

Introduction

Now a days, teens are living in a society where gambling is not only socially acceptable, but also widely promoted and accessible. In the media, gambling is portrayed as being a glamorous activity that can make you lots of money and make you look cool among your group of friends (Benson,2022). However, gambling can lead to serious consequences including, but not limited to, relationship problems, academic problems, and financial problems. Teens are two to four times more likely to develop a gambling problem than adults, and this is because their brains are not fully developed, therefore, they cannot make responsible decisions. Gambling can be addictive and lead to a lot of problems, including financial instability and mental health disorders. Ultimately, if gambling does become a problem, it has protentional to derail a person's life. Gambling in teens can lead to low self-esteem issues, stress, anxiety, and depression. Teens with gambling problems reported more negative life experiences as a whole and more major negative life events than social gamblers or non-gamblers. Teens can be impulsive and are looking for an adrenaline rush, gambling gives that to them. Gambling is also an easy way to make money. Teens might gamble to avoid difficult emotions such as loneliness or feeling like they don't fit into society. When they are winning, it can increase their self-esteem and make them feel like they are on top of the world. However, the negatives outweigh the positives when it comes to teens gambling.

Proposed Research Question

How does a counseling group on gambling influence the effect on students' before and after and their willingness/plans to gamble in their future?

Needs for Proposed Group

Plan: Collaboratively discuss and overcome the dangers of teenage gambling through group reflections and activities tailored to bring awareness to the serious consequences of gambling.

- This group will be mandatory for all high school juniors and seniors.

Entails: Students of all backgrounds discussing personal stories they are comfortable sharing as well as inviting guest speakers in to present their own stories to the group to invite the members to have comfortable conversations followed by an open Q&A at the end of each session.

Purpose: Provide students with a supportive group and safe place to discuss addiction tendencies With gambling becoming increasingly accessible, kids are exposed to gambling at a very young age. It's important to be proactive to help protect your child from gambling. This proposed research study will help educate students about the risk of gambling, help monitor their gaming habits, show them how to lead by example, and seek professional help when needed.

- State and understand the dangers of gambling
- Process reflective thoughts and feelings because of these dangers
- Formulate methods to utilize beyond their teenage years to prevent addiction

School Counselor Implications with a Social Justice Focus

Gambling hurts students from a lower socioeconomic status that may be trying to 'get by'. Gambling grinds the faces of the poor into the ground as it benefits multinational corporations. Lower classes are proposed with the idea of 'wealth' that is much more difficult to attain than the media will make it out to be. Casinos that come and go, typically from lower class areas, leave with little attraction of tourism or an agricultural standing at all. This continues the cycle for individuals from a lower socioeconomic standing struggling to succeed and advance their futures. Understanding this influence of gambling includes gaining a better understanding of commercial power. Gambling is used to represent 'the good life' and that anyone can achieve their monetary dreams, when, there is a greater chance of losing more than one might have anticipated. Ensuring that all the students we work with understand the many ways gambling can hurt people of all different living standards is important to the success and growth of the group.

Methodology

Participants: Junior and Senior high school students from the counseling group

Material: Pre and Post Questionnaire to decipher if the group influenced the students' before and after willingness/plans to gamble in their future

The following questions will be asked:

"How well did the leader interpret and assist you in processing the dangers of gambling?"

"Did you find the conversations surrounding the topics of gambling and its dangers productive?"

"Did you feel included in the group even if you have never gambled before?"

Format:

- The group will be a closed counseling group
- The maximum number of students per each group will range from 20 to 25 students for a total of 11 groups
- Each group of students will meet for 12 weeks (one marking period)
- The groups will meet once a week lasting for a total of 42 minutes

Conclusion

This proposed research study will aim to educate students on the dangers of gambling. There are no hypotheses being made at this time. However, the expected group outcomes are that students participating in this type of group will make better decisions when it comes to gambling. We hope our students can better understand gambling comes with addiction tendencies, it has numerous dangers (financial, relational, and academic concerns), and can lead to an increase in mental illness. Teens are notorious for experimentation, and gambling is no exception. Gambling can affect the brain's reward system in the same way that drugs do and causes a "high" when they make a risky bet. When gambling, your brain releases dopamine, the feel-good neurotransmitter that makes you feel excited (Benson, 2022). Overall, gambling has a lot of dangers, and students need to learn more about those dangers.

References

Benson,R. (2022). Risks of teen gambling. *Algamus Gambling Treatment*. Retrieved from: <https://www.algamus.org/blog/risks-teen-gambling>