The WAGER, Vol. 1(16) – Elevated substance use & gambling among children of problem gamblers

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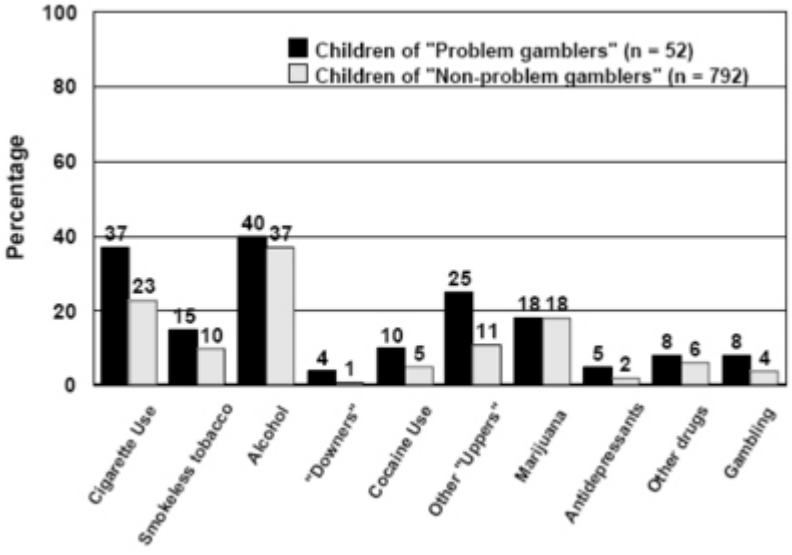
Problem gambling has been shown to hold negative consequences for individuals related to the gambler. A study of 844 randomly selected 9th to 12th graders examined a variety of health indicators, including levels of substance use and gambling activity. Students who rated their parent(s) as having a compulsive gambling problem (n = 52) were contrasted with students who rated their parent(s) as having no gambling problem (n = 792). Children of problem gamblers reported higher levels of use for tobacco, alcohol, and drugs, with the exception of marijuana. In addition, children of problem gamblers reported being more involved in gambling than their counterparts. The authors state that children of problem gamblers show "a greater propensity for seeking mood-elevating substances and stimulating experiences" than do children of parents with no gambling problem.



Source: Jacobs, D.F., Marston, A.R., Singer, R.D., Widaman, K., Little, T., & Veizades, J. (1989). Children of problem gamblers. Journal of Gambling Behavior, 5, 261-267.

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