

Gambling Addiction

The Challenge and The Response

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In 1998...





**TN Institute for Gambling
Education & Research**

TGC

THE GAMBLING CLINIC



Our Mission

Provide a science-informed system of care to reduce the harms caused by gambling for all Tennesseans





Agenda

- ❖ Public Health
- ❖ Clinical
- ❖ Prevention



Agenda

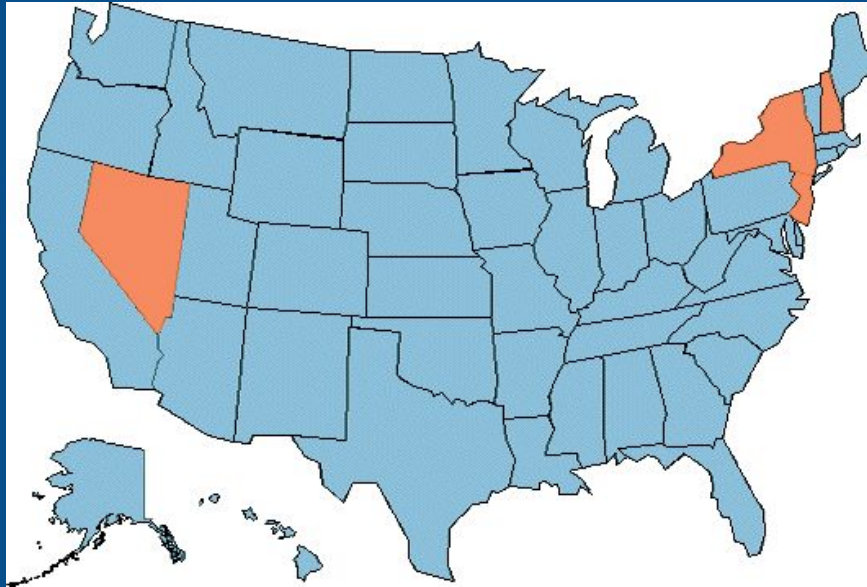
- ❖ **Public Health**
- ❖ Clinical
- ❖ Prevention

GAMBLING

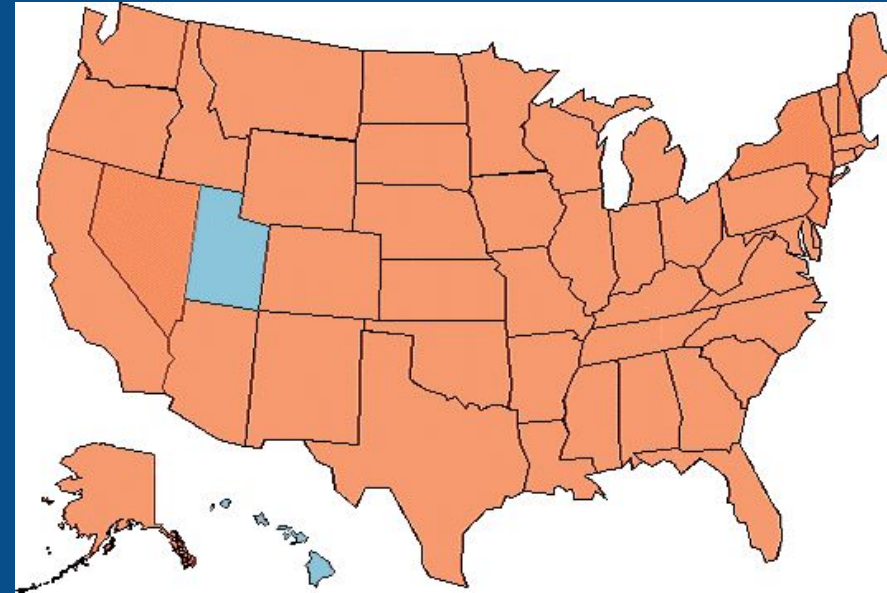
Betting money or something of value on a game or event where the outcome is unknown in the hope of winning





Changes Legalized Gambling Opportunities



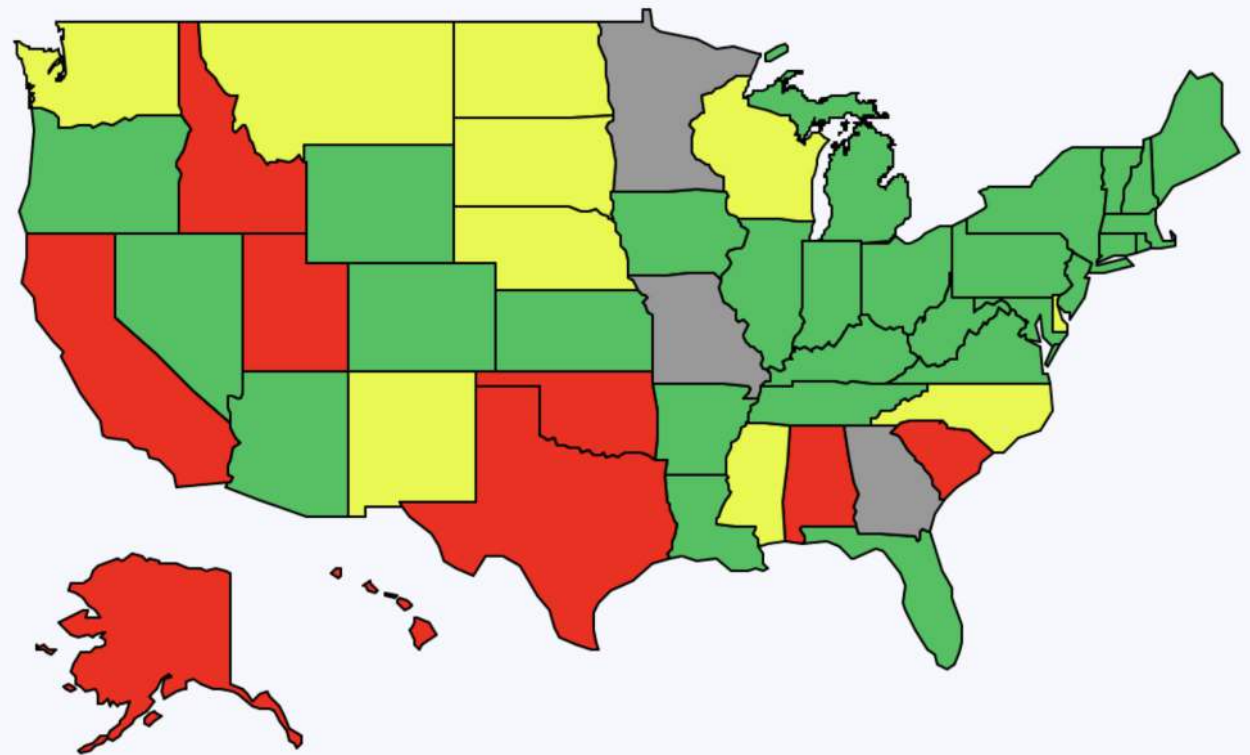
1971



2004

-  Gambling Legal
-  Gambling Illegal

LEGALIZED SPORTS BETTING



● Possible 2025 ● Legal (Retail) ● Legal (Online) ● 2026+ or Never

Changes...

Type

Lottery



Casino



Sports Betting

Accessibility

Travel



Drive



Reach

Acceptability

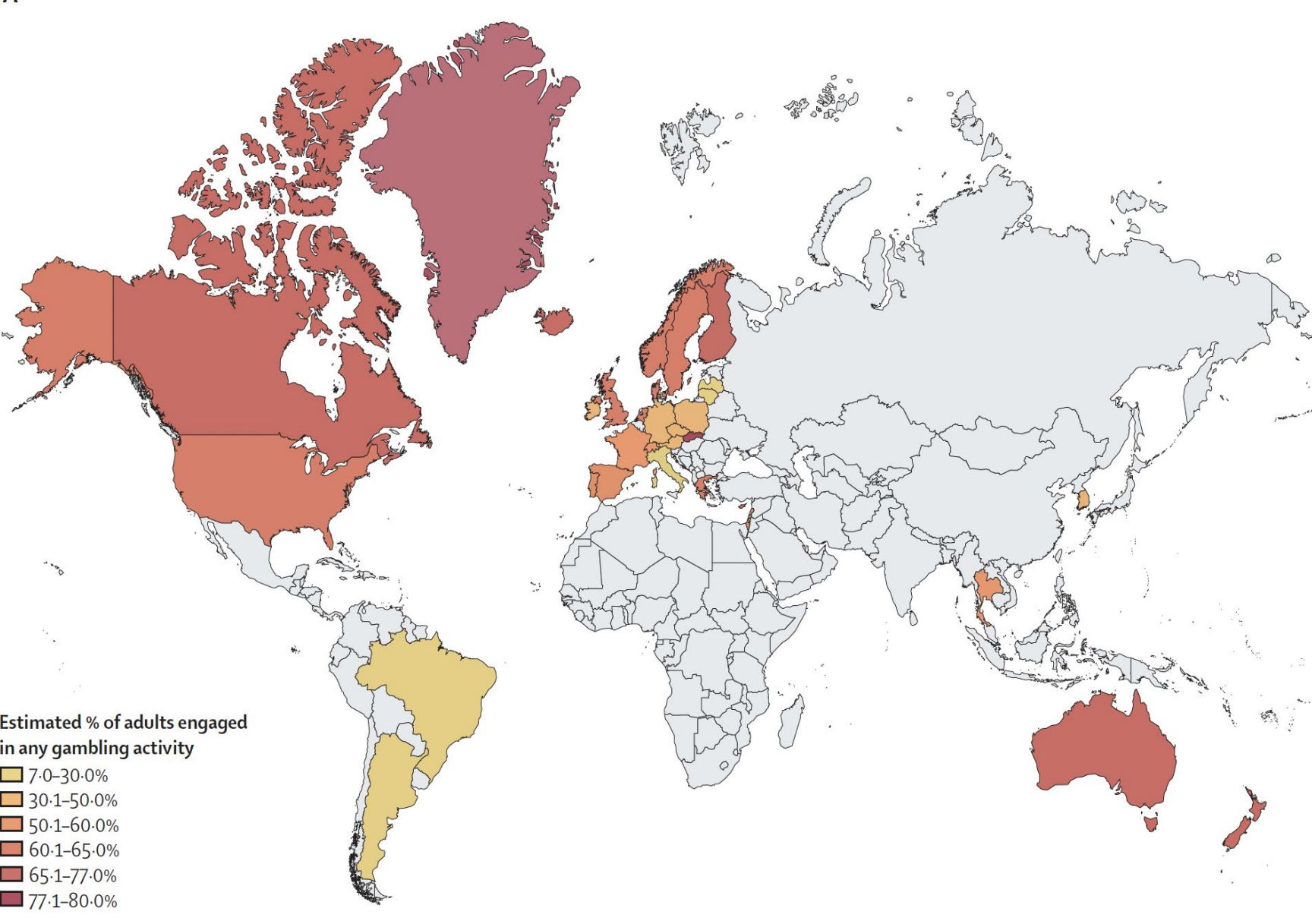
Questionable
acceptability



Acceptable



Commercialized



Prevalence

- ❖ 380 studies ('10-'24)
- ❖ 68 countries
- ❖ 46.2 % gambled past year
- ❖ 1-2% significant problems
- ❖ Highest % of problems is slot machines

Global Gambling Involvement

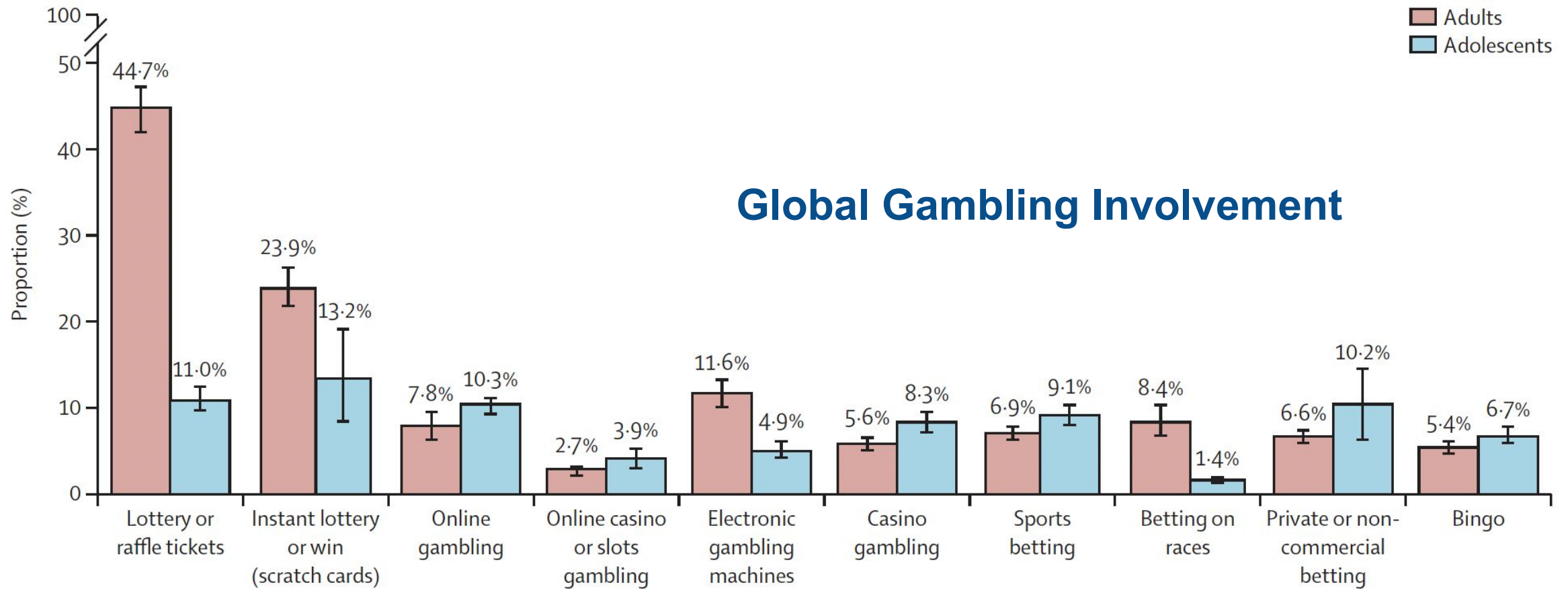


Figure 2: Past year participation in specific gambling activities, among adults and adolescents

GAMBLING CONTINUUM



DIAGNOSTIC CRITERIA

- Gambling with increasing amounts of money in order to achieve the desired level of excitement.
- Is restless or irritable when attempting to cut down or stop gambling.
- Repeated unsuccessful efforts to control, cut back, or stop gambling.
- Often preoccupied with gambling.
- Gambles when distressed.
- After losing money gambling, often returns another day to get even.
- Lies to conceal the extent of gambling involvement.
- Has jeopardized or lost a significant relationship, job, or educational or career opportunity because of gambling.
- Relies on others to provide money to relieve a desperate financial situation caused by gambling.

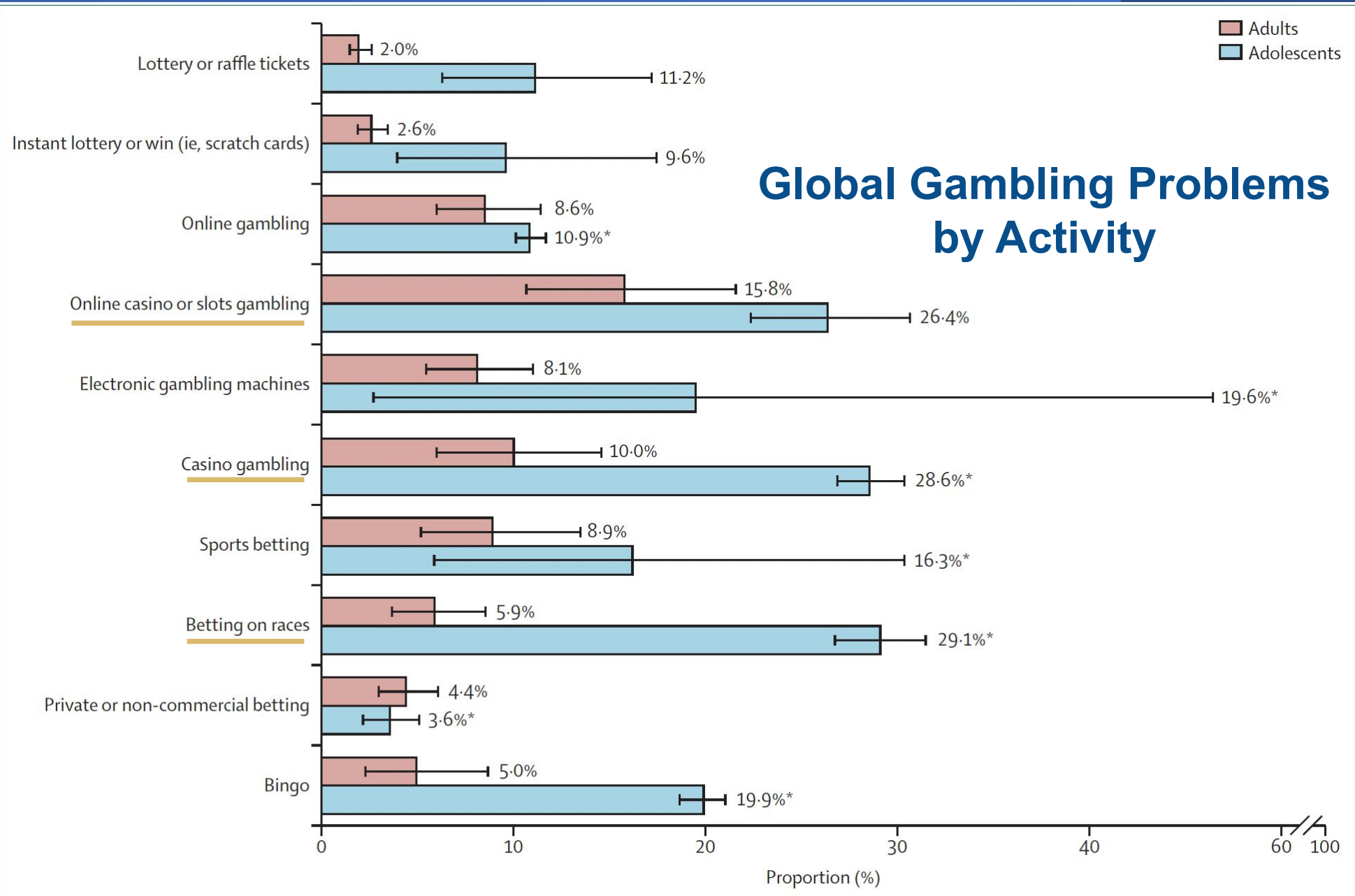
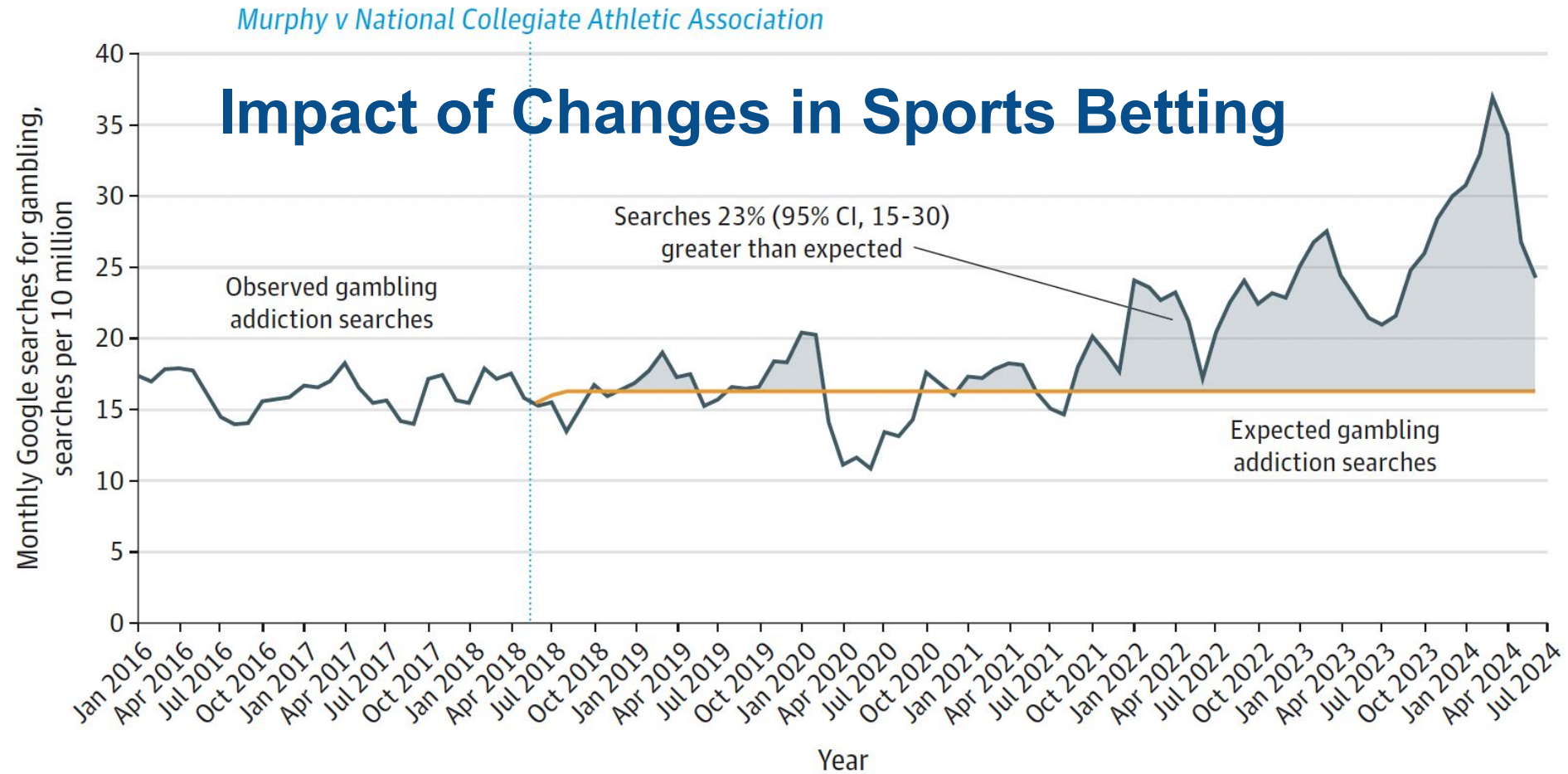


Figure 5: Prevalence of problematic gambling or gambling disorder by activity for adults and adolescents

Table 3. Categories of harms associated with gambling, adapted from Langham et al. (2015).

	Individual and family	Community and society
Financial	Reduced disposable income, erosion of savings, basic needs not covered, financial insecurity, indebtedment, bankruptcy, poor credit rating, homelessness	Welfare resilience, debt, business closures, impact on other industries, infrastructure, productivity loss, state dependence on gambling revenue, residential area degeneration and increased living costs
Relationships	Disengagement with relationships, family disruption, conflict, neglect, exploitation of relationships, family violence, victim of crime.	Cost of relationship breakdown, lack of social cohesion, social isolation and exclusion, increased inequalities, reduced social capital
Emotional and psychological	Emotional and psychological distress, mental health problems, lack of control, feelings of insecurity and lack of safety, shame and stigma, reduced wellbeing and happiness	Increased burden of disease, social care costs, prevention costs
Health	Physical symptoms, problem gambling, other risky consumptions, sleep patterns, noncompliance with medication, comorbidities, violence, self-harm and suicide, risk taking, neglected self-care	Increased burden of disease, Regulation and research costs, health care costs, prevention costs, research costs, long-term disability costs
Cultural	Gambling against cultural beliefs, reduced contribution and time to cultural engagement, exclusion, stigma	Cultural community and cultural identity degeneration, socio-cultural costs, disconnection of youth, normalization of gambling
Work and study	Criminal acts at work, reduced performance, termination of employment, unstable employment, absenteeism, relationships at work, school drop out	Economic costs of reduced productivity, unemployment, and crime
Crime	Engagement in criminal activity as consequence of gambling, anti-social behavior, incarceration	Costs of criminal activity

Figure 2. Monthly Internet Searches for Gambling Addiction in the US From January 2016 to June 2024



Yeola A, Allen MR, Desai N, Poliak A, Yang KH, Smith DM, Ayers JW. Growing Health Concern Regarding Gambling Addiction in the Age of Sportsbooks. JAMA Intern Med. 2025 Feb 17:e248193. doi: 10.1001/jamainternmed.2024.8193. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 39960737; PMCID: PMC11833657.



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Most common

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Most Severe

Co-Occurring Problems



Disorder	Rate
Substance use disorder	57.5 %
Alcohol use disorder	28.1 %
Illicit drug use	17.2 %
Nicotine dependence	60.1 %
Mood disorder	37.9 %
major Depression	23.1 %
Bipolar	9.8 %
Anxiety disorder	28.8 %
Psychotic Disorders	4.5%

SCREENING

Brief Biosocial Gambling Screen

	Yes	No
During the past 12-months, have you become restless, irritable or anxious when trying to stop/cut down on gambling		
During the past 12-months, have you tried to keep your family or friends from knowing how much you gamble?		
During the past 12-months, did you have such financial trouble as a result of your gambling that you had to get help with living expenses from family, friends, or welfare?		

sensitivity 0.96; specificity 0.99; PPV = .36

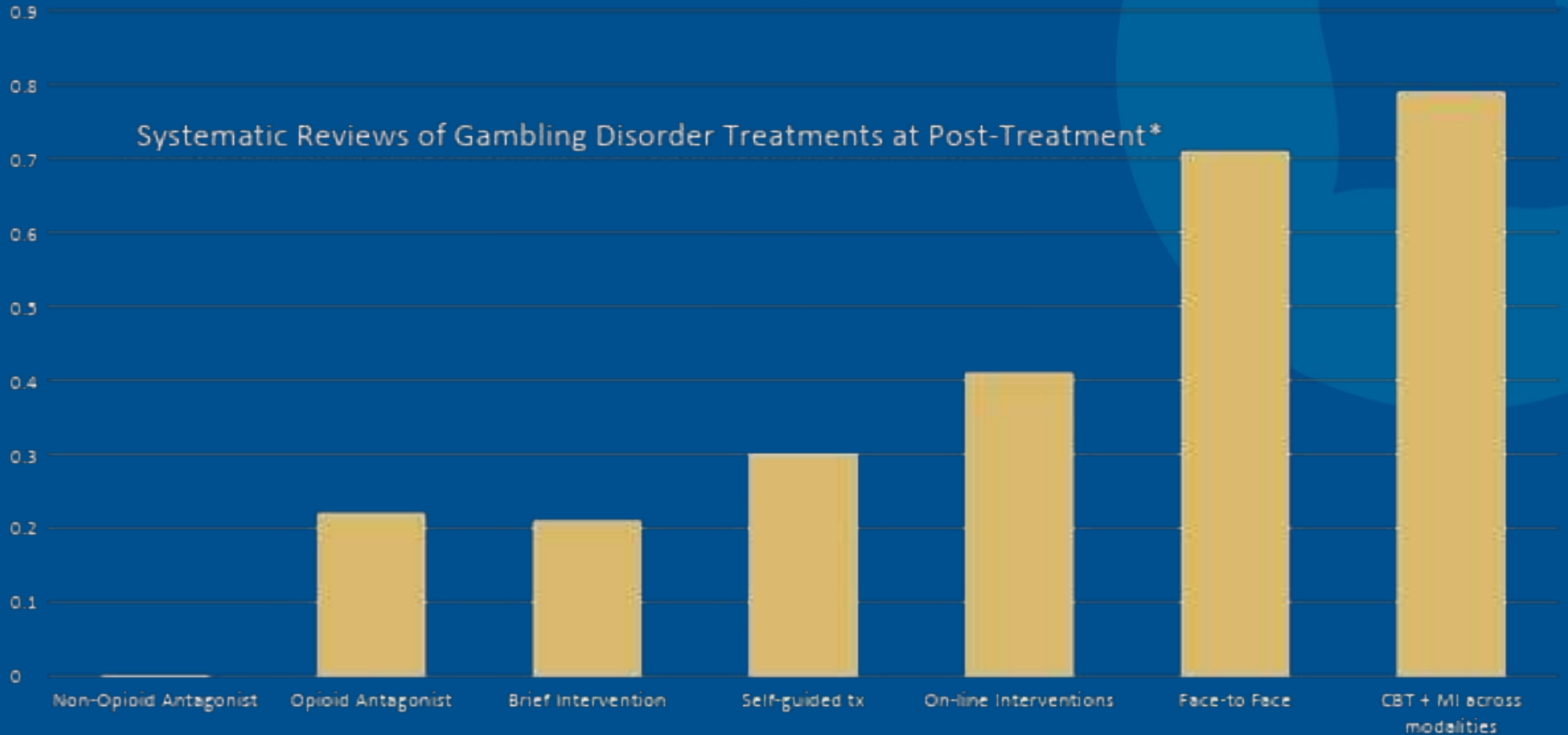
A yes to any item then respondent is at risk for a gambling problem. Proceed with diagnostic interview

PROBLEM ASSESSMENT

Problem Gambling Severity Index (PGSI)

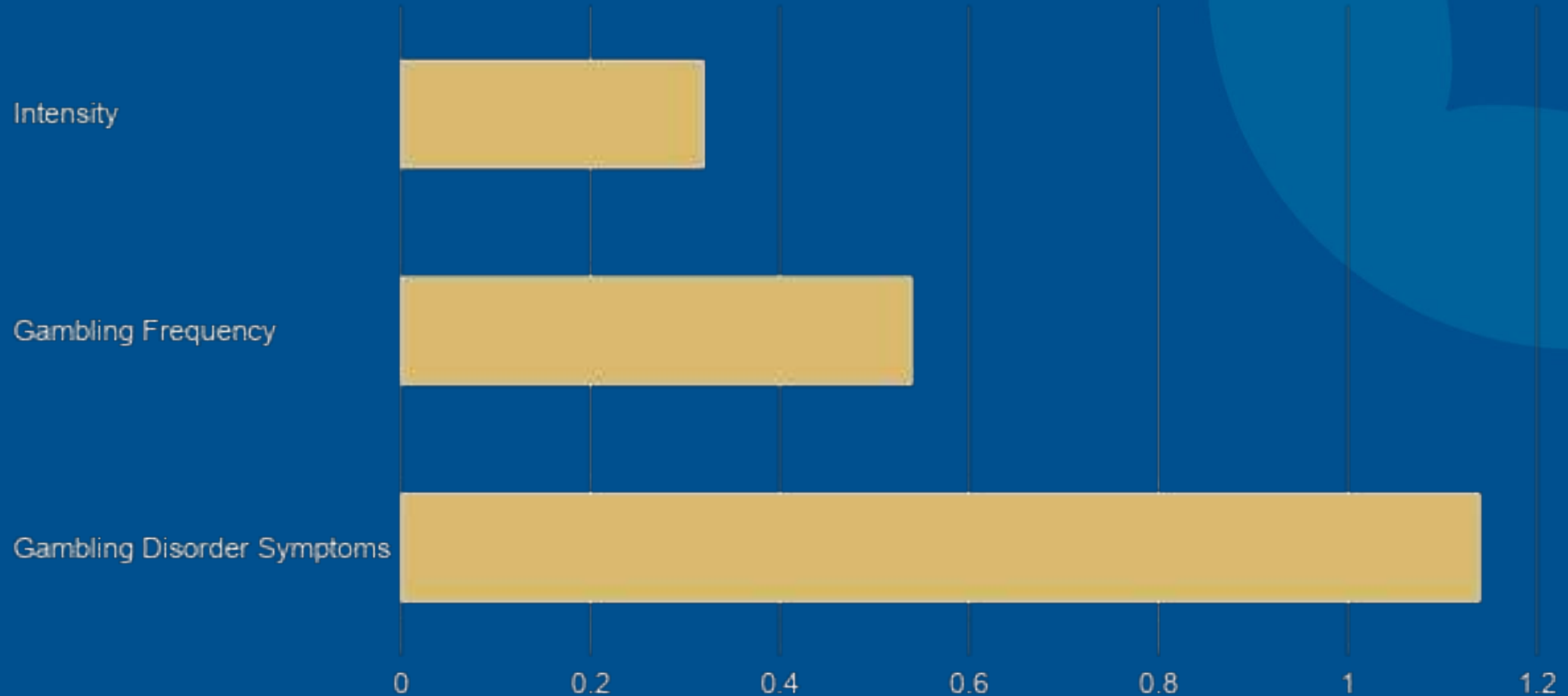
- 9-item self-report
- 4 response options
 - never, sometimes, most of the time, always
- No, low, moderate, high-risk categories
- Support for validity; ok temporal reliability
- Low/Moderate distinction not good

TREATMENT

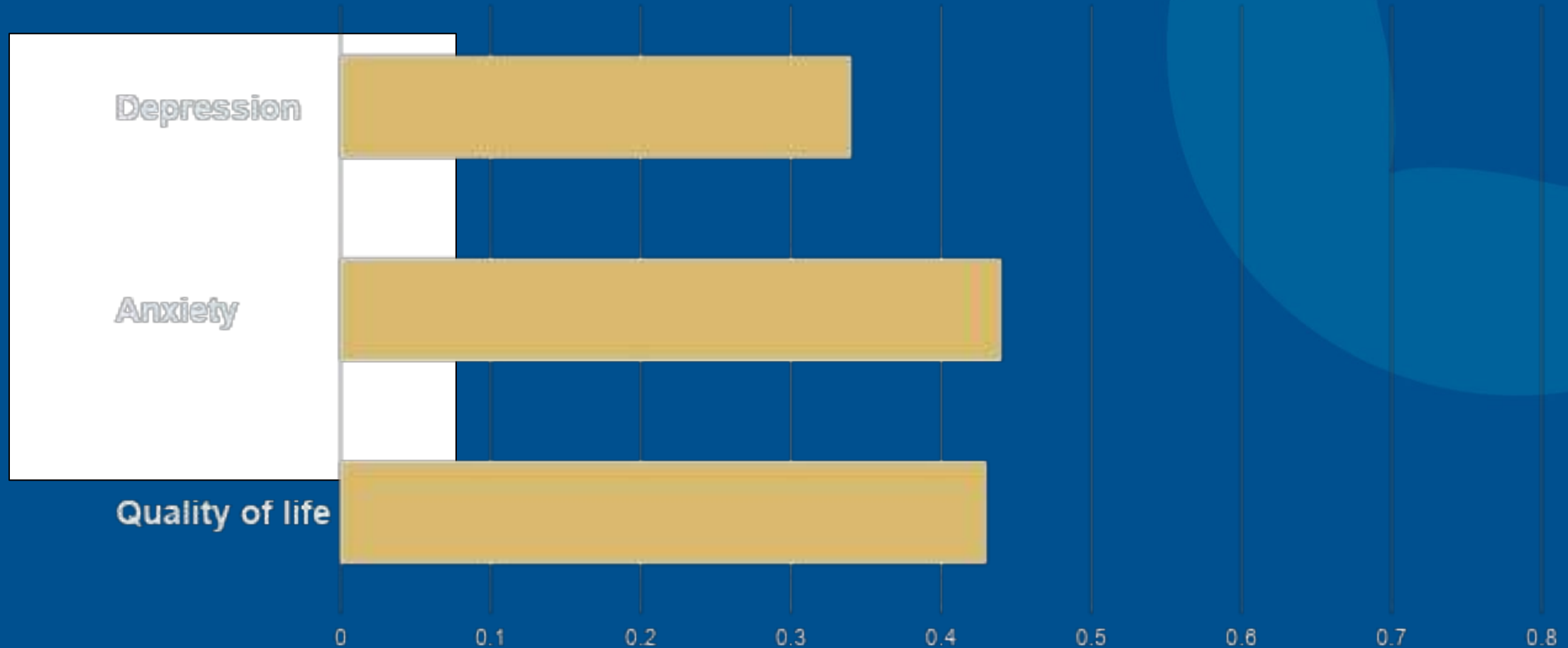


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GAMBLING OUTCOMES

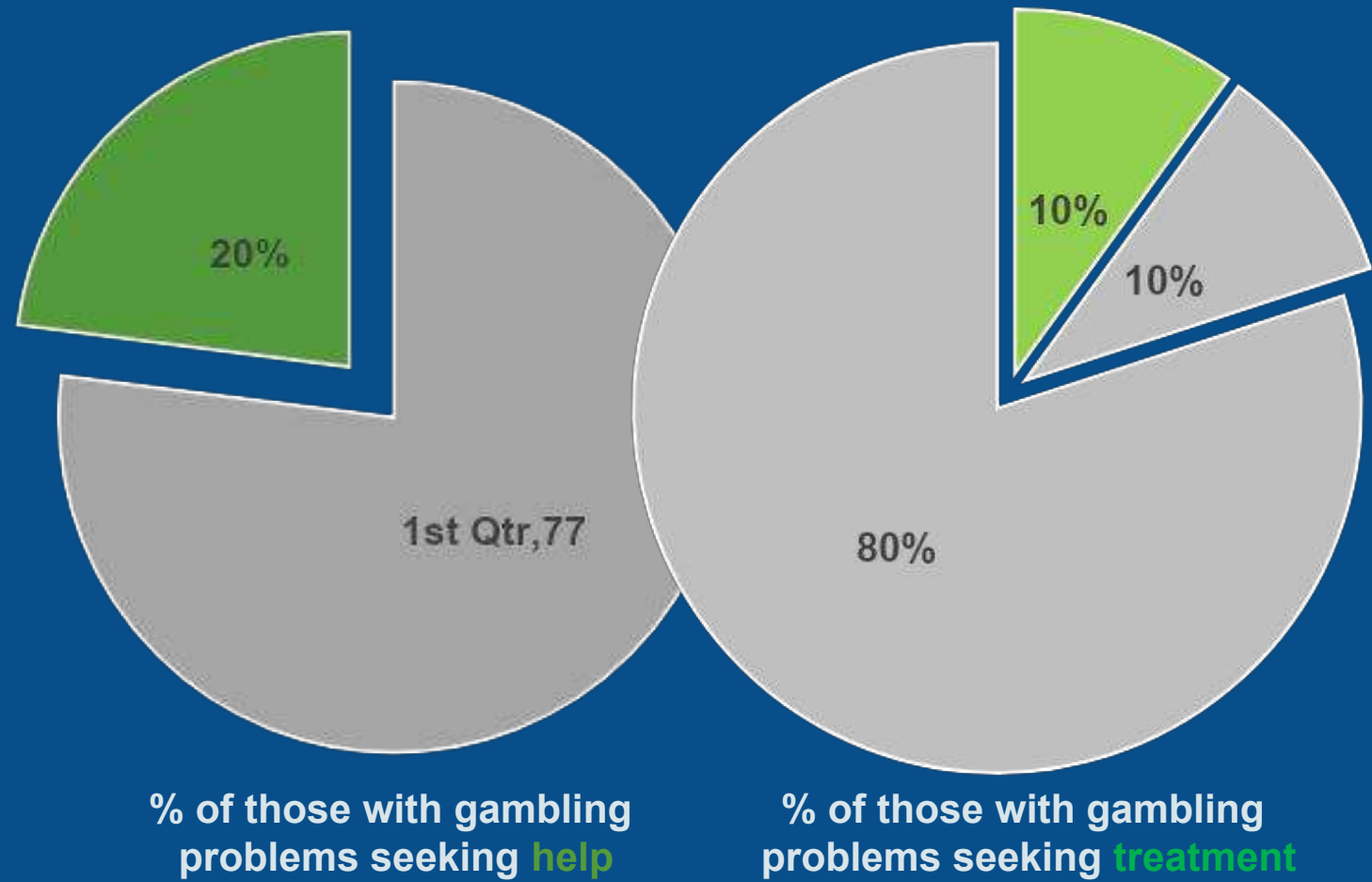


GAMBLING OUTCOMES



Pfund RA, King SA, Forman DP, Zech JM, Ginley MK, Peter SC, McAfee NW, Witkiewitz K, Whelan JP.(2023). Effects of cognitive behavioral techniques for gambling on recovery defined by gambling, psychological functioning, and quality of life: A systematic review and meta-analysis. Psychol Addictive Behavior

Help Seeking

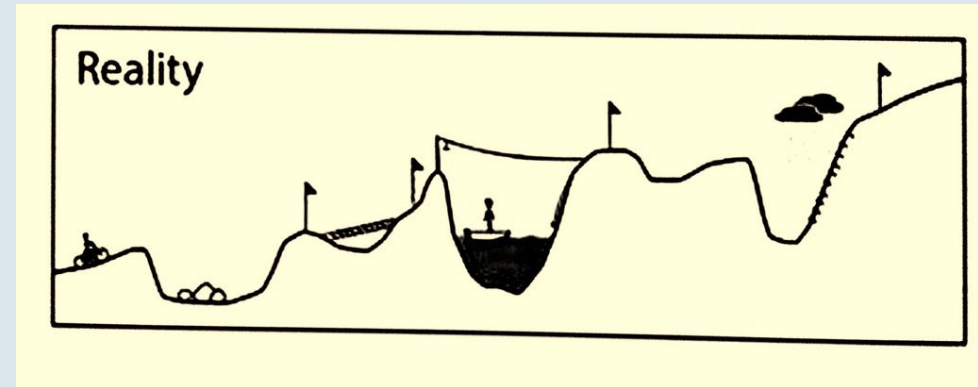
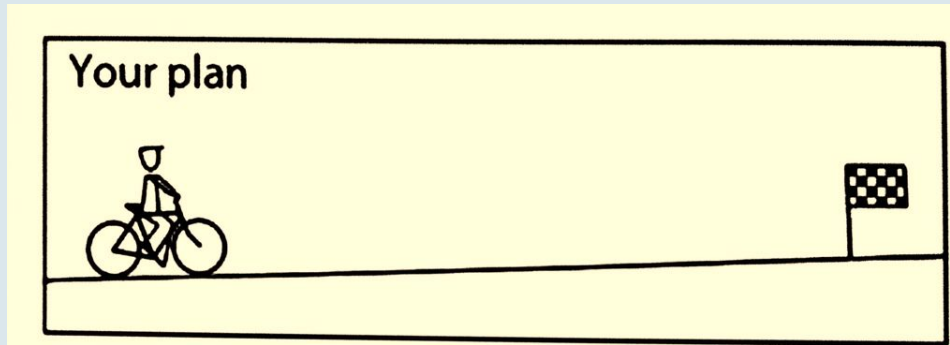


Treatment Hesitancy

Reasons for *not seeking gambling* treatment

- Low awareness of problems/harms
- Stigma - Public and Self
- Limited awareness of and access to effective service
- Never being able to win back their losses

Treatment Retention



- 39% of those who start psychological treatment
 - 40% who start drug trial fail to complete



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How Important Is Responsible Gambling?



**RESPONSIBLE
GAMBLING**

18+

- AKA safer gambling *
- Social responsibility initiatives by gaming operators
- Options required by regulators
- To prevent or mitigate the harms due to gambling



**HAVE A
GAME PLAN**
Bet responsibly.

#RGEW21





RISK

Know and respect your tolerance for risk.



MONEY

Never borrow money to gamble.
Don't gamble money you can't afford to lose.



TEAM UP

Consider teaming up with a friend to help each other stick to your personal betting plan.



TIME

Set a timer on your phone to keep track of time spent betting.



BALANCE

Balance gambling with other activities.



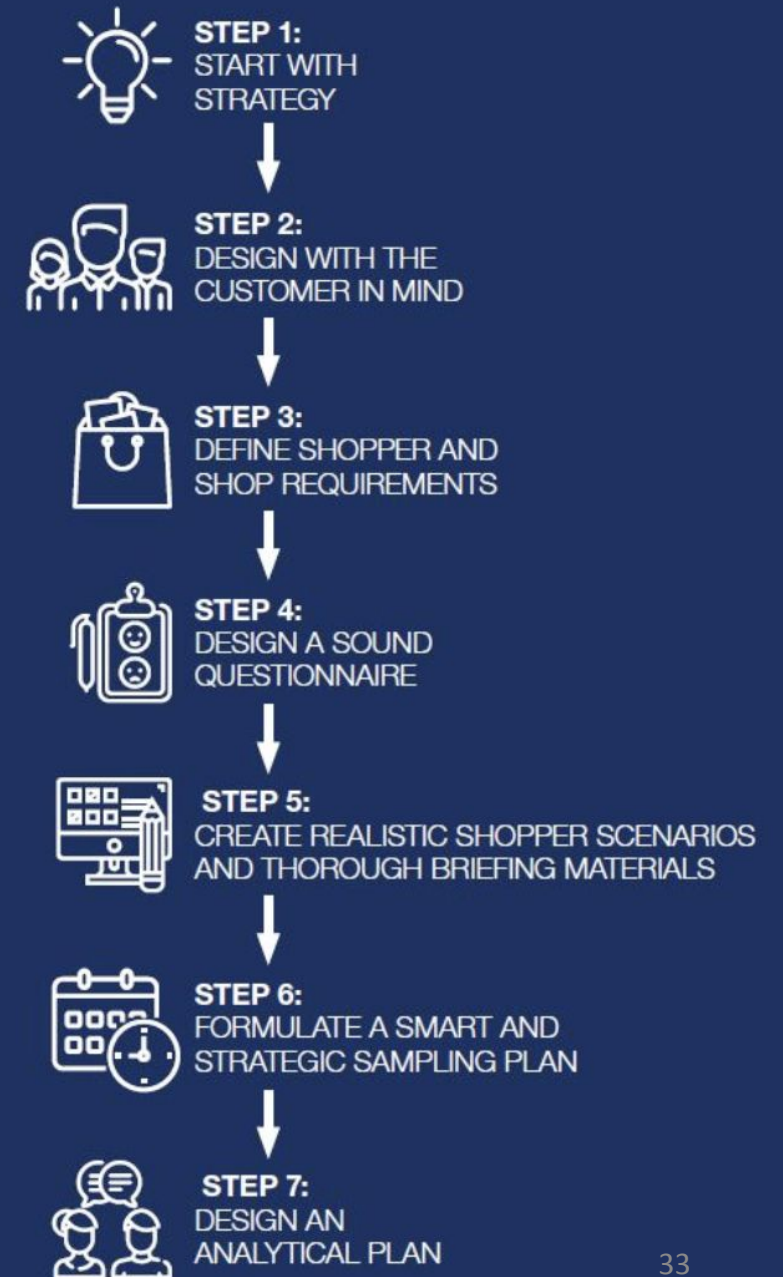
ENTERTAINMENT

Treat gambling as a form of entertainment and not a way to make money.

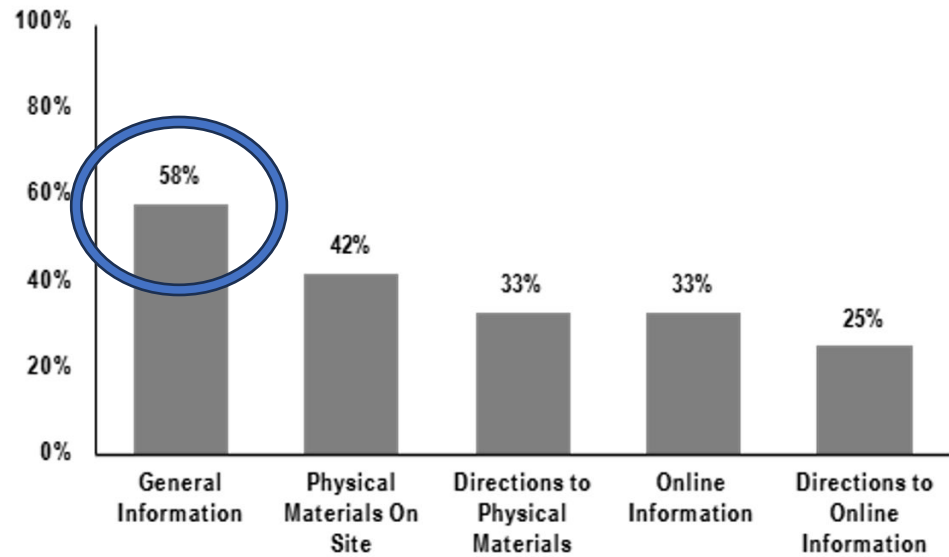
Audit Methodology

“Secret Shopper”

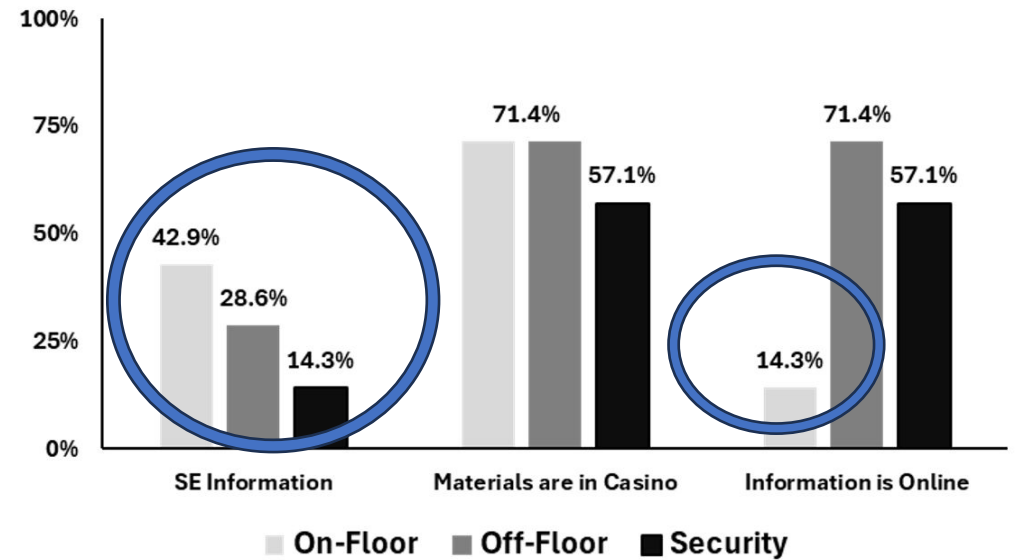
- Self-Exclusion
- Call casino customer service
- Visit casino to interact with casino employees



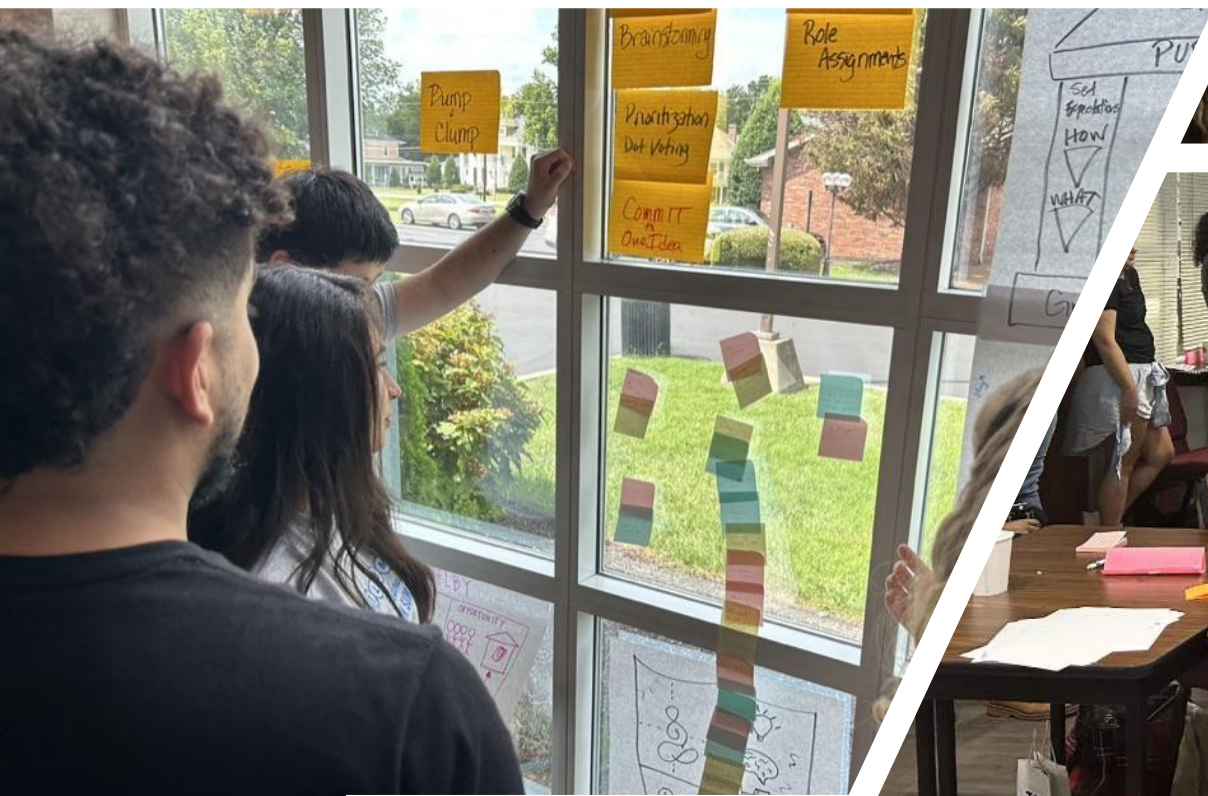
Self-Exclusion Audit Study



Customer Service calls



Casino Visits



In 2025...



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Percentage of casinos (n = 6) that provided the requested RG information in both, one, or neither call.

