

EPIDEMIOLOGY OF YOUTH GAMBLING IN GEORGIA



Introduction

Since the Georgia Lottery began in 1993¹, more youth are being exposed to gambling and gambling advertising. However, few data exist on youth gambling in Georgia. Studies link youth gambling with many negative behaviors and outcomes during adolescence:

- Alcohol and drug abuse^{2, 3, 4}
- Drug sales and prostitution^{5, 6}
- Delinquency, including low academic achievement, truancy, and stealing^{3, 5} and conduct problems⁴
- Psychological problems such as depression, suicidality, and bingeing^{2, 4, 7} and a decreased ability to deal with anxiety, anger, and stress^{8, 9}

Males^{2, 3, 4, 10} and older youth¹⁰ are more likely to gamble. Other attributes associated with youth gambling are familial or peer substance abuse or gambling^{3, 4, 11} and lack of parental monitoring.¹¹ In addition, early onset gambling^{12, 13} (<18 years of age) is associated with alcohol and drug abuse later in life.¹⁴ To measure youth gambling, questions on gambling were included in the Georgia Student Health Survey (also known as the Youth Risk Behavior Survey) in 2003 and 2005. The purpose of this summary is to report current prevalence rates of youth gambling in Georgia. Risk factors and groups at higher risk for gambling are also reported.

Key Findings

- In 2005, more than 247,000 (57%) Georgia students in grades 9-12 gambled[†] and more than 69,000 (16%) gambled frequently[†]
- Overall, past-year and frequent gambling rates did not change significantly from 2003 to 2005. However, among females, gambling increased significantly from 33% to 42%
- Males were 1.9 times[‡] more likely than females to gamble in the past year and 3.1 times more likely to gamble frequently
- Males and females prefer different games, with males preferring cards, sports, and games of skill, and females preferring the lottery, regardless of gambling frequency
- Blacks were 1.4 times more likely to gamble frequently than Whites
- 12th grade gambling increased significantly from 2003 (50%) to 2005 (64%)
- Frequent gamblers were 1.9 times more likely than past-year gamblers to bet ≥ \$50 in one day
- Males who gambled frequently were 1.7 times more likely to bet high dollar amounts than males who gambled less frequently, while females who gambled frequently were 2.4 times more likely to bet high dollar amounts than females who gambled less frequently

Conclusions

- Youth gambling is a significant problem in Georgia and control activities are needed
- Sex is a more useful differentiator of gambler type than race or grade, and should be a basis for designing interventions
- Males are at higher risk for gambling, but females are more likely to increase spending as gambling frequency increases, suggesting particular risks for females
- The lottery is the second most popular game for females, while it is the least popular game for males
- Youth gambling in Georgia is a progressive problem, as the amount of money spent increases with gambling frequency

Actions for Lowering Youth Gambling Rates in Georgia

- Provide interventions targeting specific risk groups, such as males
- Educate youth on positive coping skills and alternative forms of entertainment
- Improve enforcement of underage gambling prohibitions
- Educate the public on the risk and harms of youth gambling
- Continue measuring youth gambling rates, so that trends can be monitored

* Gambling or past-year gambling: having played for money or bet money on at least one of the following, *at least once* in the past 12 months: cards, games of personal skill, sports, the lottery, or any other game

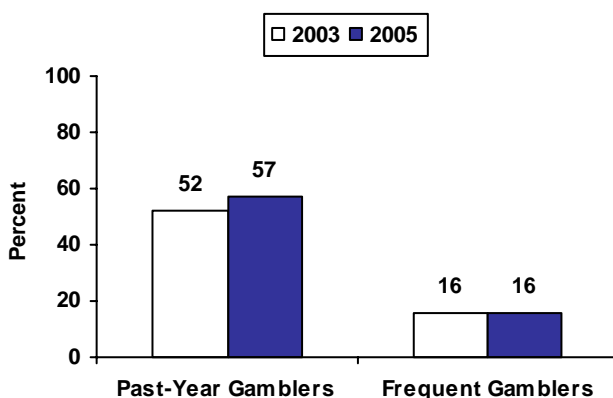
[†] Frequent gambling: having played for money or bet money on at least one of the following, *at least once a week* in the past 12 months: cards, games of personal skill, sports, or the lottery

[‡] All risk ratios are significant at $\alpha = .05$ unless otherwise noted

Total Population

- In 2005, 57% of Georgia high school students, over 247,000 students, gambled during the past-year; 16%, over 69,000 students, gambled frequently (at least once a week)
- Overall past-year and frequent gambling rates did not change significantly from 2003 to 2005

Percent of High School Students who Gambled, by Frequency, Georgia, 2003 and 2005



Gambling Prevalences by Sex

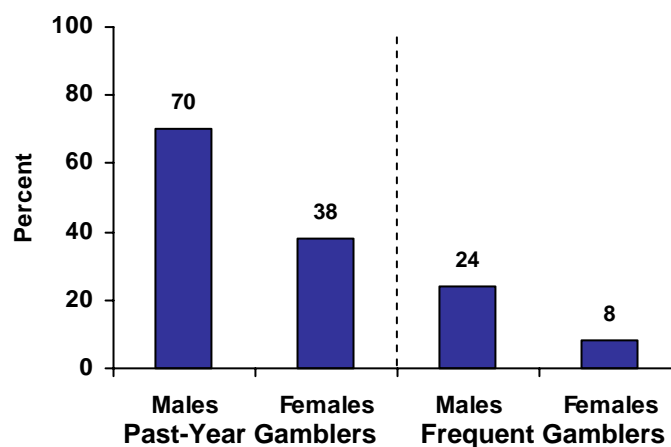
Past-Year Gamblers

- Males (70%) were 1.9 times more likely than females (38%) to gamble

Frequent Gamblers

- Males (24%) were 3.1 times more likely than females (8%) to be frequent gamblers (once a week or more)

Percent of High School Students who Gambled, by Frequency and Sex, Georgia, 2003 and 2005



Gambling Prevalences by Race

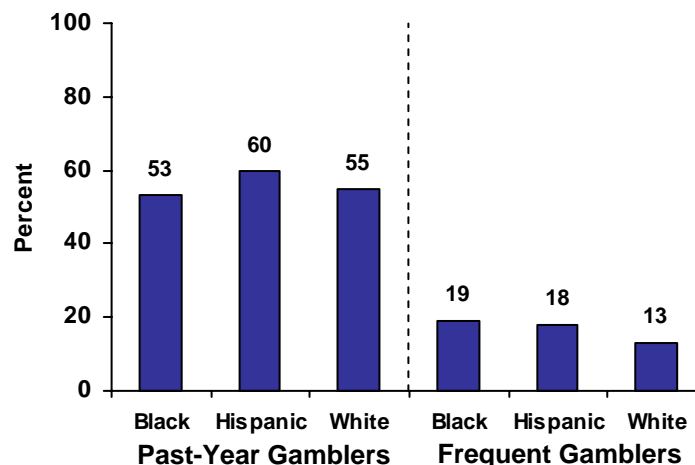
Past-Year Gamblers

- No significant differences between races

Frequent Gamblers

- Blacks (19%) were 1.4 times more likely than Whites (13%) to gamble frequently

Percent of High School Students who Gambled, by Frequency and Race, Georgia, 2003 and 2005

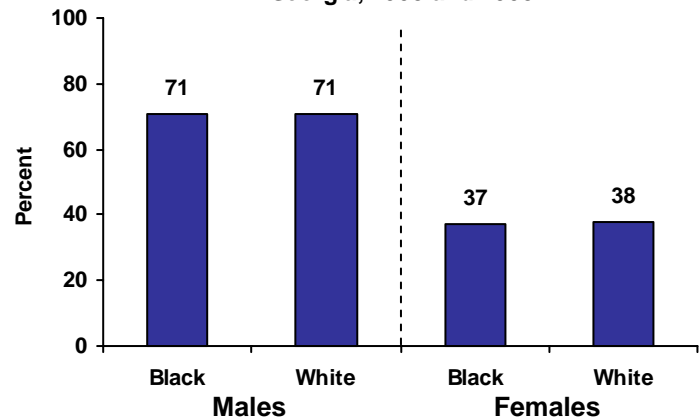


Gambling Prevalences by Sex and Race

Past-Year Gambling by Sex and Race

- Black males (71%) were 1.9 times more likely than Black females (37%) to gamble
- White males (71%) were 1.9 times more likely than White females (38%) to gamble

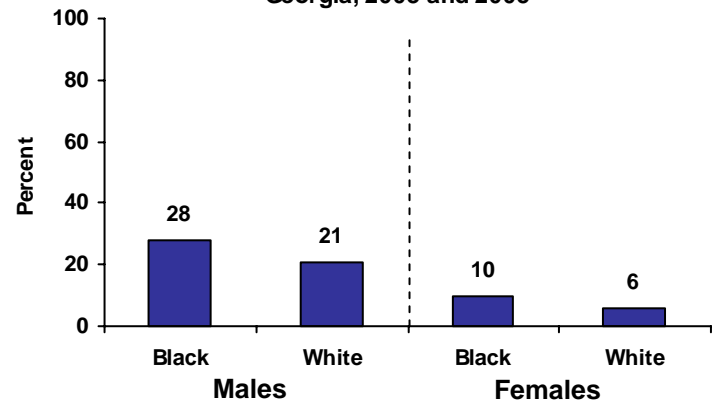
Percent of High School Students who Gambled:
Past-Year Gamblers by Sex and Race,
Georgia, 2003 and 2005



Frequent Gambling by Sex and Race

- Black males (28%) were 1.4 times more likely than White males (21%) to gamble frequently
- Black females (10%) were 1.8 times more likely than White females (6%) to gamble frequently
- Black males (28%) were 2.9 times more likely than Black females (10%) to gamble frequently
- White males (21%) were 3.7 times more likely than White females (6%) to gamble frequently

Percent of High School Students who Gambled:
Frequent Gamblers by Sex and Race,
Georgia, 2003 and 2005



Gambling Prevalences by Grade

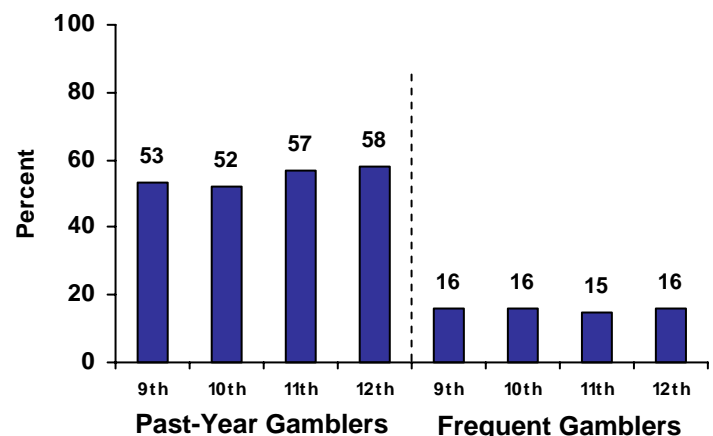
Past-Year Gambling

- No significant differences between grades

Frequent Gambling

- No significant differences between grades

Percent of High School Students who Gambled,
by Frequency and Grade, Georgia, 2003 and 2005

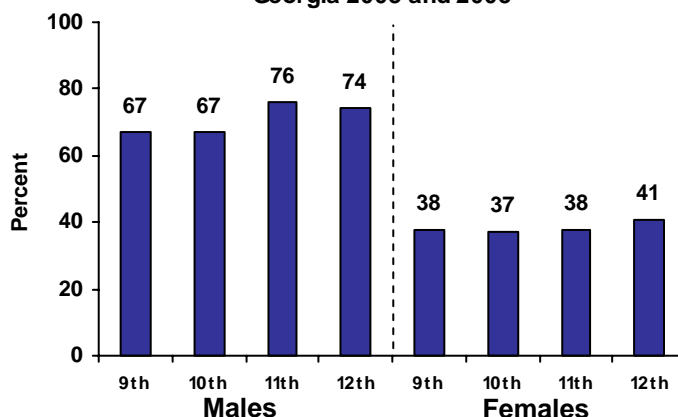


Gambling Prevalences by Sex and Grade

Past-Year Gambling by Sex and Grade

- Within each respective grade, males were significantly more likely than females to gamble (1.8 – 2.0 times more likely)
- 11th grade males were significantly more likely to gamble than 10th grade males

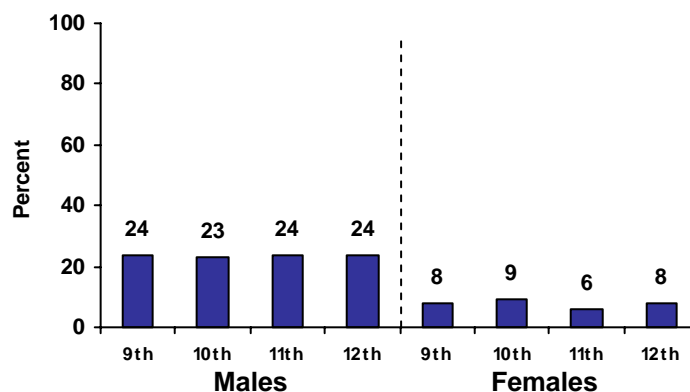
Percent of High School Students who Gambled:
Past-Year Gamblers by Sex and Grade,
Georgia 2003 and 2005



Frequent Gambling by Sex and Grade

- Within each respective grade, males were significantly more likely than females to gamble (2.5 – 4.2 times more likely)
- No significant differences between grades for either sex

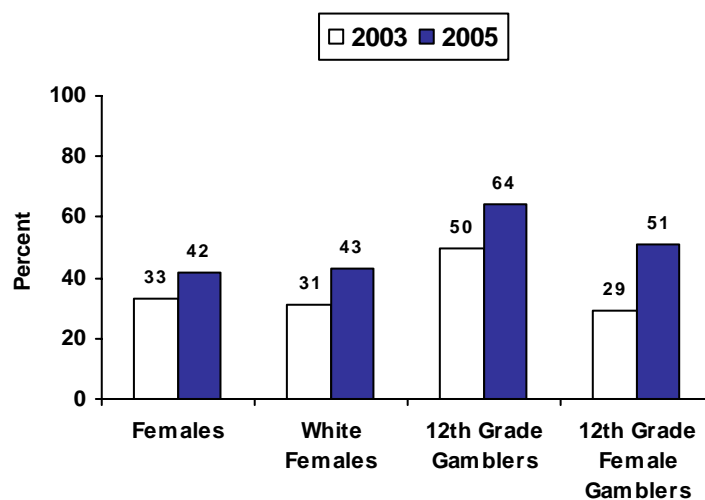
Percent of High School Students who Gambled:
Frequent Gamblers by Sex and Grade,
Georgia 2003 and 2005



Prevalence Changes from 2003 to 2005

- Significantly more females gambled in 2005 (42%) than in 2003 (33%)
- The number of White female gamblers increased significantly from 2003 (31%) to 2005 (43%)
- The percentage of 12th grade gamblers increased significantly from 2003 (50%) to 2005 (64%)
- The percentage of 12th grade female gamblers increased significantly from 2003 (29%) to 2005 (51%)

Changes in Gambling Prevalences,
Georgia, 2003 and 2005



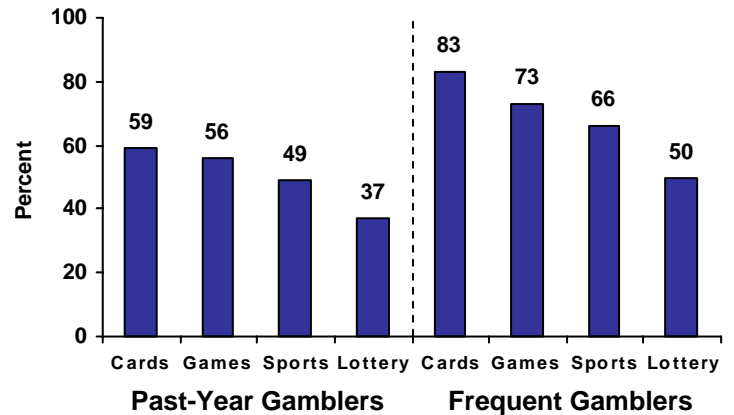
Prevalences Among Gamblers

Popularity of Different Gambling Games

Gambling Frequency by Game

- Frequent gamblers were significantly more likely than past-year gamblers to bet on cards, games, sports, and to buy lottery tickets
- Regardless of gambling frequency, gamblers were significantly more likely to bet on cards, games, or sports than to buy lottery tickets

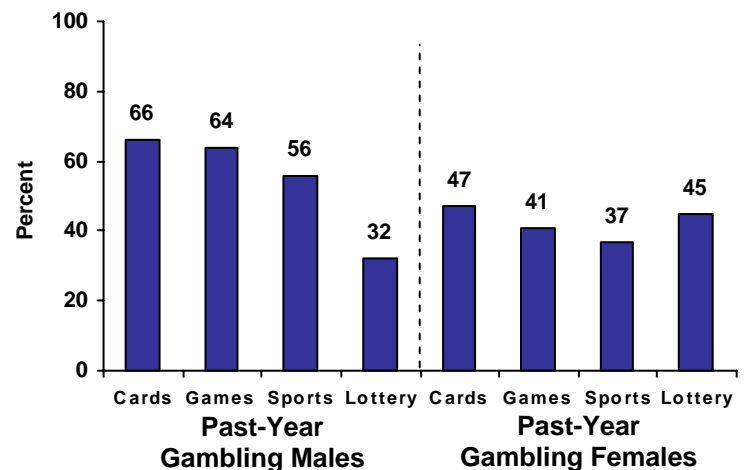
Gambling Frequency by Game Among High School Students who Gambled, Georgia, 2003 and 2005



Past-Year Gambling by Sex and Game

- Male gamblers were significantly more likely than females to bet on cards, games, and sports
- Female gamblers (45%) were 1.4 times more likely than males (32%) to buy lottery tickets
- Male gamblers were 1.2 times more likely to bet on cards (66%) than sports (56%), and 2.1 times more likely to bet on cards than to buy lottery tickets (32%)
- Females were 1.3 times more likely to bet on cards (47%) than sports (37%)

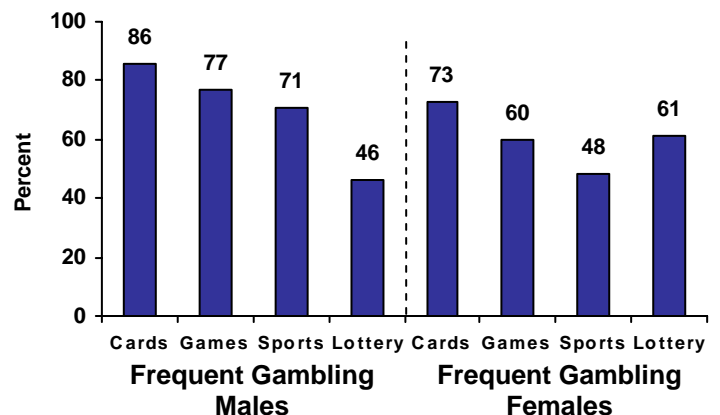
Gambling Frequency by Sex and Game Among High School Students who Gambled, Georgia, 2003 and 2005



Frequent Gambling by Sex and Game

- Male frequent gamblers were significantly more likely than females to bet on cards, games, or sports (1.2 – 1.5 times more likely)
- Females (61%) were 1.3 times more likely than males (46%) to buy lottery tickets
- Male frequent gamblers were 1.2 times more likely to bet on cards (86%) than sports (71%), and 1.9 times more likely to bet on cards than to buy lottery tickets (46%)
- Female frequent gamblers were 1.5 times more likely to bet on cards (73%) than sports (48%)

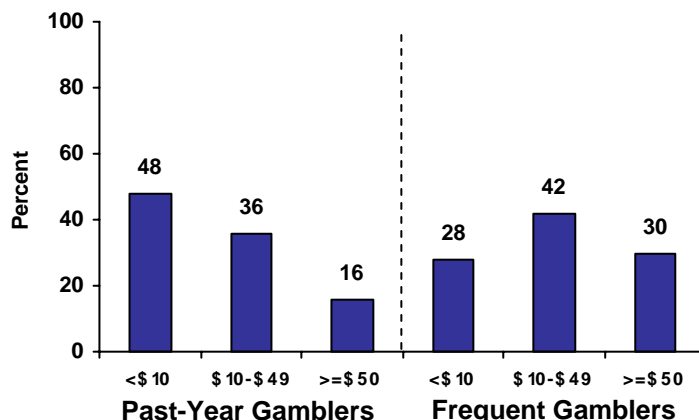
Gambling Frequency by Sex and Game Among High School Students who Gambled Frequently, Georgia, 2003 and 2005



Largest Dollar Amount Gambled in One Day

- Frequent gamblers (30%) were 1.9 times more likely than past-year gamblers (16%) to have bet \geq \$50 in one day
- Past-year gamblers (48%) were 1.7 times more likely than frequent gamblers (28%) to have bet $<$ \$10 in one day

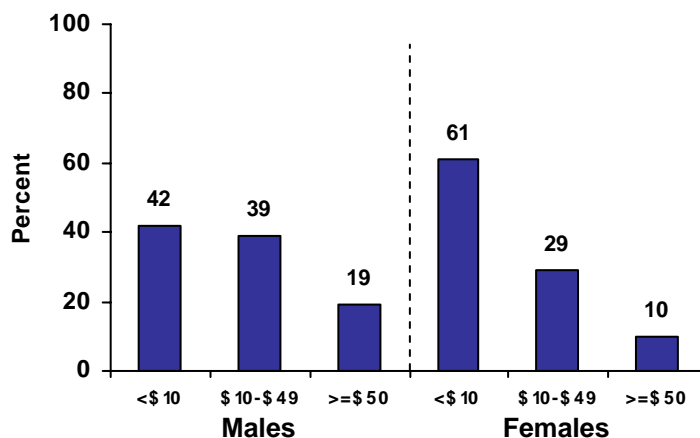
Largest Dollar Amount Gambled in One Day
Among High School Students who Gambled,
Georgia, 2003 and 2005



Past-Year Gambling by Sex and Largest Dollar Amount Gambled in One Day

- Male past-year gamblers (19%) were 1.9 times more likely than females (10%) to bet \geq \$50 in one day
- Male past-year gamblers (39%) were 1.4 times more likely than females (29%) to bet \$10 – \$49 in one day
- Female past-year gamblers (61%) were 1.5 times more likely than males (42%) to bet $<$ \$10 in one day

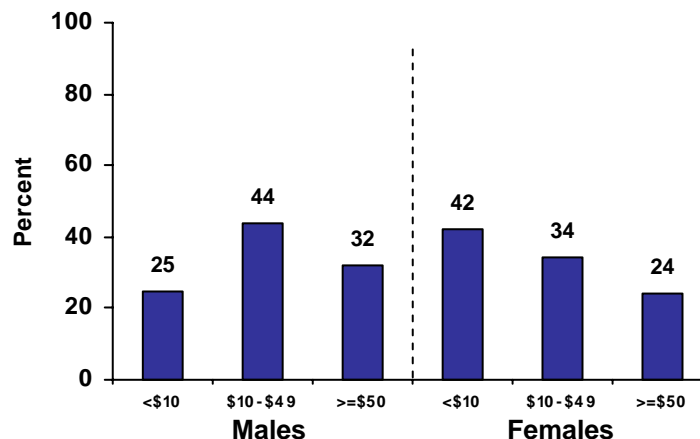
Largest Dollar Amount Gambled In One Day, by Sex,
Among High School Students who Gambled,
Georgia, 2003 and 2005



Frequent Gambling by Sex and Largest Dollar Amount Gambled in One Day

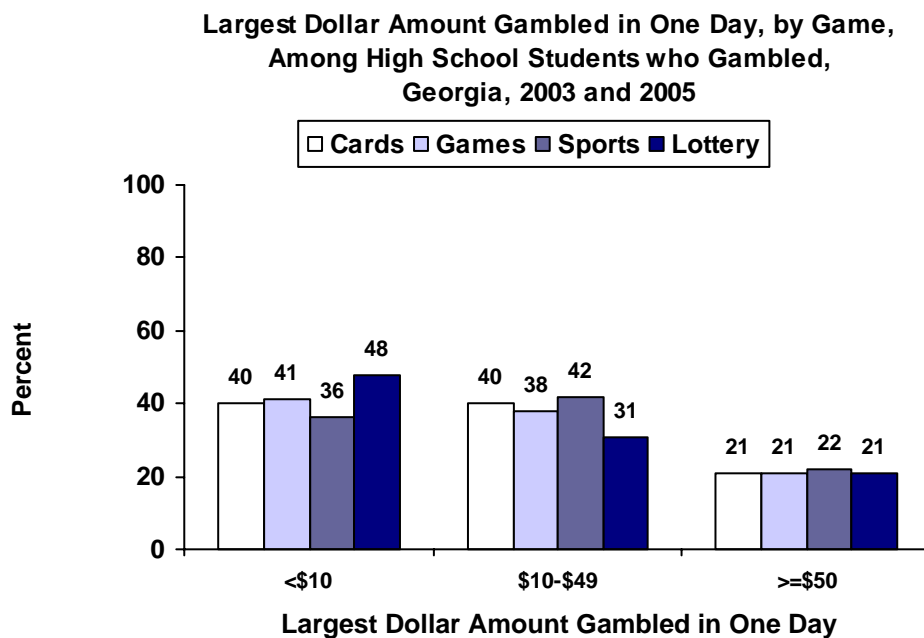
- Female frequent gamblers (42%) were 1.7 times more likely than males (25%) to bet $<$ \$10 in one day
- Male frequent gamblers were 1.7 times more likely to bet \geq \$50 than males who gambled less frequently, while female frequent gamblers were 2.4 times more likely to bet \geq \$50 than females who gambled less frequently

Largest Dollar Amount Gambled In One Day, by Sex,
Among High School Students who Gambled Frequently,
Georgia, 2003 and 2005

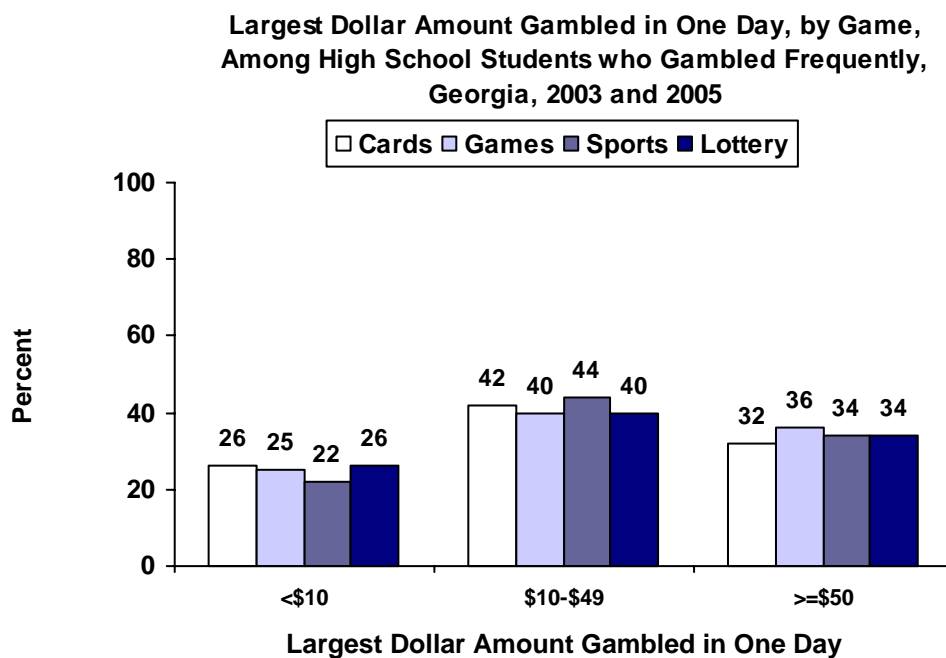


Largest Dollar Amount Gambled in One Day by Game Type

Past-Year Gamblers



Frequent Gamblers



Methodology

The Georgia Student Health Survey (also known as the Youth Risk Behavior Survey) gathers data on behaviors that contribute to the leading causes of morbidity and mortality in Georgia. The survey provides information on initiation and prevalence of health risk behaviors and trends over time. Topics covered include tobacco use, physical activity, eating habits, alcohol and drug use, unintentional injuries, violence, and suicide¹⁶. The Georgia Student Health Survey contains questions from the CDC's Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) and additional questions on selected topics. The survey is conducted every odd-numbered year by the Georgia Department of Human Resources, Division of Public Health and the Georgia Department of Education. The Georgia Student Health Survey includes a random, representative sample of public middle and high school students.

A 1996 study conducted by Rachel Volberg for the Department of Human Resources indicated a Georgia youth gambling prevalence rate of 40%, excluding weekly gamblers¹⁵. To measure current rates, the Georgia Lottery Corporation funded a module of five gambling questions that was included on the Georgia Student Health Survey in 2003 and 2005.

The 2003 and 2005 Georgia Student Health Survey samples are described below. For both surveys, students completed an anonymous questionnaire. The 2003 high school survey consisted of 94 questions and the 2005 high school survey consisted of 90 questions.

Response Rates

Year	High School Students			High Schools			Overall *
	Selected	Participated	Response rate	Selected	Participated	Response rate	
2003	2209	2066	94%	50	48	96%	90%
2005	1962	1755	89%	50	43	86%	77%

*Overall Response Rate = School Response Rate * Student Response Rate

Participants by Grade (High School)

Year	Grade			
	9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th
2003	32.0%	26.0%	22.1%	19.8%
2005	32.6%	25.9%	22.0%	19.3%

Participants by Racial Group (High School)

Year	White	Black	Hispanic	Multiple races	Other
2003	54.3%	37.3%	3.8%	1.5%	3.1%
2005	52.1%	38.2%	5.8%	1.5%	2.4%

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