

## Gambling Addiction Issues

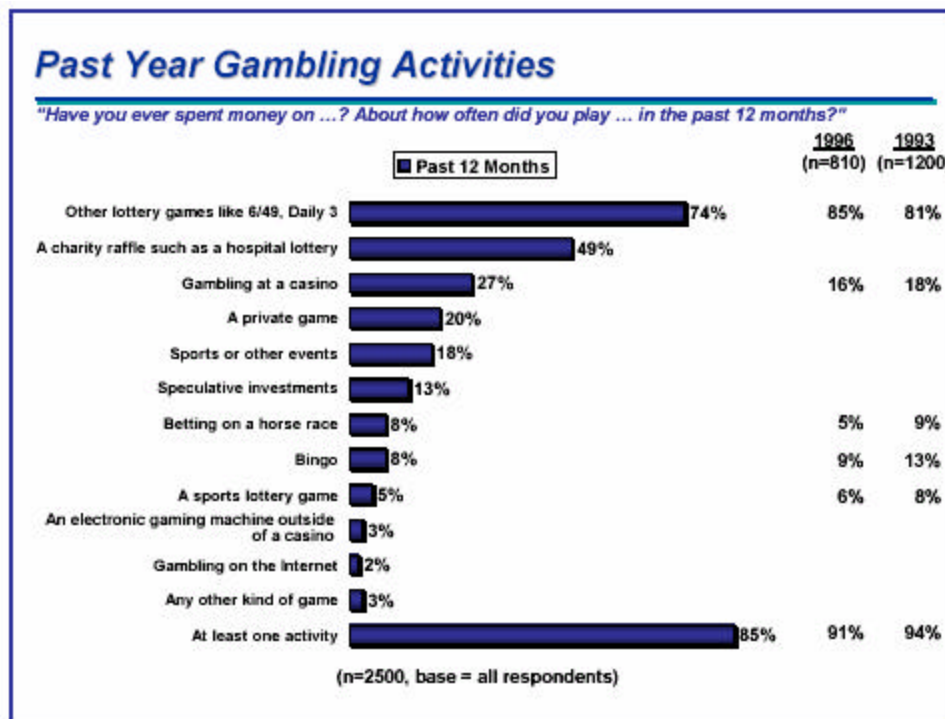
### Definition of Problem Gambling

"Problem gambling is gambling behaviour that creates negative consequences for the gambler, others in his or her social network, or for the community." (Ferris & Wynne, 2001).

There is also a definition for pathological gambling, the more acute element of the continuum of gambling-related problems, which is recognized as a mental disorder by the American Psychiatric Association. The main features of pathological gambling are: (1) a continuous or periodic loss of control over gambling; (2) a progression, in gambling frequency and amounts wagered, in the preoccupation with gambling and in obtaining monies with which to gamble; and (3) a continuation of gambling involvement despite adverse consequences (American Psychiatric Association, 1994).

### Gambling Activity

The Problem Gambling Prevalence Study conducted at the end of 2002, where 2,500 adult British Columbians were interviewed, indicates that in 2002, 85% of the population participated in at least one gambling activity:



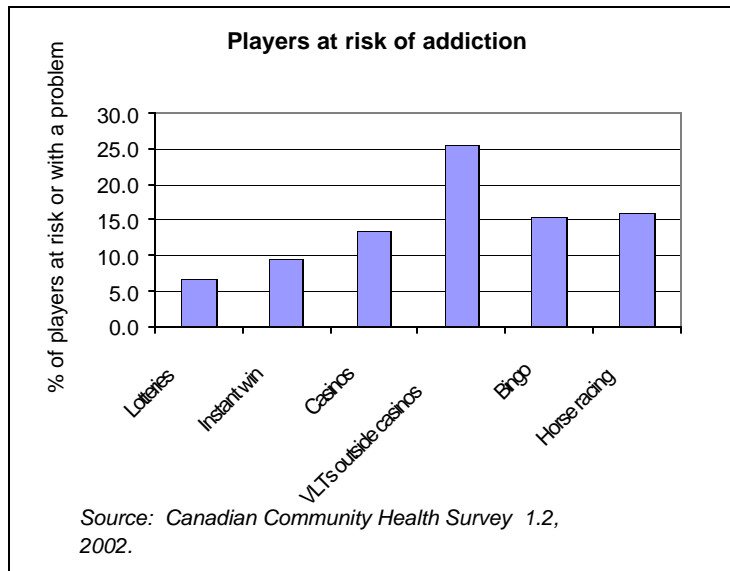
In terms of defining a favourite gambling activity, past year gamblers indicated that lottery games (34%) was the number one favourite, followed by casino slot machines (11%), casino card games (6%), and horseracing (4%).

When asked if they have participated in at least one gambling activity on a weekly basis, 39% of British Columbians indicated that they did. Buying lottery tickets was the most popular weekly activity (33%).

### Problem Gambling Prevalence

It is estimated that 4.6% of adult British Columbians are problem gamblers, including 4.2% who are moderate problem gamblers and 0.4% who are severe problem gamblers. Some gambling activities are associated with higher problem gambling rates. According to the B.C. Problem Gambling Prevalence Study, the top activities in terms of problem gamblers are sport lotteries (12.9%), bingo (10.9%), horseracing (10.4%), casinos (8.8%), and electronic gaming machines outside casinos (8.4%).

A recent study by Statistics Canada indicates that the type of gambling that presents the greater risk for developing gambling problems are VLT's outside casinos (e.g. bars), as the following chart indicates. While there is no category for slots, the closest comparable would be casino, which has a comparable risk to bingo and horseracing.



Note: There are no VLT's outside casinos in B.C. Gambling Machines in B.C. are within casinos.

### Gaming Revenue Generated by Problem Gamblers

Problem gamblers do spend more on gaming activities than non-problem gamblers. Based on a review of current literature, this amount is difficult to estimate. The most recent study in the Canadian context is the research published by Robert Williams and Robert Wood from the University of Lethbridge. In the Journal Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy, Vol.4, No.1, 2004, they indicate that: "an estimate of the proportion of gaming revenue derived from problem gamblers in Canada, and using secondary data collected in eight provinces, is 23.1%, compared to a problem gambling prevalence rate of 4.2%. This estimate must be seen as tentative, however, as self-reported expenditures are 2.1 times higher than actual provincial gaming revenues."

Studies in other jurisdictions indicate that the proportion of revenue generated by problem gamblers is as follows: Australia (1999) at 33%, New Zealand (2000) at 19%, and the United States (1999) at 15%.