

The WAGER, Vol. 1(7) - Guide toward standard gambling nomenclature

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A variety of methods currently exist to estimate the prevalence of problem gambling. The South Oaks Gambling Screen (SOGS) and its modifications, the Massachusetts Gambling Screen (MAGS), the American Psychiatric Association's DSM-IV criteria, the Multifactor Method, and Gambler's Anonymous 20 questions all can provide estimates of disordered gambling rates. Most instruments allow for classification of individuals into three categories of problem severity. However, there is still considerable conceptual variation among these categories and estimation methods used to define disordered gambling. To facilitate comparison among prevalence rates derived from studies that use different methods and category labels, Shaffer & Hall (in press) propose the implementation of the following new generic multilevel classification scheme. This nomenclature provides both a common language for comparing prevalence rates and conceptual categories capable of guiding the allocation of resources within a comprehensive health care system.

<i>Levels of Gambling Involvement and Experience</i>	<i>Operational Definition</i>	<i>Possible Education, Prevention & Treatment Opportunities</i>
Level 0 : Non Gambling	Has never gambled	>Educational awareness >Primary prevention programs
Level 1 : Non-Problem Gambling	Has gambled recreationally and does not experience any signs or symptoms of gambling-related disorder	>Secondary prevention
Level 2 : In-Transition Gambling	Gambler who experiences symptoms or displays signs of problems related to gambling activity; may be progressing either toward more serious or intense symptoms (i.e., progression) or away from these symptoms (i.e., during recovery)	>Tertiary prevention >Early treatment to arrest progression >Relapse prevention activities to facilitate and sustain recovery
Level 3 : Gambling-Related Disorder with Impairment	Gambler who meets diagnostic criteria (e.g., DSM-IV, MAGS, SOGS) for biologic, sociologic or psychologic impairment	>Tertiary prevention to minimize harm >Treatment
Level 4 : Impaired Gambler who Displays Willingness to Enter Treatment	Gambler who satisfies level 3 requirements and, in addition, displays interest in entering the health care domain (with or without existing obstacles)	>Treatment >Relapse prevention

Source: Shaffer, H.J., & Hall, M.N. (in press). Estimating the prevalence of adolescent gambling disorders: a quantitative synthesis and guide toward

standard gambling nomenclature. Journal of Gambling Studies.