

**Statewide Survey to Measure Public Awareness
and Attitudes Toward Gambling Disorders**

a report issued by

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Survey conducted by
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I. Background and Methodology

The Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling, a non-profit organization providing information, education, advocacy and referral for gambling-related problems, commissioned Opinion Dynamics Corporation (ODC) to conduct a statewide survey to measure public awareness and attitudes toward gambling disorders. Specifically, the survey was designed to measure Massachusetts residents':

- Frequency of participation in gambling activities;
- Familiarity with people who have ever had a gambling problem;
- Familiarity with problems associated with problem gamblers;
- Familiarity with people who have sought help to address a gambling problem;
- Attitudes towards the seriousness and impact of program gambling in Massachusetts;
- Awareness of Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling and its problem gambling helpline; and
- Awareness of Problem Gambling Treatment Centers in Massachusetts.

The survey was conducted by telephone using a random-digit-dialing (RDD) methodology. In total, 600 interviews were conducted between June 1 and June 6, 2005. The margin of error for the total sample size of 600 is +/- 4% at the 95% confidence level.

II. Executive Summary

Frequency of Participation in Gambling Activities

- Massachusetts residents most often participate in state lottery games (33% often or sometimes); 16% often or sometimes visit a casino or gaming facility in nearby states; 8% often or sometimes gamble at church or nonprofit events; and 9% often or sometimes visit a casino or gaming facility in Las Vegas.

Familiarity With People Who Have Ever Had a Gambling Problem

- Nearly one-quarter (22%) of Massachusetts residents personally know someone who has ever had a gambling problem.

Familiarity with Problems Associated with Problem Gamblers

- Of those who personally know someone who has ever had a gambling problem, over half (56%) of Massachusetts residents knew friends that had a gambling problem; 37% knew family; and 24% knew co-workers.
- Of those who personally know someone who has ever had a gambling problem, two-thirds (67%) of Massachusetts residents have seen problem gamblers experience debt problems; 46% have seen problem gamblers experience family or friend problems; 35% have seen problem gamblers experience physical or emotional health problems; 31% have seen problem gamblers experience work or school problems; 26% have seen problem gamblers experience legal problems; and 18% did not know.

Familiarity with People Who Have Sought Help to Address a Gambling Problem

- One-quarter (25%) of Massachusetts residents who personally know someone who has ever had a gambling problem also personally know someone who has sought help to address a gambling problem.

Attitudes Towards the Seriousness and Impact of Problem Gambling in Massachusetts

- Nearly half (46%) of Massachusetts residents think that compulsive gambling is either a very or somewhat serious problem; 30% of residents do not think it is a serious problem; and 24% of residents were unsure.

Attitudes Towards the Seriousness and Impact of Problem Gambling in Massachusetts

- Over three-quarters of Massachusetts residents agree that "problem gambling is a public health issue that affects people of all ages, races, ethnics and economic backgrounds" (81% strongly or somewhat agree).
- Over three-quarters (78%) agree that "as long as the state derives revenue from legal gambling, it should continue to fund problem gambling programs".
- Over three-quarters (80%) agree that "problem gambling has a significant social and economic cost".
- Less than one in five Massachusetts residents (18%) agree that "anyone can stop betting or gambling easily".

Awareness of Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling and the Problem Gambling Helpline

- About one-quarter (23%) of Massachusetts residents have ever heard of the Mass Council before.
- Over one-quarter (28%) of Massachusetts residents have seen information about the problem gambling helpline before.
- Residents who have seen information about the problem gambling helpline primarily have heard about it through a TV news story (26%); Keno/Lottery machines (18%) and Billboards (17%).

Awareness of Problem Gambling Treatment Centers in Massachusetts

- Just 2% of Massachusetts residents are personally aware of any Problem Gambling Treatment Centers in their area.

III. Conclusions and Recommendations

Problem gambling is perceived as a serious problem that can affect anyone in Massachusetts. By a 46% to 30% margin, Massachusetts residents think that compulsive gambling is a serious problem in Massachusetts; while nearly one in four (24%) don't know. Overwhelmingly, Massachusetts residents agree that problem gambling is a public health issue that affects people of all demographic backgrounds (81% to 11%) and has significant social and economic costs (80% to 13%). Less than one in five residents (18%) think that anyone can stop betting or gambling easily.

The state should fund problem gambling programs as long as it is in the gambling business. By a 78% to 16% margin, Massachusetts residents agree as long as the state derives revenue from legal gambling, it should continue to fund problem gambling programs.

Massachusetts residents are moderately familiar with problem gamblers. Nearly one in four Massachusetts residents personally knows someone who has ever had a gambling problem. Most often, the problem gamblers are friends, family or co-workers. Those that are familiar with problem gamblers have seen them experience multiple problems, usually debt problems combined with either family/friend problems, physical/emotional health problems, work/school problems or legal problems. An outreach effort on the signs of problem gambling should be considered to educate residents who may know someone who has a gambling problem.

There may significant numbers of Massachusetts residents who are not seeking help for problem gambling. Of the 22% of Massachusetts residents who personally know anyone who has ever had a gambling program, just one in four personally know anyone who has sought help to address a gambling problem. This figure may be somewhat understated due to potential limited knowledge of whether a person has actually sought help to address a gambling problem. However, given that friends or family were the most frequently known people who had a gambling problem, there is likely to be some level of familiarity with the problem gambler's situation.

Awareness of the Mass Council is moderate but impactful. Nearly one in four Massachusetts residents have ever heard of the Mass Council before. More importantly, awareness of the Mass Council is significantly higher among those who know someone who has had a gambling problem. Those who are aware of the Mass Council are also more likely to have seen information about the problem gambling hotline.

A combination of media and targeted placement is needed to inform residents about the problem gambling helpline. TV news stories and billboards were the most frequently mentioned media outlets for the problem gambling helpline. However, significant mention of Keno/Lottery machines and casinos/race tracks was also made, indicating the need to reach people both through the media and directly at the point of gambling.

Awareness of Problem Gambling Treatment Centers is virtually nonexistent. Just 2% of Massachusetts residents are aware of any Problem Gambling Treatment Centers in their area. Greater visibility of the 10 centers located throughout Massachusetts is needed.

Southeastern Massachusetts may be a community to focus problem gambling outreach efforts.

Southeastern Massachusetts residents indicated a higher level of frequency for participation in state lottery games; sports betting and live or simulcast dog racing. This is combined with the fact that Southeastern Massachusetts residents were the most likely region in the state to know someone who has ever had a gambling problem (28%) and the most likely to strongly agree that problem gambling has a significant social and economic cost.

Low and middle-income residents may be target groups to focus problem gambling outreach efforts. Residents with incomes below \$35,000 and between \$50,000-\$75,000 had higher levels of participating in state lottery games and visiting casinos or gaming facilities in nearby states. These groups are also more likely to think that compulsive gambling is a serious problem in Massachusetts. Of particular note is the fact that residents with incomes below \$35,000 are the least likely to have ever heard of both the Mass Council and the problem gambling hotline before. In regard to outreach efforts that may be targeted at these groups, it is important to differentiate that residents with incomes below \$35,000 are more likely to be single or widowed, while residents with incomes between \$50,000-\$75,000 are more likely to be married.

Residents with a high school degree or less may also be a target group to focus problem gambling outreach efforts. Residents with a high school degree or less had higher levels of participating in state lottery games and visiting casinos or gaming facilities in nearby states. However, this group was the least likely to agree that problem gambling has a significant social and economic cost and the most likely to agree that anyone can stop betting or gambling easily.

Men may be a specific target group to focus problem gambling outreach efforts. Men are more likely than women to participate in a number of gambling activities, from sports betting, live or simulcast horse racing, live or simulcast dog racing, visiting a casino gaming facility in Las Vegas and Internet gambling. Men are also more likely to know someone who has ever had a gambling problem, especially a friend or co-worker. Men are also more likely than women to think that anyone can stop betting or gambling easily.

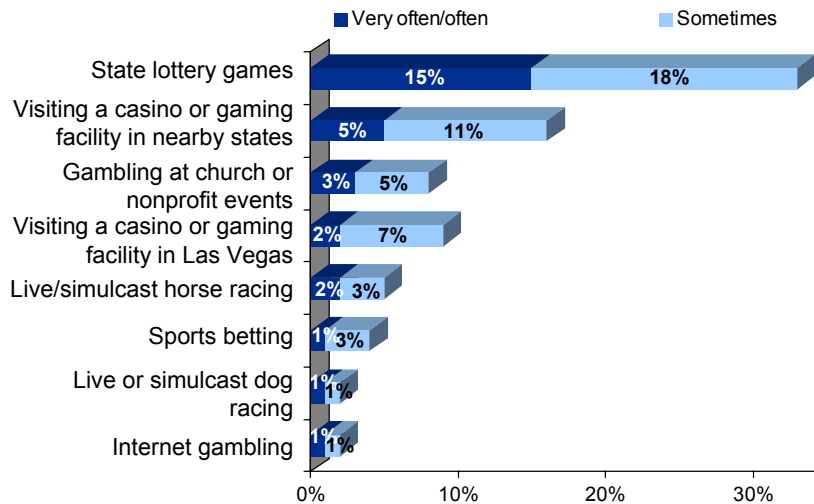
IV. Summary of Findings

All findings are based on a sample size of 600 unless otherwise noted.

A. Frequency of Participation in Gambling Activities

Respondents were asked how often they had participated in eight different activities over the past year.

How often have you participated in the following activities over the past year?



Massachusetts residents most often participate in state lottery games (33% often or sometimes); 16% often or sometimes visit a casino or gaming facility in nearby states; 8% often or sometimes gamble at church or nonprofit events; and 9% often or sometimes visit a casino or gaming facility in Las Vegas. All other activities were 5% or less.

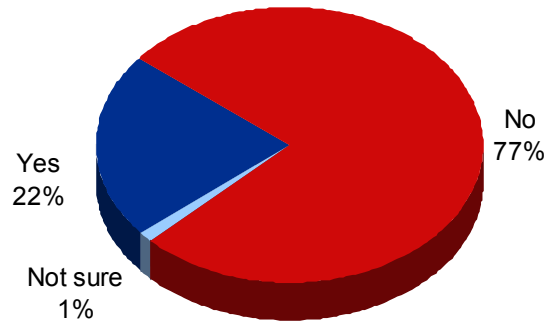
- Southeastern Massachusetts residents (38%) are the most likely region to often or sometimes participate in state lottery games.
- Residents with a high school degree or less (43%) are more likely to often or sometimes participate in state lottery games than those with some college (30%) or a college degree (27%).
- Residents with incomes below \$35,000 (39%) and between \$50,000-\$75,000 (37%) are the most likely income brackets to often or sometimes participate in lottery games.
- Residents with a high school degree or less (33%) are more likely to often or sometimes visit a casino or gaming facility in nearby states than those with some college (18%) or a college degree (11%).
- Residents with incomes below \$35,000 (19%) and between \$50,000-\$75,000 (20%) are the most likely income brackets to often or sometimes visit a casino or gaming facility in nearby states.

- Southeastern Massachusetts residents (8%) are the most likely region to often or sometimes participate in sports betting.
- Residents 18-34 years old (9%) are the most likely age group to often or sometimes participate in sports betting.
- Men (6%) are more likely than women (3%) to often or sometimes participate in sports betting.
- Southeastern Massachusetts residents (6%) are the most likely region to often or sometimes participate in live or simulcast dog racing.
- Residents 18-34 years old (4%) are the most likely age group to often or sometimes participate in Internet gambling or Internet casino games.

B. Familiarity With People Who Have Ever Had a Gambling Problem

Respondents were asked if they personally know anyone who has ever had a gambling problem.

Do you personally know anyone who has ever had a gambling problem?



Nearly one-quarter (22%) of Massachusetts residents personally know someone who has ever had a gambling problem.

- Southeastern Massachusetts residents (28%) and Suburban Boston residents (25%) are the most likely regions to know someone who has ever had a gambling problem.
- Residents 35-54 years old (27%) are the most likely age group to know someone who has ever had a gambling problem.
- Men (26%) are more likely than women (19%) to know someone who has ever had a gambling problem.
- Residents who are aware of the Mass Council (36%) are twice as likely to know someone who has ever had a gambling problem than those that are not aware of the Mass Council (18%).

C. Familiarity with Problems Associated with Problem Gamblers

Respondents who personally know someone who has ever had a gambling problem were asked if they know anyone who has sought help to address a gambling problem. The results are based on 134 respondents who personally know someone who has ever had a gambling problem.

Who were the people you knew who had a gambling problem? (multiple response, n=134)

Friends	56%
Family	37
Co-workers	24
Other	1
Don't know	1

Of those who personally know someone who has ever had a gambling problem, over half (56%) of Massachusetts residents knew friends that had a gambling problem; 37% knew family; and 24% knew co-workers.

Respondents who personally know someone who has ever had a gambling problem were asked what types of problems they have personally seen problem gamblers experience. The results are based on 134 respondents who personally know someone who has ever had a gambling problem.

Which of the following problems have you personally seen gamblers experience?

(multiple response, n=134)

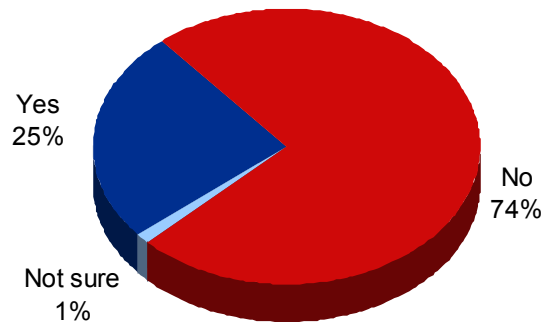
Debt problems	67%
Family or friend problems	46
Physical or emotional health problems	35
Work or school problems	31
Legal problems	26
Don't know	18

Of those who personally know someone who has ever had a gambling problem, two-thirds (67%) of Massachusetts residents have seen problem gamblers experience debt problems; 46% have seen problem gamblers experience family or friend problems; 35% have seen problem gamblers experience physical or emotional health problems; 31% have seen problem gamblers experience work or school problems; 26% have seen problem gamblers experience legal problems; and 18% did not know.

D. Familiarity with People Who Have Sought Help to Address a Gambling Problem

Respondents who personally know someone who has ever had a gambling problem, were asked if they know anyone who has sought help to address a gambling problem. The results are based on 134 respondents who personally know someone who has ever had a gambling problem.

Do you personally know anyone who has sought help to address a gambling problem? (n=134)



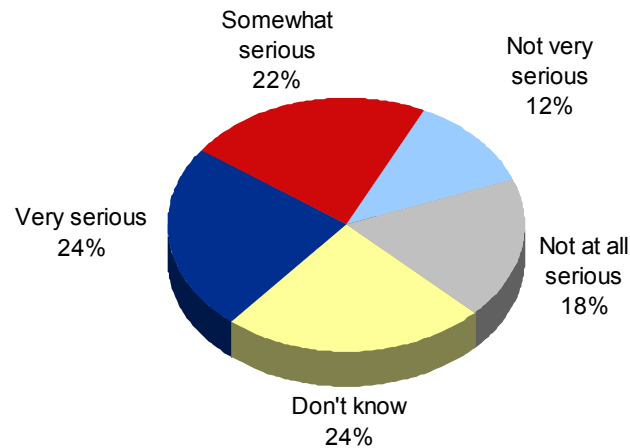
One-quarter (25%) of Massachusetts residents who personally know someone who has ever had a gambling problem also personally know someone who has sought help to address a gambling problem.

- Residents who are aware of the Mass Council (35%) are almost twice as likely to personally know someone who has sought help to address a gambling problem than those that are not aware of the Mass Council (19%).

E. Attitudes Towards the Seriousness and Impact of Program Gambling in Massachusetts

Respondents were asked whether they thought compulsive gambling is a serious problem in Massachusetts or not.

Do you think compulsive gambling is a serious problem in Massachusetts or not?



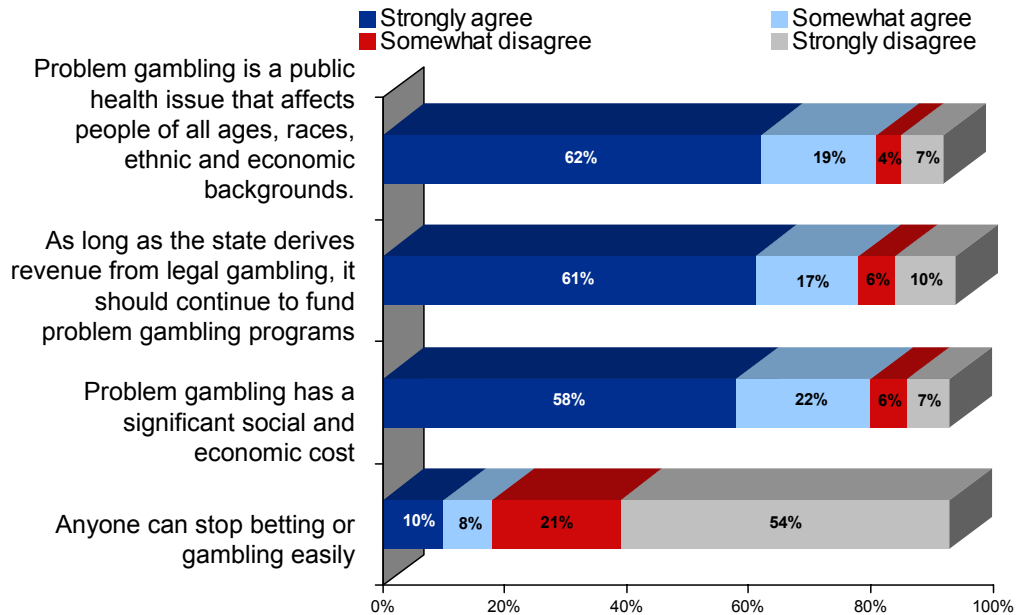
Nearly half (46%) of Massachusetts residents think that compulsive gambling is either a very or somewhat serious problem; 30% of residents do not think it is a serious problem; and 24% of residents were unsure.

- Boston residents (52%) and Suburban Boston residents (49%) are the most likely regions to think compulsive gambling is a serious problem in Massachusetts.
- Residents 75 years of age or older (57%) are the most likely age group to think compulsive gambling is a serious problem in Massachusetts.
- Residents who are separated, divorced or widowed (60%) are more likely to think compulsive gambling is a serious problem in Massachusetts than married adults (44%) and single adults (42%).
- Residents with incomes of \$50,000-\$75,000 (53%) and incomes below \$35,000 (54%) are more likely to think compulsive gambling is a serious problem in Massachusetts than other income levels.
- Residents with some college education (55%) are more likely to think compulsive gambling is a serious problem in Massachusetts than residents with a college degree (42%) and residents with a high school degree or less (47%).
- Residents who personally know someone who has ever had a gambling problem (61%) are more likely to think compulsive gambling is a serious problem in Massachusetts than those that do not know anyone who has ever had a gambling problem (40%).

F. Attitudes Towards the Seriousness and Impact of Program Gambling in Massachusetts

Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with a series of four statements.

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements:



Over three-quarters of Massachusetts residents agree that "problem gambling is a public health issue that affects people of all ages, races, ethnics and economic backgrounds" (81% strongly or somewhat agree); 78% agree that "as long as the state derives revenue from legal gambling, it should continue to fund problem gambling programs"; and 80% agree that "problem gambling has a significant social and economic cost". Less than one in five Massachusetts residents (18%) agree that "anyone can stop betting or gambling easily".

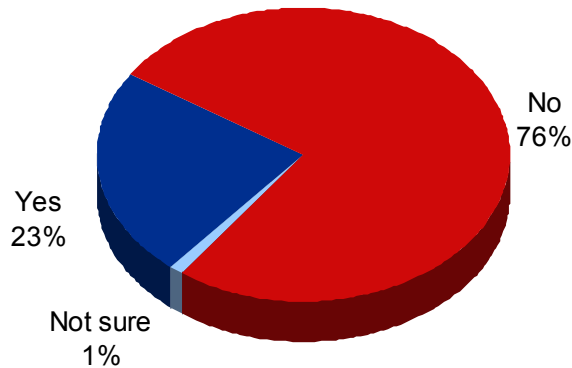
- Residents with a high school degree or less (72% agree) are less likely to agree that "problem gambling has a significant social and economic cost" compared to residents with some college (84%) or a college degree (84%).
- Residents who personally know someone who has ever had a gambling problem (88% agree) are more likely to agree that "problem gambling has a significant social and economic cost" than those that do not know anyone who has ever had a gambling problem (78%).
- Residents who are 75 years of age or older (52%) are the least likely age group to agree that "as long as the state derives revenue from legal gambling, it should continue to fund problem gambling programs".

- Residents who personally know someone who has ever had a gambling problem (85% agree) are more likely to agree that "as long as the state derives revenue from legal gambling, it should continue to fund problem gambling programs" than those that do not know anyone who has ever had a gambling problem (75%).
- Residents who are aware of the Mass Council (84% agree) are more likely to agree that "as long as the state derives revenue from legal gambling, it should continue to fund problem gambling programs" than those who are not aware of the Mass Council (76%).
- Residents with a high school degree or less (23%) are more likely to think that "anyone can stop betting or gambling easily" compared to residents with some college (16%) or a college degree (14%).
- Men (22%) are more likely than women (15%) to think that "anyone can stop betting or gambling easily".
- Residents who do not know anyone who has ever had a gambling problem (20%) are more likely to think that "anyone can stop betting or gambling easily" than residents who know someone who has ever had a gambling problem (8%).

G. Awareness of Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling and the Problem Gambling Helpline

Respondents were told that the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling was established in 1983 to provide problem gambling education, information, advocacy and referral, and were then asked if they had ever heard of the Mass Council before.

Have you ever heard of the Mass Council before?

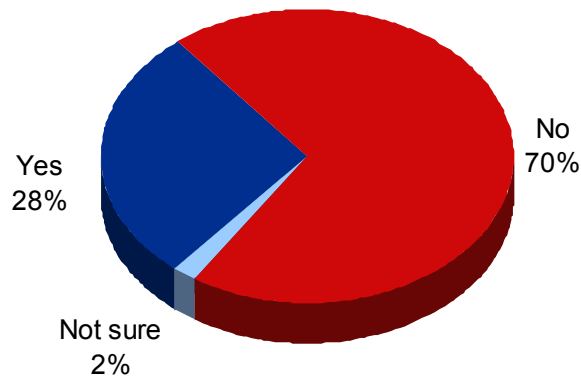


About one-quarter (23%) of Massachusetts residents have ever heard of the Mass Council before.

- Southeastern Massachusetts residents (29%) are the most likely region to have ever heard of the Mass Council before.
- Residents with incomes above \$50,000 (26%) are twice as likely to have ever heard of the Mass Council before than residents with incomes below \$50,000 (13%).
- Men (26%) are more likely than women (19%) to have ever heard of the Mass Council before.
- Residents who personally know someone who has ever had a gambling problem (36%) are almost twice as likely to have ever heard of the Mass Council before than those that do not know anyone who has ever had a gambling problem (19%).

Respondents were told that the Mass Council operates a problem gambling helpline to assist people affected by problem gambling and asked if they have seen any information about the problem gambling helpline before.

Have you seen any information about the problem gambling helpline before?



Over one-quarter (28%) of Massachusetts residents have seen information about the problem gambling helpline before.

- Southeastern Massachusetts residents (38%) are the most likely region to have seen information about the problem gambling helpline before.
- Residents 35-54 (33%) are the most likely age group to have seen information about the problem gambling helpline before.
- Residents with incomes of \$50,000-\$75,000 (41%) are more likely than residents in other income brackets to have seen information about the problem gambling helpline before.
- Residents with incomes below \$35,000 (18%) had the lowest level of having seen information about the problem gambling helpline before.
- Residents who personally know someone who has ever had a gambling problem (40%) are more likely to have seen information about the problem gambling helpline before than those that do not know anyone who has ever had a gambling problem (24%).
- Residents who are aware of the Mass Council (64%) are more likely to have seen information about the problem gambling helpline than those who are not aware of the Mass Council (17%).

Respondents who have seen any information about the problem gambling helpline before were asked to identify where they have heard about the problem gambling helpline. The results are based on 167 respondents who have seen any information about the problem gambling helpline.

Where have you heard about the problem gambling hotline?

(multiple response, n=167)

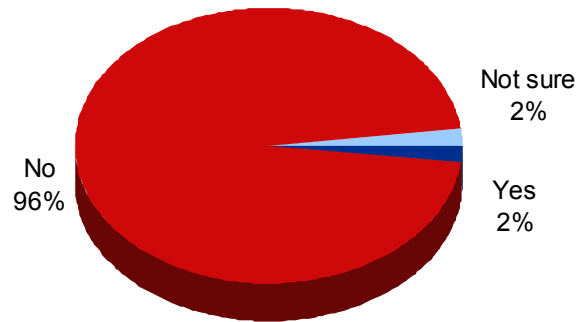
TV news story	26%
Keno/Lottery machines	18
Billboards	17
Radio ads	9
Word-of-mouth	9
Casino/race track	8
TV ads/commercials	7
Newspaper/magazine	6
Transit posters	5
MCCG website	3

Residents who have seen information about the problem gambling helpline primarily have heard about it through a TV news story (26%); Keno/Lottery machines (18%) and Billboards (17%).

H. Awareness of Problem Gambling Treatment Centers in Massachusetts

Respondents were asked if they were personally aware of any Problem Gambling Treatment Centers in their area.

Are you personally aware of any Problem Gambling Treatment Centers in your area?



Just 2% of Massachusetts residents are personally aware of any Problem Gambling Treatment Centers in their area.

- Respondents who personally know someone who has ever had a gambling problem (5%) are more likely to be personally aware of a Problem Gambling Treatment Center in their area than those that do not know anyone who has ever had a gambling problem (1%).

How often have you participated in the following activities over the past year?

1. State lottery games such as scratch tickets, Keno, Megabucks and daily numbers.

Very often	7%
Often	8
Sometimes	18
Rarely	31
Never	36
(Don't know)	-

2. Live or simulcast horse racing.

Very often	1%
Often	1
Sometimes	3
Rarely	5
Never	92
(Don't know)	-

3. Live or simulcast dog racing.

Very often	-%
Often	1
Sometimes	1
Rarely	6
Never	92
(Don't know)	-

4. Visited a casino or gaming facility in nearby states.

Very often	1%
Often	4
Sometimes	11
Rarely	21
Never	63
(Don't know)	-

5. Visited a casino or gaming facility in Las Vegas.

Very often	1%
Often	1
Sometimes	7
Rarely	12
Never	80
(Don't know)	1

6. Internet gambling and/or Internet casino games.

Very often	-%
Often	1
Sometimes	1
Rarely	2
Never	96
(Don't know)	-

7. Gambling at church or nonprofit events.

Very often	1%
Often	2
Sometimes	5
Rarely	11
Never	81
(Don't know)	-

8. Sports betting.

Very often	-%
Often	1
Sometimes	3
Rarely	7
Never	89
(Don't know)	-

9. Do you personally know anyone who has ever had a gambling problem?

Yes	22%
No	77
(Don't know)	1

10. **(IF YES)** Were (any of) the people you knew who had a gambling problem friends, family, co-workers or someone else?

Friends	56%
Family	37
Co-workers	24
(Other)	1
(Don't know)	1
(Refused)	1

11. **(IF YES TO QUESTION 9)** Which of the following problems have you personally seen problem gamblers experience?

Debt problems	67%
Work or school problems	46
Legal problems	35
Family or friend problems	31
Physical or emotional health problems	26
(Don't know)	18

12. **(IF YES TO QUESTION 9)** Do you personally know anyone who has sought help to address a gambling problem?

Yes	25%
No	74
(Don't know)	1

13. Do you think compulsive gambling is a serious problem in Massachusetts or not? (If yes: Is that very or somewhat? If no: Is that not very or not at all?)

Very serious	24%
Somewhat serious	22
Not very serious	12
Not at all serious	18
(Don't know)	24

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements:

14. Anyone can stop betting or gambling easily.

Strongly agree	10%
Somewhat agree	8
Somewhat disagree	21
Strongly disagree	54
(Don't know)	8

15. Problem gambling is a public health issue that affects people of all ages, races, ethnic and economic backgrounds.

Strongly agree	62%
Somewhat agree	19
Somewhat disagree	4
Strongly disagree	7
(Don't know)	9

16. Problem gambling has a significant social and economic cost.

Strongly agree	58%
Somewhat agree	22
Somewhat disagree	6
Strongly disagree	7
(Don't know)	7

17. As long as the state derives revenue from legal gambling, it should continue to fund problem gambling programs.

Strongly agree	61%
Somewhat agree	17
Somewhat disagree	6
Strongly disagree	10
(Don't know)	7

18. The Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling was established in 1983 to provide problem gambling education, information, advocacy and referral. Before this call, had you ever heard of the Mass Council?

Yes	23%
No	76
(Don't know)	2

19. The Mass Council operates a problem gambling helpline to assist people affected by gambling. Have you seen any information about the problem gambling helpline before?

Yes	28%
No	70
(Don't know)	3

20. (IF YES) Where have you heard about the problem gambling helpline?

TV news story	26%
Keno/Lottery machines	18
Billboards	17
Radio ads	9
Word of mouth (family, friend, or co-worker)	9
Casino/Race track	8
TV ads/commercials	7
Newspaper/Magazine	6
Transit posters	5
MCCG website	3
Yellow pages	1
(Other)	1
(Don't know)	7

21. Are you personally aware of any Problem Gambling Treatment Centers in your area?

Yes	2%
No	96
(Don't know)	2

Now I'd like to ask you a few questions for statistical purposes only.

22. What is your age?

18-24	7%
25-34	11
35-44	18
45-54	20
55-64	19
65-74	11
75 or older	11
(Refused)	4

23. What was the last grade you completed in school?

Less than high school (1-11)	4%
Graduated high school	26
Some college/Tech./Voc.	19
Graduated college	31
Graduate/professional school	17
(Don't know/Refused)	4

24. What is your racial or ethnic heritage?

White	87%
African-American, black	2
Asian	1
Latino, Hispanic	2
(Other)	4
(Refused)	5

25. What is your marital status?

Married	55%
Single	25
Separated/Divorced	8
Widowed	8
(Other)	-
(Refused)	5

26. What is your total household income — that is, of everyone living in your family household?

\$0-11,999	2%
\$12-14,999	2
\$15-19,999	2
\$20-24,999	3
\$25-34,999	5
\$35-49,999	11
\$50 -74,999	14
\$75-99,999	9
\$100,000-124,999	9
Over \$125,000	6
(Refused/Don't know)	37

27. Gender: [OBSERVATION]

Female	53%
Male	47