

Gambling Activity in Ontario, 2003

This *eBulletin* provides an overview of gambling activities among Ontario students and adults. Data are from two ongoing population surveys: the *Ontario Student Drug Use Survey (OSDUS)* and the *CAMH Monitor*. Although each survey has been tracking gambling activities and problems since the 1990s, only the 2003 findings on activities engaged in during the 12 months before each survey are presented.

Students, Grades 7 to 12

In 2003, students in grades 7 to 12 reported gambling money on the following activities at least once during the year before the survey:

- Card game 24.0%
- Lottery ticket 22.4%
- Sports pool 20.3%
- Dice 12.7%
- Bingo 9.9%
- Sports lottery ticket 7.8%
- Slot/video machine 6.7%
- Internet 2.5%
- Casino (in Ontario) 1.7%

Generally, gambling is more prevalent among boys and increases with grade.

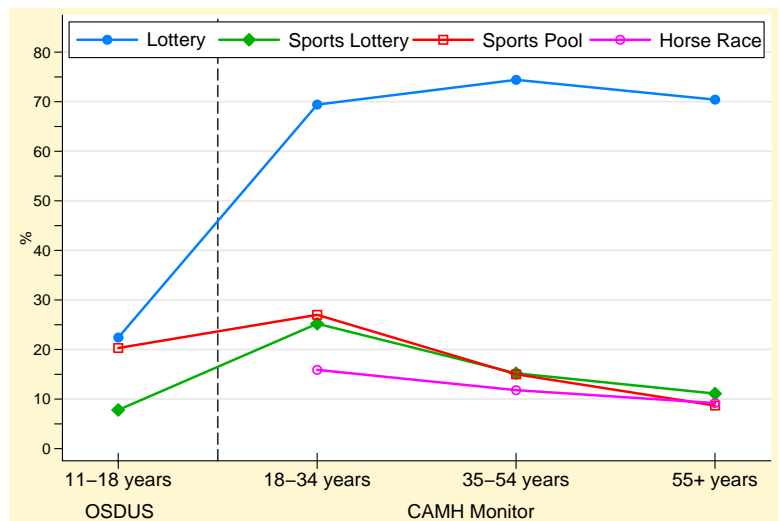
Adults, Ages 18+

In 2003, adults aged 18 and older reported gambling money on the following activities at least once during the year before the survey:

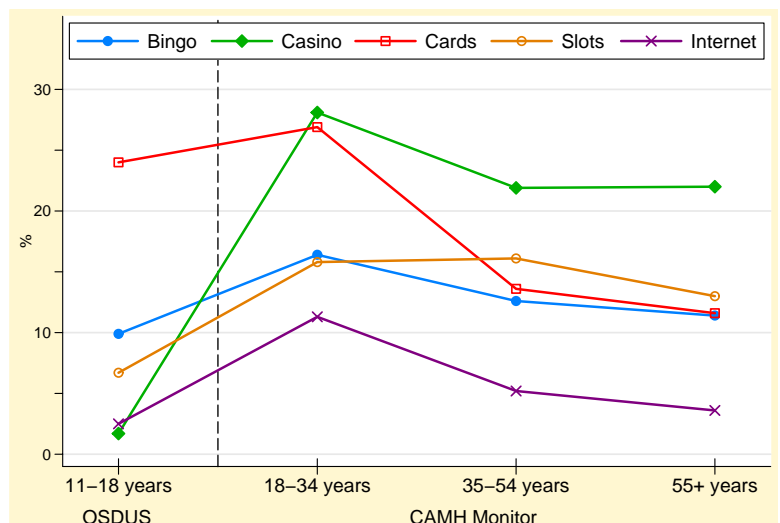
- Lottery ticket 71.7%
- Casino (in Ontario) 23.9%
- Card game 17.2%
- Sports lottery ticket 17.2%
- Sports pool 17.0%
- Slot machine 15.2%
- Bingo 13.5%
- Horse race 12.3%
- Internet 6.7%

Significant differences among *CAMH Monitor* age groups were found for five of the nine activities shown in Figure 1. Gambling on sports lotteries, sports pools, horse races, card games, and over the Internet decreases as age increases. The peak gambling years tend to be between ages 18 and 34.

Figure 1. Gambling Activities by Age Group, 2003 OSDUS and CAMH Monitor



Note: significant age differences among the CAMH Monitor groups for sports lottery, sports pool, and horse race.



Note: significant age differences found among the CAMH Monitor groups for cards and Internet.

Methods:

The *Ontario Student Drug Use Survey (OSDUS)* is an Ontario-wide survey of elementary (grades 7 and 8) and secondary (grades 9-12) school students conducted every two years since 1977. The 2003 survey, which used a stratified (region) two-stage cluster design (school, class) included 6,616 students in grades 7 to 12 from 37 school boards, 126 schools, and 383 classes. Self-administered questionnaires, which promote anonymity, were administered by staff from the Institute for Social Research, York University on a classroom basis between January and June 2003. The student participation rate was 72%. The 2003 full sample size of 6,616 students represents about 970,000 students in grades 7 to 12 in public and Catholic schools across the province. The gambling questions were asked of a random half sample, N=3,464.

The *CAMH Monitor* is an addiction and mental health random, anonymous telephone survey of the Ontario population aged 18 and older, administered by the Institute for Social Research, York University. The *CAMH Monitor* is conducted on an ongoing monthly basis and employs a stratified (region) two-stage (household, respondent) probability sample design. The following 6 regional strata are used: Toronto, Central East, East, Central West, West, and North. The gambling data for 2003 are based on monthly cycles from June to December, for a total sample size of 1,446.

All survey estimates were weighted, and variance and statistical tests were corrected for each survey's sampling design.

Terminology:

For each gambling activity, respondents were asked how often, on average, they had bet money during the past 12 months. Percentages reflect those who have gambled at the given activity at least once in the past 12 months.

- **Bingo** gambling excludes instant bingo.
- **Card game** gambling excluding games played at casinos.
- **Casino** gambling refers to money bet at an Ontario casino only.
- **Dice** gambling was not asked about in the adult survey.
- **Horse race** gambling was not asked about in the student survey.
- **Internet** gambling refers to betting money over the Internet.
- **Lottery ticket** gambling includes scratch tickets and pull-tabs.
- **Slots** gambling refers to machines at a racetrack in the adult survey; the question also includes video gambling machines in the student survey.
- **Sports Lottery ticket** gambling refers to "Sports Select" and "Proline" tickets.
- **Sports Pool** gambling refers to betting on sports, including a sports pool.
- **Significant Difference** refers to a difference between two percentages that is not likely due to chance. For example, a difference found at the $p < .05$ level of statistical significance is one that is less than 5% likely to occur by chance alone.

Sources:

The *CAMH Monitor* 2003 results are based on unpublished statistical analyses.

For more details on gambling among Ontario students, please see: Adlaf, E.M., Paglia-Boak, A., Beitchman, J.H., & Wolfe, D. (2004). *The Mental Health and Well-Being of Ontario Students, 1991-2003: Detailed OSDUS Findings*. CAMH Research Document Series, No. 14. Toronto: Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. (Available in PDF at: <http://www.camh.net/research/osdus.html>).

Suggested Citation:

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. Gambling Activity in Ontario, 2003. *CAMH Population Studies eBulletin*, March/April 2005, Vol. 6, No.2. Toronto, Ontario: CAMH.

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