

Gambling Education and Prevention Needs Assessment for Juveniles in Residential Detention Centers of the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice

Executive Summary

Prepared for the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling

by

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The purpose of this study is to provide data to the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice in order to help in the decision process of whether to initiate a gambling education and prevention program in their residential facilities.

Five hundred and sixty-nine youths at 13 sites from Low, Moderate, High and Maximum risk levels were surveyed with an instrument measuring the extent of gambling involvement prior to placement in a DJJ Facility. The sample was statistically representative of the residential facilities on risk level and sex. The instrument consisted of a modification of the SOGS-RA gambling screen as well as additional items more attuned to the DJJ population. The main findings are:

- There were 467 males (82.1%) and 102 females (17.9%)
- The ages ranged from 11 to 20, with a mean of 15.8 years and a median of 16.0
- The majority were Protestant (52%) followed by “No Religion” (26%) and Catholic (15%)
- Blacks comprised 40 percent of the sample followed by Whites (37%) and Hispanics (12%). “All Others” added up to 11 percent

- Of the total sample, 91.0 percent indicated that they had gambled in at least one type of gambling during their lifetime
- Seventy-five percent of the entire sample gambled in at least one type during the 12 months prior to entering the residence
- The four most popular gambling activities for “last 12 months” were: personal skill sports [pool, basketball, bowling, etc.](56%), cards (51%), sports teams (48%), and dice (50%)
- Twenty-three percent of the youths who ever gambled, cited that they gambled on 10 or more types during the last year
- Eleven percent of the youths who gambled during the last year engaged in ten or more separate types of gambling on a weekly basis
- Eighty-four percent of those who gambled during the last year cited at least one negative consequence from a list in the SOGS-RA screening instrument
- Seventeen percent of those who gambled last year said that their being in a DJJ facility was connected to gambling
- Nine percent said that they had been arrested or detained at least once because of gambling
- Twenty-nine percent of the youths who gambled last year scored positive on the Acute Gambling Problems Index (created to supplement the SOGS-RA for the special needs of an adjudicated population)
- Forty six percent of those who gambled last year scored 4 or more on the SOGS-RA gambling screen which would classify them as “problem” or “pathological” gamblers
- Fifty one percent of those who gambled last year (or 42 % of the total sample) scored High, i.e., were found to have a need for gambling intervention on some level, according to the combined SOGS-RA — AGPI index