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More than 1 million young people use Internet gambling sites each month

Rates of online gambling among males 18-22 doubled last year

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October 2, 2006 – Two days after Congress cracked down on online gambling, new data released today show that more than one million young people currently are using Internet gambling sites on a monthly basis. Among males 18 to 22, Internet gambling doubled in the past year.

The new data are being released by the National Annenberg Risk Survey of Youth, which has tracked gambling among young people ages 14 to 22 since 2002. Based on the survey's most recent estimates, approximately 850,000 males ages 18 to 22 gamble online at least one a month. The corresponding number for males between 14 and 17 is 357,000.

Among the 18- to 22-year-old age group, weekly use of Internet gambling sites increased from 2.3% in 2005 to 5.8% this year, a statistically significant increase.

The overall percentage of males ages 14 to 22 who reported playing cards for money on a weekly basis dropped for the first time since 2002. The decline in the past year was slight, however. (See full report for further details.)

At the same time, card playing for money among males 18 to 22 increased, reflecting the ever-expanding popularity of the games among college students. For those under 18, weekly card playing declined in 2006.

The National Annenberg Risk Survey of Youth is conducted by the [Adolescent Risk Communication Institute of the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania](#).

Although weekly use of Internet gambling sites held steady among all male youth, patterns differed by age. For males under the age of 18, weekly use of Internet gambling declined. Not so, however, among those above the age of 17.

“It appears that younger male youth have started to get the message about the risks of card playing for money,” said Dan Romer, director of the annual survey. “The strong drop in Internet use is especially encouraging. However, older youth seem not yet to have taken the message to heart. The continued rise in card playing both offline and on the Internet among older male youth indicates that the risks for problem gambling continue to mount for these players.”

Symptoms of problem gambling parallel card-playing trends. Among males ages 14 to 17, those who reported some type of gambling on a weekly basis and who reported at least one symptom of problem gambling dropped from 13.9% in 2005 to 6.7% in 2006. Among older male youth, rates of problem gambling coupled with weekly gambling increased from 14.3% to 20.4%, a change that was just short of statistical significance.

The increase among older youth occurred despite no change in rates of overall weekly gambling (24.9% vs. 25%), suggesting that the rise was attributable to increasing card playing.

Young women’s rates of gambling of all kinds tend to lag behind men’s. Among young women ages 18 to 22, about 35% report any type of gambling on a monthly basis, compared to about 56% in men. Among women, Internet use is small; only about 1% of women ages 18 to 22 report playing online.

For more information and data, see the full report at www.annenbergpublicpolicycenter.org