

Problem Gambling



**Celebrating National Minority
Mental Health Awareness
Month:
Problem Gambling Prevention
Strategies for Minority
Populations**



UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

THE MARYLAND CENTER OF EXCELLENCE
ON PROBLEM GAMBLING

Introductions



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Learning Objectives:

1. **Describe problem gambling as a public health issue**, including the neuroscience of addiction (reward, tolerance, withdrawal) and identify populations disproportionately affected, particularly racial and ethnic minority groups based on current research and Maryland prevalence data.
2. **Identify and apply evidence-based, community-level prevention strategies to reduce gambling-related harms** and understand how to integrate these strategies into their current work.
3. **Analyze disparities in problem gambling among minority populations and implement culturally responsive prevention approaches**, including engaging trusted community voices, addressing stigma, and tailoring messaging to cultural values and barriers.

Mission Statement

The Maryland Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling promotes **healthy and informed choices** regarding gambling and problem gambling through various key initiatives and partnerships.

The Center works closely with appropriate state stakeholders and brings together experts from a variety of disciplines including psychiatry, medicine, epidemiology, social work, and law.

Main Office: 667-214-2120

<https://www.mdproblemgambling.com>



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Key Initiatives and Resources



Public Awareness



Free Training with CEUs



Prevention Programs



**Provider Referral
Directory**



Public Policy



Peer Recovery Support



Research

**Maryland Problem Gambling Helpline:
1-800-GAMBLER**

Call/Text/Chat

Welcome!

Let's get to know you!

Please put in question box your...

- Name (pronouns)
- What Department or Organization do you work?
- What is your professional role?
- What MD county do you serve?



Gambling Defined

The staking or risking of something of value upon the outcome of a contest of others, a sporting event, or a game subject to chance, upon an agreement or understanding that something of value will be received in the event of a certain outcome.

(Legal Information Institute, 2006)



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Gambling Addiction Explained



The Reward System



Tolerance



Withdrawal

Gambling Addiction Explained



The Reward System: Gambling triggers dopamine (happy hormone) release, like the mechanism seen in drug addiction (UCLA, 2021).



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Gambling Addiction Explained



Tolerance: The brain develops tolerance, meaning person gambling with increasing amount of money to feel the same excitement (NIH, 2025).



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Gambling Addiction Explained



Withdrawal: When not gambling, individuals may experience cravings and psychological withdrawal symptoms, such as irritability or restlessness.

(National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2025)



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Gambling Addiction Explained



The “Near-Wins” Effect”

*Unpredictable outcomes ("near wins") stimulate the reward system, reinforcing compulsive gambling
(Stange et al., 2017)*

Expansion of Gambling in Maryland



1873: Horse Racing



1973: Lottery



2010: First Maryland Casino Opened



2017: Fantasy Sports



2021: Sports Betting

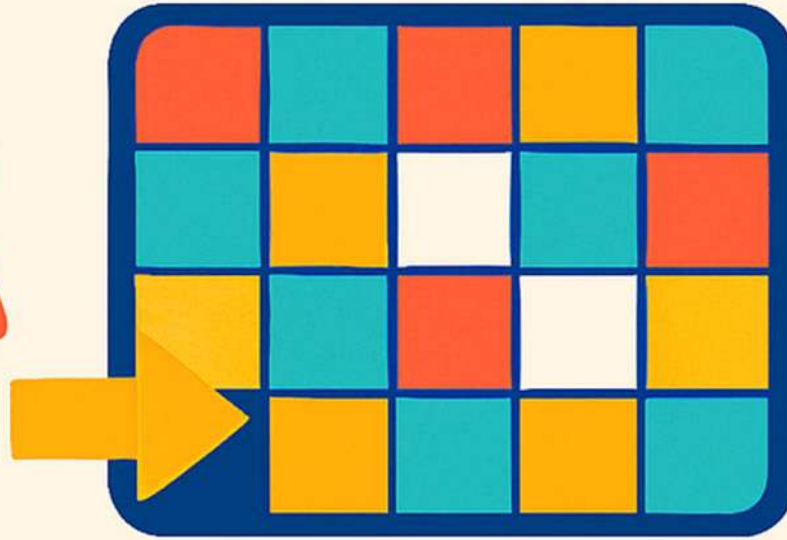


2022: Online Sports Betting



*On the horizon:
iLottery &
iGaming*

Let's play a game!



Popular Forms of Gambling and Minimum Age



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Minimum Age for Legal forms of MD Gambling

Casino Gambling: *slots, table games*

21



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Minimum Age for Legal forms of MD Gambling

Sports Betting: in-person and mobile

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Minimum Age for Legal forms of MD Gambling

Lottery: keno, scratch-offs

18



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Minimum Age for Legal forms of MD Gambling

Horse Betting: off-track betting

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Minimum Age for Legal forms of MD Gambling

Fantasy Sports: daily, weekly, etc.

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Minimum Age for Legal forms of MD Gambling

Bingo Halls

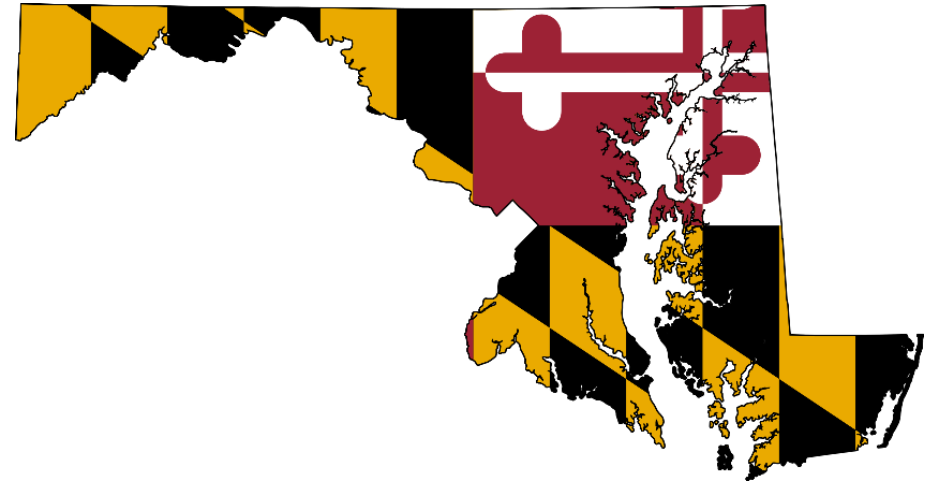
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2024 Prevalence Study



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Gambling in Maryland: 2024 Survey of Maryland Adults (18+)

- NODS-Questions related to:
 - Preoccupation with gambling
 - Increasing gambling amounts (tolerance)
 - Restlessness or irritability when cutting down (withdrawal)
 - Repeated unsuccessful attempts to stop or control gambling
 - Gambling to cope with emotional distress
 - Chasing losses
 - Lying about gambling behavior or losses
 - Illegal or inappropriate use of money to gamble
 - Negative impact on relationships, work, or school
 - Financial dependence on others due to gambling



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Gambling in Maryland: 2024 Survey of Maryland Adults (18+)

- “**Disordered Gambling**” is defined as a score of 3 or higher on the NORC Diagnostic Screen for Gambling Problems (NODS).
- Non-Gambler is considered as having never participated in any gambling activity in their lifetime

- Probable Pathological Gambling score >5
- Problem Gambling score of 3 or 4
- At-Risk: NODS score 1 to 2
- Low-Risk: NODS score 0



**Disordered
Gambling**

2024 Prevalence Study: Considerations



MD Population (Census, 2024)

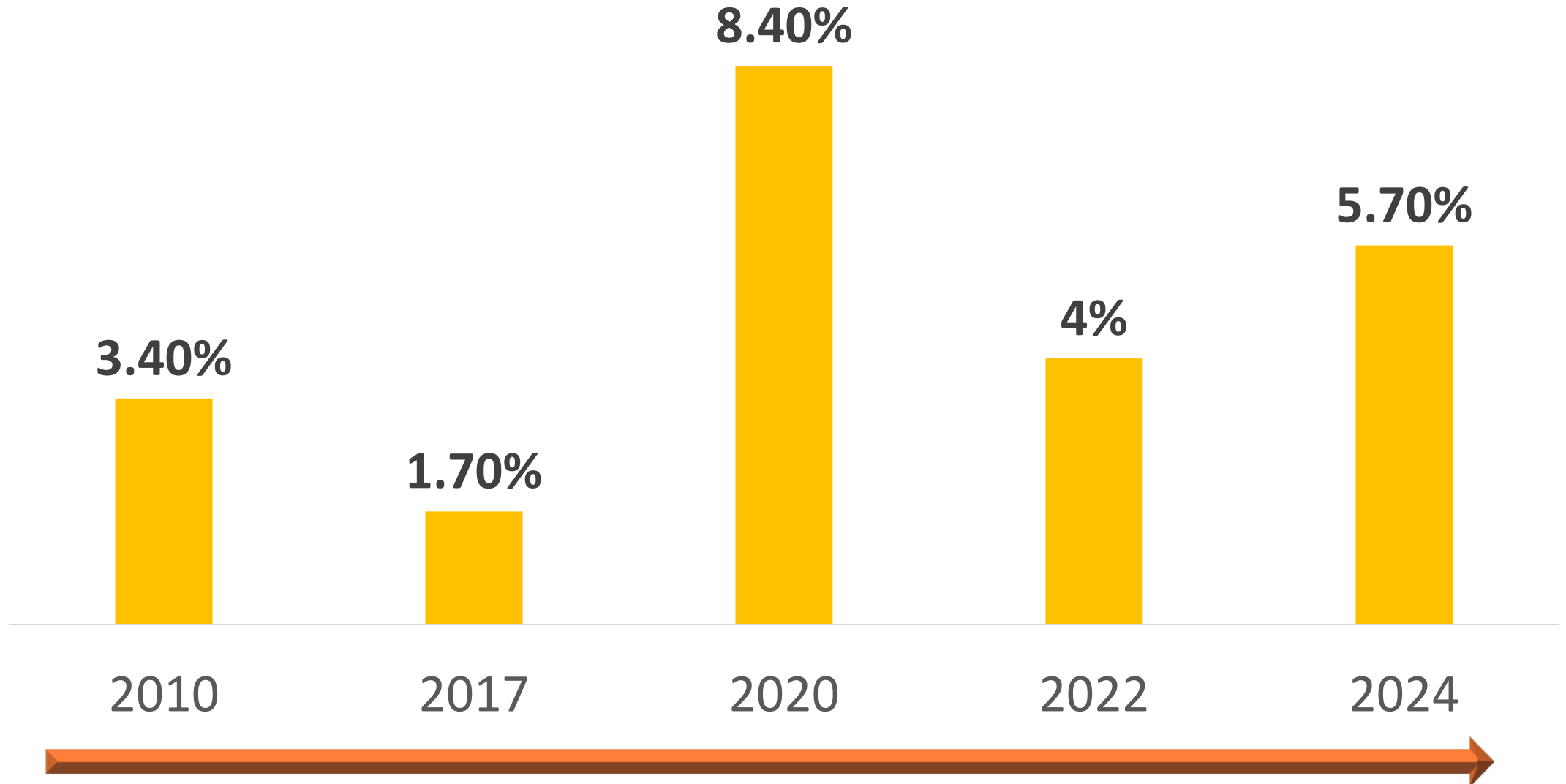
- White alone (not Hispanic/Latino): 46.4%
- African Americans: 31.6%
- Hispanic/Latino: 13.3%
- Asian: 7.3%
- American Indian or Other Pacific Islander: 0.1%
- Two or more Races: 3.4%



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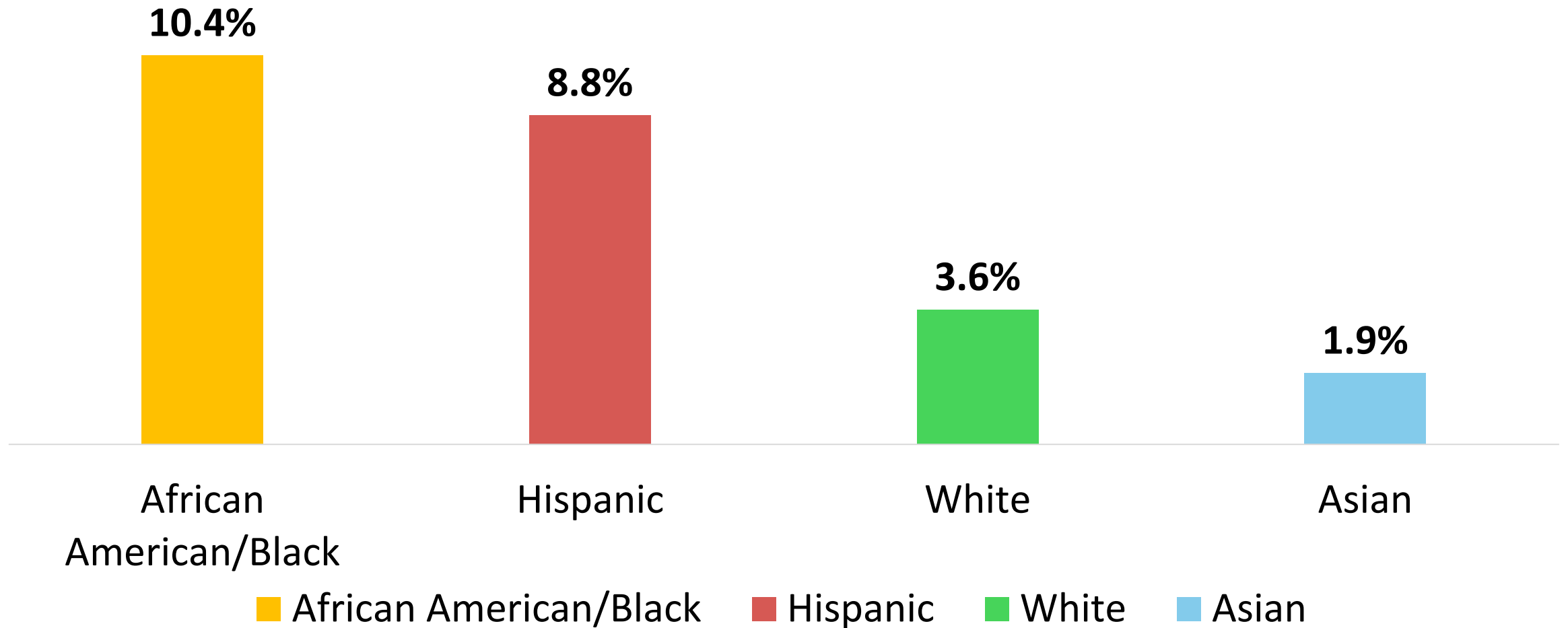
Gambling in Maryland: Survey of Maryland Adults (18+)

Percentage of Disordered Gamblers *Over the Years*



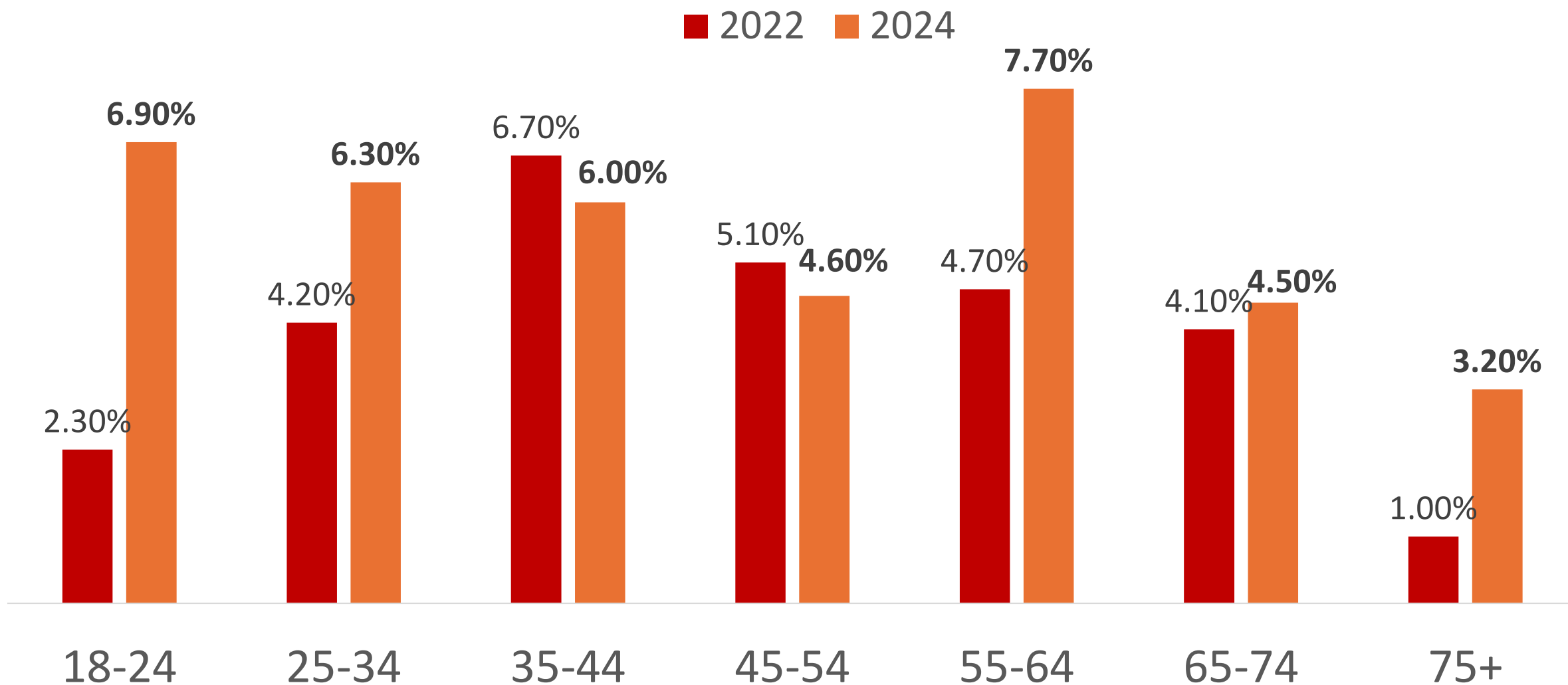
Gambling in Maryland: Survey of Maryland Adults (18+)

Percentage of Disordered Gamblers *by Race 2024*



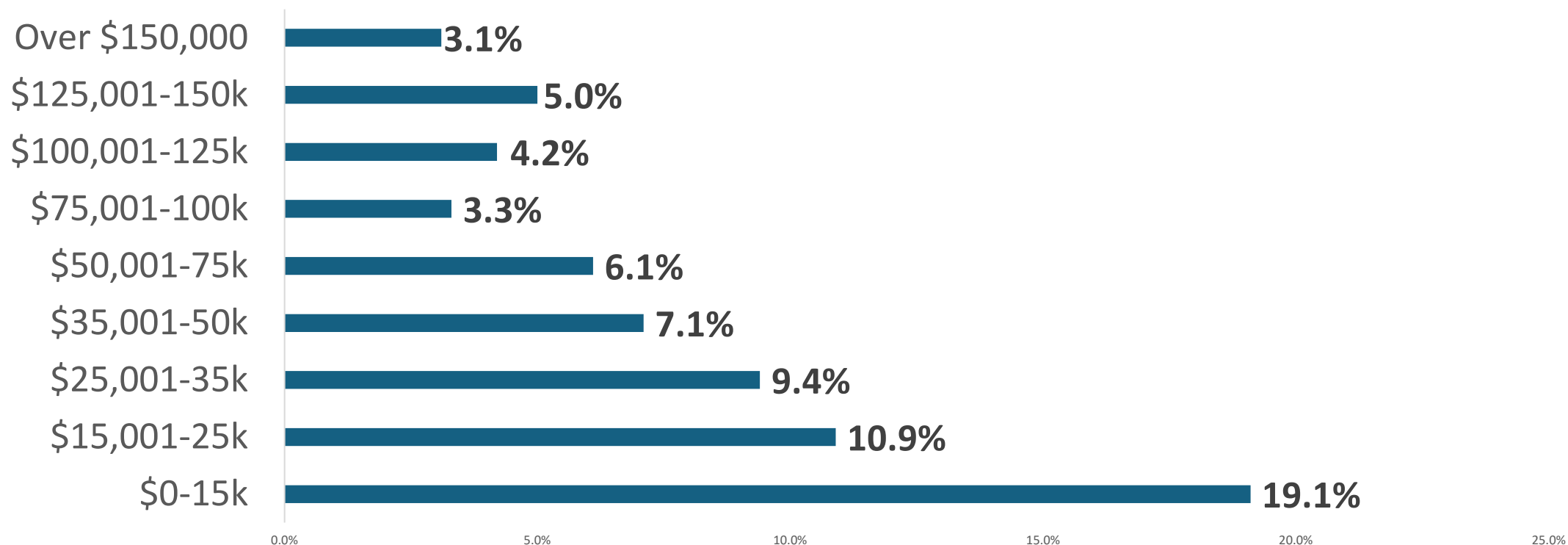
Gambling in Maryland: Survey of Maryland Adults (18+)

Weighted sociodemographic of *Disordered Gamblers by Age Group*



Gambling in Maryland: Survey of Maryland Adults (18+)

Weighted sociodemographic of *Disordered Gamblers by Total Household Income*



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Key Findings

- **Men** are affected at nearly **3x the rate of women** (8.9% vs 3.3%).
- **African American adults** face problem gambling rates nearly **3x higher** than white adults. (10.4% vs 3.6%)
- **Disordered gambling** was **higher** among **Hispanics** (8.8%) compared to non-Hispanics (5.5%).

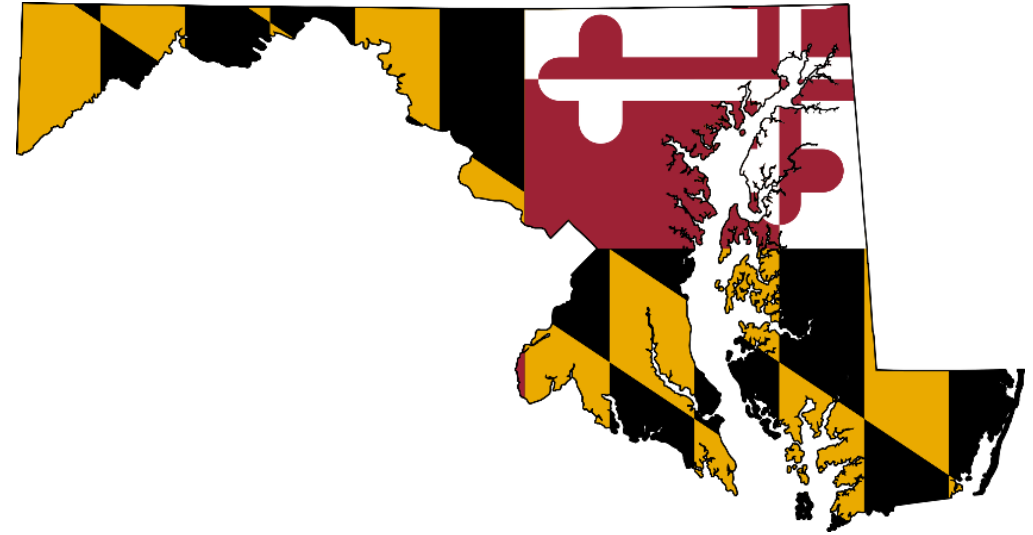


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Special Populations at Greater Risk of Disordered Gambling in Maryland

- Males
- Ages 55-64 years old
- African Americans and Hispanics
- Household income below \$25,000
- Youth
 - increase from 2022 to 2024
 - Accessibility



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Gambling: African American, Asian and Hispanic Communities



Gambling: African American Communities

- **Risk Factors:** Gambling is often viewed as a “hope-seeking” behavior or a perceived pathway out of economic exclusion rather than purely recreational activity.

(Alegría et al., 2009; Haskins, 2023)



Gambling: African American Communities

- **Barriers:** African American communities face environmental barriers, including a disproportionate concentration of gambling advertisements and betting establishments in predominantly Black neighborhoods, along with a strong association between gambling behaviors and substance use such as alcohol.

(Pause Before You Play, 2025; Kresovich et al., 2025)



Gambling: Asian American Communities

- **Risk Factors:** Although Asian Americans may gamble less frequently overall, they are more likely to experience higher severity of gambling problems and are overrepresented among individuals meeting criteria for pathological gambling.

(Chan et al., 2015; Alegría et al., 2009)



Gambling: Asian American Communities

- **Cultural Context:** Cultural values such as shame, stigma, and the need to maintain family honor can contribute to secrecy around gambling problems, often delaying help-seeking until significant financial or social consequences occur.

(Colby et al., 2022; Greo Evidence Centre, 2022)



Gambling: Hispanic & Latino Communities

- **Risk Factors:** Hispanic individuals are more likely to be classified as high-risk problem gamblers and demonstrate strong associations between gambling behaviors and substance use, as well as co-occurring mental health concerns

(Caler et al., 2017; Kresovich et al., 2025)



Gambling: Hispanic & Latino Communities

- **Cultural Strengths:** Prevention and intervention strategies should leverage cultural values such as *familismo* (strong family connectedness) and collective community orientation, which play a critical role in building trust and improving engagement in services

(Massachusetts Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling Prevention, 2025; Ortiz, 2025)





Preventing Problem Gambling

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Problem Gambling Prevention Strategies: Colleges/Universities and Special Populations

7 Strategies for Community Change

(CADCA's National Coalition Institute)



1. Providing information:

- **Communication:** Printed materials, Social media, Web content
- **Education:** Presentations, Risk assessment, Problem Gambling Awareness Month (March each year)
- **Support:** 1-800-GAMBLER, Blocking software (Bet Blocker/Gamban), Gamblers Anonymus
- **Environment:** Campus-wide visibility, Digital safety info

Problem Gambling Prevention Strategies: Colleges/Universities and Special Populations



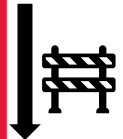
2. Enhancing Skills:

- Training to students' leaders on problematic gambling to train other students; train college staff that directly serves students.



3. Provide Support:

- Work with departments on campus to integrate problematic gambling prevention into existing programs or courses.



4. Enhancing Access/ Reducing Barriers:

- Promote gambling prevention tools on campuses such as the Helpline, GamBan, and Bet Blocker.



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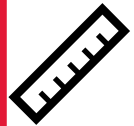
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Problem Gambling Prevention Strategies: Colleges/Universities and Special Populations



5. Changing Consequences:

- Assess enforcement of gambling prevention on campus (are students with gambling problems referred for help?).



6. Physical Design:

- Promote permanent signage with problem gambling prevention messaging and resources for help.



7. Modifying/Changing Policies:

- Investigate if there are gambling policies on campus.
- Work to strengthen problem gambling prevention policies.



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Check in for Questions and Comments



Addressing Problem Gambling in Minority Populations: Cultural Responsiveness





What is Culture?

- Culture is defined as the shared **traditions, beliefs, customs, history, folklore, and institutions of a group of people.**
- Culture is shared by people of the same ethnicity, language, nationality, or religion.
 - It's a system of rules that are the base of what we are and affect how we express ourselves as part of a group and as individuals.

Community Toolbox, Kansas State University



Cultural Responsiveness/Humility

- Gambling as *Public Health*
- Cultural Relevant messages
- Engage **Trusted Voices and Messengers**
- **Health Literacy**
- Address **Cultural beliefs** about gambling
- Integrate **Problem Gambling Prevention** into existing programs
- Respect cultural barriers to help-seeking
- Build **staff capacity in cultural humility**

Prevention Grants to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)

- **University of Maryland Eastern Shore**
 - Raising awareness and disseminate problem gambling materials
- **Morgan State University**
 - Conduct research and disseminate problem gambling materials
- **Bowie State University**
 - Share messaging on social media and collaborate with campus organizations
- **Coppin State University**
 - Post messaging and share resources throughout campus; social media posts, Problem Gambling posters

The Center's Other Minority Serving Grantees



**Asian American
Center of Frederick**
Enhance. Empower. Enrich.



The Healing Institute Global
Global healing one brain at a time!

My Life
FOUNDATION
BE THE CHANGE

The Center's Other Minority Serving Grantees

Asian American Center of Frederick

- Training community health workers and volunteers
- Share and distribute problem gambling materials



Ways to Decrease Health Disparities in Problem Gambling Among Minority Populations



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Colleges/Universities and Special Population Grants

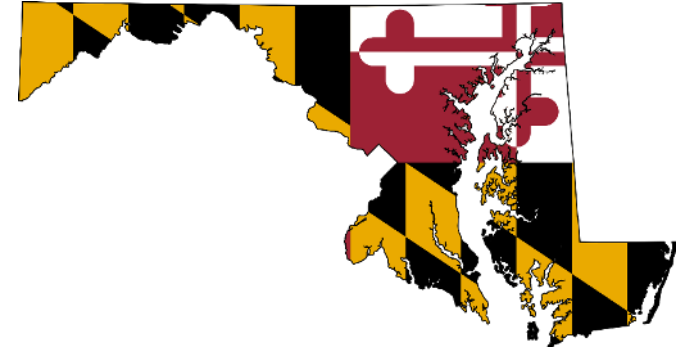
- **Colleges/Universities** prevention education grants for college age youth and young adults(\$5,000- \$10,000)
- **Special population grants** for organizations that serve those at greater risk of problem gambling (\$2,000-\$10,000)
- In need of schools and organizations serving the Hispanic population.

Colleges/Universities and Special Population Grants

- **Colleges/Universities FY 2027 Grant Application**
 - <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/B862ZQ8>
- Pre-application workshop Wednesday, August 19, 2026 at 12pm
 - <https://umaryland.zoom.us/meeting/register/rGOPsBCzQX6--L1C1KjELg>
- **Special Population FY2027 Grant Application**
 - <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YSPZXGD>
- Pre-application workshop Thursday, August 20, 2026, at 12pm.
 - <https://umaryland.zoom.us/meeting/register/Tk51afAVQf-EAd3N5DUeKw>

MARYLAND RESOURCES

Gambling Helpline: 1-800-GAMBLER



Maryland Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling:

- mdproblemgambling.com
- helpmygamblingproblem.org

Parent's Place of Maryland:

<https://www.ppmmd.org/contact/>

Faith-based Advocacy & Assistance via the Maryland Council on Problem Gambling:

<https://www.marylandproblemgambling.org>

Maryland Legal Aid:

<https://www.mdlab.org>

Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service:

<https://mvlslaw.org>

Money Management International - Maryland:

<https://www.moneymanagement.org/locations/maryland>



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Maryland's No Cost Treatment



If you or any member of your family is struggling with harms associated with gambling, help and counseling is available for Maryland residents at **no cost** regardless of insurance coverage or ability to pay.

<https://www.mdproblemgambling.com/find-a-counselor>

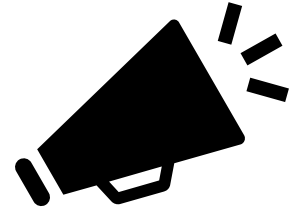
The Maryland Department of Health Behavioral Health Administration, in collaboration with the State's ASO, will reimburse providers and private practitioners for providing therapeutic gambling services to Maryland individuals and their loved ones struggling with gambling disorder.

<https://www.mdproblemgambling.com/provider-referral-network>

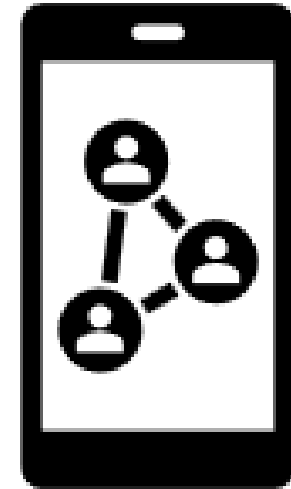
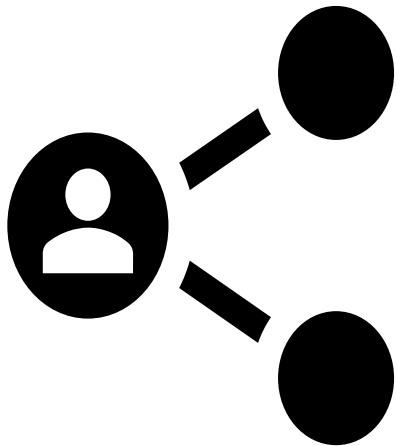


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Problem Gambling Awareness Strategies



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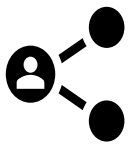
Problem Gambling Awareness Strategies



Join the Center's Email List.



Promote the Center's training among DHS and DSS employees: *Free CEUs!*



Distribute awareness materials (printed and/or electronic) emphasizing the 1-800-GAMBLER helpline.

Problem Gambling Awareness Strategies



Raise public awareness to populations at risk of problematic gambling.



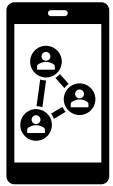
Familiarize yourself with gambling recovery resources to support those in need.



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Problem Gambling Awareness Strategies



Use **Social Media** to collaborate and promote **1-800-GAMBLER**.



Normalize conversations about **gambling** to raise awareness of potential harms, ways to stay safe, and where to go for help.



Hang the **self assessment flyer** or poster **in your office or lobby**.



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Problem Gambling Awareness Strategies



Add an **evidenced-based gambling screening** to current intake protocols.



Include **gambling related questions** into **financial literacy** discussions.



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WAYS THE CENTER CAN PROVIDE YOU SUPPORT



Free!

- Free Gambling Related Trainings with CEUs
- Free Case Consultation Calls 4xs a month on Zoom
- Free Peer Support: *1:1 and Group Presentations*
- Free Treatment for Maryland Residents
- Free Awareness Materials for your lobby or offices
- **Free Helpline 1-800-GAMBLER**
 - call, text, or chat confidentially with a professional 24/7

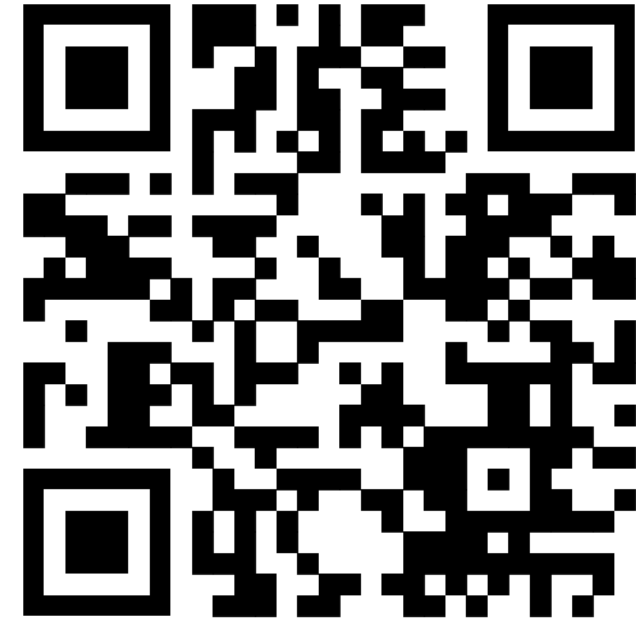
Join our Mailing List

<https://www.mdproblemgambling.com/join>

Stay up to date on Center initiatives

Learn how you can get involved:

- ✓ Awareness
- ✓ Training
- ✓ Prevention
- ✓ Public Policy



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*Questions, Comments & One Key Takeaway
form this Presentation (question box)*

Main Office: 667-214-2120

*Thank
You*

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QR code for survey :
Complete to receive your certificate and CEUs!





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