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DATE: 28 September 2006

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Card Playing Trend in Young People Starts to Diverge

Steady Increase in Youth over Age 17

First Signs of Decline in Youth under age 18

Trends Similar for Internet Gambling

According to the latest results of the National Annenberg Risk Survey of Youth completed this summer, the overall percentage of male youth ages 14 to 22 who reported playing cards for money on a weekly basis dropped to 11.6% in 2006 from 12.5% in 2005 (see Table 1). Although this decline was not statistically significant, it represents the first absolute decline since the survey began tracking youth gambling patterns in 2002.

Despite the overall small decline in card playing among all male youth in the survey, the ever-expanding popularity of card playing continued in male youth ages 18 to 22. Weekly card playing increased from 12.7% to 16.3%, reflecting the continued popularity of card playing among youth in college. However, for those under the age of 18, weekly card playing declined from 12.3% in 2005 to 6.6% in 2006. Although neither change was statistically significant on its own, the divergence in the trends was unlikely to have occurred by chance.

Similar patterns were observed for gambling on the Internet (see Figure). Although weekly use of Internet gambling sites held steady among all male youth (2.5% vs. 3.0% in 2005 and 2006 respectively), the pattern diverged for youth depending on age. For males under the age of 18, weekly use of Internet gambling declined from 2.6% in 2005 to 0% in 2006. However, rates of Internet gambling rose among male youth over the age of 17 from 2.3% in 2005 to 5.8% in 2006, a statistically significant jump of over 100%.

“It appears that younger male youth have started to get the message about the risks of playing cards for money,” said Dan Romer, director of the 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.”

Problem Gambling Symptoms Increase in Male Youth Ages 18 to 22

Symptoms of problem gambling parallel card playing trends. Among male youth 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 weekly gambling coupled with reported problems 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.

Monthly Rates of Gambling Stable among Older Male Youth but Declining in Younger Youth

Monthly rates of card playing and overall gambling changed little among older male youth (see Table 2). Card playing went from about 38% to 39%, and overall gambling went from about 59% to 55%. Among younger youth, the rates paralleled the findings for weekly card playing. Monthly card playing went from about 34% to 27%, and overall monthly gambling went from about 51% to 42%, both statistically significant declines.

In regard to Internet use, monthly rates of Internet gambling in male youth under age 18 went from 3.6% in 2005 to 4.2% in 2006, a nonsignificant change. There was also an increase among older male youth from 5.6% to 8.9%, but this did not reach statistical significance. Nevertheless, the increase was significant in comparison to 2004, when the percentage of male monthly Internet users was only 3.6%.

Based on our most recent estimates, there are approximately 850,000 male youth ages 18 to 22 who gamble on the Internet at least once a month. The corresponding number for male youth between 14 and 17 is 357,000. Hence, there are well over a million young people using Internet gambling sites on a monthly basis.

Gambling Rates and Problems Lower in Young Women

Young women's rates of gambling of all kinds tend to lag behind men's. Only about 19% of young women ages 14 to 17 report any gambling on a monthly basis compared to about 42% of young men. Among young women ages 18 to 22, about 35% report any type of gambling on a monthly basis compared to about 56% in young men. Although about 9% of young women report playing cards for money on a monthly basis, Internet use tends to be small, especially among ages 18 to 22, where only about 1% report playing online. Not surprisingly, young women report much lower rates of problem gambling symptoms, about 4% overall.

Table 1. Percentages of Respondents Reporting Different Gambling Activities at Least Once a Week from 2002 to 2006.

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

Table 2. Percentages of Respondents Reporting Different Gambling Activities at Least Once a Month from 2004 to 2006.

Type of Gambling in Total and by Gender	Age Group						Total Sample		
	14-17			18-22			2004	2005	2006
	2004	2005	2006	2004	2005	2006			
Card Playing	17.0	20.6	18.0	23.9	29.5	24.2	20.7	25.6	21.3
Male	23.7	33.9	26.6	33.1	38.4	39.3	28.7	36.4	33.1
Female	10.0	5.9	8.3	14.5	20.3	9.8	12.4	14.1	9.2
Internet	2.2	2.2	3.2	2.6	3.8	4.9	2.4	3.1	4.1
Male	2.2	3.6	4.2	3.6	5.6	8.9	2.9	4.7	6.6
Female	2.3	0.7	2.1	1.6	1.9	1.1	1.9	1.4	1.5
Other Gambling	20.0	24.2	21.1	41.2	39.6	38.9	31.3	32.9	30.7
Male	24.7	33.0	28.5	43.9	45.5	45.4	34.9	40.0	37.2
Female	15.1	14.4	12.8	38.4	33.5	32.8	27.6	25.4	24.0
All Gambling	28.0	35.8	31.5	50.6	49.4	45.2	40.1	43.5	38.9
Male	35.9	51.9	42.9	57.9	59.7	55.4	47.5	56.3	49.4
Female	19.8	18.2	18.5	43.2	38.8	35.6	32.4	30.0	28.1

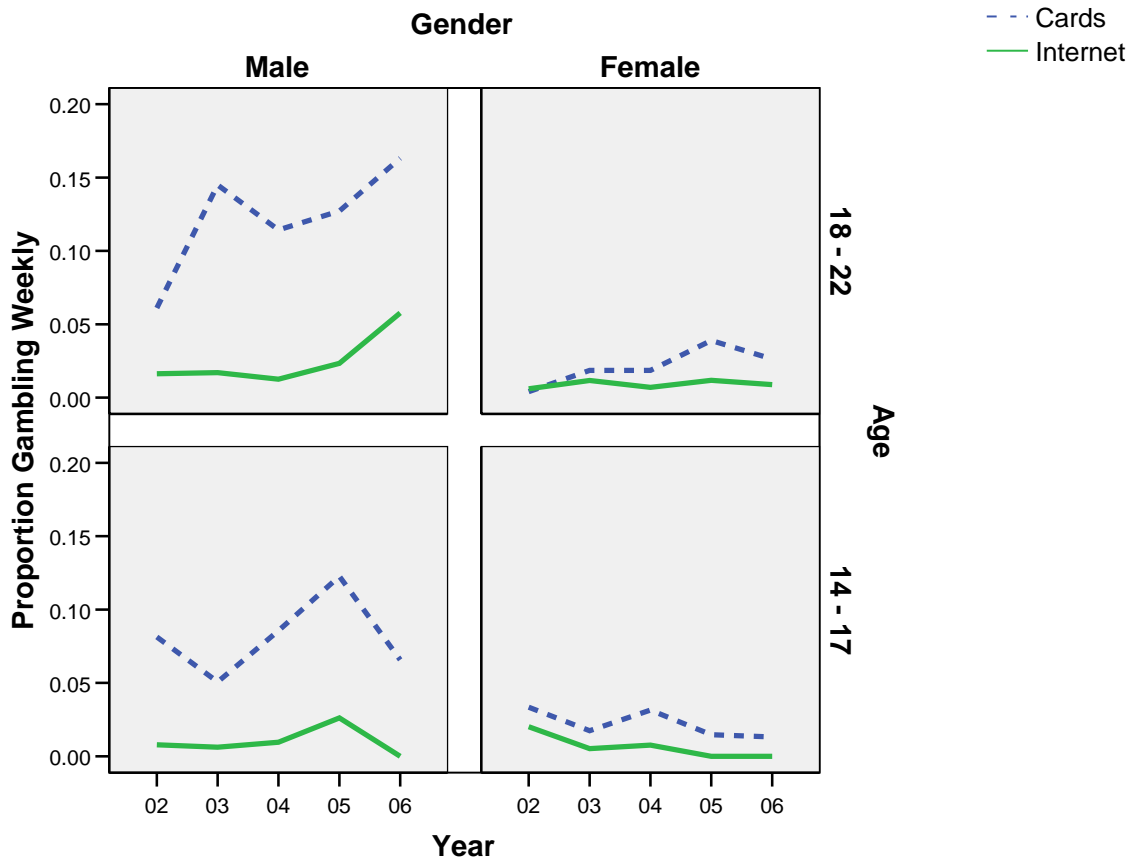


Figure. Trends in weekly card playing offline and gambling online by age and gender.

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 1501 (2004) completed interviews with young people ages 14 to 22 across the 48 contiguous states. Response rates were approximately 50% across the five years, which is comparable to the rate obtained by 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% for the entire samples, except in year 2004 when they were +/- 2.6%. When data are examined by subgroup, the maximum error is larger. For example, the error range for male youth ages 14 to 17 and 18 to 22 was approximately +/-6.7%.

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, policy makers 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 Risk Survey of Youth, the Annenberg Media Health Coding Project, and reviews of research by panels of experts.

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