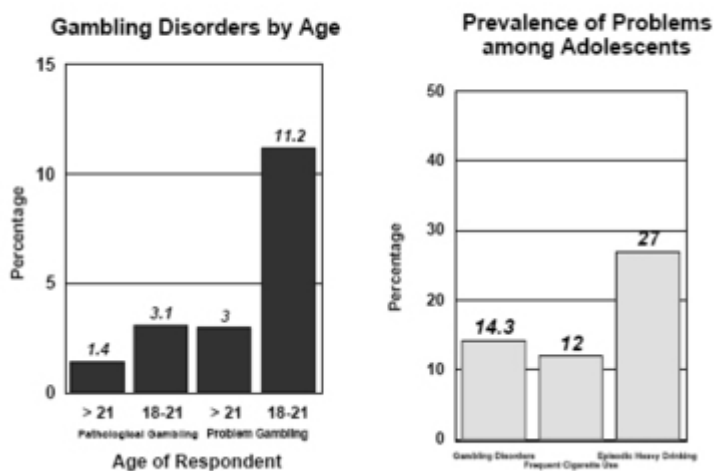


# The WAGER, Vol. 1(50) - Gambling disorders in Louisiana

December 10, 1996

Seven forms of legalized gaming are available in Louisiana: pari-mutuel horse racing, charitable gaming, off-track betting, lottery, riverboat casinos, video poker, and land-based casinos. A recent study determined the prevalence of problem and pathological gambling among adults (over 21) and adolescents (defined in this study as ages 18-21) in Louisiana. A random sample of 1818 residents were interviewed by telephone using the South Oaks Gambling Screen (SOGS) to ascertain the prevalence of gambling disorders. Individuals with SOGS scores of 3 or 4 were considered "problem" gamblers, and those with scores of 5 or more were considered "pathological" gamblers. Adolescents were more than twice (2.2 times) as likely as adults to be pathological gamblers, and 3.7 times more likely than adults to be problem gamblers. Among adolescents, gambling disorders were more prevalent than frequent smoking, but less prevalent than episodic heavy drinking. Non-problem gamblers (those who did not meet criteria for either problem or pathological gambling) in Louisiana spent an average of 6% of their monthly income on gambling, while pathological gamblers spent an average of 45% of their monthly income on gambling.

## Gambling Disorders in Louisiana



**Source:** Westphal, J.R., & Rush, J. (1996). Pathological gambling in Louisiana: An epidemiological perspective. *Journal of Louisiana State Medical Society*, 148, 353-358.

This public education project is funded, in part, by The Andrews Foundation.  
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For more information contact the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive  
Gambling,  
190 High Street, Suite 6, Boston, MA 02110.