



OASAS

NEW YORK STATE OFFICE OF ALCOHOLISM AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES

**Gambling Behaviors and Problem Gambling
Among Adults in New York State:
Initial Findings from the
2006 OASAS Household Survey**

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Gambling Behaviors and Problem Gambling Among Adults in New York State: Initial Findings from the 2006 OASAS Household Survey

Executive Summary

In 2006 OASAS completed its most recent statewide household survey. The focus of the survey was on gambling behavior and problems. Among the gambling-related items included in the interview schedule were: the frequency of engaging in 16 different gambling activities during the past year, weekly gambling in a typical month, age of first gambling experience, and the 10 diagnostic criteria for pathological gambling from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association. This brief report describes initial findings regarding gambling behavior and problems as well as the cross-prevalence of problem gambling and substance use disorders.

Two-thirds (67%) of adults, age 18 and older, engaged in one or more gambling activities during the past year. One-fifth (21%) of adults engaged in at least one gambling activity on a weekly basis during a typical month over the past year. Over one-half (53%) of adults purchased state lottery tickets in the past year and 16 percent typically played the lottery at least once per week. While about 25 percent of adults participated in raffles or office pools in the past year, only 2 percent typically did so once a week or more. Twenty percent of adults gambled at casinos in the past year; however, less than one percent typically gambled at casinos on a weekly basis. Ten percent of adults age 18 and older played card games for money in the past year, while 2 percent typically played cards for money once a week or more.

Approximately 5 percent of adults experienced problem gambling* in the past year and may be in need treatment services. Among these 600,000 plus adults: 42 percent typically purchased state lottery tickets at least once per week; 14 percent typically bet on sports events once a week or more; 12 percent typically played cards at least once per week; and 10 percent typically bet money on games of skill once a week or more. While half of adults experiencing problem gambling had gambled at a casino in the past year, only 5 percent did so on a weekly basis. Adults experiencing problem gambling had first engaged in gambling at a younger age (19 years old on average) compared to all adults who have gambled in the past year (age 23 on average).

While females were almost as likely as males to have gambled at least once in the past year, males were more likely to have gambled on a weekly basis (26% vs. 16%) and were three-times more likely to experience problem gambling (7.8% vs. 2.3%). Older adults were somewhat more likely to have gambled on a weekly basis; however, younger adults were almost three times more likely to have experienced problem gambling in the past year. For instance, 7.6 percent of adults in their 20's experienced problem gambling in the past year compared to 2.8 percent of adults age 60 and older. Whites, Blacks and Hispanics were about equally likely to have

* "Problem gambling" means meeting one or more of the criteria for pathological gambling specified in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM IV) of the American Psychiatric Association, based on responses to survey questions.

gambled on a weekly basis (21% to 23%); however, Blacks and Hispanics were almost twice as likely as Whites to have experienced problem gambling (7.2% and 7.1% vs. 3.8%). Never married adults were about twice as likely as married adults to have experienced problem gambling (7.8% vs. 4.0%). Adults employed full or part time were more likely to have experienced problem gambling than persons not employed (5.3% vs. 3.9%).

Of the 4.9 percent (668,000) of adults who experienced problem gambling in the past year, about 28 percent (185,000) also experienced a substance use disorder in the past year. Conversely, among adults experiencing a substance use disorder in the past year, about 13 percent also experienced problem gambling.

Gambling Behaviors and Problem Gambling Among Adults in New York State: Initial Findings from the 2006 OASAS Household Survey

Introduction

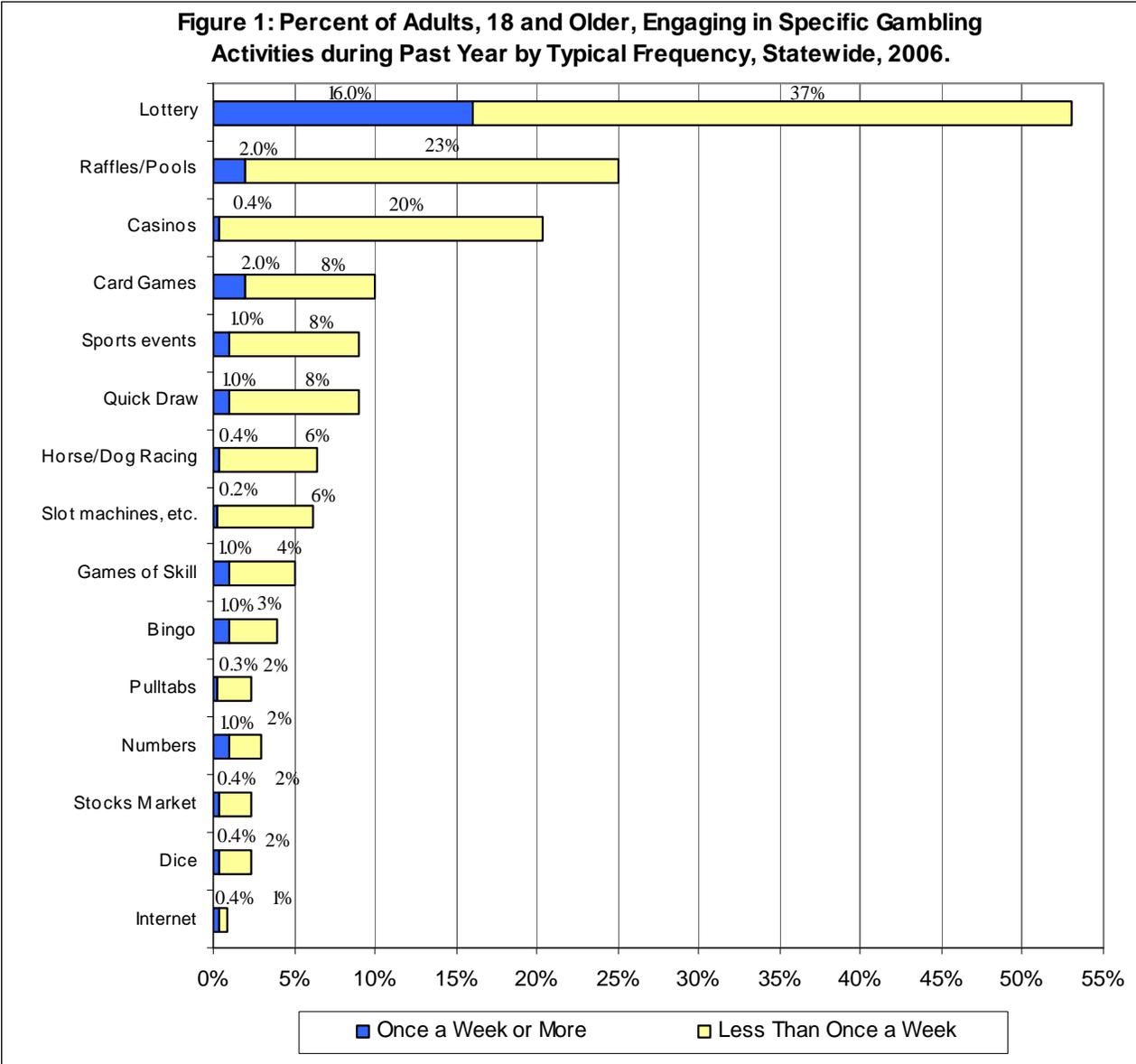
In order to assess the nature and extent of gambling problems in New York State, OASAS conducted a household survey of adults age 18 and older. The survey was conducted through the computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) facility at the New York State University at Stony Brook's Center for Survey Research using random digit dialing to obtain a statewide probability sample. Among the gambling-related items included in the interview schedule were: the frequency of engaging in 16 different gambling activities during the past year, weekly gambling in a typical month, age of first gambling experience, and the 10 diagnostic criteria for pathological gambling from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association. The average interview took 16 minutes to complete. Approximately 5,100 State residents participated in the survey which was conducted between November of 2005 and April of 2006. The survey methodology is described in a separate report, "2006 OASAS Household Survey Technical Documentation." This brief report describes initial findings regarding gambling behavior and problems as well as the cross-prevalence of problem gambling and substance use disorders.

Gambling Behaviors

Respondents were asked if they engaged in any of the following activities during the past year: playing bingo for money; betting on office pools, raffles or other charitable games; betting at casinos; betting on sports events (but not in a casino); spending money on a state lottery including daily numbers or scratch off tickets; playing "Quick Draw"; betting or spending money on pull tabs or bell jars; playing card games for money (but not in a casino); playing games of skill with a wager of money; betting money on horse races or other animal races at OTB, at the track or with a bookie; playing dice games for money (but not in casino); betting money on cock fights or other animal fights; playing the numbers; playing slot machines, poker machines, or other gambling machines for money at a bar or a race track; betting money over the Internet; and playing the stock or commodities market as a day trader. In addition, for each activity, respondents were asked whether they engaged in the activity at least once a week in a typical month.

- About 53 percent of adults age 18 and older purchased state lottery tickets in the past year and 16 percent of adults typically purchased state lottery tickets at least once per week.
- About 25 percent of adults age 18 and older participated in raffles or office pools in the past year, but only 2 percent of adults typically participated in raffles or office pools once a week or more.
- Twenty percent of adults age 18 and older gambled at casinos in the past year; however, less than one percent of adults typically gambled at casinos once a week or more.
- Ten percent of adults age 18 and older played cards games for money in the past year, while 2 percent of adults typically played cards for money once a week or more.

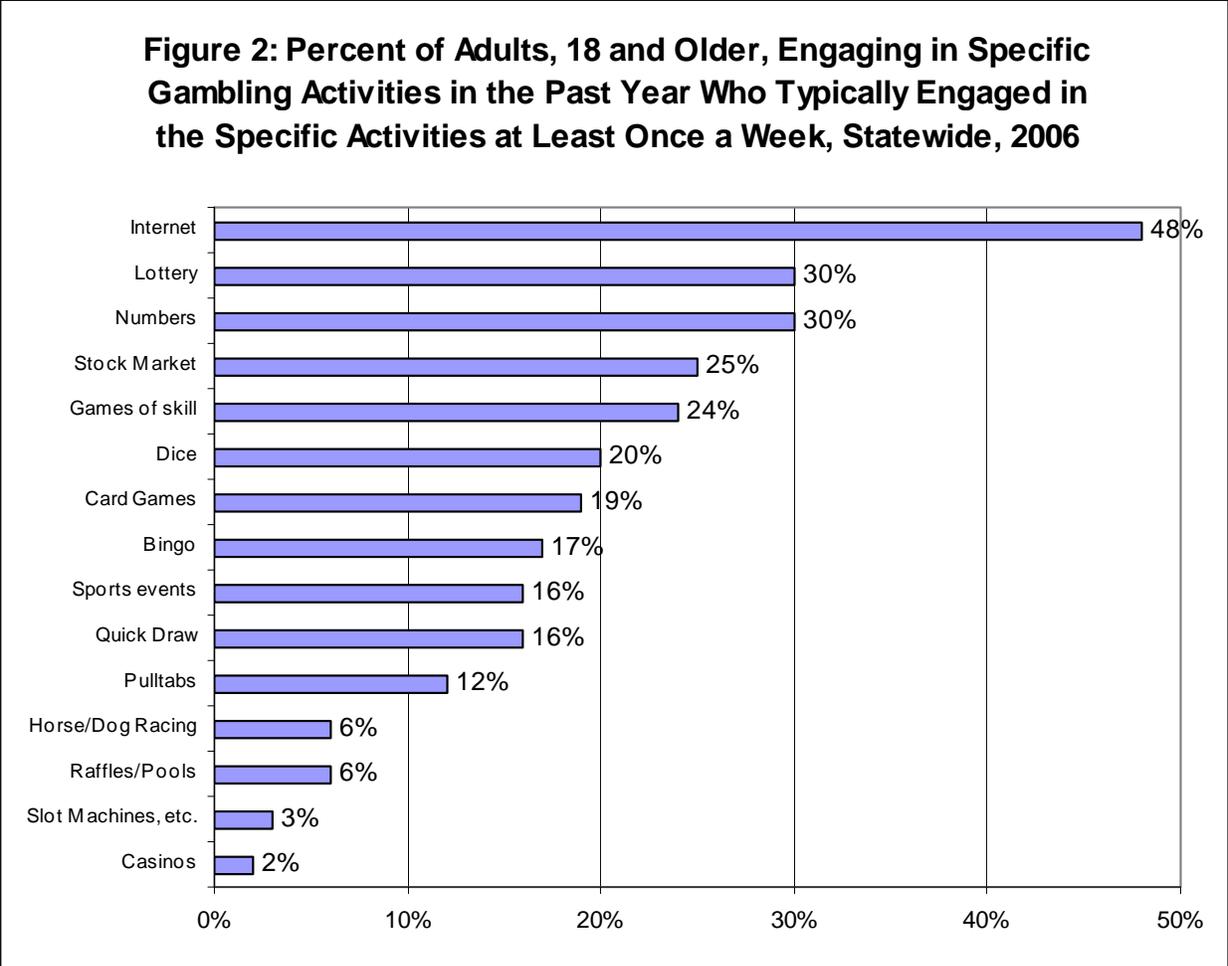
- Nine percent of adults age 18 and older played “Quick Draw” in the past year, and 1 percent of adults typically played “Quick Draw” once a week or more.
- Nine percent of adults age 18 and older bet on sporting events in the past year, while 1 percent of adults typically bet on sports events once a week or more.
- About 6 percent of adults age 18 and older bet money on horse or other animal races in the past year, but less than one percent of adults typically bet on horse or other animal races once a week or more.
- About 6 percent of adults age 18 and older gambled on slot machines or other gambling machines in the past year, but less than one percent of adults typically gambled on slot machine or other gambling machines once a week or more.



- About 5 percent of adults age 18 and older bowled, played golf, shot pool, or played some other game of skill with a wager of money in the past year, and 1 percent of adults typically played games of skill with a wager once a week or more.
- About 4 percent of adults age 18 and older played bingo for money in the past year, and 1 percent of adults typically played bingo for money once a week or more.
- Only 1 percent of adults age 18 and older gambled on the Internet in the past year and about half-of-one percent of adults typically gambled on the Internet once a week or more.
- Few adults age 18 and older gambled on bingo, games of skill, pull tabs, numbers, dice, or day trading on the stock or commodities market.

Likelihood of Weekly Gambling by Gambling Activity

Some gambling activities may be engaged in by a substantial portion of adults over the course of a year, but not on a regular basis. Conversely, other gambling activities may be engaged in by relatively few adults, but those adults who do, tend to engage in the activity regularly. Figure 2 displays the proportion who participated in each gambling activity at least once a week during a typical month among those adults who engaged in the activity during the past year.

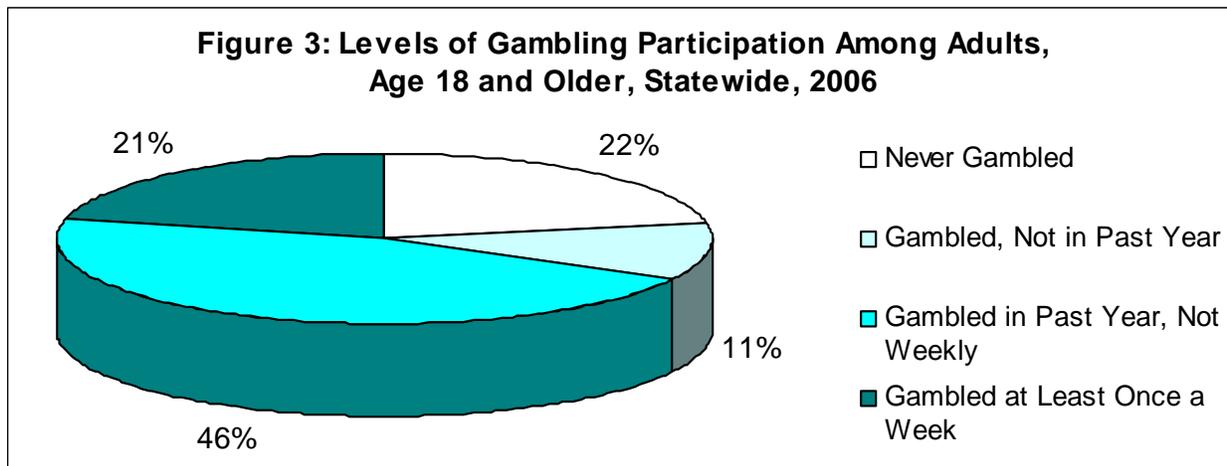


- While just slightly more than 1 percent of adults gambled on the Internet in the past year, of those who gambled on the Internet, 48 percent did so at least once a week in a typical month.
- Over half of adults (53%) played the lottery in the past year. Of those who played the lottery, 30 percent did so at least once a week in a typical month.
- Only about 3 percent of adults played the numbers or “bolita” in the past year; but of those who played the numbers, 30 percent did so at least once a week in a typical month.
- While 20 percent of adults gambled at a casino in the past year, only about 2 percent of those gambled at a casino did so at least once a week in a typical month.

Level of Gambling Participation

Figure 3 shows the level of gambling across the gambling activities in terms of lifetime gambling, past year gambling and weekly gambling in the past year.

- Over three-quarters (78%) of the respondents reported having engaged in gambling at some time in their lifetime.
- Two-thirds (67%) of adults engaged in one or more gambling activities during the past year.
- One-fifth (21%) of adults engaged in at least one gambling activity on a weekly basis during a typical month over the past year.



Gambling Problems

In the 2006 OASAS Household Survey, gambling problems are principally addressed in terms of the criteria for pathological gambling in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-IV) of the American Psychiatric Association. The survey uses questions from the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) DSM IV Screen (NODS) for Gambling Problems.¹ The NODS includes items corresponding to all 10 DSM IV criteria for pathological gambling. The text of these items is included in Table 1.

¹ Gerstein, D., Volberg, R., Harwood, H., Christiansen, M., et al. (1999) *Gambling Impact and Behavior Study: Report to the National Gambling Impact Study Commission*. Chicago, IL: National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago.

Table 1 shows the percent of all adults, age 18 and older, who responded positively to diagnosis-related questions. (Adults who reported never gambling are included in the percentages.) The questions asked whether the respondent ever experienced the problem, and then whether the problem had occurred in the past 12 months. The DSM criteria most often endorsed are “chasing” and “preoccupation.”

Table 1: Percent of Adults Responding Positively to Questions Based on Diagnostic Criteria for Pathological Gambling, Lifetime and Past 12 Months, Statewide, 2006

DSM IV Criteria	Text of Questions	Lifetime	Past 12 Months
Preoccupation May be positive on either question	Have there ever been any periods lasting two weeks or longer when you spent a lot of time thinking about your gambling experiences or planning future gambling ventures or bets?	3%	2%
	Have there ever been any periods lasting two weeks or longer when you spent a lot of time thinking about ways of getting money to gamble with?	1%	1%
Tolerance	Have there ever been any periods when you needed to gamble with increasing amounts of money or with larger bets than before in order to get the same feeling of excitement?	2%	1%
Withdrawal <u>Must</u> be positive on both questions	Have you ever tried to stop, cut down, or control your gambling?	4%	3%
	On one or more of these times when you tried to stop, cut down, or control your gambling, were you restless or irritable?	1%	1%
Loss of Control <u>Must</u> be positive on both questions	Have you ever tried but not succeeded in stopping, cutting down, or controlling your gambling?	1%	1%
	Have you ever tried but not succeeded in stopping, cutting down, or controlling your gambling three or more times?	1%	< 0.5%
Escape May be positive on either question	Have you ever gambled as a way to escape from personal problems?	2%	1%
	Have you ever gambled to relieve uncomfortable feelings such as guilt, anxiety, helplessness, or depression?	1%	1%
Chasing	Has there ever been a period in your life when, if you lost money gambling on one day, you would return another day to get even?	5%	3%
Lying <u>Must</u> be positive on both questions	Have you ever lied to family members, friends, or others about how much you gamble or how much money you lost on gambling?	3%	1%
	Have you ever lied to family members, friends, or others about how much you gamble or how much money you lost on gambling three or more times?	1%	< 0.5%
Illegal Acts	Have you ever written a bad check or taken money that didn't belong to you from family members or anyone else in order to pay for your gambling?	< 0.5%	< 0.5%
Risked Relationships May be positive on any question	Has your gambling ever caused serious or repeated problems in your relationships with any of your family members or friends?	1%	< 0.5%
	Has your gambling ever caused you any problems in school, such as missing classes or days of school or your grades dropping?	< 0.5%	< 0.5%
	Has your gambling ever caused you to lose a job, have trouble with your job, or miss out on an important job or career opportunity?	< 0.5%	< 0.5%
Bailout	Have you ever needed to ask family members or anyone else to loan you money or otherwise bail you out of a desperate money situation that was largely caused by your gambling?	1%	< 0.5%

While a diagnosis of pathological gambling requires meeting 5 or more of the DSM criteria, many adults experience clinically-significant gambling problems without meeting the standard for a “pathological” diagnosis. According to the National Council on Problem Gambling:

Problem gambling is gambling behavior which causes disruptions in any major area of life: psychological, physical, social or vocational. The term "Problem Gambling" includes, but is not limited to, the condition known as "Pathological", or "Compulsive" Gambling, a progressive addiction characterized by increasing preoccupation with gambling, a need to bet more money more frequently, restlessness or irritability when attempting to stop, "chasing" losses, and loss of control manifested by continuation of the gambling behavior in spite of mounting, serious, negative consequences.²

The Council further suggests that, in addition to pathological gamblers, other persons “would be considered problem gamblers. . . [who] do not meet the full diagnostic criteria for pathological gambling, but meet one or more of the criteria...”³ Empirical literature based on the NODS instrument has generally divided the count of diagnostic criteria into three categories: pathological gambling (5 or more criteria), possible pathological gambling (also referred to as problem gambling) (3-4 criteria) and at-risk of developing possible pathological or pathological gambling (1-2 criteria).⁴

Consistent with the National Council on Problem Gambling and New York’s program guidelines for gambling treatment services, OASAS uses the term “problem gambling” to refer to meeting one or more of the DSM criteria, including both pathological gambling and clinically significant conditions represented in Table 2 as “possible pathological gambling” (3-4 criteria) and “at-risk of developing pathological gambling” (1-2 criteria).

Table 2: Estimated Annual Prevalence of Problem Gambling Among Adults, Age 18 and Older, Statewide

DSM IV Criteria	%	Population Estimate
Pathological Gambling (5+ criteria)	0.4%	49,000
Possible Pathological Gambling (3-4 criteria)	0.5%	75,000
At-risk of Developing Pathological Gambling (1-2 criteria)	4.0%	544,000
Total, Problem Gambling	4.9%	668,000

² National Council on Problem Gambling. Web page: www.ncpgambling.org, July 2007.

³ National Council on Problem Gambling. www.ncpgambling.i4a.com/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3390, July 2007.

⁴ Gerstein et al. op. cit., p. 21; Mancuso, D., Gilson, M. and Felver, B. (2005) 2003 Washington State Needs Assessment Household Survey: Substance Use, Substance Use Disorders, and Need for Treatment. Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, chapt. 6, p. 3. See also the Web site for National Problem Awareness Week (www.npgaw.org).

As shown in Table 2, approximately 5 percent of adults, age 18 and older, have experienced problem gambling in the past year and may need treatment services. Thus, over 600,000 adults may need treatment for problem gambling.

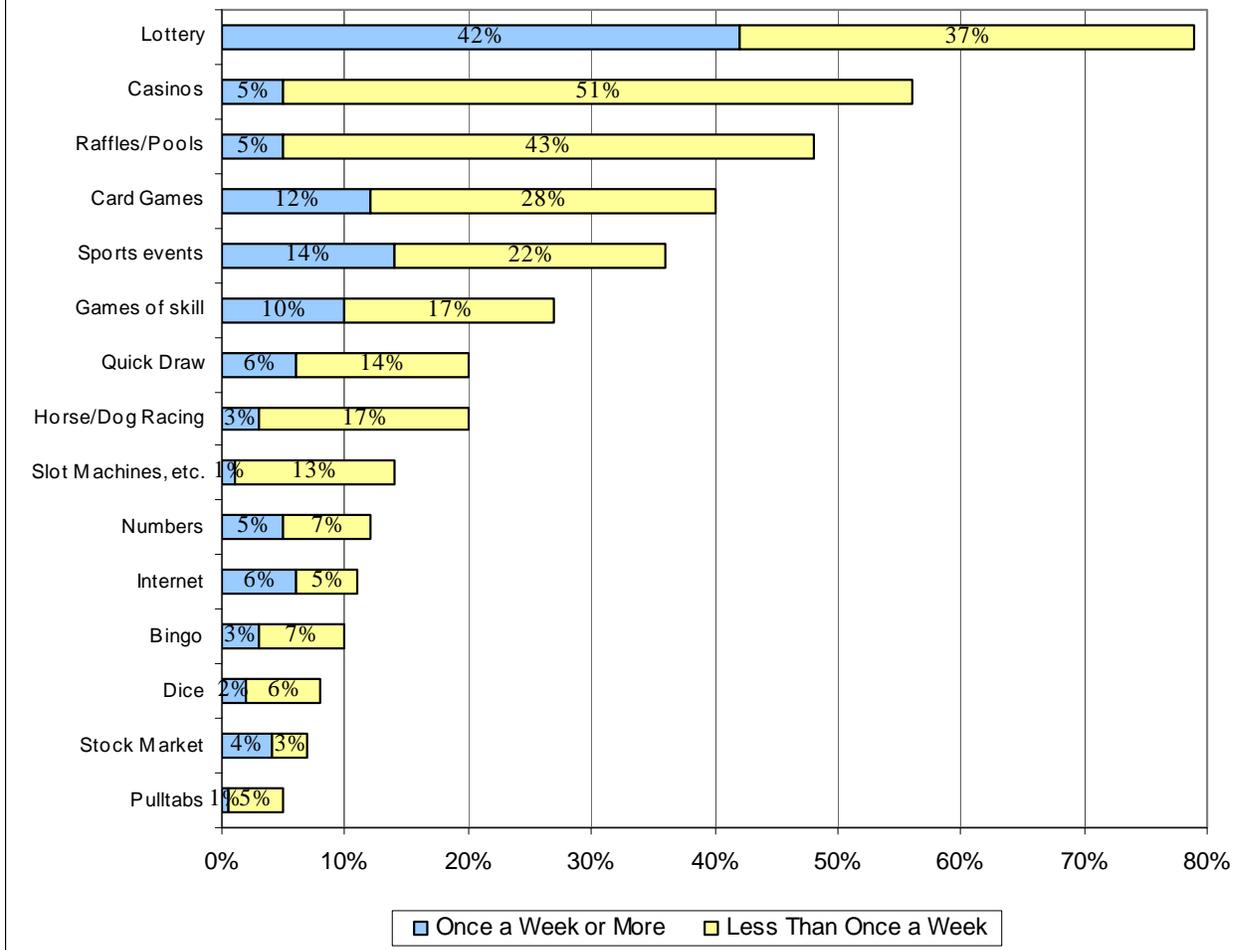
Gambling Activities Associated with Problem Gambling

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-IV) criteria for pathological gambling do not distinguish among various forms of gambling. Nor is there a simple classification or typology for forms of gambling similar to the different classes of substance specified for substance use disorders in the DSM. Determining directly which forms of gambling are more responsible for development of problem gambling is beyond the scope of this survey. However, the survey data can answer the question, Which gambling activities are likely to be engaged in by adults experiencing problem gambling?

Figure 4 shows the gambling activities engaged in by adults who have experienced problem gambling in the past year. Figure 4 parallels Figure 1: whereas all adults are included in Figure 1, only adults who have experienced problem gambling in the past year (i.e., endorsed one or more DSM-IV criteria) are included in Figure 4. The gambling activities most frequently engaged in are the following.

- About 79 percent of adults experiencing problem gambling purchased state lottery tickets in the past year and 42 percent typically purchased state lottery tickets at least once per week.
- About 56 percent of adults experiencing problem gambling gambled at casinos in the past year; however, only five percent typically gambled at casinos once a week or more.
- About 48 percent of adults experiencing problem gambling participated in raffles or office pools in the past year, but only 5 percent typically participated in raffles or office pools once a week or more.
- Forty percent of adults experiencing problem gambling played cards games for money in the past year, while 12 percent typically played cards once a week or more.
- Thirty-six percent of adults experiencing problem gambling bet on sporting events in the past year, and 14 percent typically bet on sports events once a week or more.
- Twenty-seven percent of adults experiencing problem gambling bet money on games of skill during the past year, and 10 percent typically bet money on games of skill once a week or more.
- Twenty percent of adults experiencing problem gambling played “Quick Draw” in the past year, and 6 percent typically played “Quick Draw” once a week or more.
- Twenty percent of adults experiencing problem gambling bet money on horse or other animal races in the past year, but only 3 percent typically bet on animal races once a week or more.
- About 14 percent of adults experiencing problem gambling gambled on slot machines or other gambling machines in the past year and one percent typically gambled on slot machine or other gambling machines once a week or more.
- Twelve percent of adults experiencing problem gambling bet money playing numbers in the past year, and five percent typically played numbers once a week or more.
- Only 11 percent of adults experiencing problem gambling gambled over the Internet in the past year, but over half of these adults (6 percent) typically gambled over the Internet once a week or more.

Figure 4: Percent of Adults, Age 18 and Older, Experiencing Problem Gambling Who Engaged in Various Gambling Activities in the Past Year by Typical Frequency of Each Activity, 2006



Age for First Gambling Experience

Among adults who had gambled in the past year, the average age at which they first made a wager or bet money was 23 years old. The same was true for adults who had gambled on a weekly basis in the past year. However, among those adults who had experienced problem gambling in the past year, the average age of first gambling experience was 19 years old.

Socio-demographic Correlates

Table 3 provides the annual prevalence rates of any gambling in the past year, weekly gambling in the typical month, and problem gambling (based on meeting one or more diagnostic criteria). These rates are provided for different demographic groups. For all adults, 67 percent gambled in the past year, 21 percent engaged in at least one gambling activity on a weekly basis

during a typical month, and about 5 percent experienced problem gambling in the past year. (About one-half percent experienced a pathological gambling problem in the past year.)

- While females were almost as likely as males to have gambled at least once in the past year, males were more likely to have gambled on a weekly basis (26% vs. 16%) and were three-times more likely to experience problem gambling (7.8% vs. 2.3%).

Table 3: Annual Prevalence of Any Gambling, Weekly Gambling and Problem Gambling, for Adults, Age 18 and Older, by Socio-Demographic Characteristics, Statewide, 2006.

Population Characteristics	Annual Prevalence		
	Any Gambling	Weekly Gambling	Problem Gambling
<u>All Adults</u> (n= 13,737,000)			
Number	9,154,000	2,871,000	668,000
Percent	67%	21%	4.9%
<u>Gender:</u>			
Male	72%	26%	7.8%
Female	63%	16%	2.3%
<u>Age:</u>			
18-19 years	53%	13%	11.8%
20-29 years	63%	19%	7.6%
30-59 years	70%	20%	4.5%
60+ years	64%	25%	2.8%
<u>Region of Residence:</u>			
New York City	61%	19%	5.0%
Suburban Ring*	72%	23%	4.4%
Upstate	71%	23%	5.0%
<u>Casino or Race Track in County of Residence</u>			
Yes	69%	23%	5.6%
No	65%	20%	4.4%
<u>Ethnicity:</u>			
White	71%	21%	3.8%
Black	63%	23%	7.2%
Hispanic	62%	23%	7.1%
Asian	48%	13%	4.4%
<u>Born in the U.S.:</u>			
Yes	69%	21%	4.6%
No	58%	19%	5.5%
<u>Marital Status:</u>			
Married	68%	21%	4.0%
Widowed	63%	21%	1.9%
Divorced/Separated	68%	27%	4.7%
Never Married	63%	18%	7.8%
<u>Education:</u>			
High School graduate or lower	62%	24%	5.4%
1 or more years of College	69%	19%	4.5%
<u>Employed on a Full or Part Time</u>			
Yes	71%	22%	5.3%
No	59%	19%	3.9%

*Suburban Ring consists of the following counties: Dutchess, Nassau, Orange, Suffolk, Ulster, Westchester, Putnam and Rockland.

- Older adults were somewhat more likely to have gambled on a weekly basis. For instance, 25 percent of adults age 60 and older gambled on a weekly basis compared to 19 percent of adults in their 20's. However, younger adults were almost three times more likely to have experienced problem gambling in the past year. For instance, 7.6 percent of adults in their 20's experienced problem gambling in the past year compared to 2.8 percent of adults age 60 and older.
- New York City residents were slightly less likely to have gambled on a weekly basis but were about as likely as other residents of the State to have experienced problem gambling.
- Residents of counties that have race tracks or casinos were slightly more likely to have gambled on a weekly basis and to experienced problem gambling compared to other residents of the state.
- Whites, Blacks and Hispanics were about equally likely to have gambled on a weekly basis (21% to 23%); however, Blacks and Hispanics were almost twice as likely as Whites to have experienced problem gambling (7.2% and 7.1% vs. 3.8%).
- Never married adults were about twice as likely as married adults to have experienced problem gambling (7.8% vs. 4.0%).
- Adults with education beyond high school were slightly less likely to have gambled on a weekly basis (19% vs. 24%) and slightly less likely to have experienced problem gambling (4.5% vs. 5.4%).
- Adults employed full or part time were slightly more likely to have gambled on a weekly basis than persons not employed (22% vs. 19%) and were more likely to have experienced problem gambling (5.3% vs. 3.9%).

Cross-Prevalence with Substance Use Disorders

OASAS estimates the prevalence of substance use disorders based on the criteria specified in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association.⁵ The household survey includes interview items for each of the seven dependence and four abuse criteria. A DSM IV diagnosis of substance dependence requires that at least three of the seven criteria occur at some time in the same 12-month period. The “residual” diagnosis of substance abuse is made for those individuals who have not met at least 3 of the dependence criteria for substance dependence but do exhibit a “maladaptive pattern” of recurrent substance use meeting at least one of four abuse criteria and occurring in the same 12-month period.

Based on the DSM criteria included in the household survey, OASAS estimates that 10.3 percent (1,416,000) of New York State residents, 18 or older, experienced a substance use disorder in the past year, either abuse or dependence. (This statistic is based only on responses to this household survey and does not include the OASAS adjustment for “hidden populations,” i.e., heroin users.⁶)

⁵ American Psychiatric Association. (1994). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV)* (4th ed.). Washington, DC

⁶ Estimates of the annual prevalence of heroin users in New York based on household surveys have typically been only equal to or less than the population known to have received treatment during the year, and thus clearly underestimate the extent of substance use disorders involving heroin.

- Among those adults who experienced a substance use disorder in the past year, 13.1 percent (185,000) also experienced problem gambling in the past year.
- Conversely, among the 4.9 percent (668,000) of adults who experienced problem gambling in the past year, 27.7 percent (185,000) also experienced a substance use disorder in the past year.

Summary

Two-thirds (67%) of adults, age 18 and older, engaged in one or more gambling activities during the past year. One-fifth (21%) of adults engaged in at least one gambling activity on a weekly basis during a typical month over the past year. Over one-half (53%) of adults purchased state lottery tickets in the past year and 16 percent typically played the lottery at least once per week. While about 25 percent of adults participated in raffles or office pools in the past year, only 2 percent typically did so once a week or more. Twenty percent of adults gambled at casinos in the past year; however, less than one percent typically gambled at casinos on a weekly basis. Ten percent of adults age 18 and older played cards games for money in the past year, while 2 percent typically played cards for money once a week or more.

Approximately 5 percent of adults experienced problem gambling in the past year and may be in need of treatment services. Among these 600,000 plus adults: 42 percent typically purchased state lottery tickets at least once per week; 14 percent typically bet on sports events once a week or more; 12 percent typically played cards at least once per week; and 10 percent typically bet money on games of skill once a week or more. While half of adults experiencing problem gambling had gambled at a casino in the past year, only 5 percent did so on a weekly basis. Adults experiencing problem gambling had first engaged in gambling at a younger age (19 years old on average) compared to all adults who have gambled in the past year (age 23 on average).

While females were almost as likely as males to have gambled at least once in the past year, males were more likely to have gambled on a weekly basis (26% vs. 16%) and were three-times more likely to experience problem gambling (7.8% vs. 2.3%). Older adults were somewhat more likely to have gambled on a weekly basis; however, younger adults were almost three times more likely to have experienced problem gambling in the past year. For instance, 7.6 percent of adults in their 20's experienced problem gambling in the past year compared to 2.8 percent of adults age 60 and older. Whites, Blacks and Hispanics were about equally likely to have gambled on a weekly basis (21% to 23%); however, Blacks and Hispanics were almost twice as likely as Whites to have experienced problem gambling (7.2% and 7.1% vs. 3.8%). Never married adults were about twice as likely as married adults to have experienced problem gambling (7.8% vs. 4.0%). Adults employed full or part time were more likely to have experienced problem gambling than persons not employed (5.3% vs. 3.9%).

Of the 4.9 percent (668,000) of adults who experienced problem gambling in the past year, about 28 percent (185,000) also experienced a substance use disorder in the past year. Conversely, among adults experiencing a substance use disorder in the past year, about 13 percent also experienced problem gambling.