

Gambling and Problem Gambling among Minnesota Public School Students in 2019

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Acknowledgements

- This research was conducted with funds from Northstar Problem Gambling Alliance through a grant by the MN Department of Human Services.
- The Minnesota Student Survey data was provided by public school students in Minnesota and managed by the Minnesota Student Survey Interagency Team including the Departments of Human Services, Education, Health and Public Safety

Youth Gambling Research Questions

- What are the 2019 rates of gambling participation and problem gambling among MN public school students?
- Have 2019 rates of youth gambling and problem gambling increased, decreased, or remained stable from 2016? From 1992?
- What demographic, psychosocial, and behavioral variables are associated with problem gambling?

Overview and brief history of the Minnesota Student Survey (MSS)

- Mid to Late 80s, Need to measure alcohol and drug use among MN youth
- 1988 MSS developed by Chemical Dependency Division of MN DHS and modeled after NIDA Monitoring the Future survey conducted by the University of Michigan
- Starting in 1989, MSS was administered every three years to 6th, 9th, and 12th grades in the spring (in 2016 administered to 5th, 8th, 9th, and 11th grades in fall)
- School district participation is voluntary, as is individual student participation
- Majority of schools and students participate in MSS, usually over 70%
- 1992, five gambling items were added (gambling items not included in 1995 6th grade survey; gambling items not included in 2013 survey)
- Gambling items re-inserted in the 2016 MSS, including a new brief screen for problem gambling
- Grades surveyed in 2016 changed to 5th, 8th, 9th, and 11th grades
- This is the largest database in existence on youth gambling with about 80,000 students each administration, 1992, 1995, 1998, 2001, 2004, 2007, 2010; and 115,000 students in 2016 and 2019
- Casino item added in 1998; online gambling item added in 2007; Brief Adolescent Gambling Screen added in 2016

2019 MSS Methodology

- MSS is an anonymous survey; no names or identifying code numbers are collected, and survey answers cannot be traced to an individual. Students can decline to take the survey. If they take the survey, students can skip any question or stop at any point.
- Administered in the first half of 2019 to students in grades 5, 8, 9, and 11 statewide
- Most public school districts (81%) chose to participate. Across the state, approximately 66% of fifth graders, 68% of eighth graders, 66% of ninth graders, and 54% of eleventh graders participated
- MSS administered to regular public schools, including charter and online schools
- Level 1-Grade 5 survey version was shorter than the Level 2-Grade 8 survey version, which in turn was shorter than Level 3-Grades 9 and 11 version
- Gambling section included in Levels 2 (8th grade) and 3 (9th and 11th grades) but not in Level 1 (5th grade)
- All three levels of the MSS were administered online

MSS Content

- Minnesota Student Survey, a large omnibus statewide school-based census-like survey
- Content domains include demographics, school problems, school violence/safety, activities, health, mental health, nutrition, family relationships, emotional distress, suicidal behavior, antisocial behaviors, family alcohol/drug problems, physical/sexual abuse, gambling behavior, communication with parents, alcohol/drug and tobacco use behaviors, sources of alcohol/drugs/tobacco, substance use diagnostic criteria, sexual behavior, dating violence, and pregnancy.
- Gambling behavior includes participation and gambling problems, Brief Adolescent Gambling Screen (BAGS) ⁶

2019 Gambling Participation Items

- The next questions are about gambling. By gambling, we mean when you bet money or something else of value so that you can win or gain money or something else.
- During the last 12 months, how often have you done the following gambling/betting activities?
- 1) Played cards, bet on sports teams or games of personal skill like video gaming, pool, golf or bowling
- 2) Bought lottery tickets or scratch offs
- 3) Gambled in a casino
- 4) Gambled for money online
- Each gambling participation item has the following six response options: (a) Not at all; (b) Less than once a month; (c) About once a month; (d) About once a week; (e) Two to six times a week; and (f) Daily

Brief Adolescent Gambling Screen Items

- If student gambled in the last 12 months
- During the last 12 months, how often have you . . .
- 1) Hidden your gambling/betting from your parents, other family members or teachers?
- 2) Felt that you might have a problem with gambling/betting?
- 3) Skipped hanging out with friends who do not gamble/bet to hang out with friends who do gamble/bet?
- Each problem gambling item has the following four response options: (a) Never; (b) Sometimes; (c) Many times; and (d) All of the time.

2019 Minnesota Student Sample Sizes
by Gender and Grade (Total N = 113,707)

	8 th Grade	9 th Grade	11 th Grade
Boys	20,511	19,507	15,534
Girls	21,433	20,712	16,010
Total	41,944	40,219	31,544

2019 Rates of Gambling Participation

- 30% of 8th, 9th and 11th grade public school students have played an informal or legal form of gambling
- 25% played informal games
- 7% reported buying a lottery ticket or scratchoff
- 2% reported gambling in a casino
- 2% reported gambling online

2019 Rates of Frequent Gambling (weekly or more often) Participation

- 6.5% of 8th, 9th and 11th grade public school students have played an informal or legal form of gambling weekly or more often
- 5% played informal games weekly or more often
- 1% reported buying a lottery ticket or scratchoff weekly or more often
- 1% reported gambling in a casino weekly or more often
- 1% reported gambling online weekly or more often

2019 Rates of Problem Gambling

- Students who did not participate in any gambling in the past year were instructed to skip the three problem gambling items (BAGS)
- 71.2% No gambling
- 26% No problem gambling (gambled and BAGS score of 0)
- 2.3% Subclinical problem gambling (gambled and BAGS score of 1, 2 or 3)
- 0.5% Problem gambling (gambled and BAGS score of 4 or more)
- This rate of 0.5% is the same as was reported for 2016 MSS
- While one half of one percent may not seem important it represents over 2,000 students in MN public secondary schools (403,331)

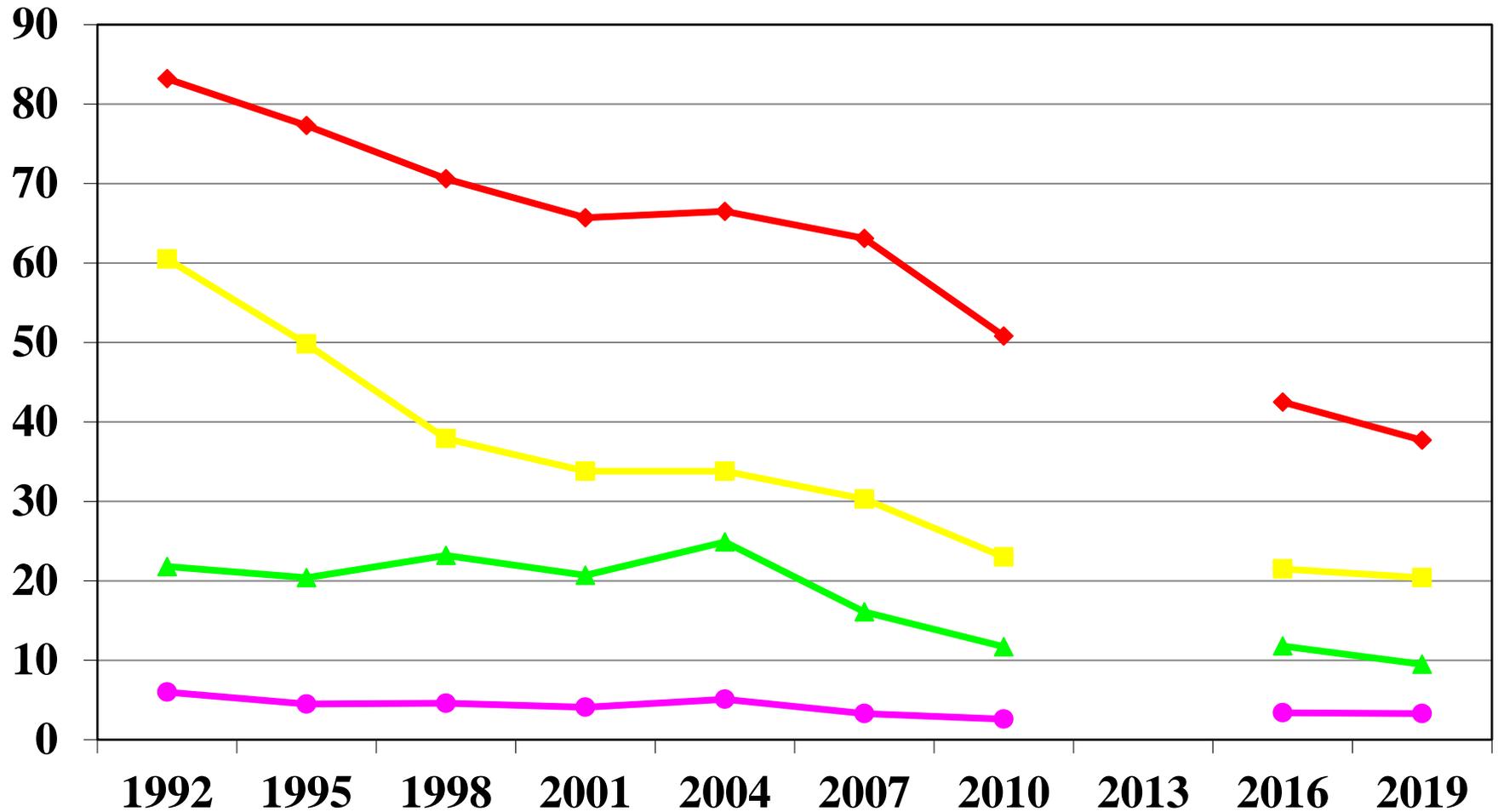
Problem Gambling (2019)



Comparison of Gambling Participation from 2016 to 2019

- Slight decline in gambling from 2016 (32.1%) to 2019 (29.6%)
- Three of the four forms of gambling showed slight declines except the lottery which showed no change
- Slight decline in frequent gambling from 2016 (7.5%) to 2019 (6.5%)
- Three of the four forms of gambling showed slight declines except casino which showed a slight increase
- Have there been changes in gambling from 1992?

Ninth Grade Boys and Girls Rates of Any Gambling and Frequent Gambling from 1992 to 2019



Have youth gambling rates increased, decreased or stayed the same?

- Ninth grade is the only grade that has been surveyed at each MSS administration every three years from 1992 to 2019 (with the exception of 2013 which did not include gambling items)
- Decreased: Youth gambling rates have decreased and there are fewer youth gambling in 2019 than in 1992 as shown by large and consistent declines for both 9th grade boys and girls rates of any gambling from 1992 to 2019
- Frequent (weekly or more often) gambling exhibited small and inconsistent declines from 1992 to 2019, and there are fewer frequent gamblers in 2019 than there were in 1992.
- Frequent gambling rates have remained relatively stable over time compared to rates of any gambling
- For the majority of students, gambling participation has turned around since 1992 when gambling participation rates were 70% and now in 2019 that is the figure for not gambling
- The goal of reducing the large number of adolescents involved in gambling from the early 1990s has been met
- In spite of these declines, there remains a significant number of youth participating in gambling, frequent gambling, and problem gambling
- In a review of youth gambling studies from around the world, Volberg, Gupta, Griffiths, Olason, and Delfabbro (2010), concluded that the literature is mixed, but most studies indicate either stability or decreases

What demographic, psychosocial, and behavioral variables are associated with problem gambling?

- There were six questions representing two content domains of tobacco use and antisocial behavior, that were correlated with problem gambling:
- 1) During the last 30 days, on how many days did you use a hookah or a waterpipe to smoke tobacco?
- 2) During the last 12 months, how often have you run away from home?
- 3) During the last 30 days, on how many days did you use chewing tobacco, snuff or dip?
- 4) During the last 12 months, how often have you damaged or destroyed property?
- 5) During the last 30 days, on how many days did you smoke cigars, cigarillos or little cigars?
- 6) During the last 12 months, how often have you hit or beat up another person?
- Tobacco use and antisocial behaviors were related to problem gambling but only accounted for 16% of the variance in problem gambling

Limitations of Current Study

- Not a comprehensive gambling assessment (not all games/types/venues are included); use of a brief screen and gross level measure of frequency of gambling (see response options that do not include time or money lost)
- Possible sample bias due to youth absent on the day of the survey (absent youth are likely to have more involvement in gambling than students who are present)
- Does not include all grades and ages
- Self-report with no corroboration
- Different types of gambling (cards, sports betting, etc.) are combined in one item
- Are there new forms of gambling not included in these items, such as betting on fantasy sports, e-sports, and other forms of electronic gambling

Future Research Directions

- Why are fewer youth gambling?
- Are underage youth accessing legal forms of gambling such as lottery, casino and online, as they report? Can this be corroborated? How are underage youth accessing lottery, casino and online gambling?
- Why have rates of frequent gambling and problem gambling remained relatively stable and not decreased as any gambling has decreased?
- What variables may serve as risk and protective factors that will have implications for public awareness and prevention?
- Your question?

Youth gambling articles published by the author from MSS

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Visit: <http://www.northstarproblemgambling.org/news-publications/>

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