

# GAMBLING HARMS

## MIND MAP

This map visualizes gambling harm and the way in which these harms are distributed throughout the population. A systems approach that considers the socioeconomic and environmental determinants of gambling harms from a public health perspective can transform policy and healthcare service delivery, and may ultimately reduce the burden of gambling harm in our communities.



### LIVING CONDITIONS

Gambling harm is associated with:

- Higher neighbourhood disadvantage
- Unstable housing conditions
- Homelessness

Adolescents whose parents gamble are 3-12 times more likely to report at-risk or problem gambling.



### EDUCATION

A person's education influences how they gamble and their risk of developing a gambling problem.

Poor academic performance and lower educational attainment are risk factors and strong predictors for problem gambling behaviour.

People with higher education are more likely to gamble online.



### SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

People with lower income spend proportionately more of their income on gambling activities.

Land-based gambling opportunities are generally more readily available in lower income areas.

People who are unemployed are 3 times more likely to experience a gambling problem than those with secure employment.



### HEALTH BEHAVIOURS AND RISK FACTORS

Gamblers are more likely to be sedentary than non-gamblers, and physical activity is associated with a decreased risk for problem gambling. People with a gambling problem are:

- 2 times more likely to report a lack of regular exercise
- 3 times more likely to watch 20+ hours of TV per week

People who gamble problematically are also 3 times more likely to be obese when compared to recreational or non-gamblers.



### ETHNICITY

People of colour are significantly more likely to gamble and experience gambling harm.

Cultural differences, stressful living conditions, and social inequities experienced by Indigenous peoples contribute to a higher community prevalence of problematic gambling compared to the general public.



### AGE

Gambling influences community health and wellbeing across the lifespan. Youth, young adults and older adults are particularly vulnerable to experiencing gambling harms.

Early gambling behaviour is a risk factor for harm. Free-to-play apps with gambling content continue to grow in popularity, making young people particularly vulnerable.

Older adults are more vulnerable to gambling harms as they may be less able to recover from financial loss.



### MENTAL HEALTH

As many as 32% of those who gamble problematically struggle with major depression (national average = 4.7%).

Gambling can serve as a coping mechanism for people who are emotionally vulnerable.

Gambling harm is often associated with social anxiety, ADHD, impulsiveness, mood and anxiety disorders, and other mental health outcomes.



### SUBSTANCE USE AND ADDICTION

People who struggle with a gambling problem are 2-4 times more likely to have a tobacco use disorder, and 3-6 times more likely to have an alcohol use disorder.

High school students in Ontario who struggle with problem gambling behaviour are 11 times more likely to report a cannabis use disorder compared to other students.



**GAMBLING RESEARCH  
EXCHANGE ONTARIO**  
DRIVING KNOWLEDGE INTO ACTION