RESEARCH QUESTIONS
What factors predict the development of risky gambling behaviour in adolescents?

PURPOSE
Existing research showed that adolescence is a critical period for the development of pathological gambling (PG). This study investigated the role of sex, risk-taking behaviour, changes in temperament and psychiatric symptoms in the development of risky gambling behaviour.

KEY RESULTS
- The numbers of males (13%) and females (9%) in the risky gambling group were similar.
- Reductions in levels of attention control (i.e., ability to choose what to pay attention to) and increases in levels of frustration over time predicted risky gambling behaviours.
- Risk-taking behaviours, particularly alcohol use, predicted risky gambling in both males and females.
- For females, higher levels of parental-reported aggressive behaviour predicted risky gambling. For males, fewer parental-reported social and attentional problems predicted risky gambling behaviours.

LIMITATIONS
Risky gambling behaviour, not PG, was assessed and it is not clear whether adolescents with risky gambling will go on to experience PG. The results may not apply to adolescents in other geographic regions.

KEYWORDS: gambling, addiction, risk, personality, adolescent

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