

Problem Gambling

Community Awareness & Education Strategy



What are the reasons why people at-risk take part in gambling?

Methodology

The Market Segmentation study (2008) involved 1743 x ~30min computer aided telephone surveys with members of the Victorian community (adults 18yrs or over). Research was used to inform the development of the Problem Gambling Community Awareness and Education Strategy. Sampling covered both people at-risk for problem gambling and general members of the Victorian community.

Key findings

The Market Segmentation Study (2008) explored the major reasons why people at-risk for problem gambling take part in gambling. This was asked of low risk, moderate risk and problem gamblers (as measured by the Problem Gambling Severity Index).

Overall findings suggested that the reasons for gambling were quite different for gamblers of different risk segments. The top reasons included:

Low risk gamblers

- friends going gambling (56%)
- entertainment/fun/enjoyment (11%)
- boredom or loneliness (9%)
- to raise money for the household (8%)

Moderate risk gamblers

- friends going gambling (60%)
- boredom or loneliness (20%)
- entertainment/fun/enjoyment (10%)

Problem gamblers

- boredom or loneliness (47%)
- to reduce stress/anxiety/trauma (26%)
- to raise money for the household (12%)

This highlights that reasons for gambling are quite different for each of the at-risk gambling segments.

Further analysis also showed that, in cases where problem gamblers reported use of gambling to reduce stress, reported stress was typically associated with past personal issues (49%) or current personal issues (22%). This may suggest that gambling is used as a coping strategy.

In the case of moderate risk gamblers, however, stress linked to work pressures (54%) or current personal issues (36%) was more frequently reported as the reason for using gambling to reduce stress.

Focus group discussions also showed that some people are aware they gamble for reasons other than entertainment.

"I was once driving down the street and had \$4 in my bag. I was wanting a brush for my artwork. I'd then go in to the pokies to win money for the art brushes"

"We recently realised, we were mainly going to the pokies due to boredom, so we stopped going" (focus group participant)



take the **problem** out of gambling