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Similarities & Differences

Differences –legally involved gamblers

- little to no screening for gambling as underlying factor
- less opportunities for diversion
- no treatment or support in correctional settings
- gambling extremely prevalent in correction settings
- financial harm is often greater for gambling-related crimes, inability to make restitution

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How does gambling relate to crime?

 <p>Non-violent "white collar crimes"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • theft • retail theft • forgery • fraud • low level drug dealing 	 <p>Escalation</p> <p>Seriousness of crimes tend to increase as the severity of the disorder increases.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • embezzlement • assault • arson • murder 	 <p>Money is the Drug</p> <p>Most gambling-related crimes reflect a desperate "need" to obtain more money to keep gambling, to recoup losses, to pay back money they owe or pay bills they can't pay, due to gambling losses</p>
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Gambling Stats/Findings

<p>50% Rate</p> <p>over 50% of disordered gamblers commit crimes related to their gambling</p>	<p>Corrections Settings</p> <p>The highest rate of gambling disorder ever recorded was among incarcerated individuals.</p>	<p>Theft</p> <p>Together, nearly 400 Gamblers Anonymous members reporting having stolen to support their gambling, stole \$30 million (of money and/or property)</p>
<p>Arrests</p> <p>Pathological and problem gamblers are arrested over three times more often than low-risk gamblers and over seven times more often than non-gamblers⁸</p>	<p>Accessing Care</p> <p>Only 5.4% of offenders assessed as having a gambling problem reported having ever been in treatment or attending a self-help group for gambling¹²</p>	<p>Costs to the System</p> <p>Lifetime correctional costs of problem gamblers in the one state's prison population have been estimated at \$249,159,000</p>

Source: "Gambling and Crime" by Georgia State University

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What About Gambling and Domestic Violence?

Like with Substance Use, Gambling Disorder has a complex relationship to Intimate Partner Violence: Spouses/ Significant Others

- 25-50% of problem gamblers' spouses have been abused.
- Emergency room study showed risk of intimate partner violence increased when partner had a gambling problem.
- stress from financial problems increases tension in the home
- spouse tries to prevent gambling or withhold funds needed for bills
- gambler acts out aggressively when ability to continue gambling is threatened

National Problem Gambling Clinic, 2010; Shaffer et al. 2002



"Evidence suggests that the relationship between IPV and substance use may be best categorized as bidirectional."

Gamblers Are Often Those Abused

- gambler is assaulted when extent of gambling losses are discovered
- some gambling environments offer a nearby quiet place to feel "safe" and anonymous
- people living with domestic violence turn to gambling as a means of coping
- continued gambling can lead to increasing financial dependence on abuser; ability of abuser to use finances to control the gambler

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What About Gambling and Domestic Violence?



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Recent Findings

Gambling-Motivated Crime vs. Non-Gambling-Motivated

- the bulk of crimes committed by those with gambling disorder were specific to their gambling
- the common precursor to gambling-motivated crime was???

Gender and Gambling-Motivated Crime

- gender differences disappear when gambling underlies crime
- women face incarceration at a higher rate than men for gambling-motivated crimes

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One Example

Michelle L. Malkin, JD
PhD Student
School of Criminal Justice
Michigan State University
malkinm@msu.edu
@malkinmich

THE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CRIMINAL CONSEQUENCES OF GAMBLING

21:00-25:57
Notes of Criminal Justice
© 2023
Michigan State University

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What does this tell us?

Need for Screening

- you don't know if you don't ask
- just asking tells offenders this is important
- procedures should be in place for positive screenings
- many options available
 - **LAUDS**
 - **BRGS**
 - **SBST**
 - **NORS**
 - **RRAL**

Access to Treatment

- State-contracted treatment providers
- capacity is expanding in response to DHS SUPR efforts
- Sliding scale -income not necessarily a factor
- are behavioral health providers working with offenders screening and making referrals?
- need to support referrals, when made

Recidivism

- we know the importance of addressing underlying factors of criminal behavior
- court-mandated treatment works
- untreated gambling disorders are not likely to just "go away"
- more likely to escalate

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Screening www.areasreallywinning.com

Call 1-800-GAMBLER or text "GAMF" to 633224

Get help • About • News • Providers

Take the Problem Gambling Helpline screen

Could I have a gambling problem?

This screen can help people to understand what gambling activities could lead to problem gambling or other negative outcomes like money or relationship problems.

But problem gambling can be managed and treated. This brief screen can help people decide whether to get a formal evaluation of their gambling activities and understand their options.

ARE YOU REALLY WINNING

In these questions, "gambling" means buying lottery tickets, gambling or playing slot machines, video poker or other video gambling, gambling on the internet, betting on horses or dogs, playing video games with gambling activities or fast low purchases, trading stocks or other speculative investments, and playing bingo or keno.

Please answer these questions with "Yes" or "No" answers.

During the past 12 months:

Have you gambled or more than?

No Yes

About the screen

The Problem Gambling Helpline screen is made up of 9 questions from the Screening Disordered Gambling (SDG) Treatment and Screen, which was adopted by Illinois from the (SDG) and (SDG).

Also known as Gambling Brief Intervention and based on Treatment (GBIT), it is an evidence-based approach to identifying individuals who may have an elevated risk of developing gambling problems. The goal of GBIT is to reduce and prevent gambling-related problems.

Research suggests that there are high rates of comorbidity between substance use disorders and problem gambling. For more information about a formal evaluation, contact your treatment provider.

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Gambler Testimonials

Dan T

I had so much shame, and so much guilt. Until I was able to start talking about it, it started freeing me from the mental prison I was in.

Sandra A

Suddenly my orderly existence turned into a private Hell.

Michelle M


I struggled with the demise of a debilitating, baffling, progressive addiction - compulsive gambling - for 14 years... addiction will make the most capable people incapacitated, the givers into takers, the rule makers into rule breakers, and the ethical into criminals.

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Gambling is Not (Exactly) Like Substance Use, from a court perspective

- can't test for it through traditional means
- follow the money (keeping in mind unreported income, other means of obtaining money)
- can you discourage or order "no gambling"?
- can you prohibit presence in gambling establishments?
- can you prohibit gambling apps on devices?
- what about self-exclusion? blocking software?
- Attendance at gambling-specific support?

If this is all seemingly insurmountable, can you mandate treatment?



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Gambling Courts



Amherst, NY

The first Gambling Court in the US was started by Justice Mark Farrell. He presided over many cases that were gambling-related, including thefts, bankruptcies, domestic violence, etc. and recognized problem gambling as an illness. Justice Farrell wanted to make sure "treatment is a mandated part of sentencing and...prosecutors, defense lawyers, and health care professionals cooperate to that end."

Clark County, NV

"It would take a thousand pages to write about the consequences of a person suffering from a gambling addiction. These included failed marriages, lying and stealing to feed their addiction, and the total loss of control over their lives. A gambling disorder does not discriminate as it affects all persons from varied socioeconomic status, celebrities, professionals, casino employees, and persons as young as adolescents to retired senior citizens."

"I submit that persons who go through GTDC will always be in lifetime recovery just as with any other persons who are in recovery from other addictions. No matter how small or large the amount of the money that was gambled away, one must understand that the often does not register in a gambler's cognitive thinking processes when they are deep into their addiction. Getting them into treatment and recovery benefits the individual and the community." -Honorable Cheryl Moss

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Gambling Courts

COMING SOON

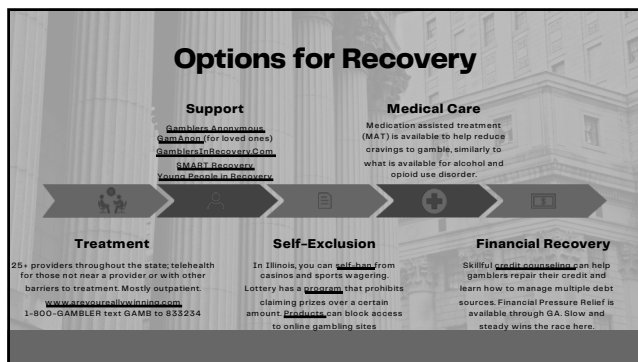
An evaluation of the court was conducted by researcher Michelle Malkin. Stemming from this, Dr. Malkin has developed a number of "gold standards" for Gambling Diversion Courts. She has also developed a checklist for determining eligibility for offenders who may be candidates for the program.



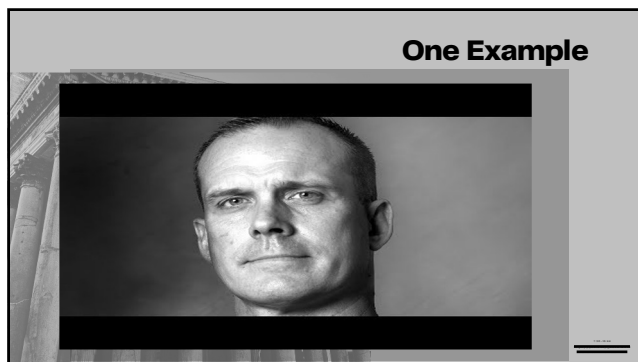

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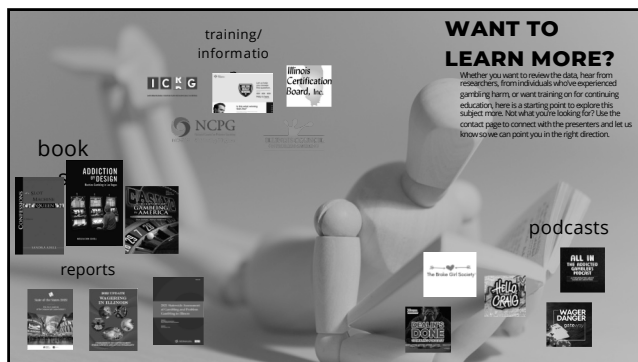
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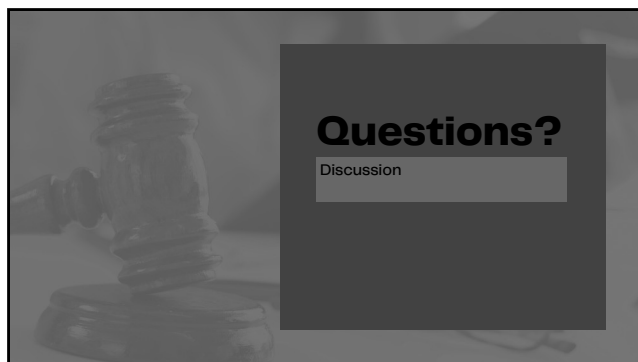
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Need More Information?

☎ Anita 708-417-8902 / Elizabeth 847-201-7099

✉ anita@waybackinn.org / ethielen@nicasa.org

🌐 www.waybackinn.org / www.nicasa.org

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Thank You

We very much appreciate your time and attention!

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