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Card Playing Down Among College-Age Youth Internet Gambling Also Declines

Card playing for money among college-age youth (18 to 22) has declined, according to the latest National Annenberg Survey of Youth. Weekly use of the Internet for gambling also declined among this age group. Both declines are statistically significant.

“This year’s strong drop in weekly card playing among college-age youth indicates that the fad has peaked,” said Dan Romer, director of the Annenberg survey. “The strong drop in use of Internet sites also suggests that federal legislation restricting the transfer of funds to Internet gambling sites has had its intended effect. Whether this will last remains to be seen.”

Card playing for money among college-age youth (18 to 22) has now declined to the same level reported by high school youth (ages 14 to 17). The overall percentage of male youth ages 18 to 22 who reported playing cards for money on a weekly basis dropped to 4.4 percent in 2007 from 16.3 percent in 2006 (see Table 1), a statistically significant decline. This level of gambling was not different from that reported by male high school-age youth in 2007 (5.5 percent). Card playing in high school-aged males remained at about the same level as reported in 2006 (6.6 percent).

Weekly use of the Internet for gambling among college-age youth also declined, going from 5.8 percent in 2006 to 1.5 percent in 2007, a statistically significant drop. Use of the Internet among high school-aged male youth was already very low in 2006 and did not change this year, going from 0 percent to 0.8 percent.

The decline in Internet use was not surprising in view of the passage last fall (2006) of the Unlawful Internet Gambling Enforcement Act by Congress. This legislation restricted banks from transferring funds to Internet gambling sites, all of which operate outside of the U.S. Many sites closed as a result. However, it was not clear whether such gambling is no longer possible. Indeed, a small percentage of male youth (1.1 percent) still report using such sites in 2007, and even female youth report some use (0.5 percent). Nevertheless, the overall declines in card playing among older youth and the restrictions on Internet use have combined to reduce the popularity of Internet gambling.

Monthly rates of card playing, a broader measure of gambling, have not declined as dramatically. Monthly card playing in college-age males dropped from 39.3 percent to 31.4 percent, a nonsignificant drop. The drop among high school-aged males was even smaller, 26.6 percent to 22.0 percent, also nonsignificant.

Monthly Internet gambling dropped from 8.9 percent to 2.9 percent in college-age males, a drop that was reliable, suggesting that restrictions on the use of these sites have cut into the practice. Monthly use of Internet sites by younger males dropped nonsignificantly from 4.2 percent to 2.0 percent.

Other Forms of Gambling

Rates of gambling in other venues (lotteries, slots, horse racing and sports betting) did not change significantly since 2006. Among younger male youth, these forms of gambling did not change on either a weekly (8.2 percent vs. 7.1 percent) or monthly basis (28.5 percent vs. 24.1 percent). Among older youth, the declines were also not significant on either a weekly (16.1 percent vs. 10.3 percent) or monthly basis (45.4 percent vs. 40.7 percent).

“The finding that other kinds of gambling did not decline significantly since last year suggests that card playing, in particular, has lost much of its former appeal among young people,” added Romer.

Problem Gambling Symptoms Also Decline in Male Youth Ages 18 to 22

Symptoms of problem gambling parallel card-playing trends. Among male youth ages 18 to 22, those who reported some type of gambling on a weekly basis and who reported at least one symptom of problem gambling dropped from 20.4% in 2006 to 5.9% in 2007, a significant decline. Among younger male youth, rates of weekly gambling coupled with reported problems stayed about the same (6.8 percent vs. 6.3 percent in 2006 and 2007). The decrease among older youth occurred despite little change in rates of overall weekly gambling in other venues, suggesting that the decline was attributable to reduced card playing.

Gambling Rates and Problems Lower in Young Women

Gambling of all kinds in young women tends to lag behind men. Only about 13 percent of young women ages 14 to 17 report any gambling on a monthly basis compared to 34 percent of young men. Among young women ages 18 to 22, about 31 percent report any type of gambling on a monthly basis compared to about 52 percent in young men. Although about 6 percent of young women report playing cards for money on a monthly basis, Internet use tends to be small, where only about 1 percent report playing online. Not surprisingly, young women report much lower rates of problem gambling symptoms, about 2 percent overall.

Table 1. Percentages of Respondents Reporting Different Gambling Activities at Least Once a Week from 2002 to 2007. *Italicized values indicate significant changes from 2006 to 2007.*

Type of Gambling	Age												Total					
	14-17						18-22											
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Card Playing	5.8	3.4	5.9	7.1	4.1	3.9	3.2	8.1	6.7	8.4	9.3	3.1	4.4	6.0	6.3	7.8	6.9	3.6
Male	8.1	5.1	8.6	12.3	6.6	5.5	6.1	14.5	11.4	12.7	16.3	4.4	7.0	10.1	10.1	12.5	11.6	5.0
Female	3.3	1.7	3.1	1.5	1.3	2.1	0.4	1.9	1.9	3.9	2.6	1.9	1.7	1.8	2.5	2.9	2.1	2.0
Internet	1.4	0.6	0.9	1.4	0.0	0.4	1.1	1.4	1.0	1.8	3.3	1.2	1.2	1.0	0.9	1.6	1.8	0.8
Male	0.8	0.6	1.0	2.6	0.0	0.8	1.6	1.7	1.3	2.3	5.8	1.5	1.2	1.2	1.1	2.5	3.0	1.1
Female	2.0	0.5	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6	1.2	0.7	1.2	0.9	1.0	1.2	0.9	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.5
Other Gambling	10.7	9.0	7.1	8.8	6.3	5.4	14.1	14.9	11.5	12.2	11.3	8.2	12.5	12.2	9.5	10.7	9.0	6.6
Male	12.1	14.2	7.6	12.1	8.2	7.1	20.8	22.2	13.8	16.6	16.1	10.3	16.8	18.5	10.9	14.6	12.3	8.5
Female	9.3	3.6	6.6	5.1	4.2	3.4	7.5	7.7	9.2	7.6	6.7	6.2	8.3	5.9	8.0	6.6	5.6	4.5
All Gambling	14.0	10.8	10.9	14.7	9.1	7.8	15.5	18.5	16.1	16.9	16.9	10.1	14.8	15.0	13.7	15.9	13.3	8.9
Male	16.4	16.2	13.3	22.5	12.6	10.7	23.6	28.1	21.9	25.2	25.0	13.2	20.3	22.6	17.8	24.0	19.0	11.8
Female	11.5	5.1	8.3	6.3	5.1	4.7	7.5	9.0	10.2	8.3	9.3	7.1	9.3	7.3	9.3	7.4	7.5	5.9

Table 2. Percentages of Respondents Reporting Different Gambling Activities at Least Once a Month from 2004 to 2007.

Type of Gambling By Gender	Age											
	14-17				18-22				Total			
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2004	2005	2006	2007	2004	2005	2006	2007
Card Playing	17.0	20.6	18.0	13.8	23.9	29.5	24.2	20.8	20.7	25.6	21.3	17.0
Male	23.7	33.9	26.6	22.0	33.1	38.4	39.3	31.4	28.7	36.4	33.1	26.0
Female	10.0	5.9	8.3	5.5	14.5	20.3	9.8	10.5	12.4	14.1	9.2	7.7
Internet	2.2	2.2	3.2	1.4	2.6	3.8	4.9	2.2	2.4	3.1	4.1	1.8
Male	2.2	3.6	4.2	2.0	3.6	5.6	8.9	2.9	2.9	4.7	6.6	2.4
Female	2.3	0.7	2.1	0.9	1.6	1.9	1.1	1.4	1.9	1.4	1.5	1.1
Other Gambling	20.0	24.2	21.1	17.7	41.2	39.6	38.9	34.1	31.3	32.9	30.7	25.3
Male	24.7	33.0	28.5	24.1	43.9	45.5	45.4	40.7	34.9	40.0	37.2	31.4
Female	15.1	14.4	12.8	10.8	38.4	33.5	32.8	27.6	27.6	25.4	24.0	19.0
All Gambling	28.0	35.8	31.5	24.1	50.6	49.4	45.2	41.1	40.1	43.5	38.9	32.0
Male	35.9	51.9	42.9	34.0	57.9	59.7	55.4	51.7	47.5	56.3	49.4	41.9
Female	19.8	18.2	18.5	13.4	43.2	38.8	35.6	30.8	32.4	30.0	28.1	21.7

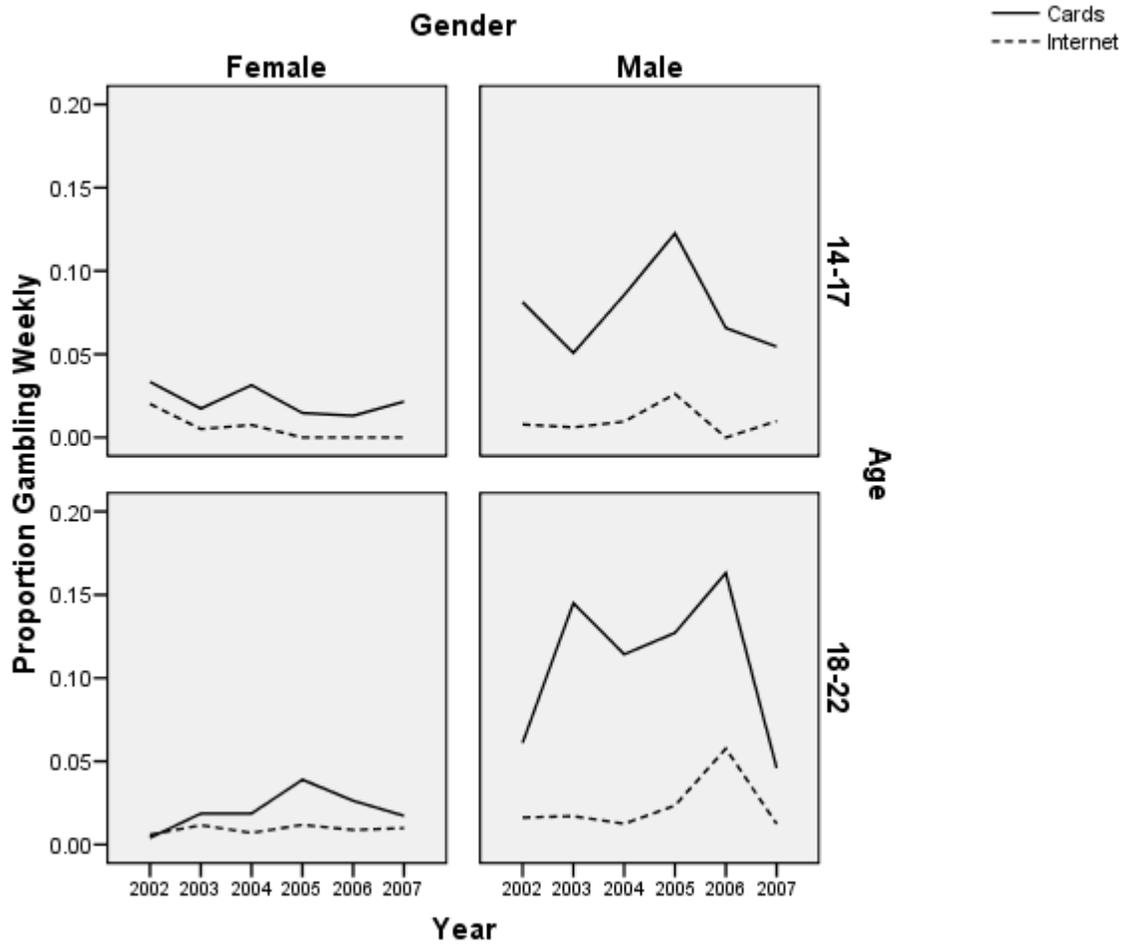


Figure. Trends in weekly card playing offline and gambling online by age and gender.

Methodology

The surveys were conducted by telephone in the spring and summers of each year by Shulman, Ronca, and Bucuvalas, Inc., using random-digit dialing procedures. The survey is designed by the Adolescent Risk Communication Institute of the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania. The samples contain 900 (all years except 2004) and 1,501 (2004) completed interviews with young people ages 14 to 22 across the 48 contiguous states. Response rates were approximately 50 percent across the five years, which is comparable to the rate obtained by the CDC in its national telephone surveys of behavioral risk factors in adults. Results are weighted to represent national proportions for age, gender, race/ethnicity, education, number of phone lines in the home and region of the country. Error ranges for the survey vary with the question, subgroup examined and the year of the survey. The maximum error is +/- 3.3 percent for the entire samples, except in year 2004 when they were +/- 2.6 percent. When data are examined by subgroup, the maximum error is larger. For example, the error ranges for male youth ages 14 to 17 and 18 to 22 were approximately +/-6.7 percent.

All respondents were asked questions about a range of risky activities, including the frequency of engaging in specific gambling activities “in an average month.” Weekly gamblers are those who said they gambled at least once a week in an average month. Data for monthly gambling in years 2002 and 2003 are not shown since the questioning used to obtain these rates was not comparable to later years.

If respondents had engaged in one or more specific gambling activities in an average month, they were asked four questions about difficulties related to their gambling. These items asked whether in the past year the respondent had (a) “often found yourself thinking about gambling,” (b) “ever needed to gamble with more and more money to get the amount of excitement you want,” (c) ever spent more than you had planned on gambling” and (d) ever felt bad or fed up when trying to cut down or stop gambling?”

The Adolescent Risk Communication Institute (ARCI) was created by the Annenberg Foundation in 2002 as part of the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania, see

http://www.annenbergpublicpolicycenter.org/07_adolescent_risk/adolescent_risk.htm.

ARCI aims to inform researchers, policymakers and the public regarding strategies to prevent risks to healthy adolescent development and to enhance the wellbeing of youth. It conducts the annual National Annenberg Survey of Youth, the Annenberg Media Health Coding Project and reviews of research by panels of experts.

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