



Odds and Ends



The Newsletter of The Gambling Clinic at the University of Memphis

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Social and Economic Costs of Disordered Gambling

Existing research tells us that the consequences of disordered gambling include financial, employment, relational, legal, physical health, and mental health problems. The scope of these adverse consequences suggests that the impact of disordered gambling is likely to be felt not only by the gambler but also by the community at large. For instance, family members, friends, and employers are likely to be affected by the negative consequences of problematic gambling. The impact may also be felt by businesses that suffer losses due to employee theft or that are forced to hire creditors to collect unpaid debts. Governmental agencies may need to devote resources when illegal acts are committed or social services are required.

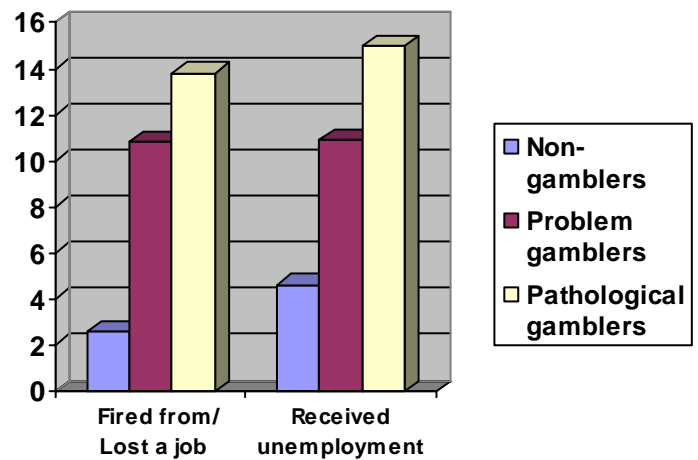
Such consequences have prompted researchers to examine the social and economic costs of disordered gambling. The National Gambling Impact Study

Commission reported that gambling has a significant effect on job loss, funds lost as a result of unemployment, bankruptcy, divorce, arrest and incarceration, and physical health and mental health problems. These consequences were chosen to be examined due to their known relation with problematic gambling and because their associated economic value could be estimated. These researchers concluded that costly consequences were highest among disordered gamblers, that many thousands of dollars in costs are imposed on society as a result of problematic gambling, and that disordered gamblers were unlikely to directly identify their gambling behavior as the cause of these problems. These results suggest that the economic costs imposed by problem and pathological gambling are significant and may be exacerbated by the lack of awareness by many in our society of the costly consequences of gambling behavior.

Gambling and the Workplace

Gambling may have a significant impact on one's employment. Gamblers may engage in gambling-related activities at inappropriate times: missing work or being late to work due to gambling or gambling while at work. Gambling at inappropriate times could result in a variety of adverse consequences including lost productivity, decreased job performance, increased employer costs, reduced wages, termination, and subsequent dependence on welfare programs. One review of the literature found that gambling was related to absenteeism from work in 69-76 percent of pathological gamblers. It was also found that job loss was attributed to gambling behavior in 21-36 percent of gamblers seeking treatment for disordered gambling. The National Opinion Research Center (1999) found that a significant percentage of pathological and problem gamblers had been terminated from their place of employment and had received unemployment benefits in the previous year. The following ta-

ble depicts the percentages of non-gamblers, problem gamblers, and pathological gamblers experiencing such consequences.



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We want to hear from you!

Please send your questions or
comments to Odds and Ends:

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Phone: 901.678.STOP(7867)

-or-

901.678.3491

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Each month, we'll select and
answer several questions from our
readers. We want to hear
your concerns and look
forward to your feedback.

Co-Directors:

Drs. Andrew Meyers & James Whelan

Visit Us Online: www.thegamblingclinic.memphis.edu

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Meet The Gambling Clinic



(Bottom Row) Claudia McCausland, Adrienne Studaway, Trevor Watson, Andrea Wheeler
(Second Row) Andrew Meyers (Third Row) Andrea Booth, Rachel Coleman (Fourth Row) George
Mitzner, Don Yorgason (Fifth Row) Damon Lipinski, James Whelan (Sixth Row) Rebecca West

The Gambling Clinic Mission: Provide High Quality, Cost-Efficient services to Mid-South Problem Gamblers

COMMENTS,
QUESTIONS,
SUGGESTIONS?

WE WANT
YOUR
FEEDBACK!!