



# RIA Reaching Others with Gambling Research

From 1900-1960, Nevada was the only state with legalized gambling. Outside of Nevada, gambling translated to charity bingo, horse and dog tracks.

By 2001, gambling opportunities had increased radically: 35 out of 50 states had Off Track Betting (OTB), 42 had interstate track betting, 38 had lotteries and 26 states had casinos. RIA researchers wanted to know how prevalent problem gambling had become; how the prevalence of problem gambling was related to the expanded availability of gambling and the increased permissiveness of gambling laws; how problem gambling was distributed across different ethnic groups, age groups, regions and neighborhoods; and what it means for families, communities and public policy.

## Timely Research

RIA responded to the country's growing concerns about gambling in the late 90s, and by doing so expanded its portfolio of addiction research from alcohol and drugs to include gambling.

One of the first national gambling studies of its kind – with funding not from a gambling-related entity but from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) – surveyed U.S. adults (18 and over) about their gambling and drinking habits. Data were collected from residents of all 50 states and D.C.

The results hit the news media, community groups and policymakers with a resounding impact:

### Over 80% of Americans gamble every year and between 3-5% of Americans – 3-5 out of every 100 – have a gambling problem.

- ▶ The growth of gambling opportunities throughout the country reflects a shift in the profile of gamblers to more female, older, poorer and less white than previously seen.
- ▶ Problem drinkers are 23 times more likely to have a gambling problem than individuals without alcohol problems.

### Subsequent research into youth problem gambling found that:

- ▶ An estimated 750,000 of America's youth – between the ages of 14 and 21 – are problem gamblers (they gamble more than intended or steal money to support gambling).
- ▶ 11% of youth gamble twice per week or more; 68% report gambling at least once in the past year.
- ▶ Gambling activity was found to increase as youth age. For instance, as they transition from student life, start careers, move into independent living and marry, gambling increases with each major life change.
- ▶ Problem gambling rates for adult and young males were identical, 4%. Adult female gambling rates were high, 3% when compared to young females, less than .1%. Black youth gambled less than white youth but if they did gamble, it was more likely to be frequent, 30% to 12%.



## What it Means to Main St.

Grant awards made to RIA scientists increase the number of jobs in our area, the amount of dollars spent in housing, retail, schooling and entertainment, as well as the growth of urban, suburban and rural communities in the region. RIA's 160 staff members reside in and contribute to 20 different local municipalities as taxpayers, consumers, parents, students, volunteers and much, much more.

Multi-year awards from NIH funding RIA's gambling research since 1998 included:

<b>1998 - 2002</b>	<b>\$1.2 million</b>
Co-Occurrence of Gambling & Alcohol Use in the U.S.	
<b>1999 - 2003</b>	<b>\$665,000</b>
Coping in Those with Pathological Gambling Partners	
<b>2000 - 2003</b>	<b>\$308,000</b>
Development of Gambling & Alcohol Use in Youth	
<b>2003 - 2008</b>	<b>\$1.8 million</b>
Gambling & Substance Use Among Youth	
<b>2009 - 2013</b>	<b>\$3.0 million</b>
Problem Gambling: A Decade of Change	

## An analysis of geographic factors found that:

- ▶ Living within 10 miles or less of a casino doubles the risk of problem gambling.
  - ▶ Likewise, individuals living in a disadvantaged neighborhood have a 90% increase in the odds of being a problem or pathological gambler.



## In a more recent study of problem gambling results demonstrate:



- ▶ Problem gambling is considerably more common than alcohol dependence among U.S. adults (21 and older), even though alcohol dependence receives more attention.
  - ▶ Gambling, frequent gambling and problem gambling increases in frequency during the teen years, reaches its highest level in the 20s and 30s and then falls off among individuals over 70.
  - ▶ Frequent gambling is twice as great among men (28%) than among women (13%).
- ▶ Frequent and problem gambling numbers rise as socioeconomic status (SES) declines; gambling involvement tends to decrease as SES rises.

## Reaching Others

RIA communicates research results to various audiences – individuals, families, medical professionals, addiction treatment providers, other scientists -- in multi-media kinds of ways: newspapers, tv and radio, websites and blogs, peer-reviewed journals. These results have been disseminated to:

**Newspaper/TV/Radio:** *The New York Times, New York Daily News, The Cleveland Plain Dealer, Pennsylvania's Meadville Tribune, Buffalo News, Business First, Buffalo Challenger, Buffalo Criterion, Philadelphia Inquirer, Chicago's Daily Herald, Addiction Professional Magazine, HHS Healthbeat, WNED-TV, Alcoholism & Drug Abuse Weekly, Harvard Medical School's "The WAGER," Boston Globe, Denver Post, Chicago Business, Bethlehem PA's The Morning Call, Las Vegas Sun.*



**Web:** Health News Digest, Casino Gambling Web, PsychCentral, Addiction Professional, The McCarville Report Online blogspot, EurekaAlert, Medical News Today, SunSpot.net— Maryland's Online Community, Healthscout.com, ctnow.com— The Hartford Courant, SubstanceAbuse.About.com, scienceblog.com, NBC, ABC, AP, UPI, CBC, Great Lakes Center to Prevent Gambling Addiction.



**Scientific Journals:** *Journal of Gambling Studies, International Gambling Studies, Journal of American College Health, American Journal on Addictions, Journal of Adolescent Health, Psychology of Addictive Behaviors, and the Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs, to name a few.*