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## Health

### Gambling a problem for many U.S. youth

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BUFFALO, N.Y., May 8 (UPI) -- Gambling is widespread among U.S. adolescents and young adults ages 14 through 21, a University at Buffalo Research Institute on Addictions study reveals.

Principal investigator John W. Welte said the results of the first national survey of its kind show problem gambling -- described as gambling with three or more negative consequences, such as risking more than intended or stealing money to gamble -- in the past year occurred at a rate of 2.1 percent among youth 14 to 21, or about 750,000 young problem gamblers nationwide.

In addition, 11 percent of the 2,274 teens and young adults surveyed in the random telephone survey gambled twice per week or more, considered frequent gambling. Sixty-eight percent of the youth interviewed reported that they had gambled at least once in the past year.

"In a society where young people are increasingly exposed to gambling influences, there is cause for concern," Welte said in a statement.

The researchers found gambling increased with each major life change such as employment or marriage. Those who worked full-time were more likely to gamble, those who were not students were more likely to gamble frequently and those who lived independently were more likely to gamble and to be problem gamblers.

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