

Mobile gambling among adolescents: Is this a problem?

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Youth increasingly Rely on Wireless Services

- Wireless services have become an integral part of young people's lives. Whether to stay in touch with family and friends, consume content, work while on the move, or **gamble** wireless services have become indispensable.
- Nearly 31 million Canadians subscribe to wireless services (CRTC, Communications Monitoring Report, 2017) – that's 87.5% of Canadians based on the 2016 Census. 91% youth age 12-17 in U.S. have smartphones (eMarketer, 2018).
- More Canadians have mobile phones (86.1%) than landlines (71.9%), and 27.5% of households rely exclusively on wireless services (CRTC, Communications Monitoring Report, 2017). In U.S., 52.5% have only mobile phones (Statista, 2018).



Mobile Gambling Today

- More and more players use mobile devices
- Mobile devices are preferred by players for their convenience
- Players have immediate access to betting options
- Online gambling and social networks are on the same mobile platforms
- Mobile platforms offer a new gaming experience
- Mobile gamblers spend more money than traditional desktop players

Wireless Casino



**Play Now
on Your
Cell Phone!**

Click [HERE](#) to Play!

Some caveats to this study

- Online gambling was generally prohibited in most states in the US (exception Fantasy Sports)
- Often youth do not have credit cards
- However, past 3 month and past year adolescent prevalence rates suggest they engage in online gambling in spite of prohibitions (Canale et al., 2016; Elton-Marshall et al., 2016)
- King & Delfabbro (2016) reported 3.1% of adolescents placed wager via smartphones

Current research

- **Participants:**

N=6,818 youth (3,341 males; 3,224 females, 253 unspecified) age 10-19 (M=14.90; SD= 1.77)

- **Measures:**

Past year gambling – 11 gambling activities assessed
Frequency: daily, about once a week, about once per month, Less than once per month, not at all

Gambling Problems NODS-CLIP (Toce-Gerstein et al., 2009)

3 items –Loss of control, Lying & Preoccupation

NODS-CLIP

- Have there ever been periods lasting 2 weeks or longer when you spent a lot of time thinking about your gambling experiences or planning out future gambling ventures or bets?
- Have you ever tried to stop, cut down, or control your gambling?
- Have you ever lied to family members, friends or others about how much you gamble or how much money you lost gambling?

Results

- 31% of adolescents reported gambling (past year)
- 5.1% of adolescents reported having gambled (for money) during the past year using their mobile device
- 7.2% identified as being at-risk for a gambling problem (scoring at least 1/3 items) (5.9% endorsed 1 item; 1.2% endorsed 2 items; 0.5% endorsed 3 items)
- Males 3.7 times more likely to gamble and use mobile device
- Older students 1.9 times more likely to gamble via mobile device

Percentage of Adolescents Engaged in Mobile Gambling by Gambling Severity

Mobile Gambling Frequency

Gambling Severity	Not at all	< Monthly	> Monthly	
No Risk	96.4%	1.8%	1.8%	
At Risk	76.5%	4.0%	19.5%	
Overall Totals	94.9%	2.0%	3.1%	

Conclusions

- Currently, relatively low prevalence rate of mobile gambling (5.1%) – prohibited activity and primarily need for credit card.
- However, regular mobile gamblers (> once per month) 13 times more likely than non regular gamblers to be at risk for experiencing a gambling problem.
- Need to monitor exposure to gambling via smartphones.
- Need for parents to be aware that youth can be gambling online.

More information

Zhao, Y., Marchica, L. Derevensky, J. & Ivoska, W. (2018). Mobile gambling among youth: A warning sign for problem gambling? *Journal of Gambling Issues*, 38, 268-281.