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Gambling: Minimising health risks

Strand

Promoting the Health of Individuals and Communities

Purpose

Students explore the sociocultural factors that can contribute to problem gambling, and propose strategies to address the issue. Each student maintains a journal that supports demonstration of core learning outcomes. Students examine the advertising of gambling as well as the advertising of support services for people adversely affected by gambling. All students design an advertising product targeting adolescents who are participating in unhealthy gambling behaviours and involved in potentially unsafe situations related to problem gambling. Students produce the advertisements in a form that will appeal to the target audience, and display them in venues where their messages will be conveyed.

Overview of activities

Activities in this module are based on a learner-centred approach with an emphasis on decision making and problem solving. As the following diagram shows, activities are sequenced in **tuning in**, **exploring**, **looking and sorting**, **testing**, **acting** and **reflecting** phases.



Source: Diagram adapted from *Social Investigators: An Approach to Active and Informed Citizenship for Years 8–10* and *The Social Education Framework: P–10*, (see details p. 5).



Core learning outcomes

This module focuses on the following core learning outcomes from the Years 1 to 10 Health and Physical Education Syllabus:

Promoting the Health of Individuals and Communities

- 6.1** Students investigate the social, cultural and environmental factors associated with a health concern of young adults in order to propose strategies that promote the health of themselves and others.
- 6.3** Students devise personal and community strategies to respond to potentially unsafe situations and behaviours.

Core content

This module incorporates the following core content from the syllabus:

Promoting the Health of Individuals and Communities

- factors influencing health — society, culture and environment;
- preventive, protective and treatment actions — risk management;
- creation and maintenance of environments that promote and protect health — the role of individuals and communities.

Assessment strategy

The following are examples of assessment tasks that provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the core learning outcomes identified in this module.

Promoting the Health of Individuals and Communities 6.1

- **Students identify social, cultural and environmental factors that influence adolescent gambling and also identify the health effects of gambling. They use this information to devise advertisements (for example, in the form of posters) that represent a community-level strategy for addressing the negative health effects associated with problem gambling.**
 - Does the student develop an appropriate advertising product that addresses the issue of problem gambling by adolescents and/or their friends and family?
 - Does the student present a slogan, image, additional text and contact information effectively in a poster? (Adapt this question as necessary to apply to the general features of other advertising media.)
 - Would the student’s advertising product appeal to the target audience?
 - Does the student’s advertising product identify social, cultural and environmental factors that may influence adolescent gambling?
 - Does the advertising product identify the effects of problem gambling on the health of adolescents?

Promoting the Health of Individuals and Communities 6.3

- **Students explain in their journals how their proposed personal and community strategies deal with the issues of unsafe situations and unhealthy behaviours related to excessive gambling.**
 - Does the student identify unsafe situations and unhealthy behaviours related to excessive gambling in given scenarios?
 - Does the student propose health-promoting strategies relevant to given scenarios?

Background information

Gambling in Australia

Gambling is an integral part of Australian culture: Australians spend more per capita on gambling than do people in any other Western country.

For many people, gambling is a recreational interest that provides important opportunities for social interaction, and is a harmless and enjoyable pastime. However, others may gamble excessively, resulting in high economic, social, family and personal costs.

People who gamble excessively are estimated to constitute about 2 per cent of the total population (Productivity Commission 1999, p. 2). In addition, every excessive gambler adversely affects a large number of other people, including family, friends and work associates. Submissions to the Review of Gaming in Queensland suggested that problem gambling can be linked to 'domestic violence, suicide, diminished work performances, anxiety, depression, loneliness, social isolation, family breakdown, homelessness, poverty, alcoholism, and criminal activity to fund gambling' (Gaming Review Steering Committee 1999, p. 76).

It is difficult to define 'problem gambling' because behaviours and situations that harm some individuals may not cause problems for others. However, a 'problem/compulsive gambler' can be defined as 'a person whose gambling has caused unmanageability or problems in some areas of ... life, e.g. financial, marital, work, emotions, health, loss of identity, depression etc.' (Symond 1997, p. 27). The term 'pathological gambler' is used to describe a person experiencing severe psychological problems as a result of their gambling. For the purposes of this module, 'responsible gambling' could be defined as participating in gambling practices that do not result in negative health outcomes.

The Responsible Gambling Advisory Committee consists of Queensland community, industry and government groups working together to develop responsible approaches to gambling. The responsible gambling curriculum web pages (see 'Support materials and references') offer a curriculum section specifically designed to help Queensland students demonstrate the core learning outcomes of this module.

If students engage in disclosure about gambling-related issues, professional support is available through local Break Even services and other community services.

Investigating a social issue

Many of the strategies used in this module could also be used to investigate other health concerns of young adults.

Terminology

Activities in this module involve use of the following language in the context of Health and Physical Education:

compulsive gambler	pathological gambler
gambling	problem gambler
gaming	

School authority policies

Teachers need to be aware of and observe school authority policies that may be relevant to this module, particularly policies relating to sensitive issues.

Social justice principles

This module provides opportunities for students to increase their understanding and appreciation of supportive environments. It includes activities that encourage students to:

- access knowledge about the negative health effects of problem gambling;
- develop the skills to access available support services.

Students with disabilities or learning difficulties may require some activities to be modified to optimise both their participation and their ability to demonstrate the outcomes. Teachers should consult with parents/carers and specialist support staff to determine whether modification is necessary.

Support materials and references

Allcock, C. 1997 'An overview of pathological gambling', in K. Healey (ed.) *Gambling: Issues for the Nineties*, The Spinney Press, Sydney, pp. 23–24.

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Freiberg, P. 1995, 'Research identifies kids at risk for problem gambling', in *Monitor on Psychology*, American Psychological Association, Dec., p. 36.

The Gamblers: A Behind-the-Scenes Look at Australia's No. 1 Obsession (series of video-recordings): *The Punter and the Bookie*, 16 September 1998; *Casino*, 23 September 1998; *Hooked*, 30 September 1998; *The Track*, 7 October 1998; *The Crusaders*, 14 October 1998; *The Offenders*, 21 October 1998, Film Australia. (The episodes of the series were broadcast on ABC Television on the dates given.)

Gaming Review Steering Committee 1999, *Review of Gaming in Queensland: Report to the Treasurer*, Queensland Government, Brisbane.

Healey, K. (ed.) 1997, *Gambling: Issues for the Nineties*, The Spinney Press, Sydney.

Hebron, H. 1997, 'Gambling with education', *Health Education Australia*, Autumn, May, pp. 20–23.

Heinemann Education 1993, *Heinemann Australian Dictionary*, 4th edn, Heinemann Education, Port Melbourne, Vic.

Moore, S. & Ohtsuka, K. 1997, 'Gambling activities of young Australians: Developing a model of behaviour', *Journal of Gambling Studies*, vol. 12 (3), Fall, pp. 207–236.

Pike, G. & Selby, D. 1988, *Global Teacher, Global Learner*, Hodder and Stoughton, London.

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Queensland Department of Education 1994, *Media Curriculum Guide for Years 1 to 10: Constructing Realities*, Brisbane.

Queensland Department of Education 1994, *Social Investigators: An Approach to Active and Informed Citizenship for Years 8–10*, Brisbane.

Queensland Office of Gaming Regulation. Available URL: <http://www.qogr.qld.gov.au/QOGR2.shtml> (accessed September 2000).

Queensland Treasury, Gambling Policy Directorate, 'Responsible Gambling Curriculum'. Available URL: <http://www.responsiblegambling.qld.gov.au> (accessed September 2000).

Symond, P. 1997, 'A synopsis of problem/compulsive gambling' in K. Healey (ed.) *Gambling: Issues for the Nineties*, The Spinney Press, Sydney, pp. 27–29.

Victoria Ministry of Education 1987, *The Social Education Framework: P–10*, Melbourne.

Activities

Tuning in

GAMBLING IN OUR SOCIETY

Tuning in to some of the sociocultural factors that define the place of gambling in today's society

- ▶ Students brainstorm ideas about the meaning of the term 'sociocultural factors'. They then produce and share their own definitions.

Teaching considerations

According to the *Heinemann Australian Dictionary* (fourth edition, 1993), 'social' refers to factors 'of or relating to life within a society'. Social groups vary according to age, gender, ethnicity, geographical location, socioeconomic class and so on. 'Cultural' factors relate to 'the distinctive practices and beliefs of a society'.

Sociocultural factors shape the values and beliefs of a society, and the values and beliefs of the different social subgroups about the subgroups themselves, about other subgroups and about society as a whole. Gambling practices, like other human behaviours, are constructed on the basis of societal values and beliefs. Gambling is, therefore, practised and viewed in different ways by different societies, as well as by different groups within each society. Powerful institutions and practices, such as those associated with advertising, exert strong influences on groups and individuals. Advertising, for example, influences the way consumers shape their values relating to products and services.

- ▶ Students view a range of texts collected by the teacher, including television and print advertisements, which illustrate some of the ways in which gambling practices are portrayed or socially constructed for consumers.

Focus questions could include:

- What types of gambling are portrayed in these texts?
- What do you understand by the term 'gambling'?
- What images are associated with gambling (at the TAB, at the race track, in hotels, clubs, casinos, newsagents etc.)? What do these images suggest about the values and beliefs held by adults/young people in relation to gambling? How do these views vary according to age, gender, ethnicity etc.?
- What kinds of lifestyles and personalities do you perceive to be associated with gambling in different contexts (at the TAB, at the race track, in hotels, clubs, casinos, newsagents etc.)?
- Which social groups (socioeconomic class, gender, ethnicity, age etc.) are targeted in the advertisements analysed? Why can't young people gamble in most situations? In which situations can young people gamble?
- Do any stereotypes emerge from these advertisements? If so, what are they?

- Do these advertisements contain any references to negative health outcomes? (Consider the references made to negative health outcomes in cigarette advertisements.) If not, why not?
- What do you know about the history of gambling in Australia? For example, was gambling practised in traditional Australian indigenous cultures or by early European settlers in Australia?

▶ Students could also view extracts from a range of documentaries, such as *The Gamblers* series (Film Australia 1998). They could consider what beliefs and values have contributed to the construction of gambling as a popular pastime, and have led to Australians spending more on gambling per capita than do people in any other Western country.

Teaching considerations

[Gambling is] the exchange of some property (usually money) on the outcome of an event at least partly determined by chance ... Ancient Egyptians from 2000 BC depict the playing of board games, dice games were played in Rome around 900 BC, and there was betting on those famous chariot races! No culture has been found without some evidence of gambling, with the possible exception of the pre-European Australian aborigine.

Source: Allcock, C. 1997 'An overview of pathological gaming', in K. Healey (ed.) *Gambling: Issues for the Nineties*, The Spinney Press, Sydney, p. 23.

It is important for students to understand that gambling can adversely affect all people, regardless of race, gender, class, cultural background or age.

WHAT IS 'HEALTH'?

Exploring and understanding the meaning of the term 'health'



▶ Students read Resource Sheet 1, 'Definitions of health', which provides information on environmental, community and personal health. They then present this information in their own words for their peers.

THE HEALTH IMPACT OF EXCESSIVE GAMBLING

Exploring some of the sociocultural factors that can influence an individual's decision to gamble; investigating the possible health effects of problem gambling; and proposing strategies to address gambling-related health issues



▶ Students examine two scenarios in which young people are gambling excessively (see Resource Sheet 2, 'Excessive gambling: Two stories').

General focus questions on each scenario could include:

- What are some of the signs indicating that the person may have a gambling problem?
- What are some of the beliefs and values that may have contributed to the person becoming involved in excessive gambling?
- How is the person's health likely to be affected by their gambling now and in the future?
- What strategies can you propose that this person (or other gamblers) could use to minimise the adverse health effects of gambling?

Focus questions relating to ‘Betting on the Melbourne Cup’ could include:

- How important to Australians is the Melbourne Cup as a cultural event?
- From a community health perspective, to what extent does a once-a-year bet on the Melbourne Cup cause problems for Australians?
- How significant was advertising in influencing Ric’s decision to start gambling?
- What kinds of rewards did Ric perceive were associated with gambling?
- What beliefs and values underlie the advertising of gambling?
- What impact did early wins have on Ric’s belief that gambling would be profitable?
- What adverse health effects did Ric suffer as a result of gambling excessively?
- How was Ric’s physical health affected by excessive gambling?
- How was Ric’s emotional health affected by excessive gambling?

► Students examine the format of the journal (see Resource Sheet 3) and record responses about one of the scenarios in Journal Entry 1.



Teaching considerations

It is important to discuss with students that ‘problem gambling’ is difficult to define, because behaviours and situations that harm some individuals may not cause problems for others (see ‘Background information’).

When investigating the health effects of problem gambling, students will find useful information in Healey (1997) and on the websites listed in ‘Support materials and references’.

The journal is designed for students to record responses to sentence stems, providing evidence of their demonstrations of the core learning outcomes.

Journal Entry 1 may form part of the assessment in this module. The teacher discusses the criteria for assessing the journal entries with students before they make their first entries.

The following sentence stems in Journal Entry 1 are directed towards the demonstration of core learning outcomes 6.1 and 6.3:

- ‘The situation in this scenario is unsafe for the main character because ...’
- ‘Unhealthy gambling behaviours in this situation include: ...’
- ‘Strategies that the main character could use to address personal health issues related to gambling include: ...’

Strategies that students might suggest for Ric could include:

- seeking support from family and/or friends;
- seeking professional counselling.

It may be useful to talk about organisations, services and resources such as:

- the website of the Gambling Policy Directorate, Queensland Treasury;
 - the Break Even services funded by Families, Youth and Community Care Queensland.
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Exploring

YOUNG PEOPLE INTROUBLE

Developing an awareness that excessive gambling is a significant community health issue



► Students read the texts on Resource Sheet 4, ‘Young people and gambling’. They discuss statistics, themes and issues that emerge from the texts and then complete Journal Entry 2 on Resource Sheet 3.

Focus questions could include:

- What community health issues are associated with problem gambling?
- What statistics support the claim that adolescent gambling is a significant health issue in Australia?
- What statistics support the claim that adolescent gambling is a significant health issue in other countries?
- Do you consider that any of the patterns represented in these statistics might reflect behaviours among older people in your community?
- Do you consider that any of the patterns represented in these statistics might reflect behaviours among younger people in your community?

Teaching considerations

The sentence stems in Journal Entry 2 are directed towards the demonstration of core learning outcome 6.1:

- ‘Sociocultural factors that influence adolescent gambling may include ...’

The impact of one’s family on habits and pastimes is a sociocultural factor influencing adolescent gambling. Students might comment on the fact that 75 per cent of the children of problem gamblers reported that they started gambling before 11 years of age. Students might also suggest that the risk taking involved in producing fake identification is a factor in attracting adolescents to gambling.

- ‘Strategies that could be implemented at a community level to deal with the issues raised in this text include: ...’

Here students might suggest that:

- schools provide more opportunities for discussion of issues such as illegal gambling;
- students need to know where they can obtain professional help with gambling-related problems;
- authorities do more to prevent under-age entry to gambling venues.

Looking and sorting

DEMONSTRATING OUTCOMES

Clarifying outcomes and negotiating ways to demonstrate them



► Students examine core learning outcomes 6.1 and 6.3, and the teacher explains how they have been working towards these outcomes through their journal entries. Following discussion, students record their understandings of core learning outcomes 6.1 and the ways in which they will demonstrate this outcome in the module (see Resource Sheet 5, ‘Understanding and demonstrating the outcomes’).

- ▶ Students discuss community strategies that would deal with the issues of unsafe situations and unhealthy behaviours related to excessive gambling by adolescents.

Focusing on advertising, the class brainstorms ideas about possible health-promotion products — for example, a poster, an advertisement for a newspaper or for radio, a postcard, a magazine, a flyer, a page on the World Wide Web, performance art.

- ▶ Students negotiate with their teacher to develop an advertising product that will encourage young people to avoid excessive gambling and to minimise the risks associated with the excessive gambling of friends and family. Note that the information included in this module supports the design of a poster, but students may choose to develop another kind of product.

The teacher discusses with the students how important it is to have a clear idea of the product’s purpose and target audience as well as where it will be published or displayed.

R Resource Sheet 5

- ▶ Following discussion, students record their understandings of core learning outcome 6.3 and the ways in which they will demonstrate this outcome in the module (see Resource Sheet 5, ‘Understanding and demonstrating the outcomes’).

R Resource Sheet 3

Students also complete Journal Entry 3 on Resource Sheet 3 about demonstrating core learning outcomes 6.1 and 6.3. They share these entries with their teacher and peers as they proceed through the module.

Teaching considerations

The sentence stems in Journal Entry 3, Resource Sheet 3, will promote collaborative dialogue between students and teacher about demonstrating outcomes.

It is important to stress to students that each outcome is an overall criterion, and that specific criteria change according to the context of the module. In a later activity, students will negotiate specific criteria that contribute to the demonstration of core learning outcome 6.3.

EFFECTIVE ADVERTISING

Considering the elements of effective advertising

- ▶ Students collect and analyse at least one poster that is advertising support for people who are gambling excessively or for friends or families of such gamblers. In their analysis, students should focus on: slogan; image; additional text; contact information; and intended audience.

R Resource Sheets 6, 7

Following their analysis of a published poster, students prepare notes for the development of their own poster (see Resource Sheet 6, ‘Designing a poster’). They also negotiate with their teacher the specific criteria that will be used to assess their posters (see Resource Sheet 7, ‘Effective advertising: assessment criteria’).

Teaching considerations

For further information on teaching students about advertising, see the *Media Curriculum Guide for Years 1 to 10: Constructing Realities* (Department of Education, Queensland 1994) or *English in Years 1 to 10 Queensland Syllabus Materials: A Guide to Genres in English* (Department of Education, Queensland 1994).

Students can visit the responsible gambling curriculum web pages to view a range of health-promotion material related to problem gambling. They could analyse the poster designed for the Gambling Help-Line Pilot Project that was managed by Families, Youth and Community Care Queensland with support from the Responsible Gambling Advisory Committee in 1998.

DECIDING ON AN ADVERTISING PRODUCT

Deciding what kind of advertising product to create; defining its purpose and audience; and planning the production process



Resource Sheet 8

► Students complete a KWL chart to explore information about gambling behaviours relevant to the development of their product (see Resource Sheet 8). The KWL strategy consists of three stages of exploration:

- what we know;
- what we want to know;
- what we've learnt.



Resource Sheet 3

Students produce drafts or roughs of their products. They then carry out focus testing of their drafts on a sample of their target audience. They complete Journal Entry 4, Resource Sheet 3, which includes their comments on the focus testing and any product modifications needed as a result.

Teaching considerations

It is important to emphasise to students that the product they have developed constitutes a community-level strategy dealing with the issues of unsafe situations and unhealthy behaviours related to problem gambling. The sentence stems in Journal Entry 4, Resource Sheet 3, reinforce this concept.

When completing the KWL chart (see Resource Sheet 8), students can obtain useful information from the 'Support materials and references', in particular:

- the responsible gambling curriculum web pages and other websites;
- the book *Gambling: Issues for the Nineties* (Healey 1997).

Focus testing involves questioning a sample of an advertiser's target audience about the advertisement — for example, 'Do you think the graphics will appeal to 13–18 year olds?' Students can go to the responsible gambling curriculum web pages to look at the full range of questions used in the Help-Line Pilot Project.

Testing

HOW GOOD IS THIS?

Assessing the effectiveness of advertising products



Resource Sheet 9

- ▶ Students examine a testing instrument (for example, a feedback form or survey) that they could give to a sample of their target audience to measure the effectiveness of their advertising products. They might choose to use the testing instrument given on Resource Sheet 9 as is, or they could modify it as required.

Students discuss the concept of a sample. They decide on the size of the sample required — that is, they decide the number of people to ask to respond to the testing instrument.

- ▶ Students undertake peer assessment by using their testing instrument to assess the effectiveness of their product on their target audience. They modify their products on the basis of this feedback.



Resource Sheet 3

- ▶ Students complete Journal Entry 5, Resource Sheet 3, recording the feedback they obtained, and the product modifications they needed to make as a result.

Teaching consideration

It is best if students test their products on audiences as similar as possible to their target audiences. However, while they may be able to choose a sample of the appropriate age range or gender, they will not necessarily be testing their products on individuals experiencing difficulties with gambling. This level of target identification is not necessary in this context.

Acting

MAKING IT HAPPEN

Publishing the advertising products



Resource Sheet 3

- ▶ Students brainstorm possible sites for displaying or publishing their posters (or other products). Sites could include police youth clubs, skating rinks, libraries, Internet sites, youth magazines and student newspapers.
- ▶ Students research and plan how they would publish or display their products. In Journal Entry 6, Resource Sheet 3, they record what they found out during their research and while producing their plans.

Teaching considerations

Discuss the need for students to negotiate with appropriate people/ organisations about placing their products. While students should go through this process and may actually be able to have their product displayed or published, display or placement of products should not be part of the assessment.

Advertising products that can be reproduced in electronic form can be sent to the Responsible Gambling Advisory Committee through the responsible gambling curriculum web pages. Students who do this will receive individual replies.

Reflecting

HOW DID I GO?

Reflecting on the process and content of learning

- ▶ Students discuss:
 - how their products would work at a community level to reduce problem gambling;
 - the skills they have used in developing and producing the product;
 - the knowledge they have gained throughout the module about adolescent gambling, and about gambling in general and its potentially damaging effects on health.

Focus questions could include:

- What have you learnt about the involvement of adolescents in problem gambling?
 - What values and beliefs may lead adolescents to become involved in problem gambling?
 - What do you think are the most significant negative health effects of problem gambling?
 - What types of learning activities were most successful for you in this module — for example, finding information on the Internet; drafting, testing and modifying a poster; recording your thoughts using sentence stems; reading extracts from stories and research reports; analysing statistics?
- ▶ Students complete Journal Entry 7 on Resource Sheet 3.



Definitions of health



What is health?

The Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion states:

Health is created and lived by people within the settings of their everyday life: where they learn, work, play and love. Health is created by caring for oneself and others, by being able to take decisions and have control over one's life circumstances, and by ensuring that the society one lives in creates conditions that allow the attainment of health by all its members.

Quoted in Davy, J., Parker, R. & Patterson, J. 1994, *Health Moves 2: Senior Personal Development, Health and Physical Education*, Heinemann, Port Melbourne, Vic., p. 445.

This definition reflects a very broad view of health. In contrast, many generations of Australians have grown up with the narrow view that health is simply the absence of disease. The definition above suggests that health consists of many dimensions, including the personal physical dimension that most people associate with the term 'health'.

Different writers/researchers in the field of health describe the dimensions of health in different ways. Some refer only to individual or personal health, while others also include environmental and/or community dimensions. The dimensions of personal health include: the physical, emotional, intellectual/mental, social and spiritual.

Environmental health

Environmental health refers to the state of the natural systems of our planet and to the physical environments that people construct around them. Of fundamental importance to living things, including people, are the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the soil we depend on to grow so much of our food. Keeping the air, the water and the soil as healthy and unpolluted as possible is vital for environmental health. The preservation of biodiversity, the conservation of natural places and the creation of buildings and spaces where people can live and work comfortably are also important dimensions/elements of environmental health.

Community health

The health of a community can be measured by its physical health and by the nature of its social systems, particularly the interrelationships between community members.

Some important dimensions/elements of community health are:

- inclusive social structures (structures meeting the needs of all community members);
- cohesion created by valuing diversity and encouraging participation and cooperation;
- the provision of accessible community services;
- the opportunity for community members to earn a living;
- the opportunity for community members to enjoy leisure time.

While healthy communities are not free of conflict, opportunities are created for the productive and peaceful resolution of conflict.

(continued)

Definitions of health (*continued*)



Personal health: physical

Physical health is about being fit, having enough energy for both your daily work and your leisure activities, and not being sick. It means that your body systems are working well including your immune system which works to resist infections. Physical health involves getting adequate rest and sleep and having a balanced nutritional intake. Physical activity is an important part of maintaining personal physical health.

Personal health: emotional

Emotional health involves liking yourself and accepting others. It means understanding your own emotions, and having the ability to listen to others and empathise with their emotions. Importantly, it also means being able to express emotions productively. It includes controlling your own behaviour, and being able to deal with success, failure and challenge.

Emotional health means moving from emotional dependence to interdependence as we grow up. Emotional interdependence includes the ability to provide emotional support for others.

Being emotionally mature enables a person to have considerable control over their quality of life. Emotional maturity also encourages cooperation and productive relationships between people.

Personal health: intellectual/mental

Intellectual or mental health involves a person's ability to think clearly and logically and to make decisions — that is, it involves the way in which our minds operate. It includes being able to reason and question, to challenge ideas and plan actions. The ability to organise, process and evaluate information is an essential part of intellectual health. Also important are: the ability to see things from a number of perspectives, a willingness to consider new ideas and the ability to assess risk, creativity, curiosity and intuition.

Personal health: social

Social health involves the ability to interact positively with friends, family and other members of the community. Relationships that are built on social needs, such as a sense of belonging, acceptance and being cared for, as well as caring for others, contribute to social health. Another aspect of social health is the ability to use diverse social skills in a variety of contexts.

Personal health: spiritual

Spiritual health involves working out what you believe in, having a purpose in life and being in touch with your inner self. It includes making meaning for yourself by exploring ethical and philosophical questions. For some people, spiritual health may include the adoption of religious beliefs. Such beliefs can take many forms, including a profound connection to a particular place or to elements of the natural world.

(*continued*)

Definitions of health (*continued*)



Spiritual health may include: caring for your soul; respecting life; searching for wisdom; listening to your inner voice; searching for universal truths or individual truths. Maintaining spiritual health is often seen as a journey in which the directions you take, and your motivation for taking these particular directions, are important.

Interrelationships between the dimensions of health

Just as important as the distinct dimensions of health is the web of complex interrelationships between the dimensions. One attempt to explain these interrelationships is provided below.

The health and wellbeing of individuals, communities and the Earth have many interrelated dimensions. Personal and community health have physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual dimensions. Planetary health and wellbeing depend upon the state of the Earth's physical and biological systems. Political and economic systems can also affect the wellbeing of our planet and its people.

We know about the need for balanced eating habits; good nutrition is one of the things that keeps us healthy. We are also usually aware of what causes us stress, and we know there is a limit to the degree of stress we can tolerate. Knowing our limitations helps us recognise the warning signals of personal stress.

It is not only individuals who experience stress when things are out of balance; groups or communities also undergo stress. For example, the growing numbers of homeless youth could be a sign of an unhealthy community that is subject to such stresses as high levels of unemployment and family breakdown. When individuals or communities are under stress, warning signs indicate that limits are being pushed.

Similarly, there are warning signs that tell us when the Earth is under stress. For example, soil degradation is a sign that practices such as over-grazing, over-cropping, excessive deforestation and unwise use of ground water are resulting in an unhealthy planet is compromised by unwise farming, forestry and development practices — practices that reflect the values of individuals and communities.

In turn, the health of individuals and communities is affected by the health of the planet. Degraded soil (for example) leads to poorer crops and pastures, higher production costs, shortage of food, rising prices and hardship, at least for some. If our choices are founded on the understanding that natural and social systems and individuals all have limits to their ability to tolerate stress, those choices are likely to have healthier, more sustainable results now and in the future.

Excessive gambling: Two stories



Gambling on the Internet

I've always loved playing video games and surfing the Net so when I came across an interactive game on the Internet where I could win more Internet time, I was rapt.

I was pretty skilful at that sort of stuff. I have the highest score on a couple of games down at the arcade, and I've been playing computer games since I was little.

Entry to the first level was free and easy. All I had to supply was my email address.

In the first week I won 10 hours. This was going to be easy.

But after a while I got bored and wanted a bigger challenge — level 2. The only trouble was you had to buy a bank of 50 hours to play at that level. It cost \$90 and the only way to pay was by credit card.

I didn't know what to do. I wanted to play and I knew Mum would say no if I asked her.

Better not to ask her, I thought. If I did it and won, which I surely would, I would own up and surprise her by saying I'd won enough hours to last a year. That way she wouldn't have to pay for the Internet bill next term.

So I borrowed Mum's credit card and paid the fee.

The trouble was that level 2 was way harder than level 1. I lost and lost again, but thinking that I just needed a bit more time to master the game, I kept playing. I bought more time, feeling certain I could win it back. No game had ever got the better of me.

But it seemed to get harder, not easier. I was stressed out. I stopped playing basketball with the guys after school — going straight home to log on. I got into trouble at school for not paying attention and keeping up with my work.

I wasn't eating or sleeping properly either. I spent every waking moment replaying game strategies so that next time I could beat the computer.

Mum knew there was something wrong but I couldn't tell her. By the time she got her next credit card bill, I'd run up a debt of \$360.

Paul, 14 years old

(continued)

Excessive gambling: Two stories (continued)



Betting on the Melbourne Cup

It was Melbourne Cup time and we were looking at probability in our maths class. Jed, who is always full of stories, was bragging about his brother who knew someone who was 19 and had paid off a new car from betting wins. He had a new car, a bookie and no shortage of girlfriends.

Mr Kim said the odds of having that sort of success on the horses was most unlikely but I thought it sounded cool. I wanted some quick money.

I could put the lotto in and win a million. A million bucks sure would make a difference. And the casino looked like the place everyone wanted to be: lots of action and the chance to win big bucks!

Then I ran into Jed's brother and couldn't resist asking him about his bookie. He told me his bookie wouldn't take a bet smaller than \$100.

I placed a bet using some money I'd been saving from my part-time job at a garage. It was a lot of money but it felt good — better than buying a ticket in a dorky sweep run by the teachers or the student council.

I tripled my money and started dealing directly with the bookie. I was in control. I bought a mobile phone and studied the form guide religiously, placing bets with Tommo.

I was ahead for a while and when I had a couple of heavy losses, Tommo gave me credit so I could win back what I owed. But the IOUs got bigger.

Then he called them in. I was in deep. I stole money from home, school and work to pay him back. I lost my job at the garage after money went missing from the till on my shift on more than one occasion.

But I still owed money. It was out of control! I was lucky to sleep a couple of hours a night. The only thing that would take my mind of all the money I owed was a drink.

Pretty soon I was drinking every night in places where I thought Tommo wouldn't be. He threatened me more than once that, if I didn't pay him back, he would send around some of his mates.

I was in real deep and I didn't know how to get out!

Ric, 17 years old

Journal



Resource Sheet 3

Entry 1: The health impact of excessive gambling

Choose one of the scenarios from Resource Sheet 2. Complete the sentence stems below with reference to this scenario.

The situation in this scenario is unsafe for the main character because:

Unhealthy gambling behaviours in this situation include:

Sociocultural factors that may have influenced this person to gamble excessively include:

Strategies that the main character could use to address personal health issues related to gambling include:

If I were the main character, I would:

because

(continued)

GAMBLING: MINIMISING HEALTH RISKS • LOWER SECONDARY

Journal (continued)



Entry 2: Young people in trouble

Sociocultural factors that influence adolescent gambling may include:

Strategies that could be implemented at a community level to deal with the issues raised in this text include:

Entry 3: Demonstrating outcomes

The outcome I think will be the easier one for me to demonstrate is:

because

The outcome I think will be the more difficult one for me to demonstrate is:

because

I think that I might need the following support from my teacher to demonstrate these outcomes:

(continued)

Journal (continued)



Entry 4: Deciding on a product

The product that I will develop as a community-level strategy to address the issues of unsafe situations and unhealthy behaviours related to excessive gambling is:

My intended audience is:

The purpose/message of my product is:

At this stage I think I will need the following help from my teacher:

My focus testing suggested that I should modify my product in the following ways:

Entry 5: How good is my product?

The feedback I obtained from my peers about my product was:

As a result of this feedback, I intend to make the following modifications:

(continued)

Journal (continued)



Entry 6: Placing my product

When researching and negotiating where and with whom I could place my product, I discovered that:

The most difficult thing about the research and negotiation was:

Entry 7: Reflecting

During this module, the most important thing I learned to help me avoid the unsafe situations and the health risks related to problem gambling was:

My most important skills that will help me avoid the unsafe situations and the health risks related to problem gambling are:

I think that the product I developed as a community-level strategy to address the harmful effects of problem gambling would communicate effectively with my target audience because:

A worthwhile community-health strategy that the Responsible Gambling Advisory Committee and Queensland Treasury could promote to minimise the harmful health effects of problem gambling would be:

Young people and gambling



Problem gambling and young people in Victoria

A Victorian survey of 1017 school and university students found that the following percentages of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statements about problem gambling.

Statements about problem gambling	% who agree or strongly agree
To some extent, I have a gambling problem.	3.1
I have at times gambled more than I meant to.	13.6
People sometimes comment on the extent of my gambling.	4.6
People sometimes criticise the amount I gamble.	4.2
At times I feel guilty about my level of gambling.	5.8
I would like to cut down my level of gambling but it's difficult.	5.0
I often try to win back the money I lose in gambling.	29.2
Sometimes I try to keep the amount I gamble secret from family or friends.	8.1
On occasions I have borrowed money to gamble or pay gambling debts.	5.0
On occasions I have taken time off school or work in order to gamble.	4.5

Source: Moore, S. & Ohtsuka, K. 1997, 'Gambling activities of young Australians: Developing a model of behaviour', *Journal of Gambling Studies*, vol. 12 (3), Fall, pp. 207–236.

Health risks associated with gambling

Documented social and psychological effects of regular excessive gambling among adults include physical violence, job losses through taking time off work to gamble, depression, loneliness, family breakdown, homelessness, anxiety, poverty, alcoholism, social isolation and resorting to crimes to fund their gambling (e.g. Dickerson in Cathcart 1996; Break Even 1995; Walker in Caldwell 1985). The potential financial, emotional and social costs to the individuals, their families and to the community are enormous.

This has two implications for adolescents. Firstly, some studies have established links between adult problem gamblers and gambling behaviour during adolescence.

Lesieur and Klein (1987) found that 37 per cent of adult problem gamblers began gambling before the age of 10 and another 47 per cent started between the ages of 11 and 18. Blaszczynski states that in Australia problem gamblers usually become so before the age of 25 (*The Age*, 29 October 1994).

(continued)

Young people and gambling (continued)

R4

Resource Sheet 4

Secondly, studies conducted in the USA (Shaffer et al. 1994; Lesieur & Klein 1987), the UK (e.g. Griffiths 1993b, 1990, 1989; Fisher 1993) and Canada (e.g. Ladouceur et al. 1994) reveal that most adolescents in these countries are gamblers with many experiencing gambling-related problems including compulsive gambling behaviour, illegally using fake identification to enter gambling premises restricted to adults, truancy from school, selling possessions, borrowing money, using lunch money, theft, drug dealing and prostitution to fund gambling activities.

Source: Hebron, H. 1997, 'Gambling with education', *Health Education Australia*, Autumn, May, pp. 20–23.

Children of problem gamblers

Pathological gambling in the United States and Canada may be growing more rapidly among children than adults, according to psychologist Durand Jacobs, PhD, a professor of psychiatry at Loma Linda University School of Medicine and vice-president of the National Council on Compulsive Gambling.

While an estimated 1–3 per cent of adults are pathological gamblers, an estimated 4–6 per cent of children 12 to 17 have the problem, according to Jacobs's research.

Jacobs in the mid-1980s conducted the first controlled study to assess the health and social risks faced by children of problem gamblers. He gave a detailed health survey to students in four California high schools and compared the answers of students who described one or both of their parents as having a compulsive gambling problem to replies from those who reported their parents had no such problem.

Seventy-five per cent of problem gamblers' children reported that their first gambling experience occurred before age 11, compared to 34 per cent of subjects whose parents weren't gamblers. Children of problem gamblers also:

- reported more use of tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs than did their classmates;
- were twice as likely, by the age of 15, to live in a home characterised by parental separation or divorce, or by death of at least one parent;
- were more likely to rate themselves as unhappy;
- reported poorer school and work performance;
- acknowledged suicide attempts at twice the rate of their classmates.

Source: Freiberg, P. 1995, 'Research identifies kids at risk for problem gambling', in *Monitor on Psychology*, American Psychological Association, Dec. p. 36.

Understanding and demonstrating the outcomes



In your own words, say what these outcomes mean and what you have to do to demonstrate these outcomes.

Outcomes	What the outcome means	What I have to do to demonstrate the outcome
<p>6.1 Students investigate the social, cultural and environmental factors associated with a health concern of young adults in order to propose strategies that promote the health of themselves and others.</p>		
<p>6.3 Students devise personal and community strategies to respond to potentially unsafe situations and behaviours.</p>		

Designing a poster



The generic features of effective posters include:

- slogan;
- image;
- additional text;
- contact information.

It is important that these features work together to speak directly to the target audience.

Slogan

The slogan is a short catchy phrase or sentence to get the audience's attention. It usually involves some kind of play on words.

To write a slogan, write what you want to say in plain language (for example, 'Don't drink too much alcohol when you gamble') and then try changing it into more persuasive language (for example, 'Never go on a bender before a flutter').

Image

The image must grab the attention too. Sometimes images are clever interpretations or illustrations of the text; sometimes they are used for their shock value; sometimes they rely on humour. Consider using photographs, drawings, paintings, computer-generated images, montage or collage.

Additional text

Use other text in addition to the slogan to reinforce or amplify your message — for example, in addition to the slogan 'Never go on a bender before a flutter', you could add: 'If you're drunk, odds are you'll lose more than when you're sober. So keep a clear head and you might just keep a few more dollars'.

Contact information

Provide the name of a service and a contact number that people can ring for help.

Now use the above information to plan your own poster.

(continued)

Designing a poster (continued)



1. Slogan

a Write what you want to say in plain language:

b Now try writing your slogan in more persuasive language:

2. Image

Make some notes about the illustration technique and subject matter you might use:

3. Additional text

What additional text will you provide to make your message clear?

4. Contact details

Add the name and contact details of a relevant support organisation or service:

Effective advertising: assessment criteria



The general criterion of effectiveness of your advertising product is that it must represent a community-level health strategy aimed at preventing unsafe situations and behaviours associated with excessive gambling.

Suggested below are some specific criteria that could be used to assess your product. Negotiate these specific criteria with your teacher. After this process of negotiation, modify your criteria or add new ones in the blanks available. Complete the table.

I have negotiated with my teacher to develop the following product:

The target audience for my product is:

Criteria	Criteria met? Yes/no
Overall criterion Development of a community-level health strategy to respond to unsafe situations and behaviours associated with excessive gambling.	
Specific criteria 1. Generic features a Slogan b Image c Additional text d Contact information	
2. Appeal to target audience	
3.	
4.	
5.	

My comments:

Teacher's comments:

KWL: Developing your advertising product



Resource Sheet 8

<p>K What do we KNOW about:</p>	<p>W What do we WANT to know about:</p>	<p>L What have we LEARNT about:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> harmful gambling behaviours by young people? how to minimise the harm caused by gambling? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> harmful gambling behaviours by young people? where young people can get help with gambling problems? how to minimise the harm caused by gambling? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> harmful gambling behaviours by young people, and how to minimise the harm caused by gambling?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> advertising that appeals to young people? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> techniques of persuasive advertising? an effective place to display the advertisement? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the way to combine knowledge of the harm caused by adolescent gambling, and knowledge of advertising techniques?

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Sample testing instrument for peer assessment of product



About the assessor

Age: _____ Sex: _____

About the advertisement

1. The message I get from this advertisement is:

2. If you had a problem with excessive gambling, would this advertisement make you stop and think?

Yes No Maybe

Why?

3. How would you rank the effectiveness of this advertisement? (Circle the appropriate answer.)

Very effective Effective Slightly effective Not effective

4. What advice can you give on how to improve the advertisement?

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Department of Education, Queensland for *P–12 Environmental Education Curriculum Guide*, 1993.

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The American Psychological Association for material from 'Research identifies kids at risk for problem gambling', by P. Freiberg in *Monitor on Psychology*, Dec. 1995, p. 36.

This sourcebook module should be read in conjunction with the following Queensland School Curriculum Council materials:

Years 1 to 10 Health and Physical Education Syllabus

Years 1 to 10 Health and Physical Education Sourcebook: Guidelines

Health and Physical Education Initial In-service Materials

ISBN 0 7345 2067 0

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