

Study of Middle and High School Students Shows 37% Have Gambled; 98% Use Internet Daily

Lloyd D. Levenson Institute of Gaming, HIn

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Galloway, NJ - Ninety-eight percent of the middle school and high school students surveyed by the Lloyd D. Levenson Institute of Gaming, Hospitality & Tourism (LIGHT) at Stockton University spend time on the internet every day, 89 percent play video games and 37 percent of them have gambled in some way, according to a study done for the New Jersey Lottery and Northstar New Jersey Lottery Group, LLC, as part of the Lottery's responsible gaming program.

The study focused on underage gambling perspectives and behavior and was supported by the Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey (1-800-GAMBLER).

Four school districts, including Galloway Township, Egg Harbor Township, Greater Egg Harbor Regional and Mainland Regional, participated in the study designed to identify the frequency of internet use and video/Internet game play among pre-teen and teen students. The survey asked how they viewed gambling and whether they, or their friends, participated in gambling activity.

"The New Jersey Lottery believes it is important to support responsible gaming initiatives and understand the perspectives of our children," stated Carole Hedinger, executive director of the N.J. Lottery. "We chose Stockton's Lloyd D. Levenson Institute due to its expertise in studying gaming-related issues."

Rummy Pandit, LIGHT's executive director, agreed with the importance of the study, and worked with the Lottery and the Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey on the initiative.

Felicia Grondin, LIGHT's associate director, who served as the study's principal investigator and author, provided some highlights about the students' habits:

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- 98 percent spent anywhere from 1-13-plus hours on the Internet every day;
- 89 percent play video games;
- 37 percent have gambled at some time;
- 25 percent were likely to gamble in the future.

Of those who indicated that they gambled:

- 88 percent gambled for money;
- 14 percent believed that their gambling had caused them serious problems such as stress or anxiety.

The study highlights the need for middle school and high school students to receive reliable information about the risks and rewards of gambling. To address that need, the Lottery offers curriculum materials for “Stacked Deck: A Program to Prevent Problem Gambling,” that, in six sessions, teaches facts about gambling and related risks, encourages students to make responsible decisions with regard to gambling, and aims to prevent them from becoming problem gamblers.

With Lottery support, “Stacked Deck” has been used by the Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey to present underage gambling prevention education in after-school programs offered by non-profit agencies serving children in Mercer and Gloucester counties, N.J. Additional presentations are planned for later this year, with the goal of making “Stacked Deck” available in schools throughout New Jersey.

Neva Pryor, executive director of the Council of Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey, believes such a program is vitally important due to increasing gambling, drug and alcohol abuse.

“Gambling addiction usually crosses over numerous habit-forming activities and needs to be addressed in a thorough manner, especially among our children,” Pryor said. “The information