



OUTCOME & ACTIVITY REPORT

2014 – 2015 PROJECT YEARS



New York Council on Problem Gambling

The New York Council on Problem Gambling
(NYCPG) is a not-for-profit independent corporation dedicated to increasing public awareness about problem and compulsive gambling and advocating for support services and treatment for persons adversely affected by problem gambling.

NYProblemGambling.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents

Abstract _____	2
INTRODUCTION	
Literature Review _____	3
Project History _____	4
PROJECT	
Design _____	5
Data Sources and Methods _____	8
OUTCOMES	
GOAL: Increase Youth Knowledge	
Outcome 1: Increase Awareness of Key Media Literacy Facts _____	10
Outcome 2: Increase Awareness of Common Misperceptions of Gambling _____	12
GOAL: Increase Capacity to Prevent Underage Gambling	
Outcome: 3: Develop Relationships with Key Community Leaders at the Local Level _____	15
Outcome 4: Increase Parental Action toward the Issue of Underage Gambling _____	17
Outcome 5: Establish Support for Restricting Youth Access to Gambling _____	19
GOAL: Decrease Accessibility of Gambling Opportunities to Youth	
Outcome 6: Decrease Youth Accessibility to Gambling _____	21
Process Evaluation and Feedback _____	23
DISCUSSION _____	26

ABSTRACT

The most recent research indicates that among United States youth between the ages of 14 and 21, 68% have gambled in the past year, and 11% have gambled twice a week or more (Welte, 2007). However, there are currently no evidence-based prevention efforts dedicated solely to the prevention of underage gambling. In response to this lack of resources, the New York Council on Problem Gambling designed a multi-dimensional prevention effort aimed at reducing underage gambling in New York State – YOU(th) Decide. YOU(th) Decide targets youth between the ages of 12 and 17, parents, and community leaders. The program includes a number of different strategies targeting different levels within each participating community with the overarching goal of preventing underage gambling. The program specific goals of YOU(th) Decide are three-fold: **increase youth knowledge, increase capacity to prevent underage gambling, and decrease accessibility of gambling opportunities to youth.** After a pilot period, and one full year of the YOU(th) Decide project, findings suggest that project activities are successful in achieving the following: (1) Increasing youth knowledge about key media literacy facts; (2) Increasing youth knowledge of common misperceptions of gambling; (3) Developing relationships with key community leaders; (4) Increasing parental action; (5) Establishing support for project efforts; and (6) Decreasing accessibility. Based on preliminary raw data, youth and community leaders were reached through a number of project activities, and targeted objectives were met. In review, future efforts will require modifications to increase parental involvement, as well as project reporting to ensure the quality and accuracy of the data collected. Overall, the YOU(th) Decide project is well received by youth, providers and community leaders alike, and addresses a number of risk factors involved in underage gambling in the participating communities.



www.YOUthDecideNY.org

For questions regarding this report, contact:

Jaime D. Costello

Director of Prevention, Training and Special Programs

New York Council on Problem Gambling

JCostello@NYProblemGambling.org

(518) 867-4084

Literature Review

The most recent research indicates that among United States youth between the ages of 14 and 21, 68% have gambled in the past year, and 11% have gambled twice a week or more. Of those youth, 6.5% are at-risk for, or have already developed, a gambling problem (Welte, 2007).

Underage gambling brings, with it, a number of negative consequences, many of which are serious and can be devastating to the youth as well as his/her family and friends. The younger an adolescent begins gambling, the more likely he/she is to develop a gambling addiction. Underage gamblers are at an increased risk of delinquency and crime, damaged relationships, and poor academic performance (Wynne et al., 1996). Youth who gamble are also more likely than their non-gambling peers to develop mental health issues including depression and alcohol/substance abuse disorders (Hardoon et al, 2002), to attempt suicide (Gupta and Derevensky, 1998), and to maintain poor general health (Potenza et al, 2002).

There are a number of factors in a young person's life that can put them at-risk for, and/or protect them from, developing a gambling problem:

- Accessibility to gambling activities
- Community awareness that gambling can be problematic for youth
- Media (television and lottery ads) promoting gambling
- Family attitudes in support of, and family involvement in, gambling activities
- Lack of parental knowledge regarding the consequences associated with youth gambling
- Peer influence
- Early onset of gambling experiences
(Gupta & Derevensky, 2000)

Underage gambling is a public health issue. There is no one person, or group of people, who are affected by underage gambling. There is no one risk factor, or protective factor, that plays a role in underage gambling. There is no one strategy that will, alone, prevent underage gambling. A variety of strategies targeted at all levels of impact is the only effective way to prevent, and de-normalize, underage gambling.

Project History

In 2014, the New York Council on Problem Gambling launched a pilot project entitled, “The Media Literacy Project,” intended to target NYS youth between the ages of 12 and 17 through classroom/group education and outreach efforts at the local level, as well as a poster contest and social media efforts at the state level. The project goals were three-fold:

- Increase youth awareness that media messages are constructed using specific techniques to convey meaning and affect the viewer/listener’s beliefs and actions;
- Correct common youth misconceptions and beliefs surrounding gambling and increase awareness at the individual level; and
- Change individual attitudes about gambling among youth.

During the pilot period, the New York Council on Problem Gambling worked with eighteen county-level prevention providers to carry out the project in their respective catchment areas.

At the end of the pilot period, findings suggested the success of The Media Literacy Project in impacting youth knowledge about media literacy and common misconceptions surrounding gambling. Participating providers, groups and communities also responded with overwhelming support for the project.

With this feedback in mind, the New York Council on Problem Gambling redesigned a number of preexisting prevention efforts, with the goal of expanding The Media Literacy Project and making it a more comprehensive underage gambling prevention project.

In 2015, the YOU(th) Decide project was launched in twenty counties across New York State to decrease underage gambling through the following goals and objectives:

- **Increase Youth Knowledge**
 - Objective: Increase awareness of key media literacy facts among New York State youth between the ages of 12 and 17.
 - Objective: Increase awareness of the common misperceptions of gambling among New York State youth between the ages of 12 and 17.
- **Increase Capacity to Prevent Underage Gambling**
 - Objective: Develop relationships with key community leaders at the local level.
 - Objective: Increase parental action toward the issue of underage gambling.
 - Objective: Establish support for restricting youth access to gambling within New York State communities.
- **Decrease Accessibility of Gambling Opportunities to Youth**
 - Objective: Decrease youth accessibility to gambling in New York State.

This report reflects findings from the 2014 and 2015 cycles of YOU(th) Decide. The second full cycle of YOU(th) Decide is currently underway in New York State.

Design

In designing the YOU(th) Decide project, the New York Council on Problem Gambling took into consideration the 2015 Prevention Guidelines as set forth by the NYS Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS). The most effective individual and environmental level strategies for preventing substance abuse and mental health disorders, as recommended by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) through the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) were also taken into consideration during the development process.

In order to ensure the quality, saturation, and effectiveness of the YOU(th) Decide project, the New York Council on Problem Gambling partners with local, county-level prevention providers to carry out YOU(th) Decide project activities, including the face-to-face education sessions; media and outreach; and capacity building and policy work.

Face-to-Face Youth Education Sessions

Face-to-face education sessions have been shown by a number of entities to effectively increase the level of knowledge among participants at the individual level.

Participating providers were expected to work with schools, youth groups, churches, etc., to carry out face-to-face educational sessions with a minimum of 100 youth between the ages of 12 and 17. Presentations lasted between 40 minutes and 1 hour, and followed a lesson outline provided by NYCPG. These sessions included:

- A short discussion about gambling and media literacy;
- A deconstruction activity surrounding gambling advertisements (in small group or whole group instruction);
- Completion of the youth surveys; and
- Distribution of project materials.

The goal of the face-to-face education sessions was to increase youth awareness of key media literacy facts and common misperceptions of gambling.

Media and Outreach

Media and outreach have been shown to increase general awareness of a number of health concerns and issues. Media and outreach strategies have also been shown to increase individual and community readiness to address problematic behaviors.

It was expected that participating, local prevention providers had existing relationships with their community's media outlets, school districts, community organizations, etc. Utilizing these relationships, each local provider was required to distribute project materials to youth, parents, and community leaders.

Media – Local providers were expected to utilize letters to the editor, press releases, articles, public service announcements, and social media, to communicate key messages from the YOU(th) Decide Project to parents, youth, and community leaders.

Outreach – Local providers were also expected to reach parents, youth, and community leaders via partnerships with other agencies, community organizations, schools, etc. Outreach efforts included giving out information at health promotion events, spreading the word via newsletters, placing brochures in waiting rooms, etc.

The goal of media and outreach efforts as part of the YOU(th) Decide project was to increase community awareness of the issue of underage gambling and the importance of decreasing youth access to gambling, as well as to increase overall awareness of the YOU(th) Decide project in New York State.

*As part of outreach efforts, providers were required to collect a minimum of 100 surveys from youth between the ages of 12 and 17. Surveys collected via outreach served as a baseline of youth knowledge surrounding issues of media literacy and underage gambling. Results from these surveys were compared to surveys collected via face-to-face presentations in the overall evaluation of the project.

Capacity Building and Policy Work

Prevention and community readiness research has demonstrated the effectiveness of capacity building, public support and policy in addressing a number of substance use and health related issues at the community level.

All participating providers were required to collaborate with a minimum of 4 teams (each made up of one youth and one parent/adult) to meet with ten different community leaders/groups.

During each meeting with community leaders, youth and parent teams did three things:

- Educated the community leaders about the dangers of underage gambling;
- Educated community leaders on the importance of preventing underage gambling, and decreasing youth access to gambling; and
- Asked participating community leaders to sign a resolution of support for gambling-free youth and family events and/or a policy reducing youth access to gambling.

The goal of these meetings was to increase the community capacity to address underage gambling through community leader education, and to include youth and parents as stakeholders in the prevention of underage gambling.

Providers were responsible for the following steps:

1. Identifying youth/parent teams to actively participate in the project;
2. Working with teams to identify community leaders/groups to meet with;

3. Preparing teams to start the conversation of problem gambling at meetings (including a brief overview of the risks of underage gambling, who they can contact, and how to start a conversation);
4. Debriefing with teams following meetings;
5. Following up with community leaders/groups regarding their intention to take action to prevent underage gambling in the form of a policy, resolution of support, or other strategy;
6. Assisting and supporting leaders/groups in these efforts;
7. Publicly recognizing leaders'/groups' commitment to preventing underage gambling.

In addition to community meetings, participating youth were asked to assist local providers, and the NYCPCG, in assessing project materials (advertisements, incentives, social media efforts, etc.), and were asked to give project feedback in an effort to tailor future underage gambling efforts to youth audiences.

The goals of YOU(th) Decide capacity building and policy efforts were to increase community readiness to prevent underage gambling, and to decrease youth access to gambling in participating communities.

Data Sources and Methods

SURVEYS

Youth surveys were used as a way to collect information regarding youth's knowledge about media literacy, problem gambling, the dangers of underage gambling, and the myths and facts of gambling. Surveys were completed by all youth participating in face-to-face education sessions, as well as youth reached via outreach activities. Face-to-face presentation surveys were collected following the educational sessions. Outreach surveys were collected at outreach events prior to the delivery of any education and/or educational materials. Surveys were entered into a central data collection system by all YOU(th) Decide providers and were analyzed by NYCPG administrative and program staff. A sample of the current youth survey can be found on page 12 of the included YOU(th) Decide toolkit. *To ensure accuracy of data, only survey results from youth between the ages of 12 and 17 were considered for the results of this report.

Survey breakdown is as follows:

2014 Survey Collection

- TOTAL 4,019 surveys collected
- 3,339 of these surveys were completed by youth between the ages of 12 and 17
 - 50.90% via Face-to-Face Presentation
 - 41.69% via Outreach Event
 - 7.41% of youth responded No Answer to the question, "Where did you fill out this survey?" These responses were removed from the data pool prior to analysis.

2015 Survey Collection

- TOTAL 6,727 surveys collected
- 4,996 of these surveys were completed by youth between the ages of 12 and 17
 - 45.20% via Face-to-Face Presentation
 - 54.52% via Outreach Event
 - .28% of youth responded No Answer to the question, "Where did you fill out this survey?" These responses were removed from the data pool prior to analysis.

**The 2014 pilot year for YOU(th) Decide was only four months long, and included only face-to-face education sessions, outreach and media efforts. In 2015, capacity building and policy work were added to the project activities. The increased workload on local providers could explain the statistical difference between the number of surveys collected during the four months in the 2014 project versus the number collected during nine months in the 2015 project.*

QUARTERLY PROVIDER REPORTS

All participating YOU(th) Decide providers were required to complete a quarterly report regarding their YOU(th) Decide education, outreach, media, and environmental strategies and activities during each reporting period. A summary of quarterly report questions can be found on page 7 of the included YOU(th) Decide toolkit.

ANNUAL PROJECT NARRATIVE

All participating YOU(th) Decide providers are required to complete a narrative report on an annual basis regarding their successes, challenges, barriers and lessons learned during each project year. In this narrative, providers are also asked to report what additional materials and support they are in need of for the following project cycle. A summary of final narrative report questions can be found on page 8 of the included YOU(th) Decide toolkit.

DISCLAIMER

All data included in this report was entered by individual providers, and was examined by the New York Council on Problem Gambling as raw data, without prior statistical analysis. The initial survey data demonstrates the effectiveness of the face-to-face educational sessions in increasing youth knowledge, as well as an increase in capacity for preventing underage gambling and reduction in access to gambling in participating communities. Further statistical analysis by a qualified researcher is needed to attribute change in participating communities to this project.

OUTCOME 1: Increased awareness of key media literacy facts among New York State youth between the ages of 12 and 17.

GOAL: INCREASE YOUTH KNOWLEDGE

CSAP STRATEGY: EDUCATION

ACTIVITY: FACE-TO-FACE PRESENTATIONS

Participating providers were expected to work with schools, youth groups, churches, etc., to carry out face-to-face educational sessions with a minimum of 100 youth between the ages of 12 and 17. Presentations lasted between 40 minutes and 1 hour, and followed a lesson outline provided by NYCPG. These sessions included short discussions about gambling and media literacy; deconstruction of gambling advertisements (in small group or whole group instruction); completion of the youth surveys; and distribution of project materials. The lesson outline can be found on page 10 of the included YOU(th) Decide toolkit.

DATA SOURCE

Youth surveys were used as a way to collect information regarding youth's knowledge about media literacy, problem gambling, the dangers of underage gambling, and the myths and facts of gambling. Surveys were completed by all youth participating in face-to-face education sessions, as well as youth reached via outreach activities. Face-to-face presentation surveys were collected following the educational sessions. Outreach surveys were collected at outreach events prior to the delivery of any education and/or educational materials. Surveys were entered into a central data collection system by all YOU(th) Decide providers and were analyzed by NYCPG administrative and program staff. A sample of the current youth survey can be found on page 12 of the included YOU(th) Decide toolkit.

Face-to-face survey results were compared to outreach survey results in order to measure the effectiveness of the face-to-face educational sessions and an increase in youth knowledge.

To measure youth knowledge of key media literacy facts, youth were asked the following questions:

1. Media literacy is:
 - a. A means of communication
 - b. Having the ability to read and write
 - c. Being able to evaluate and understand advertising
 - d. A way to influence a large group of people

2. Advertisements tell you about a product through:
 - a. Words

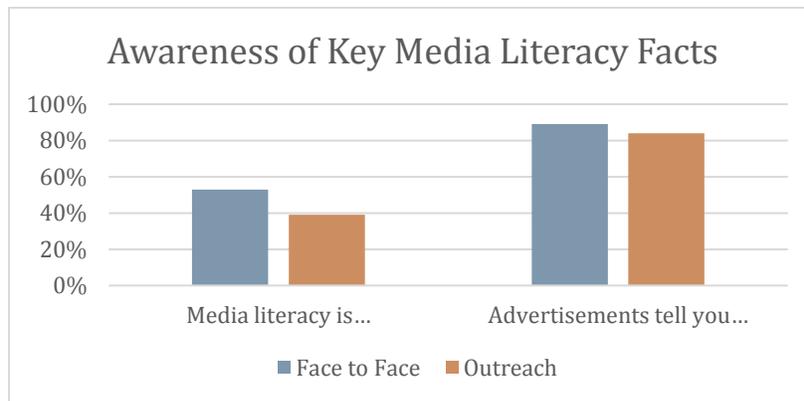
- b. Color
- c. Design
- d. Subtext
- e. All of the following

RESULTS

Initial findings suggest that the youth who participated in the face-to-face presentations as part of YOU(th) Decide were more aware of key media literacy facts than those youth who did not participate in a presentation

Regarding the definition of media literacy, 53% of youth who participated in a face-to-face presentation answered correctly, versus 39% of youth who did not participate in a face-to-face presentation.

In reference to how advertisements are designed, 89% of youth who participated in a face-to-face presentation answered correctly, versus 84% of youth who did not participate in a face-to-face presentation.



REVIEW AND FOLLOW-UP

Based on initial data, the face-to-face presentations completed as part of the YOU(th) Decide project are effective in increasing youth knowledge about key media literacy facts, more specifically about the definition of media literacy, and the ways in which advertisements are created to tell you about, and make you feel a certain way about, a product.

Outreach surveys are meant to serve as a control group to utilize when measuring the effectiveness of the face-to-face education sessions. In the case where the results are close, it may be prudent to ensure that providers are collecting youth outreach surveys prior to the delivery of any education, discussion, or materials.

OUTCOME 2: Increased awareness of common misperceptions of gambling among New York State youth between the ages of 12 and 17.

GOAL: INCREASE YOUTH KNOWLEDGE

CSAP STRATEGY: EDUCATION

ACTIVITY: FACE-TO-FACE PRESENTATIONS

Participating providers were expected to work with schools, youth groups, churches, etc., to carry out face-to-face educational sessions with a minimum of 100 youth between the ages of 12 and 17. Presentations lasted between 40 minutes and 1 hour, and followed a lesson outline provided by NYCPG. These sessions included short discussions about gambling and media literacy; deconstruction of gambling advertisements (in small group or whole group instruction); completion of the youth surveys; and distribution of project materials. The lesson outline can be found on page 10 of the included YOU(th) Decide toolkit.

DATA SOURCE

Youth surveys were used as a way to collect information regarding youth's knowledge about media literacy, problem gambling, the dangers of underage gambling, and the myths and facts of gambling. Surveys were completed by all youth participating in face-to-face education sessions, as well as youth reached via outreach activities. Face-to-face presentation surveys were collected following the educational sessions. Outreach surveys were collected at outreach events prior to the delivery of any education and/or educational materials. Surveys were entered into a central data collection system by all YOU(th) Decide providers and were analyzed by NYCPG administrative and program staff. A sample of the current youth survey can be found on page 12 of the included YOU(th) Decide toolkit.

Face-to-face survey results were compared to outreach survey results in order to measure the effectiveness of the face-to-face educational sessions and an increase in youth knowledge.

To measure youth knowledge about the common misperceptions of gambling, the following TRUE or FALSE questions were asked:

1. TRUE or FALSE: Good luck charms can help you win.
2. TRUE or FALSE: Some forms of gambling are all skill.
3. TRUE or FALSE: The longer you gamble, the more you will win.

RESULTS

Initial findings suggest that the youth who participated in the face-to-face presentations as part of YOU(th) Decide were more aware of the common misperceptions associated with gambling, than those youth who did not participate in a face-to-face presentation.

TRUE or FALSE: Good luck charms can help you win.

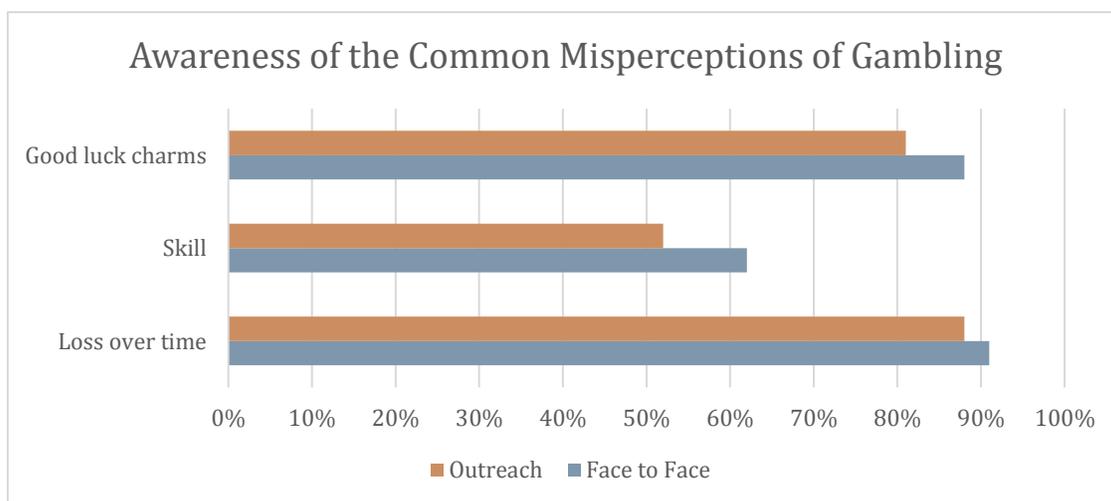
88% of youth who participated in a face-to-face presentation responded FALSE to the statement, “Good luck charms can help you win,” versus 81% of youth who did not participate in a face-to-face presentation.

TRUE or FALSE: Some forms of gambling are all skill.

62% of youth who participated in a face-to-face presentation responded FALSE to the statement, “Some forms of gambling are all skill,” versus 52% of youth who did not participate in a face-to-face presentation.

TRUE or FALSE: The longer you gamble, the more you will win.

91% of youth who participated in a face-to-face presentation responded FALSE to the statement, “The longer you gamble, the more you will win,” versus 88% of youth who did not participate in a face-to-face presentation.



REVIEW AND FOLLOW-UP

Based on initial data, the face-to-face presentations completed as part of the YOU(th) Decide project are effective in increasing youth knowledge about the common misperceptions of gambling, specifically those attributed to good luck charms, skill vs. chance, and the Gambler’s Fallacy.

TRUE or FALSE: Good luck charms can help you win.

Findings associated with this question suggest that the youth who participated in a face-to-face presentation as part of YOU(th) Decide understand that good luck charms have no effect on the outcome of any form of gambling.

TRUE or FALSE: Some forms of gambling are all skill.

Findings associated with this question suggest that the youth who participated in a face-to-face presentation as part of YOU(th) Decide understand that all gambling inherently involves some level of chance, meaning that there are no forms of gambling that are all skill. By pure definition, if a game is all skill and no chance, it is not gambling.

TRUE or FALSE: The longer you gamble, the more you will win.

Findings associated with this question suggest that the youth who participated in a face-to-face presentation as part of YOU(th) Decide understand that gambling for a longer amount of time does not guarantee you will win.

From year one (2014) to year two (2015) some survey questions were modified based on knowledge and feedback, and are therefore not included in the results above. Please see below for more information:

- In 2014 we asked “Gambling is a good way to make money. TRUE or FALSE.” In our review of the survey questions from year one to year two, it was concluded that “good” is a relative term, and therefore revised the question to, “Gambling is a guaranteed way to make money. TRUE or FALSE”
- In 2014 we utilized the question, “Gambling is a healthy way to deal with stress.” 92% of youth participating in the educational sessions, and 91% of youth reached via outreach answered the question correctly. Based on the results, it was evident that the majority of youth understood that gambling was not a healthy way to deal with stress, and the question was removed from the survey.
- In 2014 we asked youth, “Gambling can become an addiction.” 95% and 94% of youth from face-to-face education sessions and outreach respectively, answered the questions correctly. In 2015, we modified the question to “Kids can get addicted to gambling.” 92% (face-to-face) and 90% (outreach) of youth answered this correctly.
- In 2015 we added the question, “Some forms of gambling are all skill. TRUE or FALSE.” Our goal was to measure that all gambling actually involved some level of chance based solely on the definition of gambling as “RISKING something of VALUE on a game of CHANCE.” Indeed, there are NO forms of gambling that are all skill.

It is imperative that we regularly monitor the survey results and the content of the face-to-face education sessions to ensure that the youth are learning what we intend, and that we are accurately measuring the correct outcomes.

Outreach surveys are meant to serve as a control group to utilize when measuring the effectiveness of the face-to-face education sessions. In the case where the results are close, it may be prudent to ensure that providers are collecting youth outreach surveys prior to the delivery of any education, discussion, or materials.

OUTCOME 3: Developed relationships with key community leaders at the local level.

GOAL: INCREASE CAPACITY TO PREVENT UNDERAGE GAMBLING

CSAP STRATEGY: COMMUNITY-BASED PROCESSES

ACTIVITY: COMMUNITY LEADER MEETINGS

All participating providers were required to collaborate with a minimum of 4 teams (each made up of one youth and one parent/adult) to meet with ten different community leaders/groups.

During each meeting with community leaders, youth and parent teams did three things:

- Educated the community leaders about the dangers of underage gambling;
- Educated community leaders on the importance of preventing underage gambling, and decreasing youth access to gambling; and
- Asked participating community leaders to sign a resolution of support for gambling-free youth and family events and/or a policy reducing youth access to gambling.

The goal of these meetings was to increase the community capacity to address underage gambling through community leader education, and to include youth and parents as stakeholders in the prevention of underage gambling.

DATA SOURCE

All participating YOU(th) Decide providers were required to complete a quarterly report regarding their YOU(th) Decide education, outreach, media, and environmental strategies and activities during each reporting period. A summary of report questions can be found on page 7 of the included YOU(th) Decide toolkit.

RESULTS

295 youth and 219 parents attended and presented at 145 meetings reaching a total of 350 community leaders.

Examples of participating community leaders and groups include, but are not limited to:

- Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and other youth groups;
- Town Supervisors and other elected officials;
- Places of worship;
- School clubs and advisors;

- Local businesses including health and fitness centers;
- Medical offices;
- Nonprofits; and
- Parent groups.

REVIEW AND FOLLOW-UP

Via the community leader meeting aspect of YOU(th) Decide, the capacity of participating communities to address and prevent underage gambling was increased through the development relationships with community leaders, community leader education, and parent and youth involvement in project efforts.

2014 served as a “pilot” year for the YOU(th) Decide project and did not require this piece of the project, so this data only reflects 2015 project activities.

In retrospect, it is not apparent in the data whether these relationships with community leaders were new for the participating providers and youth/parent teams, or if they were previously established. Moving forward, it would be prudent to follow-up with providers to discern which of these relationships can be attributed to participation in the YOU(th) Decide project. It’s also imperative to review project reporting in order to accurately collect this information from providers moving forward.

OUTCOME 4: Increased parental action toward the issue of underage gambling.

GOAL: INCREASE CAPACITY TO PREVENT UNDERAGE GAMBLING

CSAP STRATEGY: COMMUNITY-BASED PROCESSES

ACTIVITY: COMMUNITY LEADER MEETINGS

All participating providers were required to collaborate with a minimum of 4 teams (each made up of one youth and one parent/adult) to meet with ten different community leaders/groups.

During each meeting with community leaders, youth and parent teams did three things:

- Educated the community leaders about the dangers of underage gambling;
- Educated community leaders on the importance of preventing underage gambling, and decreasing youth access to gambling; and
- Asked participating community leaders to sign a resolution of support for gambling-free youth and family events and/or a policy reducing youth access to gambling.

The goal of these meetings was to increase the community capacity to address underage gambling through community leader education and to include youth and parents as stakeholders in the prevention of underage gambling.

DATA SOURCE

All participating YOU(th) Decide providers were required to complete a quarterly report regarding their YOU(th) Decide education, outreach, media, and environmental strategies and activities during each reporting period. A summary of report questions can be found on page 7 of the included YOU(th) Decide toolkit.

RESULTS

- 231 parents/adults were recruited to participate in the YOU(th) Decide project.
- 219 parents/adults were present and participated with youth in the community leader meetings

Through participation in community leader meetings, parents were educated alongside the community leaders regarding:

- The dangers of underage gambling
- The importance of preventing underage gambling, and decreasing youth access to gambling

REVIEW AND FOLLOW-UP

Project results suggest that through participation in community leader meetings in partnership with YOU(th) Decide, parents and trusted adults were also educated about key facts surrounding underage gambling, and were actively involved in taking action toward the issue of underage gambling.

2014 served as a “pilot” year for the YOU(th) Decide project and did not require this piece of the project, so this data only reflects 2015 project activities.

Our intention was to actively involve parents in the community leader meetings with their child(-ren). What we found was that in the case that a parent wasn’t available and/or interested, a trusted adult accompanied the youth to meeting(s). In addition, due to the way the question was asked on the period report, there is also the possibility of overlap not reflected in this data.

The reporting has been modified to collect more detailed information regarding adult participants who attend meetings to determine if they are indeed parents or trusted adults in the lives of participating youth. The reporting questions have also been rearranged to prevent any overlap in reporting.

Moving forward, we are exploring alternative ways to involve parents in the prevention of underage gambling through the YOU(th) Decide project.

OUTCOME 5: Establish support for restricting youth access to gambling within New York State communities.

GOAL: INCREASE CAPACITY TO PREVENT UNDERAGE GAMBLING

CSAP STRATEGY: COMMUNITY-BASED PROCESSES

ACTIVITY: COMMUNITY LEADER MEETINGS

All participating providers were required to collaborate with a minimum of 4 teams (each made up of one youth and one parent/adult) to meet with ten different community leaders/groups. The goal of these meetings was to raise awareness to community leaders and groups about the issue of underage gambling, and the importance of reducing youth access to gambling. During meetings, youth and parent teams requested community leaders/groups to take action to prevent underage gambling in their community(-ies) by:

- Signing a resolution of support for “gambling-free” activities; and/or
- Enacting, or agreeing to start the process of enacting, a “gambling-free” policy for their respective event, agency, etc.

DATA SOURCE

All participating YOU(th) Decide providers were required to complete a quarterly report regarding their YOU(th) Decide education, outreach, media, and environmental strategies and activities during each reporting period. A summary of report questions can be found on page 7 of the included YOU(th) Decide toolkit.

RESULTS

110 resolutions and/or letters of support were signed by community leaders and groups

Examples of community leaders and groups that signed a resolution or letter of support include, but are not limited to:

- Athletic leagues;
- Youth groups;
- Media outlets;
- Places of worship;
- School clubs and advisors;
- Local businesses including health and fitness centers;
- Health departments;
- Town Supervisors;

- Medical groups; and
- Nonprofits.

*A sample resolution can be found on page 55 of the included YOU(th) Decide Toolkit.

REVIEW AND FOLLOW-UP

YOU(th) Decide Community Leader Meeting outcome data suggests an increased support for gambling-free activities and in the prevention of underage gambling in participating communities, as evidenced by the signing of 110 resolutions and letters of support.

Provider activity reporting has been modified to ask more specific questions regarding the specific content of the resolutions and letters of support to distinguish general project support from support for gambling-free activities for youth and families.

2014 served as a “pilot” year for the YOU(th) Decide project and did not require this piece of the project, so this data only reflects 2015 project activities.

OUTCOME 6: Decreased youth accessibility to gambling in New York State.

GOAL: DECREASE ACCESSIBILITY OF GAMBLING OPPORTUNITIES TO YOUTH

CSAP STRATEGY: ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES

ACTIVITY: COMMUNITY LEADER MEETINGS

All participating providers were required to collaborate with a minimum of 4 teams (each made up of one youth and one parent/adult) to meet with ten different community leaders/groups. The goal of these meetings was to raise awareness to community leaders and groups about the issue of underage gambling, and the importance of reducing youth access to gambling. During meetings, youth and parent teams requested community leaders/groups to take action to prevent underage gambling in their community(-ies) by:

- Signing a resolution of support for “gambling-free” activities; and/or
- Enacting, or agreeing to start the process of enacting, a “gambling-free” policy for their respective event, agency, etc.

DATA SOURCE

All participating YOU(th) Decide providers were required to complete a quarterly report regarding their YOU(th) Decide education, outreach, media, and environmental strategies and activities during each reporting period. A summary of report questions can be found on page 7 of the included YOU(th) Decide toolkit.

RESULTS

25 policies underage gambling specific policies were signed affecting approximately 5,715 youth

Examples of community leaders and groups that signed gambling specific policies as part of YOU(th) Decide include, but are not limited to:

- Boy Scouts troops;
- School districts;
- Places of worship;
- School clubs;
- Local businesses; and
- Membership clubs and fraternal organizations.

*A sample policy can be found on page 56 of the included YOU(th) Decide Toolkit.

REVIEW AND FOLLOW-UP

YOU(th) Decide Community Leader Meeting outcome data suggests a decrease in youth accessibility in participating communities, and for approximately 5,715 youth in those communities, as evidenced by the establishment of 25 gambling specific policies.

2014 served as a “pilot” year for the YOU(th) Decide project and did not require this piece of the project, so this data only reflects 2015 project activities.

Participating providers were given the leeway to meet community groups and leaders where they are most comfortable in regard to changing policies. With the current data collected, it is unclear exactly what kinds of policies were signed: school use policies, gambling free event policies, agency wide policies, etc. The reporting has since been modified to collect more detailed information regarding each policy signed as a part of the YOU(th) Decide project.

It is also unclear how effectively these policies are being implemented. Moving forward, it would be beneficial to follow-up with leaders and groups who signed policies to ensure their knowledge about the policy, and the steps they have taken since signing the policy.

In order to measure the increase in gambling-free events that can be attributed to the YOU(th) Decide project, it would be necessary to do an environmental scan of past and current gambling-free events in each participating community.

Process Evaluation and Feedback

DATA SOURCE

All participating YOU(th) Decide providers were required to complete a narrative report on an annual basis regarding their successes, challenges, barriers and lessons learned during each project year. In this narrative, providers were also asked to report what additional materials and support they are in need of for the following project cycle. A summary of narrative questions can be found on page 8 of the included YOU(th) Decide toolkit.

RESULTS

Highlights for each of the areas described above are included below.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Feedback:

- Collaboration with community groups, youth and staff
- Building upon previous years' work
- "Seeing firsthand how the youth were able to impact the adults was a significant experience."
- "Consistency of providers allows for learning experiences and better implementation in future cycles"

Review:

- The feedback led us to the conclusion that the providers feel that the project was beneficial in a number of ways for youth and providers.
- Relationships are key to making this, and any community-based process/strategy, effective.

BARRIERS

Provider feedback:

- Language/verbiage used in project
 - The terms "meeting," "community leader," "resolution" and "policy" can be viewed in a number of ways, can be easily confused and can sometimes come across as very formal
 - Underage gambling prevention is sometimes viewed as anti-gambling in some communities
- Getting face-to-face time in schools can be a challenge
- Parent involvement
- Many groups do not want to give up fundraisers

- Some view YOU(th) Decide as a “school-based program” as opposed to an overall community based prevention strategy

Review:

- We chose to change the word “meeting” to “conversation” in an effort to decrease the level of discomfort and perceived challenge to completing the project activities. Once we began to use the term “conversation” instead of “meeting,” we found that providers almost immediately let their guard down and became more comfortable working with youth and community leaders to encourage conversations about underage gambling prevention.
- It’s important to clearly define project activities and outcomes so that everyone is on the same page. In order to ensure clarity and consistency across the state, we redefined the following:
 - A policy is a formal change to a practice – can be a gambling-free event policy, a change to a fundraising policy (i.e. kids aren’t allowed to sell raffle tickets), a school policy, a gambling-free agency policy, etc.
 - A resolution is any formal show of support for underage gambling prevention and/or YOU(th) Decide (i.e. letter of support, proclamation, resolution, etc.)
 - A community leader is anyone who is in a position to make change in their community. Some examples include: SADD President, baseball coach, Executive Director of local nonprofit, church youth group leader, etc.
- Face-to-face sessions can be with ANY group of youth. We encouraged providers to think outside-the-box when trying to reach youth with face-to-face education sessions. Some creative solutions included: teen homeless shelter, church youth groups, Boy Scouts, etc.
- Flexibility is key. Groups who want to sign a policy do not have to completely give up their raffle/fundraiser if gambling is included. For example, a group may choose to sign a policy that states that youth under the age of 18 are not allowed to purchase or sell the raffle tickets. It’s important to meet groups where they are at.
- YOU(th) Decide needs to be marketed as a community-wide prevention project with a number of different strategies in order to differentiate this project with school-based programs.

WHAT CAN YOU AND OTHERS LEARN FROM INVOLVEMENT IN YOU(TH) DECIDE?

- “If you ask the right people to make the right choices for the youth in our community, things can get done.”
- “...Sometimes you need to think outside the box and be creative when trying to reach youth rather than just reaching out to youth in classrooms.”
- “The stronger the community partnerships are, the more you can achieve as far as buy-in and message delivery.”

OPPORTUNITIES AND UNEXPECTED BENEFITS

- “We were pleasantly surprised that the youth were very interested in the topic of risks involved with youth gambling and were willing to discuss the topic with others. They were almost more open to the discussion than adults were.”
- “Several of the youth who participated have had opportunities presented to them because of their participation with the project.

“The opportunity to work with so many community partners and learn from other organizations statewide has been an unexpected benefit and opportunity through this project.”

The New York Council on Problem Gambling (NYCPG) designed the YOU(th) Decide project to fill the need for an effective, comprehensive underage gambling prevention program targeting youth and communities in New York State. After one and a half project years, initial findings suggest that when implemented at the local level, the combination of strategies included in YOU(th) Decide are effective in increasing youth knowledge, increasing capacity to prevent underage gambling, and decreasing youth accessibility to gambling opportunities, in an effort to reduce underage gambling.

Face-to-face educational sessions provided by local providers to New York State youth between the ages of 12 and 17, proved to be effective at increasing youth knowledge of a number of key media literacy facts and common misperceptions of gambling. Capacity building efforts were shown to increase parental involvement in the prevention of underage gambling, as well as to develop relationships with key community leaders at the local level. In addition, community leader meetings were effective in not only educating communities about underage gambling, but also in decreasing youth accessibility to gambling opportunities in New York State.

Local providers who participated in YOU(th) Decide reported feeling a sense of accomplishment while carrying out the activities included in the project. Additionally, providers reported an increased acceptance of the underage gambling prevention message within their communities. A number of providers also noted that youth who have participated in the community leader meetings demonstrate a sense of pride in being part of educating their communities.

There were limitations to the data collection process which may have affected the project outcomes analysis. In reviewing provider reporting, it was discovered that data collection efforts need to be modified in order to ensure the most accurate data as possible. In response to this finding, the 2016 reporting questions have already been modified to include more detailed data collection, to streamline the data analysis process, and to ease reporting for providers in an effort to ensure consistent and accurate reports as well as data exploration.

While youth and community leader involvement increased as the project progressed, parental involvement in the YOU(th) Decide project proved to be a challenge. The NYCPG team will be working to adjust the type of involvement required by parents in an effort to maintain parental involvement while easing the level of effort required by both parents and local providers in this area of the project.

Initial results from the YOU(th) Decide project indicate that implementing multiple CSAP prevention strategies does affect a number of risk and protective factors associated with underage gambling, including youth knowledge; community awareness and capacity; and accessibility. Additional analysis of the levels of underage gambling in participating communities, pre- and post intervention, may help to support these findings. Overall, early outcomes from YOU(th) Decide point to a general, positive impact on the participating individuals, providers and communities involved.