



# ILCAAAP

Illinois Church Action on Alcohol & Addiction Problems

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## Gambling Alert - January 2, 2023



### **Does Gaming and Online Gambling in Adolescence Increase Risk for Problem Gambling?**

**Activities with gambling-like features in adolescence and young adulthood likely contribute to problems with gambling when adolescents are older.**

A systematic review published in the *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry* found that activities with gambling-like features in adolescence and young adulthood likely contribute to problems with gambling.

Investigators from McGill University in Canada and Hamline University in the United States searched publication databases through November 2021 for studies of gambling-like activities and their effect on gambling behaviors among individuals aged 25 years and younger. A total of 45 studies were included in this review.

In 15 studies, the association between video gaming, problem gaming, and problem gambling were evaluated. There were 4 studies found that more frequent video game playing in adolescence was positively associated with at-risk and/or problem gambling. For studies that included adolescents and emerging adults, a significant effect of age was observed, in which older participants who played video games were more likely to

have gambled. This trend was not observed among adolescents. In general, more men or boys reported problem gaming. A total of 7 studies assessed social casino gaming and the relationship with problem gambling. High school students who recently participated in social casino games were more likely to report having gambled, were more likely to gamble online, and had greater severity of gambling. In general, both adolescents and young adults who engaged in social casino games were more likely to report gambling problems.

**...certain emotional and cognitive vulnerabilities appear to exacerbate the risk for symptoms of problem gambling.**

For online gambling, 27 articles reported some conflicting results. In 11 articles, a significant association between more frequent online gambling and increased risk for problem gambling were reported, however, some effects were attenuated after controlling for other forms of gambling or protective factors. Similar relationships were reported in studies of emerging adults, in which some significant associations were attenuated after controlling for confounders. In general, men and boys reported more online gambling, in which 1 study reported that men were 9 times more likely to report engaging in online gambling than women. [READ](#)

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