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Illinois Church Action on Alcohol & Addiction Problems

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Gambling Alert - December 13, 2022



Sports betting is taking America by storm—and a third of young men are hooked

As the World Cup enters its final stages, it's a safe bet fans are wagering on every moment of each match. In the U.S., it's also a safe bet millions would be putting money on the line—even if the biggest sports event in the world wasn't happening.

Today, one in six Americans—and a third of men under 55—wager on sports, according to a **national survey** we conducted this fall. Half of them only started betting within the past two years—and most of them are deeply into it, with 71% placing bets on sports at least once a week and 11% at least several times a day. If that doesn't seem like a big deal, consider this: Sports gambling remains illegal in a quarter of the country, including in major states such as **California**, Texas, and Florida.

Unsurprisingly, making money is the top reason people say they gamble on sports. But they also cited less tangible reasons for betting on everything from soccer and football to table tennis and rugby. Respondents said that what drew them almost as much to sports gambling was adding excitement to watching a game and joining friends, coworkers, and family members in the fun they were already

having.

We conducted our first poll on sports gambling in 2020, two years after the U.S. Supreme Court allowed states to legalize it. Back then, when betting apps were still a novelty, 14% of all adults said they bet on sports, with 52% beginning within the previous two years. Today, the pool has risen to 17%, with 53% saying they took up wagering on sports in the past two years.

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