Teacher Awareness and Attitudes Regarding Adolescent Risk Behaviours:

A Sample of Finnish Middle and High School Teachers

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Main topics of the presentation

- Context

- Methods

- Results
  - Teacher awareness of adolescent gambling;
  - Teacher beliefs and attitudes regarding adolescent gambling and other high-risk activities;
  - Teacher knowledge of school policies for gambling and other risk behaviors and prevention; and
  - Teachers’ confidence in their ability to provide services and meet continuing education needs

- Conclusions
Gambling scene in Finland
Availability, accessibility, and acceptability

- Tripartite monopoly system
- Expenditure on gambling one of the highest in Europe
- Approximately 20,000 slot machines in kiosks, shops, bars, restaurants, gas stations, shopping centres
- Young age, male gender, high net income, and risky alcohol consumption, associated with favorable gambling attitudes
- Advertising and marketing are perceptible

Salonen AH, Castrén S, Raisamo S, Orford J, Alho H, Lahti T. Attitudes towards gambling in Finland: A cross sectional population study. BMC Public Health 2014; 14, 982.
Castrén S, Murto A, Salonen AH. Rahapelimarkkinointi yhä aggressiivisempaa – unohtuivatko hyvät periaatteet? YP. Gambling advertising in Finland. Yhteiskuntapolitiikka, YP 2014; 79 (4):438-443.
Finnish gambling 2015

- Past-year population prevalence, Finns aged 15-74 years
  - Any gambling 80%
  - At-risk and problem gambling (SOGS = 1+) 18.3%
  - Problem gambling (SOGS = 3+) 3.3%

- Gambling in 2011 and 2015
  - Gambling increased among 18-24 and 65-74-year-olds
  - Problem gambling among women increased
  - ARPG increased
  - Gambling / ARPG decreased among 15-17-year olds

Salonen A. & Raisamo S. (2015) Suomalaisten rahapelaaminen 2015. Rahapelaaminen, rahapeliongelmat ja rahapelaamiseen liittyvät asenteet ja mielipiteet 15–74-vuotiailla. [Finnish gambling 2015. Gambling, gambling problems, and attitudes and opinions on gambling among Finns aged 15–74.] National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL). Report 16/2015.
At-risk and problem gambling (ARPG) among Finnish youth

- 47.1% (14 and 16 year-olds) had gambled during the past 6 months. 13.2% had experienced gambling related harms. Both freq and harms were associated with violent behavior (Räsänen et al. 2015 a).

- 62% (14 and 16 year-olds) gambled during the past 12 months. Frq was associated with several health and sexual risk-taking indicators (Räsänen et al. 2015 b).

- 51% (Mean age 13.4) had gambled and 7.9% ARPG (DSM-IV-J≥2). ARPG was associated with substance use and peer gambling. (Castrén et al. 2015).

- 13.6% of males and 4.6% of females (aged 15-28) ARPGers (PGSI≥2). ARPG was associated with substance use, computer gaming, loneliness (Edgren et al. 2016)

Räsänen T, Lintonen T, Jorainen K, Konu A. Girls and Boys Gambling With Health and Well-Being in Finland. Journal of School health 2015, 85(4), 214-222.

Räsänen T, Lintonen T, Raisamo S, Rimpelä A, Konu A. Gambling, violent behaviour and attitudes towards violence among adolescent gamblers in Finland. NAD 2015, 32(5), 465-477.

Castrén S, Grainger M, Lahti T, Alho H, Salonen AH. At-risk and problem gambling among adolescents: a convenience sample of first-year junior high school students in Finland. Substance Abuse, Treatment, Prevention and Policy, 2015; 10:9; DOI: 10.1186/s13011-015-0003-8.

Edgren R, Castrén S, Jokela M, Salonen AH. At-risk and problem gambling among Finnish youth: The examination of risky alcohol consumption, tobacco smoking, mental health and loneliness as gender specific correlates. Gambling and other risk behaviour among Finnish adolescents and emerging adults by gender. Nordic Studies on Alcohol and Drugs 2016 33(1), 61-80.
Methods

- Survey, convenience sample
- 157 teachers from 13 provinces (response rate 26%).
  - 26 to ≥ 60-year-old teachers, 50-59- year olds (30%), 73.7 % teaching experience minimum of 10 yrs.

- Questionnaire
  - Based on Derevensky et al. (2013)* survey instrument
  - Data collection: Autumn 2014

- Data analysis
  - Descriptive statistics: frequencies and percentage (95%CI)
  - Cochran-Q tests of association and logistic regression analyses were conducted to address questions in regards to differences in teacher knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, and interest obtaining further information and training.

*Derevensky JL, St-Pierre RA, Temcheff CE, Gupta R. Teacher Awareness and Attitudes Regarding Adolescent Risky Behaviours: Is Adolescent Gambling Perceived to be a problem? J Gambl Stud 2013-
Teacher awareness of adolescent gambling
Awareness of age limit

Gambling related activities
- Internet gambling 88.5%
- Slot machine gambling 85.4%
- Purchasing lottery ticket 72.6%
- Casino gambling 70.7%

Other age limits
- Purchasing mild alcohol 95%
- Driving a car 99.4%
- Purchasing cigarettes 90.4%
- Purchasing strong alcohol 54.8%
## Teachers’ perception of typical characteristics of adolescents with gambling problems

| Diagnostic criteria                                                                 | N  | % (±CI)  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----------|
| 1. Has weak mathematical abilities                                                  | 14 | 9.3 (±4.6) |
| 2. Resembles a delinquent                                                          | 8  | 5.4 (±3.6) |
| 3. Increases the amount of money bet over time                                      | 63 | 41.7 (±7.9) |
| 4. Borrows money from others to reimburse gambling debts                            | 78 | 51.7 (±8.0) |
| 5. Places illegal bets with the primary objective of defying the law                | 9  | 5.9 (±3.7) |
| 6. Uses violence in relationships                                                   | 4  | 2.7 (±2.6) |
| 7. Often speaks with others about their own gambling activities                     | 29 | 19.5 (±6.4) |
| 8. Spends a lot of time gambling                                                    | 72 | 48.0 (±8.0) |
| 9. Thinks often about gambling                                                      | 91 | 60.3 (±7.8) |
| 10. Seeks strategies to win when gambling                                           | 82 | 54.7 (±8.0) |
| 11. Refrains from gambling after losing money to avoid increasing losses            | 1  | 0.7 (±1.3) |
| 12. Worries excessively about their own health                                     | 3  | 2.0 (±2.2) |
| 13. Tries unsuccessfully to stop gambling                                           | 35 | 23.3 (±6.8) |
| 14. Steals money to support gambling activities                                     | 27 | 17.9 (±6.1) |

Not typical vs. typical (somewhat typical, mostly typical, typical, extremely typical). Modified diagnostic criteria (Fisher, 2000: DSM-IV-MR-J screen). * Langer (1975).
Teacher beliefs and attitudes regarding adolescent gambling and other high-risk activities
Finnish teachers’ perceptions of seriousness of adolescent issues seem to be more lenient compared to teachers’ perceptions in Romania and in Canada.

Teacher perceptions of seriousness (serious or very serious) of adolescent issues
Finnish teachers’ beliefs regarding likelihood of adolescent participation in high-risk activities leads to serious problems

- I Experimenting with cocaine – cocaine addiction (Ro I, CAN I)
- II Smoking marijuana – experimentation with other drugs (Ro IV, CAN V)
- III Underage gambling - problem gambling (Ro II, CAN II)
- IV Underage drinking – alcoholism (Ro III, CAN IV)
- V Shoplifting- pattern of theft (Ro V, CAN III)
Parents have the main responsibility to prevent adolescents from gambling

Teacher allocation of responsibility for the prevention of adolescent gambling
Teacher knowledge of school policies for gambling and other high-risk behavior and prevention
Gambling prevention was considered to be the least important among all high-risk behaviours.

Teacher beliefs concerning the importance of the schools addressing the prevention of adolescent high-risk behaviours.
Teachers’ confidence in their ability to provide services and to meet continuing education needs
Teachers are more willing to receive training in substance abuse issues and violent behaviours than gambling prevention.
Conclusions

- Adolescent gambling issues are not perceived as important as other adolescent high-risk behaviors.

- Need for increased awareness and education on youth gambling and problem gambling.

- More efforts for teachers’ education concerning youth gambling issues is needed.

- A wider replication of a study and more diverse sample of educators is needed nationally and internationally.
Thank you

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