



# Problem Gambling in WA State: Impacts & Resources

Roxane Waldron, MPA  
WA State Problem Gambling Program Mgr.  
Division of Behavioral Health & Recovery

State Prevention Enhancement  
Policy Consortium  
March 8, 2021

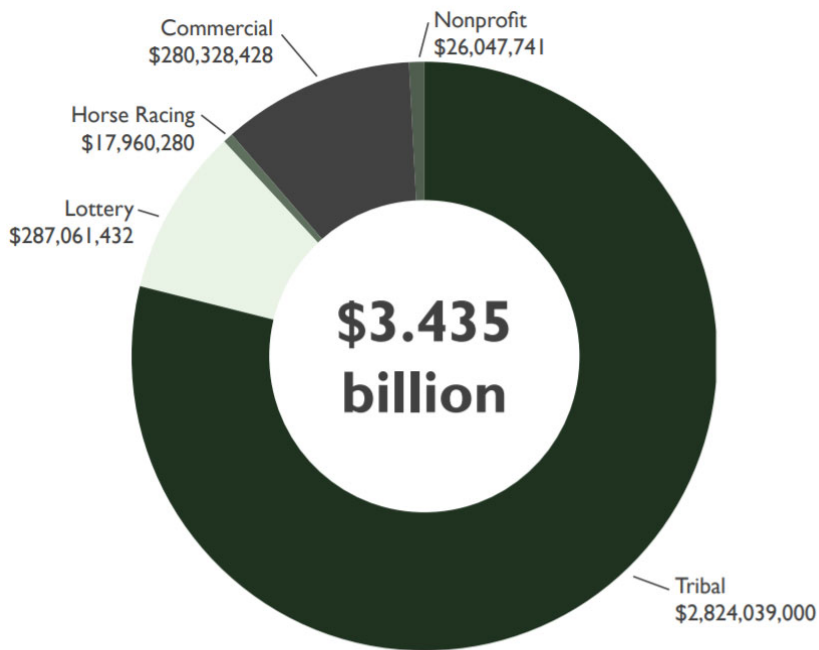
# Characteristics of Gambling:

---

1. **PRIZE:** Anything of value that is awarded.
2. **CHANCE:** The outcome is at least partially out of your control.
3. **CONSIDERATION:** What you 'spend' to wager (money, objects, and time and effort )

# WA State Gambling Industry

Washington's gambling industry is comprised of five categories, which, in 2020, generated \$3.435 billion in net gambling receipts.



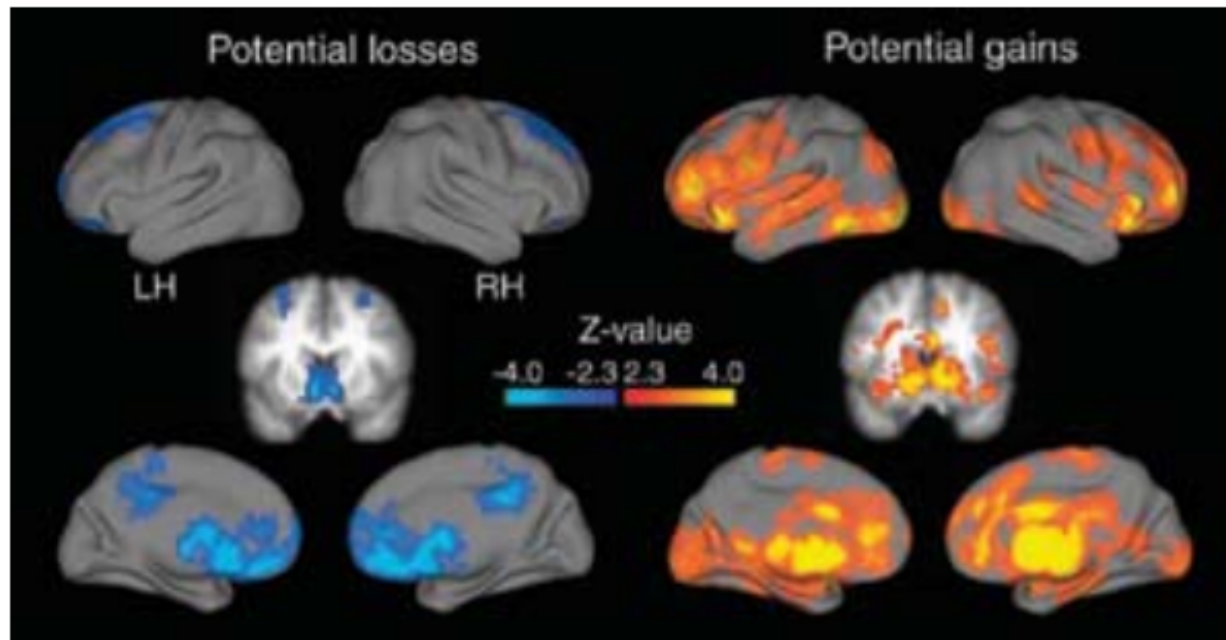
Non-tribal net gambling receipts are reported for fiscal year 2020 (7/1/19 - 6/30/20).  
Tribal operators report receipts by calendar year..

- ▶ **Card rooms:** 43 licensed (30 currently operating)
- ▶ **Tribal Casinos – Class III games:** 29
- ▶ **Lottery:** approx. 3600 retail outlets
- ▶ **Horse racing (pari-mutuel):** 1 major race track, 13 off-site betting locations, 6 advance deposit wager locations
- ▶ **Charity:** sports pool boards, raffles, fundraising
- ▶ **Other:** Pull tabs, punchboards, amusement games

<https://www.wsgc.wa.gov/sites/default/files/public/reports-publications/net-receipts/2020%20Net%20Gambling%20Receipts.pdf>

# Gambling/Gaming and Dopamine

## It's **NOT** about the money!



Dopamine **not released** when expecting a loss. Flooded with dopamine when expecting a **win!**

Source: Brain Briefings (2007, October), Society for Neuroscience, Washington, DC

*Slide courtesy of the Evergreen Council on Problem Gambling*



# Traditional Gambling

*Slide Courtesy Evergreen Council on Problem Gambling*



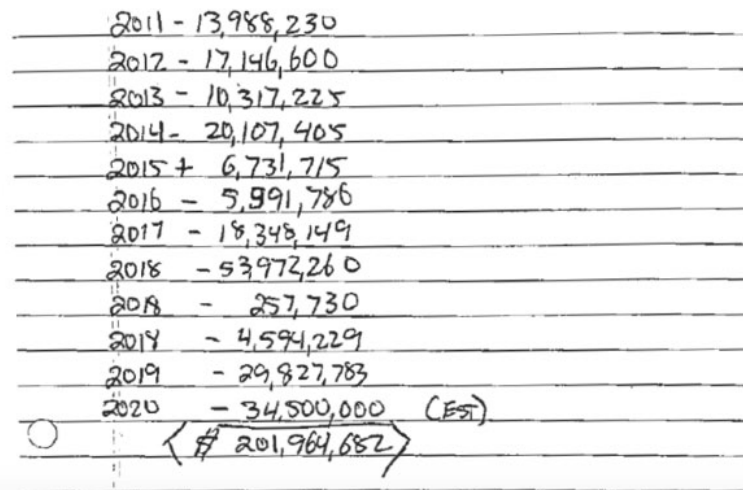
## Short On Cattle, Long On Losses: Easterday Had An Alleged Habit Of Big-Money Trading

By ANNA KING • MAR 3, 2021

[Share](#)

[Tweet](#)

[Email](#)

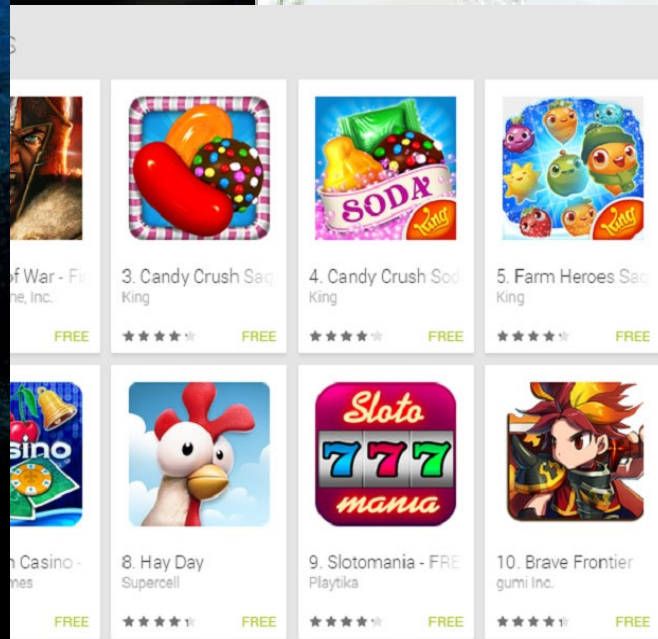
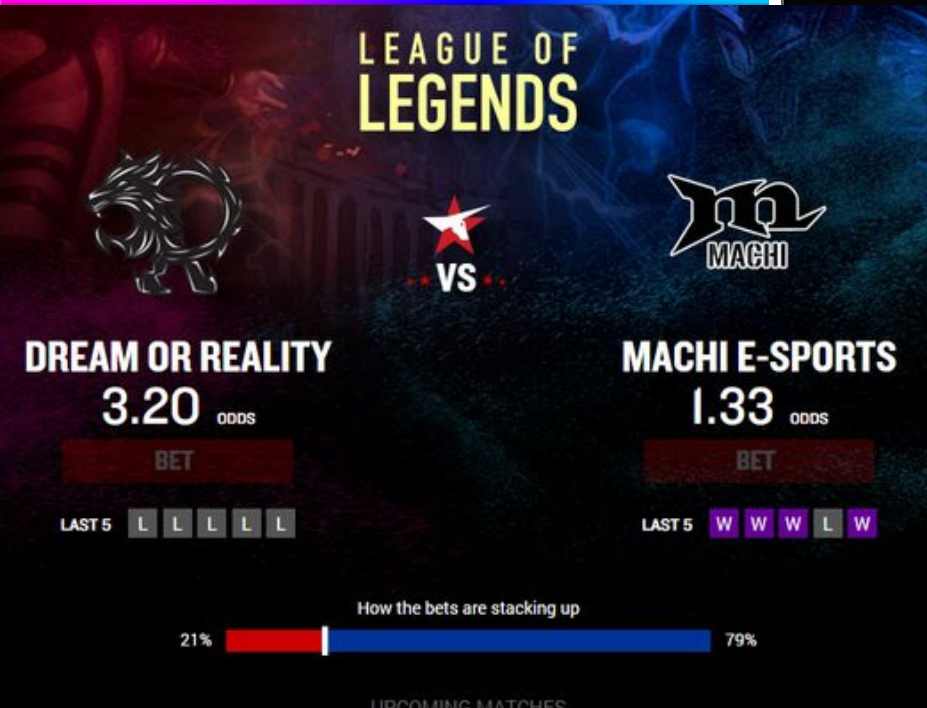


A photograph of a handwritten list of losses on lined paper, likely a court deposition. The list shows years from 2011 to 2020 with corresponding loss amounts. The 2020 entry is marked as an estimate. At the bottom, a total loss for the decade is calculated and circled.

2011	- 13,988,230
2012	- 17,146,600
2013	- 10,317,225
2014	- 20,107,405
2015	+ 6,731,715
2016	- 5,991,786
2017	- 18,348,149
2018	- 53,972,260
2018	- 257,730
2018	- 4,594,229
2019	- 29,827,783
2020	- 34,500,000 (Est)
Total: \$ 201,964,682	

A handwritten piece of paper in a court deposition by a financial officer of Tyson Fresh Meats details Cody Easterday's purported losses on the commodities market over the last decade.

COURTESY OF TYSON FRESH MEATS COURT FILING

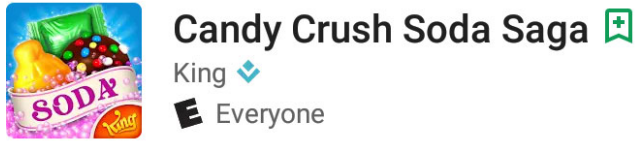


# Modern Gambling

Slide Courtesy Evergreen Council on Problem Gambling

Washington State Health Care Authority





INSTALL

In-app purchases



Downloads



5,373,861



Casual



Similar

Start playing this tasty match 3 game today! It's Sodalicious!

READ MORE



## In-App purchases

Slide courtesy of the  
Evergreen Council on  
Problem Gambling



Titan Slots™  
Game Mania Studios  
Teen

INSTALL

Contains ads • In-app purchases



Downloads



70,055



Casino



Similar

Packed full of fun – Titan Slots™.



READ MORE





# Video Gaming

---



*Slide courtesy of the Evergreen Council on Problem Gambling*

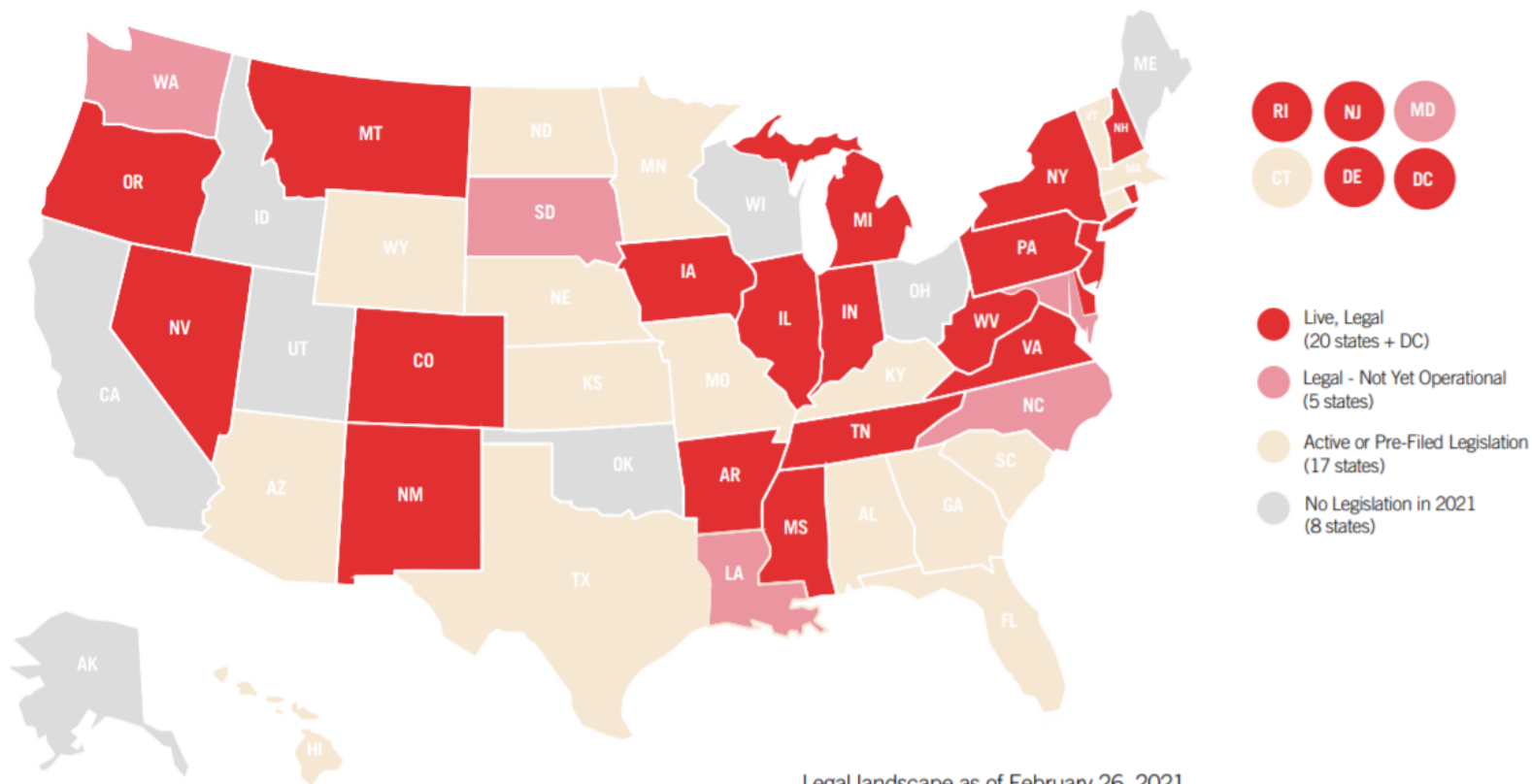
# E-sports

example: DOTA2



*Slide courtesy of the Evergreen Council on Problem Gambling*

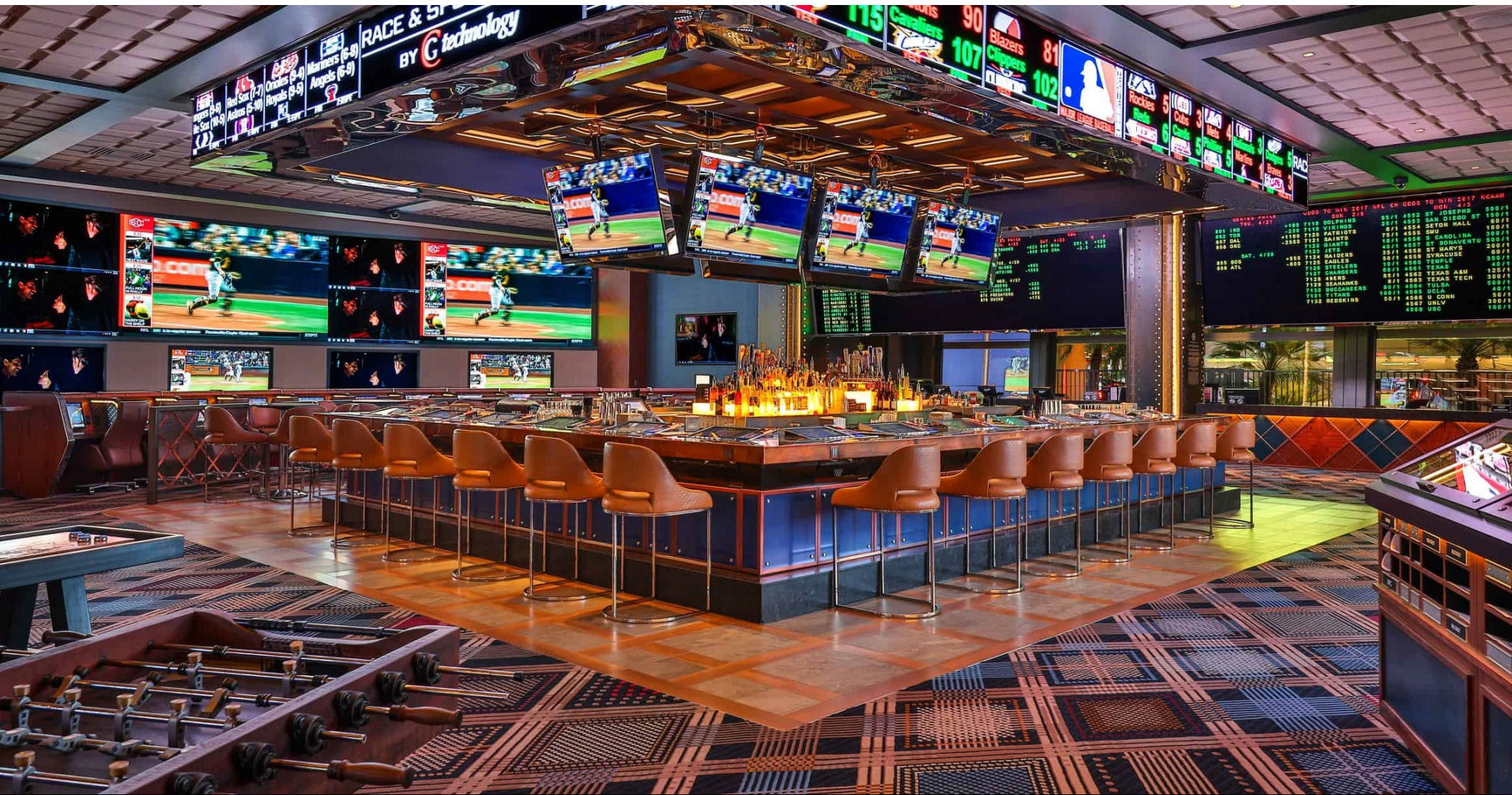
# Legal Sports Betting in the U.S.



Legal landscape as of February 26, 2021

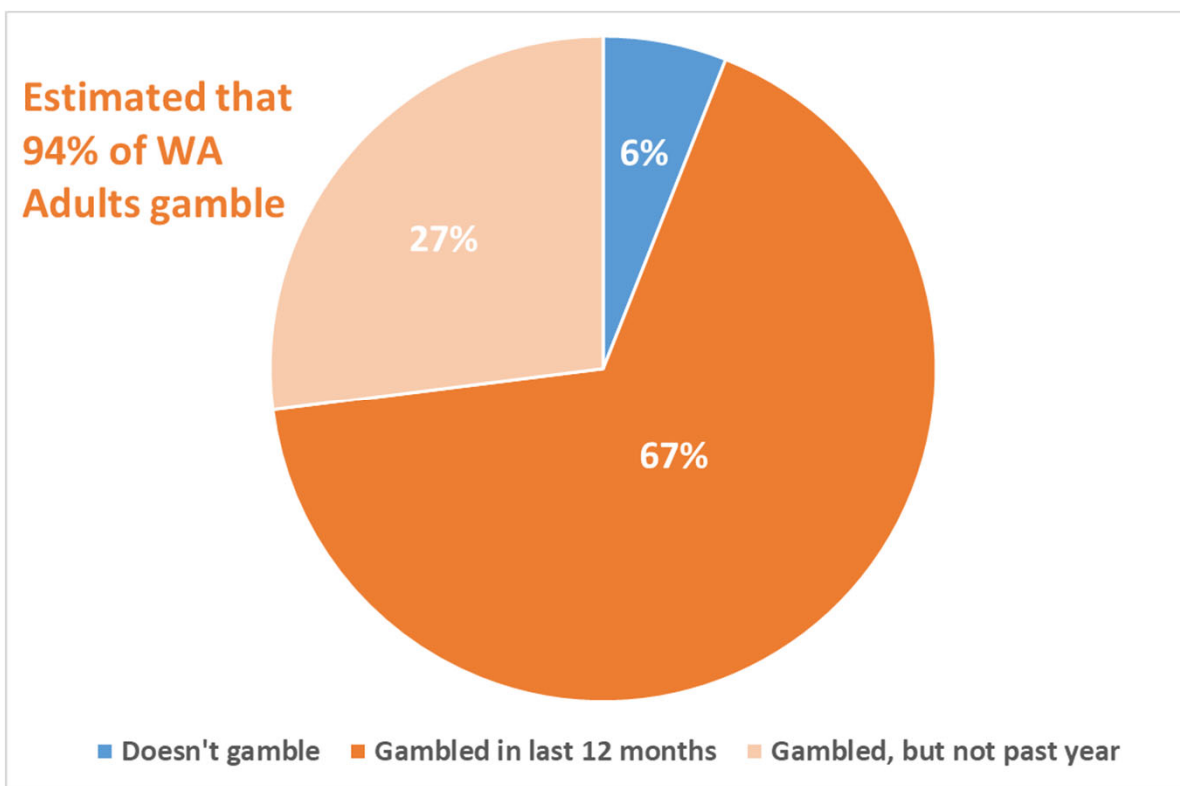
<https://www.americangaming.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/AGA-Sports-Betting-Map-2020ax.pdf>





# Gambling--WA Adults Gambling (estimated)

---





# Why do we need to address Problem Gambling?

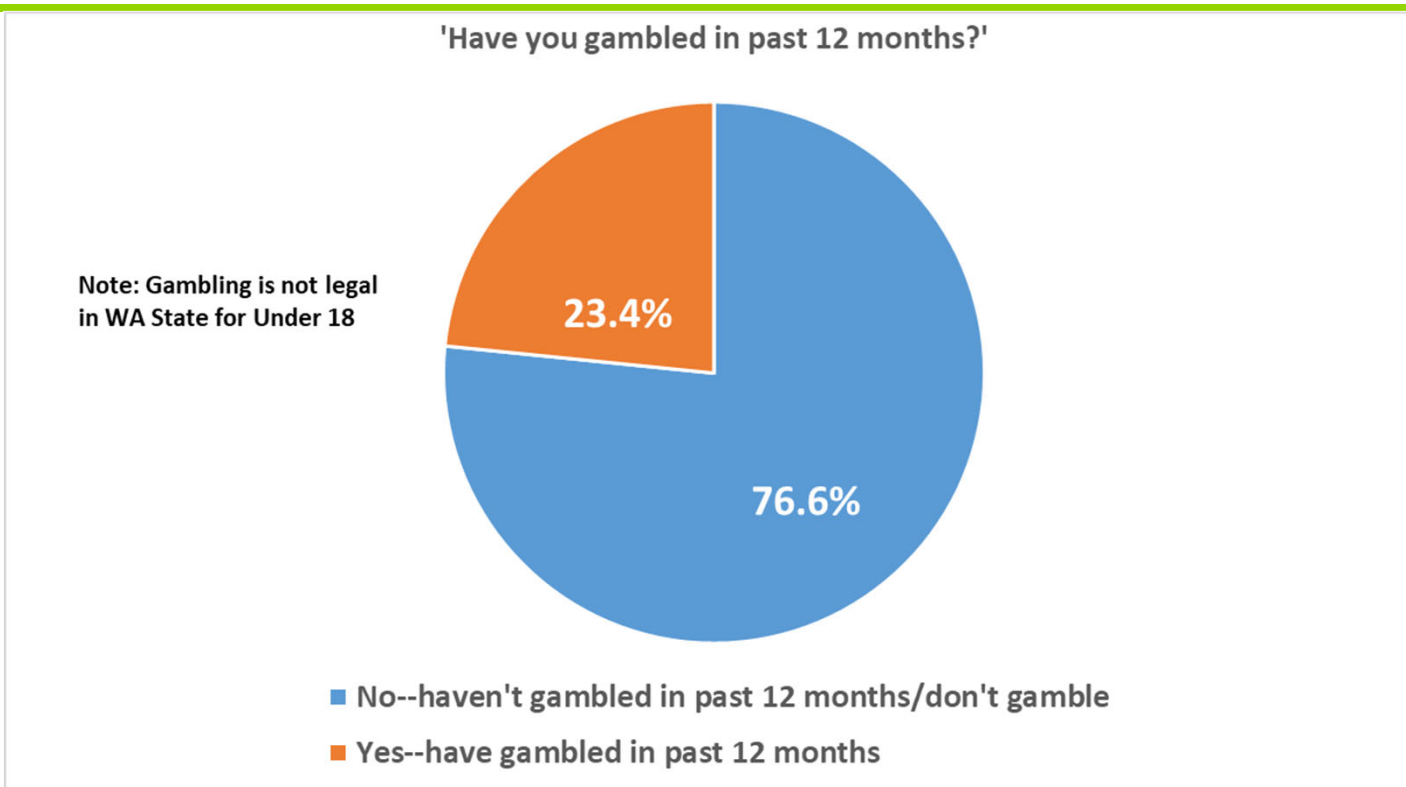
---

- ▶ Risk of death by suicide is 8-15x higher
- ▶ High rate (80%) of co-occurring disorders
- ▶ Negative impacts to communities and individuals:
  - ▶ Can be very destructive -- finances, employment/school, law enforcement/incarceration (embezzlement or other felonies)
  - ▶ Populations at higher-risk: Lower Socio-Economic, Youth, Older Adults, Veterans, College-age, Asian communities, and others
- ▶ Only 1 in 8-10 people will seek treatment and high relapse rate, and often requires multiple treatment courses



# Gambling – WA Youth

## 2016 Healthy Youth Survey – Grades 8 through 12



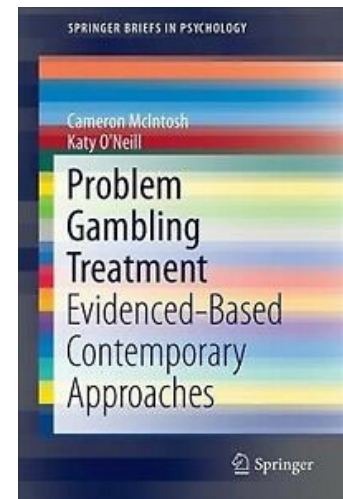
# Youth Gambling & Gaming

---

- ▶ Mobile phones, laptops, & internet have greatly increased opportunities for gambling
- ▶ If start by age 12, are 4x more likely to develop a gambling problem
- ▶ The risk of developing a gambling addiction **doubles for young adults** in a college setting – an estimated 6% have gambling problems

# Recovery is possible

- **Evidence-based practices:** CBT, DBT, MI, Metacognition & Mindfulness, ACT, Family Psycho-Education, etc.
- **Culturally-appropriate treatment** (community/Tribal)
- **Peer-based recovery supports** (e.g. The Recovery Café)
- **12-step and other group supports** (GA, Gam-Anon)
- **Voluntary Self-Exclusion (VEP)** – self-banning
- **Financial restoration**





# WA State--PG Treatment options

---

- ▶ For outpatient, there are currently ~35 Problem Gambling Certified Providers
- ▶ Private insurance, self-pay, MCOs, Tribal BH (if eligible)
- ▶ In-patient/Residential – one in-state facility for pg
- ▶ State PG program:
  - ▶ Outpatient– State program contracts with 13 problem gambling certified agencies

# State Program--Who is eligible for treatment?\*

Washington State  
Health Care Authority

Search

Home

About HCA

Contact HCA

In crisis?

Home > Health care services and supports > Behavioral health and recovery > Problem gambling

Health care services and supports

Forms & publicationsNewsContact

Behavioral health and recovery

American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN)

Child and youth behavioral health services

Client rights

Mental health services

Peer support

Problem gambling

Recovery support

Substance use disorder prevention and mental health promotion

Substance use treatment

Voices of behavioral health

Due to COVID-19, HCA's lobby is closed. [Learn more about your customer service options.](#)

## Problem gambling

The Health Care Authority (HCA) is responsible for planning, implementing, and providing quality oversight for the Washington State Problem Gambling Program.

Washington State provides treatment for [eligible individuals and their family members](#) who are affected by problem gambling.

Do you need immediate assistance?

- For a life-threatening emergency: Call 911.
- For suicide prevention: Contact the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) at 1-800-273-8255 (TRS: 1-800-799-4889).
- For 24-hour emotional support and referrals: Contact the [Washington Recovery Help Line](#) or the [mental health crisis line](#) in your area.
- For the Washington State Problem Gambling Helpline: 1-800-547-6133.

On this page

How can I tell if someone may have a gambling problem?

What should I do if I think I have a gambling problem?

Who is eligible to receive treatment?

Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

Washington State  
Health Care Authority

# PG Program—current priorities

---

- ▶ **Bringing a Public Health Perspective to all our work**
- ▶ **Increasing partnership with Prevention, especially for Youth**
- ▶ **Problem Gambling Task Force & 4 Workgroups**
- ▶ **Adult Problem Gambling Prevalence Study**
- ▶ **Support telehealth as a ‘proof of concept’ to increase access**
- ▶ **Advocating for pg program funding from sports wagering**
- ▶ **Supporting pg provider agencies through COVID-19**
- ▶ **Increased media outreach during COVID-19 (with ECPG, Recovery Café, and other partners)**



## Partners

Behavioral Health Advisory  
Council

Children's Behavioral Health  
Data and Quality Team

Children's Behavioral Health  
Executive Leadership Team  
(CBH ELT)


Children and Youth Behavioral  
Health Work Group (CYBHWG)

Cross System Initiatives Team

Family Youth System Partner  
Round Table (FYSPRT)

Office of Recovery Partnerships

**Problem Gambling Task Force  
(PGTF)**

 Due to COVID-19, HCA's lobby is closed. [Learn more about your customer service options.](#)



## ➤ Problem Gambling Task Force (PGTF)

The Health Care Authority (HCA) is lead agency for the Problem Gambling Task Force (PGTF)—a joint legislative work group funded by the Washington State Legislature in 2019.

The PGTF was created to review existing outreach, prevention, and treatment resources for problem and disordered gambling, and determine if services need to be increased.

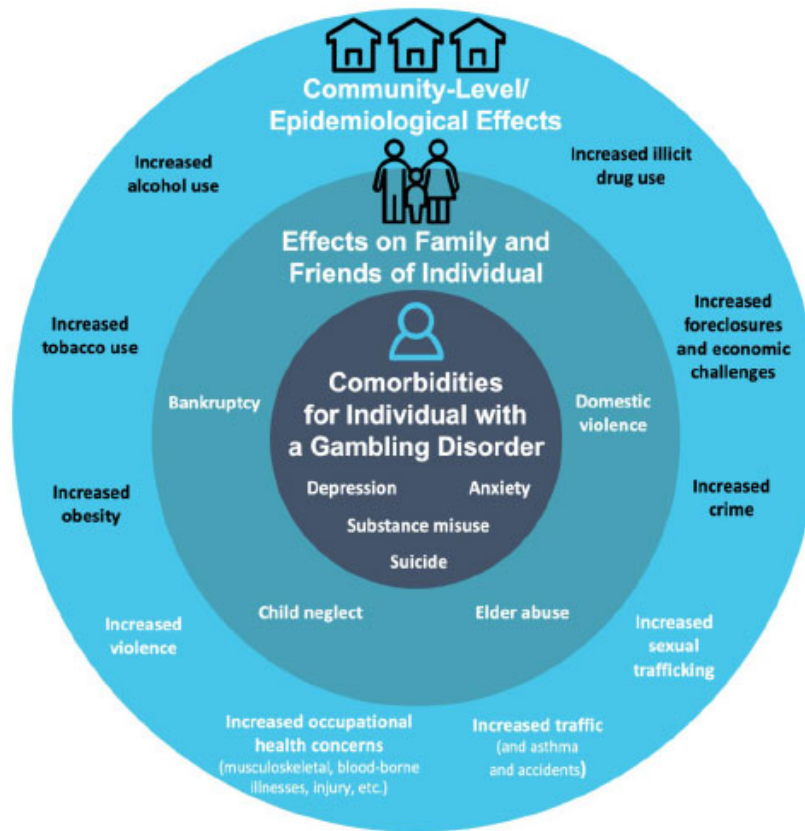
[Read the full PGTF information sheet.](#)

### On this page

[What services are currently available in Washington?](#)

[What is the role of the task force?](#)

# How does PG fit into Public Health?



*Massachusetts Public Health Trust Fund: Strategic Plan 2016 (V. Ortiz)*



## **WA State Problem Gambling Program**

Roxane Waldron, MPA  
Problem Gambling Program Mgr.  
[roxane.waldron@hca.wa.gov](mailto:roxane.waldron@hca.wa.gov)

(360) 725-1456

<https://www.hca.wa.gov/health-care-services-supports/behavioral-health-recovery/problem-gambling>

## **WA State PG Helpline**

1-800-547-6133 (24/7) call/text

## **Training, Tx, Prevention, Outreach**

Evergreen Council on Problem Gambling:  
1-360-352-6133 [www.evergreencpg.org](http://www.evergreencpg.org)

Washington State  
Health Care Authority



# Extra slide--Impact on the U.S. Economy

---

## CASINO GAMING BY THE NUMBERS

\$ 261

BILLION

Annual Economic  
Impact

\$ 41

BILLION

in Tax Revenue  
Generated  
Annually

44

STATES

With Legal Casino  
Gaming

1.8

MILLION

Jobs Supported by  
U.S. Gaming  
Industry

From American Gaming Association  
<https://www.americangaming.org/>