GOING ALL IN FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS PREVENTION PROGRAMS

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“Look children, this is all I’m going to say about drugs...Stay away from them...There’s a time and a place for everything...and it’s called college.”

Chef

Parker & Stone, South Park
>13 million U.S. college students

- 54% female
- ~9 out of every 13 students is white (non-Hispanic)
- ~10 million are between 18 and 24 years old
- As few as 30% complete in 4 years

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau (2008 data); UCLA Higher Education Research Institute
Continuum of gambling behavior

Most people either haven’t gambled within the past year (20-30%) or gamble in a non-problematic, recreational way.

In the United States:

- 12% of adolescents
- 16% of college students
- 6% of adults
College Student Gambling Consequences

- Disordered gambling students report higher alcohol use, poorer academic performance, more mental health symptoms, and greater suicidal ideation (Crockford & el-Guebaly, 1998; Lesieur et al. 1991; Takushi et al., 2002; Whiteside, et al., 2005)
Correlates* or Risk Factors

- Gender (men)
- Ethnicity (Asian and Native American)
- **Athletes**
- **Greek affiliation**
- Family history (genetic and/or socialization)
- Age of onset (early gambling = problems later)
- Early big win
- AOD use*
- Depression and/or anxiety*
- Sensation seeking and impulsivity*
Gambling Behavioral Indicators

- Pathological Gambling
  - Gambling 1.2 times per month
  - Gambling more than 2.1 hours per month
  - Intending to wager more than 6.1% of monthly income
  - Actually wagering more than 10.5% of monthly income

Weinstock, Whelan, & Meyers, 2008
Prevention

- The goal of prevention is to avoid, reduce, or alter trajectories of problem behaviors before they reach an apex of crisis, leading to better outcomes than if nothing was done.

(Dickerson, Dervensky, and Gupta, 2002).
Spectrum of Intervention Response

Thresholds for Action

None

Primary Prevention

Brief Intervention

Specialized Treatment

Moderate

Severe

Institute of Medicine, (1990)
Prevalence of College Alcohol or Gambling Policies in U.S. Colleges and Universities

Shaffer et al, 2005
National Center for Responsible Gaming
Task Force on College Gambling Policies (2009)

1. Establish a campus-wide committee to develop and monitor a comprehensive policy on gambling.
2. Ensure that college policies are consistent with applicable local, state, and federal laws.
3. Strive for consistency and universal application with prohibitions and restrictions on gambling and alcohol use at special events.
4. Promote campus-community collaborations that focus on reducing problems with student drinking and gambling.
5. Encourage adjustments in disciplinary actions applied to violators of gambling rules if the student seeks assistance from health or counseling services.
6. Make reasonable accommodations for students focused on recovery from a problem with gambling or alcohol.

7. Measure student attitudes, behaviors, and problems with gambling through campus surveys or by incorporating such measures into existing campus health-related surveys.

8. Promote campus-wide awareness of (1) pathological gambling as a mental health disorder that has a high rate of comorbidity with alcohol use and other addictive disorders, and (2) responsible gaming principles.

9. Employ evidence-based strategies to identify and help students with gambling and alcohol problems.

10. Strengthen the capacity of counseling services to identify and treat gambling disorders.
Comprehensive Prevention Programming

- University of Alabama implemented a Gambling Action Team (GAT) to facilitate campus wide awareness of the problems associated with problem and compulsive gambling and to develop assistance strategies to address such problems for the UA student body, faculty, and staff.

Indicated Prevention: Brief Intervention for College Gambling

  - Brief 1-hour Personalized Feedback Intervention (PFI) integrating Cognitive Behavioral Treatment with Motivational Interviewing, versus assessment only
  - Pilot study with 28 SOGS 3+ college students
  - Sample too small to draw firm conclusions, but results promising, especially for reducing concurrent gambling and drinking
Indicated Prevention: Brief Intervention for College Gambling

- Randomized clinical trial with assignment to a
  - personalized feedback intervention (PFI),
  - cognitive–behavioral intervention (CBI)
  - or assessment-only control (AOC).

- Relative to control, results at 6-month follow-up indicated reductions in both interventions for gambling consequences and DSM-IV criteria and reductions in gambling frequency for those in the PFI condition.

Indicated Prevention: Brief Intervention for College Gambling

- A total of 117 college student problem and pathological gamblers.
- Students were assigned randomly to:
  - an assessment-only control
  - 10 minutes of brief advice
  - one session of motivational enhancement therapy (MET)
  - one session of MET, plus three sessions of cognitive–behavioral therapy (CBT).

Indicated Prevention: Brief Intervention for College Gambling

- Compared to the assessment-only condition, those receiving any intervention had significant decreases in ASI-G scores and days and dollars wagered over time.
- The MET condition decreased significantly ASI-G scores and dollars wagered over time, and increased the odds of a clinically significant reduction in gambling at the 9-month follow-up relative to the assessment-only condition, even after controlling for baseline indices that could impact outcomes.
- The Brief Advice and MET+CBT conditions had benefits on some, but not all, indices of gambling.
- None of the interventions differed significantly from one another.

Indicated Prevention Summary

- Few studies exist
- The briefest interventions seem to make the most impact
- Brief Interventions are effective
  - Reduce time spent gambling
  - Reduce money spent gambling
  - Reduce negative consequences (gambling problem)
Brief Advice for College & Universities

- **Administrators**
  - Build on existing alcohol/drug expertise to develop comprehensive policies for students, faculty, & staff
  - Add gambling questions to annual university-wide assessments that measure frequency, quantity, and consequences

- **Healthcare providers**
  - Screen for gambling behavior during intakes
  - Receive training in gambling treatment (become a certified gambling counselor)
Brief Advice for College & Universities

- **Student Life/Resident Advisors**
  - Include at least yearly programming that promotes awareness and/or prevention efforts for college student problem gambling
  - Promote activities during the [Annual Problem Gambling Awareness Week](http://www.npgaw.org/)
  - Consider providing literature about problem gambling and Washington State Problem Gambling Hotline number at every “Casino Night Event”
Questions?