

Center for Health & Safety Culture

www.chsculture.org

Oregon Problem Gambling Survey

Key Findings Report

Prepared for the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource, Oregon Health
Authority



April 4, 2019

Reflect
Resource
Renew

Three steps to address concerns
about gambling. Visit OPGR.org
for more information.



P.O. Box 170548
Bozeman, MT 59717
406-994-7873

Contents

Executive Summary.....	3
Exposure to Gambling Behaviors and Consequences of Problem Gambling	5
Concern and Actions About Problem Gambling	5
Identifying Problem Gambling Behaviors	6
Willingness and Intention to Intervene	6
Attitudes and Beliefs About Contacting the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource	7
Support for Contacting the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource	8
Knowledge About the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource	8
Comfort in Contacting the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource.....	8
Agreement With Guidelines to Prevent Problem Gambling.....	9
Recommendations and Next Steps.....	10
Questions to Foster Meaningful Dialogue	10

Executive Summary

Two surveys were developed and implemented to better understand engagement with the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource (OPGR) and support for guidelines to prevent problem gambling. The first survey explored people's experiences with individuals who may have a problem with gambling; how well people can discern problem gambling from non-problem gambling; and people's attitudes and beliefs about contacting the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource when they are concerned about someone's gambling behaviors. The second survey assessed levels of agreement with 14 guidelines to prevent problem gambling.

The first survey was completed online by a convenience sample of 1,225 adults between May 9 and May 22, 2018 who live in Oregon. Half were female (50%), and ages ranged from 18 to over 75 with a similar distribution as the U.S. Census for Oregon. Most respondents were White (91%); other races included Black or African American (3%), American Indian or Alaska Native (3%), Asian (4%), and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (1%). Some (9%) indicated they were Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino/Latina. Participants lived in a variety of settings including urban (39%), suburban (46%), and rural (15%) from across the state. Overall, the general education attainment of the respondents was higher than the general population.

About two-thirds of the respondents indicate they have gambled in the past 12 months. About half know someone who has experienced problems because of their gambling behaviors (e.g., spent too much money gambling). About half are concerned about problem gambling in Oregon with about one in five respondents reporting concern about their own gambling behaviors in the past year and two in five reporting concern about someone else's gambling behaviors. Of those concerned about their own gambling behavior, many took some form of action including limiting access to money, speaking to someone, or reaching out to OPGR. Of those concerned about someone else's gambling behaviors, many spoke to the person or someone else, helped the person access treatment, or contacted OPGR. There are opportunities to improve help-seeking behaviors.

Respondents were presented five scenarios describing a person's gambling behaviors; three described problem gambling behaviors. Over 9 out of 10 respondents are concerned about the behaviors described in the problem-gambling scenarios, and over 8 of 10 indicate they agree that something should be done.

Most respondents are willing to contact OPGR when they are concerned about their own or someone else's gambling behaviors. Although willing, they are slightly less likely to actually contact OPGR. In general, they indicate they are more willing to use the website than other means of contact.

Overall, respondents have positive attitudes about contacting OPGR if they are concerned about someone else's gambling behaviors. Most believe it is caring, responsible, useful, safe, helpful, respectful, and necessary. About three quarters agree they would want someone to intervene if they themselves had a problem with gambling. However, some feel it is embarrassing and scary and hold beliefs that would inhibit contacting OPGR (such as the person might get in trouble, they would feel guilty, or that you have to wait for a person to hit rock bottom before they are willing to change).

Most respondents believe it is acceptable to contact OPGR if they are concerned about someone else's gambling behaviors. However, some are not sure others felt the same way. Most people are comfortable contacting OPGR; however, almost 4 out of 10 respondents are not at all familiar with OPGR and the services it provides before taking the survey.

The second survey was completed online by a convenience sample of 734 adults between January 30 and February 6, 2019 who live in Oregon. Half were female (50%), and ages ranged from 18 to over 75 with a similar

distribution as the U.S. Census for Oregon. Most respondents were White (90%); other races included Black or African American (3%), American Indian or Alaska Native (4%), and Asian (4%). Some (9%) indicated they were Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino/Latina. Participants lived in a variety of settings including urban (34%), suburban (46%), and rural (20%) from across the state. Overall, the general education attainment of the respondents was higher than the general population. Two-thirds of the respondents indicated they had gambled in the past 12 months.

Most respondents (87%) agree that if people choose to gamble, they should have their own personal guidelines for gambling responsibly. In general, people have high levels of agreement with the 14 guidelines to prevent problem gambling.

- Most (79%) agree that if people choose to gamble, they should do it for entertainment.
- Most (77%) agree that people should treat the money they lose as the cost of entertainment.
- Most (92%) agree that people should set a dollar limit on how much they will gamble and stick to it.
- Most (79%) agree that people should set a time limit as to how long they will gamble and stick to it.
- Most (85%) agree that people should expect to lose when they gamble.
- Most (93%) agree that people should not gamble using borrowed money or credit.
- Most (90%) agree that gambling should not interfere with or be a substitute for friends, family, work, or other worthwhile activities.
- Most (90%) agree that people should avoid "chasing" lost money, that is, they should avoid trying to win back lost money.
- Most (90%) agree that people should not gamble as a way to cope with emotional or physical pain.
- Most (91%) agree that people should know the warning signs of problem gambling.
- Most (57%) agree that people should not drink alcohol and gamble at the same time.
- Most (90%) agree that people should understand how much gambling costs them.
- Most (76%) agree that people under the age of 21 should not gamble.

Recommendations and questions to guide conversations with stakeholders are provided at the end of this report.

Exposure to Gambling Behaviors and Consequences of Problem Gambling

Many adults (65%) report participating in some form of gambling in the past 12 months. Some (38%) report gambling monthly or more often.

Many people know someone who gambles:

- 47% know a family member, partner, or spouse who gambles.
- 46% know a close friend who gambles.
- 38% know an acquaintance or co-worker who gambles.

Many people have known someone who has experienced problems because of their gambling behaviors:

- 53% know someone who spent too much money gambling.
- 36% know someone who lied or avoided telling the truth because of gambling.
- 34% know someone who experienced other negative consequences because of gambling.
- 33% know someone who had relationship problems because of gambling.
- 32% know someone who was not able to pay bills because of gambling.
- 13% know someone who lost a job because of gambling.
- 9% know someone who did poorly in school because of gambling.

Concern and Actions About Problem Gambling

Many people (46%) are moderately or more concerned about problem gambling in Oregon. Fewer (27%) are concerned about problem gambling among their family members or close friends.

Some people (20%) are concerned about their own gambling behaviors in the past year. Among these people, some took actions to address their concern:

- 81% limited their access to money.
- 69% spoke to someone else about it.
- 61% searched the internet for information about problem gambling.
- 56% visited the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource website.
- 49% chatted online on the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource website.
- 48% accessed counseling or treatment.
- 45% texted the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource.
- 45% called the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource.

Some people (38%) are concerned about someone else's gambling behaviors in the past year. Among people who were concerned, some took actions to address their concerns:

- 76% spoke to someone else about their concern.
- 74% spoke to the person they were concerned about.
- 53% searched the internet for information about problem gambling.
- 44% limited the person's access to money.
- 44% helped the person access counseling or treatment.
- 38% visited the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource website.
- 30% chatted online on the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource website.
- 28% texted the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource.
- 27% called the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource.

Identifying Problem Gambling Behaviors

Survey respondents read five scenarios with three describing problem gambling behaviors.

- 94% are moderately or more concerned about the gambling behavior of the person in the story.
- 95% are moderately or more concerned about the gambling behavior of the person in the story if the person was a family or close friend.
- 83% agree that something should be done to address the person's behavior.

Willingness and Intention to Intervene

When concerned about their own gambling behaviors, many people are willing to take some actions:

- 77% are moderately or more willing to visit the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource website.
- 65% are moderately or more willing to chat online on the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource website and ask someone about their concerns.
- 57% are moderately or more willing to text the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource to text someone about their concerns.
- 64% are moderately or more willing to call the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource and ask someone about their concerns.

When concerned about the gambling behaviors of a family member or close friend, many people are willing to take some actions:

- 79% are moderately or more willing to visit the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource website.
- 68% are moderately or more willing to chat online on the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource website and ask someone for guidance on what to do.
- 60% are moderately or more willing to text the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource to text someone and ask someone for guidance on what to do.
- 67% are moderately or more willing to call the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource and ask someone for guidance on what to do.

Although respondents report they are willing, fewer are likely to actually do something. When asked about taking action if they are concerned about their own gambling behaviors:

- 69% are moderately or more likely to visit the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource website.
- 57% are moderately or more likely to chat online on the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource website and ask someone about their concerns.
- 49% are moderately or more likely to text the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource to text someone about their concerns.
- 54% are moderately or more likely to call the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource and ask someone about their concerns.

Similarly, fewer are likely to take action if they are concerned about the gambling behavior of a family member or close friend:

- 72% are moderately or more willing to visit the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource website;
- 61% are moderately or more willing to chat online on the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource website and ask someone for guidance on what to do;
- 55% are moderately or more willing to text the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource to text someone and ask someone for guidance on what to do; and
- 59% are moderately or more willing to call the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource and ask someone for guidance on what to do.

Attitudes and Beliefs About Contacting the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource

Most respondents have positive attitudes about contacting the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource if they are concerned about someone else's gambling behaviors:

- 79% feel it is CARING vs. 8% who feel it is UNCARING
- 76% feel it is RESPONSIBLE vs. 10% who feel it is NOT RESPONSIBLE
- 76% feel it is USEFUL vs. 10% who feel it is USELESS
- 75% feel it is SAFE vs. 10% who feel it is DANGEROUS
- 73% feel it is HELPFUL vs. 12% who feel it is NOT HELPFUL
- 72% feel it is RIGHT vs. 9% who feel it is WRONG
- 72% feel it is RESPECTFUL vs. 10% who feel it is DISRESPECTFUL
- 71% feel it is NECESSARY vs. 9% who feel it is NOT NECESSARY
- 49% feel NOT EMBARRASSED vs. 27% who feel EMBARRASSED
- 33% feel it is NOT SCARY vs. 40% who feel it is SCARY

Respondents have high regard for the typical person who would contact the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource if they are concerned about the gambling behaviors of a family member or close friend. They feel such a person is:

- Good, strong, responsible, smart, successful, and someone they would admire.

Many respondents have protective beliefs which support help-seeking behaviors:

- Most (78%) agree that trying to get help for someone who has a gambling problem is the right thing to do.
- Most (65%) agree that they have a responsibility to intervene if they know someone has a problem with gambling.
- Most (73%) agree that they would want someone to intervene if they themselves had a problem with gambling.
- Most (70%) agree that if they contact the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource, they could get help and not be as worried.
- Most (73%) agree that if they contact the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource, they would feel more hopeful.

Some respondents have beliefs that may inhibit help-seeking behaviors:

- 21% believe that if they contact the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource, other people will know and the person (about whom they are concerned) could get in trouble (like lose their job).
- 25% would feel guilty if they contacted the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource.
- 53% believe that if they contacted the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource, they would be more involved and required to do something.
- 37% believe that you have to wait for a person with a gambling problem to hit rock bottom before they are willing to change.
- 13% believe that problem gambling is not an addiction.
- 24% believe that people can stop problem gambling on their own if they want to.

Support for Contacting the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource

Most respondents (70%) believe it is acceptable to contact the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource when they are concerned about a family member or close friend's gambling behaviors. However, they were not sure about whether most other people would agree:

- 35% do not perceive that their friends would find it acceptable (e.g., they would find it unacceptable or were neutral).
- 31% do not perceive that their family would find it acceptable.
- 60% do not perceive that most people who gamble would find it acceptable.
- 61% do not perceive that most people who have a problem with gambling would find it acceptable.

Knowledge about the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource

Familiarity with the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource varies:

- 39% of respondents report they are not at all familiar with Oregon Problem Gambling Resource (40% report they are moderately or more familiar).
- 43% of respondents report they are not at all familiar that Oregon Problem Gambling Resource provides free and confidential problem gambling treatment (36% report they are moderately or more familiar).
- 44% of respondents report they are not at all familiar that Oregon Problem Gambling Resource also provides free and confidential guidance for people who are concerned about someone else's gambling behaviors (35% report they are moderately or more familiar).

Comfort in Contacting the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource

Most respondents indicate they are comfortable contacting the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource:

- 86% report they are moderately or more comfortable visiting the website.
- 70% report they are moderately or more comfortable using the chat feature on the website and asking for guidance on what to do about a family member or close friend's gambling behaviors.
- 66% report they are moderately or more comfortable texting and asking for guidance on what to do about a family member or close friend's gambling behaviors.
- 68% report they are moderately or more comfortable calling and asking for guidance on what to do about a family member or close friend's gambling behaviors.

Agreement With Guidelines to Prevent Problem Gambling

There is strong support for guidelines to prevent problem gambling. Most respondents (87%) agree that if people choose to gamble, they should have their own personal guidelines for gambling responsibly. In general, people have high levels of agreement with the 14 guidelines to prevent problem gambling:

- Most (79%) agree that If people choose to gamble, they should do it for entertainment.
- Most (77%) agree that people should treat the money they lose as the cost of entertainment.
- Most (92%) agree that people should set a dollar limit on how much they will gamble and stick to it.
- Most (79%) agree that people should set a time limit as to how long they will gamble and stick to it.
- Most (85%) agree that people should expect to lose when they gamble.
- Most (93%) agree that people should not gamble using borrowed money or credit.
- Most (90%) agree that gambling should not interfere with or be a substitute for friends, family, work or other worthwhile activities.
- Most (90%) agree that people should avoid "chasing" lost money, that is, they should avoid trying to win back lost money.
- Most (90%) agree that people should not gamble as a way to cope with emotional or physical pain.
- Most (91%) agree that people should know the warning signs of problem gambling.
- Most (57%) agree that people should not drink alcohol and gamble at the same time.
- Most (90%) agree that people should understand how much gambling costs them.
- Most (76%) agree that people under the age of 21 should not gamble.

Recommendations and Next Steps

While the results show that many adults have healthy beliefs and attitudes about problem gambling and intervening about problem gambling, there are opportunities to improve.

- Share these results with community members, key stakeholders, and local leaders. Use the questions listed below to foster constructive dialogue.
- Correct misperceptions about shared concern, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors.
- Many adults are aware of the services provided by OPRG and some are anxious about using them. Discuss ways to educate more people about OPRG and overcome these concerns.
- Foster active dialogue about the 14 guidelines to prevent problem gambling. Encourage people to develop their own guidelines, practice following them, and seek assistance if they cannot follow them.

Questions to Foster Meaningful Dialogue

Questions to Focus Collective Attention

- What opportunities can you see that the data are revealing?
- What do we still need to learn about this issue?
- What would someone who had a very different set of beliefs than you do say about these data?

Questions to Reveal Deeper Insights

- What has had real meaning for you from what you've seen in the data?
- What surprised you? What challenged you? What encouraged you?
- What needs clarification?
- What's been your major learning, insight, or discovery so far from these data?

Questions to Create Forward Movement

- What's possible here?
- What will it take to create change?
- What needs our immediate attention going forward?

Adapted from Brown, J., Isaacs, D., Community, W. C., Senge, P., & Wheatley, M. J. (2005). *The World Café: Shaping Our Futures Through Conversations That Matter* (1st edition). San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.



**Center for
Health & Safety
Culture**

www.chsculture.org