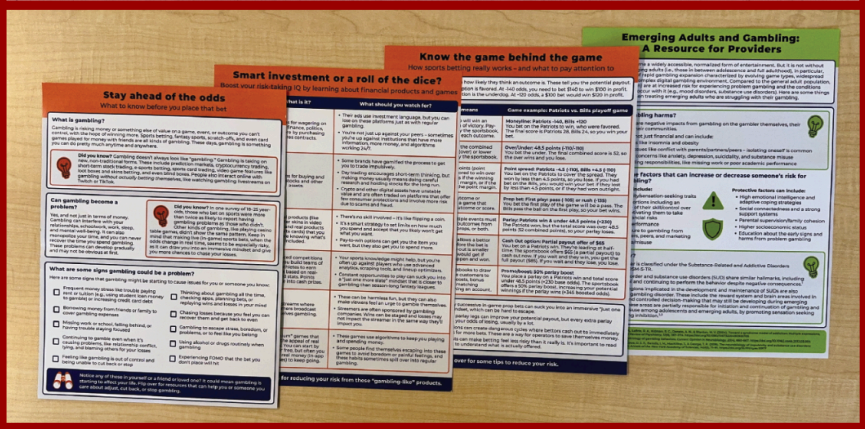
CHA Division on Addiction
Cambridge Health Alliance

2026 Gambling Disorder Screening Day

Activities, Support, and Participation







Cambridge Health Alliance Readiness for Gambling Expansion (CHARGE)

Gambling Disorder Screening Day Report

October 22, 2026

CHA Division on Addiction
Cambridge Health Alliance

Executive Summary

Gambling Disorder Screening Day (Screening Day) is an annual initiative that raises awareness of gambling-related harm and encourages screening for Gambling Disorder. The Division on Addiction (the Division) at Cambridge Health Alliance (CHA), a Harvard Medical School teaching hospital, started this global grassroots initiative in 2014. The 13th annual Screening Day took place on March 10, 2026.

Expansion and Participation

Screening Day brought together new participants alongside long-time event hosts and supporters.

- At least 262 individuals and organizations participated, representing 40 U.S. states, one U.S. territory, and six countries. Participants included health care professionals, state problem gambling councils, community organizations, gambling operators, colleges, and more.
- Eight Screening Day event hosts voluntarily reported their screening data to the Division. Together, they screened 819 people, 22.6% of whom screened positive for Gambling Disorder.

Outreach and Awareness Activities

The Division conducts outreach and awareness activities to engage new and repeat Screening Day participants and supporters.

- We developed four educational resources about gambling and emerging adults, covering topics such as recognizing and reducing risks, unique needs of emerging adults, and finding support for gambling-related problems and other mental health concerns (see Appendix). We shared these free resources through our website, social media, CHA's staff newsletter, and in-person screening events.
- We hosted three in-person Screening Day events, where we shared gambling information and screening resources: at the TD Garden during a Boston Bruins game, the Enterprise Center during a St. Louis Blues game, and CHA Cambridge Hospital.
- We promoted Screening Day through webinars and professional trainings, an informational video for California therapists, and a news segment on KSNV News 3 in Las Vegas. We also promoted Screening Day through newsletters, email communications, social media, and outreach to health care professionals.

New Materials & Resources

The Division's Screening Day Toolkit includes free, comprehensive materials and resources to support participants in planning for, promoting, and hosting their screening event.

- We continued to provide free Brief Biosocial Gambling Screen (BBGS) pocket screeners to individuals and organizations. With funding support from DraftKings, we printed and distributed 3,082 pocket screeners through requests and in-person outreach.
- We expanded the Screening Day Toolkit with new educational resources about gambling and emerging adults and new social media sharables.

Screening Day continues to bring together individuals and organizations to raise awareness of gambling-related harm and encourage screening. We're grateful to everyone who participated, shared resources, hosted events, or helped spread the word, and look forward to continuing this work in the years ahead!

Background

Gambling-related problems can affect many areas of a person's life, including their finances, relationships, and physical and emotional well-being. Yet these problems often go unrecognized and unaddressed, in part because people aren't routinely asked about their gambling.

Screening Day takes place each year on the second Tuesday of March during Problem Gambling Awareness Month. The Division on Addiction at CHA started this grassroots initiative in 2014 to promote screening for and encourage conversations about gambling-related problems. Health care and behavioral health professionals, community organizations, and others can participate by incorporating screening into health care appointments, hosting community screening events, or sharing online self-screening tools. Through these efforts, Screening Day promotes early identification of gambling-related harm and awareness of available supports. Screening Day has grown to include participants across the U.S. and around the world. The 13th annual Screening Day took place on March 10, 2026.

Screening Day Materials & Resources

The Division provides tools and resources to help Screening Day participants plan their own screening event and raise awareness about gambling screening. Our online Screening Day Toolkit includes event-planning guidance, information and tips for screening, and treatment and referral resources. It also features the Brief Biosocial Gambling Screen (BBGS), a screening tool available online as an e-screener, as a printable one-page form, and as a pocket-sized card. We continue to expand the Toolkit each year. In 2026, we added four new resources focused on gambling and emerging adults. Our Toolkit had over 1,000 page visits in February and March 2026, and our BBGS webpage had nearly 1,600 visits during this time period.

Our *Break the Ice: Talk About Gambling Problems* dedicated webpage includes a self-screener and treatment and support resources for people who want to learn more about their gambling and explore ways to make a change. Health care professionals and others can share the page with people looking for information and support. The webpage had over 400 visits in February and March 2026.



Picture 1. Social media sharable featuring the BBGS questions.

The Toolkit also includes a promotion guide to help participants spread the word about Screening Day. Our free outreach materials are available to download and share online or print and use at events. They include PSA posters and event flyers, official logos, and social media shareables. We added two new shareables this year: one promoting our *Break the Ice* page and another encouraging people to check in with their gambling (Picture 1).

New Resource: Materials for Emerging Adults

As mentioned above, with funding support from DraftKings, we developed four educational resources for emerging adults (see Appendix). Sports betting and newer gambling-like products, such as prediction markets, create additional and increasingly accessible ways for young adults to engage with gambling. Providing accessible information about how these products work and the risks they may carry is important. These resources are designed to help young adults make informed decisions, including choosing not to engage with these products, and to give healing professionals information they can use to discuss and address gambling-related concerns with young adults.

- *Stay Ahead of the Odds:* Defines gambling, outlines signs of risky or problematic gambling, and provides resources to help young adults reflect on their gambling and make a change.
- *Know the Game Behind the Game:* Explains how sports betting works, what to look out for, ways to recognize and reduce risk, and how brain chemistry and substance use can affect gambling.
- *Smart Investment or a Roll of the Dice?:* Explains how gambling-like apps and financial products work and offers tips for recognizing hidden risks and creating healthier habits.
- *Emerging Adults and Gambling: A Resource for Providers:* Provides healing professionals with an overview of gambling-related harms, consequences, and protective factors, along with treatment approaches for young adult clients experiencing gambling-related concerns.

The resources are free to download from the Division's website. Young adults can use them independently, while healing professionals, educators, and community organizations can share them as educational materials or use them to start conversations about gambling and related risks.

Within the first month after their release, the resources were downloaded from the Division's website more than 50 times. We also shared them with CHA employees through an announcement in the health system's staff newsletter and distributed copies at our Screening Day events.

BBGS Pocket Screeners



The BBGS pocket screener is a discreet, pocket-sized version of the BBGS that's easy to carry and share in different settings. It includes the BBGS questions, facts about Gambling Disorder, and support resources like the National Problem Gambling Helpline. It's available in six languages: English, Spanish, Brazilian Portuguese, Haitian Creole, simplified Chinese, and Vietnamese.

Updated BBGS Pocket Screeners

With funding and support from DraftKings, we updated our BBGS pocket screener with the new National Problem Gambling Helpline number and added a QR code to our *Break the Ice* page (Picture 2). We professionally printed 6,000 screener cards in English and Spanish to use at our own community screening events and to provide at no cost to organizations hosting their own screening events.

Picture 2. Updated back page of the BBGS pocket screener.

BBGS Pocket Screener Distribution

We provide BBGS pocket screeners at no cost to individuals and organizations who request them. For Screening Day 2026, we sent screeners to 31 individuals and organizations across 15 U.S. states and one U.S. territory. We also handed out these cards at our in-person outreach events. In total, we distributed 3,082 pocket screeners through requests and in-person outreach (Figure 1).

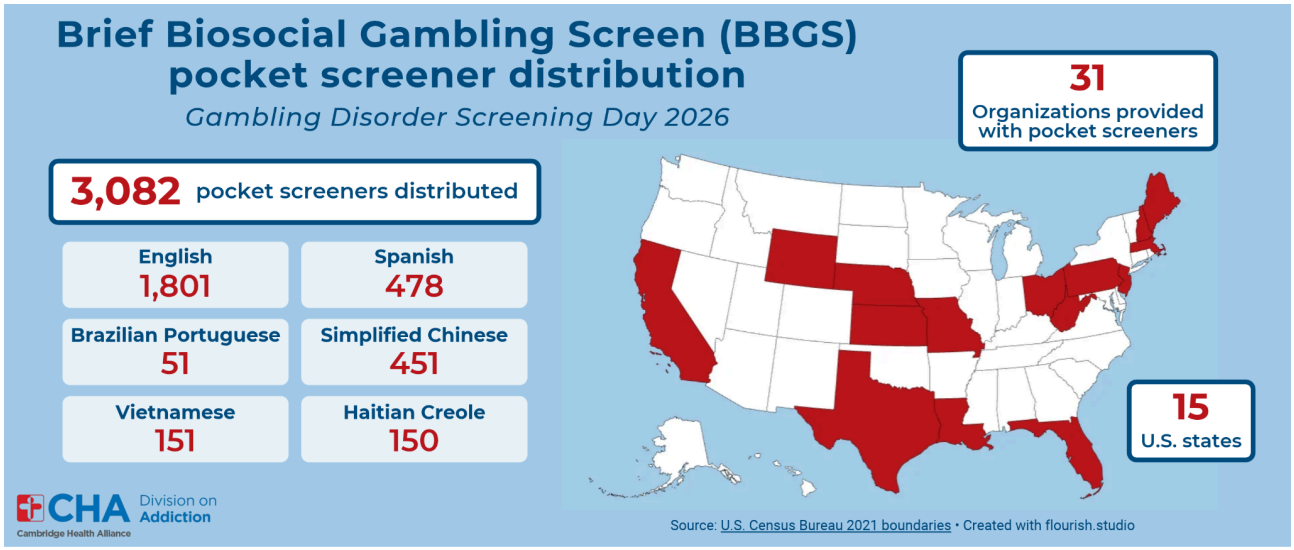


Figure 1. Distribution of BBGS pocket screeners nationwide.

Outreach and Awareness Activities

Each year, the Division conducts outreach and awareness activities to promote Screening Day and encourage participation. In 2026, activities included:

- Promoting Screening Day during the National Council on Problem Gambling webinar, "An Introduction to Problem Gambling Screening Tools" and the AllRise Treatment Court Institute training "Gambling, Behavioral Addictions, and Hidden Risk in Justice Populations."
- Hosting three in-person screening events: at the TD Garden during a Boston Bruins game, the Enterprise Center during a St. Louis Blues game, and CHA Cambridge Hospital.
- Developing and sharing new resources about gambling for emerging adults. We made the resources available to the public through our website and promoted them through CHA's staff newsletter and on our social media (see *Screening Day Materials and Resources*).
- Creating an informational video for California therapists about Screening Day and ways to participate. The California Council on Problem Gambling shared the video during a free educational class for therapists.
- Contributing to a news segment about gambling screening through an interview about Screening Day, the BBGS, and signs of gambling-related harm. The news segment aired on KSNV News 3 in Las Vegas, Nevada as part of its coverage of Screening Day.
- Promoting Screening Day through newsletters and social media. We shared information through CHA's weekly *In Brief* newsletter, our subscriber email for the Brief Addiction Science Information Source (The BASIS), the Division's quarterly newsletter, and on our social media channels.

Screening Day Tabling Events

On Screening Day, Division staff hosted tabling events at TD Garden during a Boston Bruins game, the Enterprise Center during a St. Louis Blues game, and CHA Cambridge Hospital. At each event, we hosted a resource table with information about problem gambling, gambling self-screening tools, and treatment and support resources. These in-person events gave us opportunities to connect and converse with community members, raise awareness, and share resources that can help people recognize gambling-related harm and find support for themselves or a loved one.

We had new and pre-existing resources at our events. New this year were our gambling resources for emerging adults. Other materials included our BBGS pocket screeners in multiple languages, and resource brochures with information on treatment, peer support groups, self-help tools, and recovery resources (Picture 3). We distributed Screening Day promotional items, such as pens and magnets featuring our *Break the Ice* webpage. We are grateful to the Massachusetts Health Promotion Clearinghouse for supplying problem gambling resources and materials, and the International Center for Responsible Gaming, a long-time supporter of Screening Day, for donating BBGS magnets.



Picture 3. Resource table at a Boston Bruins game.

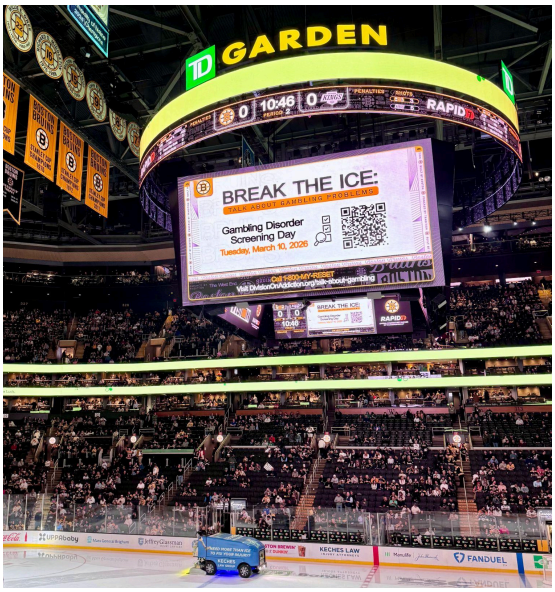
Tabling at a Boston Bruins Game

We hosted a resource table at TD Garden during a Boston Bruins game (Picture 4). This was our second time hosting a screening event here, and turnout was higher than the previous year. Nearly 40 game attendees, TD Garden employees, and Bruins staff visited our table to learn about problem gambling, explore self-screening tools, and find treatment and support resources. Several people shared concerns about their own gambling or a loved one's gambling, and many picked up resources for themselves, friends, or family members. We also made our resources available through QR codes on our banners, which gave interested patrons the chance to discreetly link to our *Break The Ice* webpage from their phones. An additional 50 people passively engaged with our table by reading our banners, viewing materials from a distance, or scanning the QR code on our banners. The QR code was also displayed on the Jumbotron and concourse TVs during intermission (Picture 5). QR codes offer a convenient and discreet way to access resources, which may help reduce barriers to seeking information, including concerns about stigma or feelings of shame.



Picture 4. Division team members staffing a resource table during a Boston Bruins game.

Beyond sharing resources, we talked with people about their gambling-related experiences and concerns. One attendee discussed how accessible gambling has become, noting how easily people can gamble on their phones. They also highlighted the pervasiveness of gambling marketing, using popular celebrities and athletes to advertise their product and promoting betting odds on talk radio and sports broadcasts. Another person approached our table and shared that they host a gambling livestream and had concerns about their gambling. These conversations highlight the importance of initiatives like Screening Day, which raise awareness of gambling-related risks and harms, share information to help people reduce those harms for themselves and their loved ones, and connect people with support when needed.

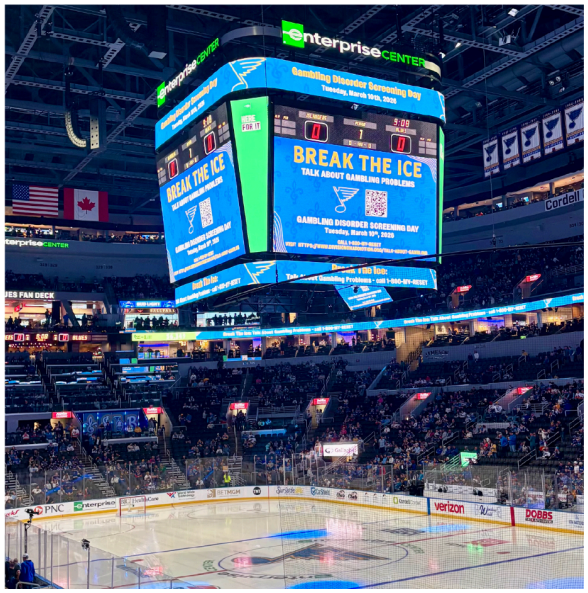


Picture 5. The jumbotron during the Boston Bruins game with information about Screening Day.

Tabling at a St. Louis Blues Game

We also tabled at the Enterprise Center during a St. Louis Blues game, a new initiative made possible through a partnership between the Blues and DraftKings. This event gave us the opportunity to bring gambling awareness and screening resources to a new community (Picture 6). Many attendees were families with children. We shared BBGS pocket screeners and promoted Screening Day through an image displayed on the Jumbotron and concourse TVs during the game (Picture 7). For future events, we could explore other ways to engage attendees, such as offering free branded Screening Day items as they enter the venue, such as a player bobblehead or calendar of upcoming games, to raise awareness of gambling-related harm and resources even among attendees who don't visit our table.





Pictures 6 and 7. Photos from Screening Day at the St. Louis Blues game, with Division staff at the resource table (Picture 6, left) and the jumbotron featuring information about Screening Day (Picture 7, right).

Tabling at CHA Cambridge Hospital

Division staff hosted a tabling event at CHA Cambridge Hospital (Picture 8). We provided patients, caregivers, and CHA providers and staff with information about Gambling Disorder and Screening Day, opportunities to reflect on their gambling behaviors through brief screening, and access to gambling-related resources. Attendees picked up materials, talked with us, or scanned our QR code to access online gambling information and resources. More specifically, an older CHA patient took 20 BBGS pocket screeners to share with residents at her senior center, noting that gambling was a common activity. Our emerging adult resources also drew interest from CHA staff. A child psychologist mentioned noticing an increase in gambling among youth, and took materials to share with coworkers. We also gave several CHA staff members our business card and invited them to reach out if they wanted additional information.



Picture 8. Division team members staffing a resource table at CHA Cambridge Hospital.

Screening Day: Global Participation

Because Screening Day events are organized independently by individuals and organizations globally, it can be difficult to track participation. To estimate overall participation, we counted individuals and organizations that did at least one of the following: (1) requested BBGS pocket screeners or information about participating; (2) posted about Screening Day online (e.g., Pictures 9 and 10); (3) expressed plans to participate by hosting an event or promoting Screening Day; and/or (4) listed their event on the National Council on Problem Gambling's events calendar.



Pictures 9 and 10. Social media posts about Screening Day from the Georgia Lottery Corporation (Picture 9, left), and the Council on Compulsive Gambling of Pennsylvania (Picture 10, right).

Using these criteria, we identified *at least* 262 individuals and organizations that participated in Screening Day. Participants in this grassroots event represented 40 U.S. states, one U.S. territory, and six countries (Figure 2). They included mental health providers, addiction treatment and recovery programs, health centers, community-based organizations, local and state government agencies, national and state problem gambling councils, gambling operators, gaming commissions, education and awareness programs, college student health centers, job training programs, research institutions and academics, employee assistance and wellness programs, and others.

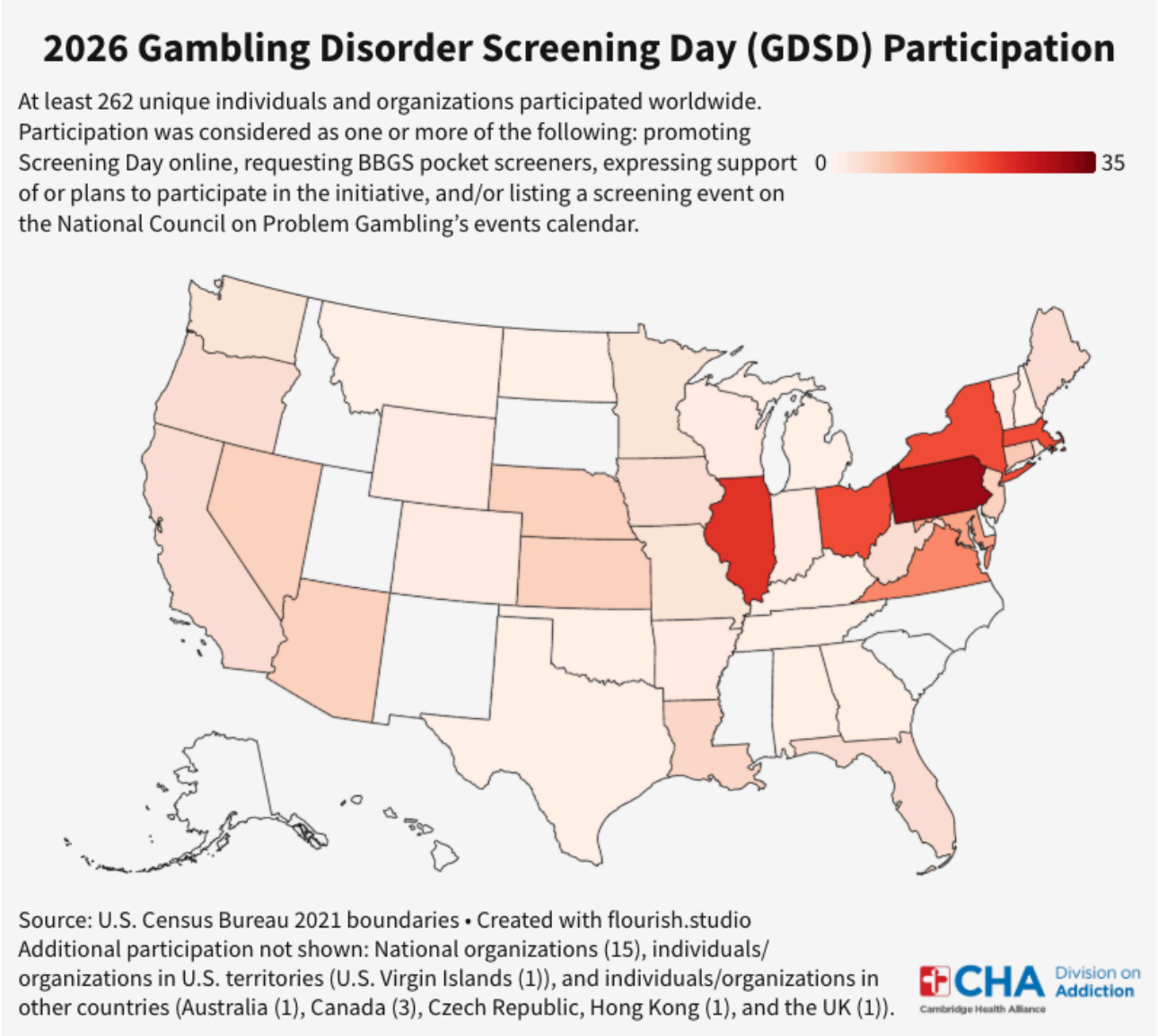


Figure 2. Participation in Screening Day by U.S. state or country.

"We will screen at the New Hampshire high school boys basketball championships. We will promote screening via social media as well as advertising and public service announcements at the game. We will have a table at the entrance to conduct screenings."

– Director, New Hampshire Council on Problem Gambling

Host and Supporter Screening Day Activities

Screening Day hosts and supporters participated in many different ways.

- Screening events took place in a variety of settings, including health care and behavioral health centers, hospitals, treatment and recovery centers, community centers, college campuses, casinos, cultural centers, and more.
- Events included screenings during health care visits, drop-in resource tables in treatment and recovery center lobbies, community events with information tables, and social media posts promoting self-screening. Unique approaches included:
    - Hosting a college campus screening event with an ice cream truck (Picture 11).
    - Hosting "Screens & Screens," where people received a free movie ticket and popcorn for completing a screen. The event also featured a costume contest (Picture 12).
    - Setting up a screening table at the New Hampshire Interscholastic Athletic Association's Division I and II boys' high school basketball championship games.
- Screening events were offered in multiple languages, including English, Spanish, Haitian Creole, Vietnamese, Mandarin, and Cantonese.
- Casinos across the country hosted screening activities. In Massachusetts, GameSense (now PlayWell) Info Centers held screenings at all three state gaming venues. In Illinois, 12 casinos hosted events where treatment providers conducted screening and shared resources.
- Gambling operators and state lotteries helped promote Screening Day. DraftKings and MGM Resorts International shared information with employees through internal channels, and MGM Resorts International featured Screening Day in an MGM Minute video. State lotteries in seven states promoted self-screening through their websites and social media.
- State problem gambling councils partnered with organizations like casinos, recovery centers, and colleges to host screening events. Some also developed and shared free resources for event hosts, such as the California Council on Problem Gambling, which hosted a free educational class for therapists featuring a video about Screening Day.
- The New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports arranged for landmarks across the state to be illuminated in yellow to commemorate Screening Day.



Pictures 11 and 12. Stickers handed out at Southern Connecticut State University during a campus screening event featuring an ice cream truck and the Midwestern Connecticut Council on Alcoholism's Know the Risks Van (Picture 11, left), and a flyer for Nicasa Behavioral Health Service's "Screens & Screens" event (Picture 12, right).

Screening Day Host Data

Screening event organizers can complete an optional data reporting form after their event to share information about the number of people screened and the demographics of those who screened positive. In 2026, eight organizations submitted data (Figure 3). They included behavioral health and addiction treatment providers, recovery centers, a state problem gambling council, and GameSense (now PlayWell) Info Centers at Massachusetts' three gaming venues. Together, they screened 819 people, 185 (22.6%) of whom screened positive. Among those who screened positive, 61.1% identified as male and 38.9% as female. By age, 15.7% were ages 18–25, 38.4% were ages 26–44, 26.5% were ages 41–55, and 19.4% were ages 56 or older.

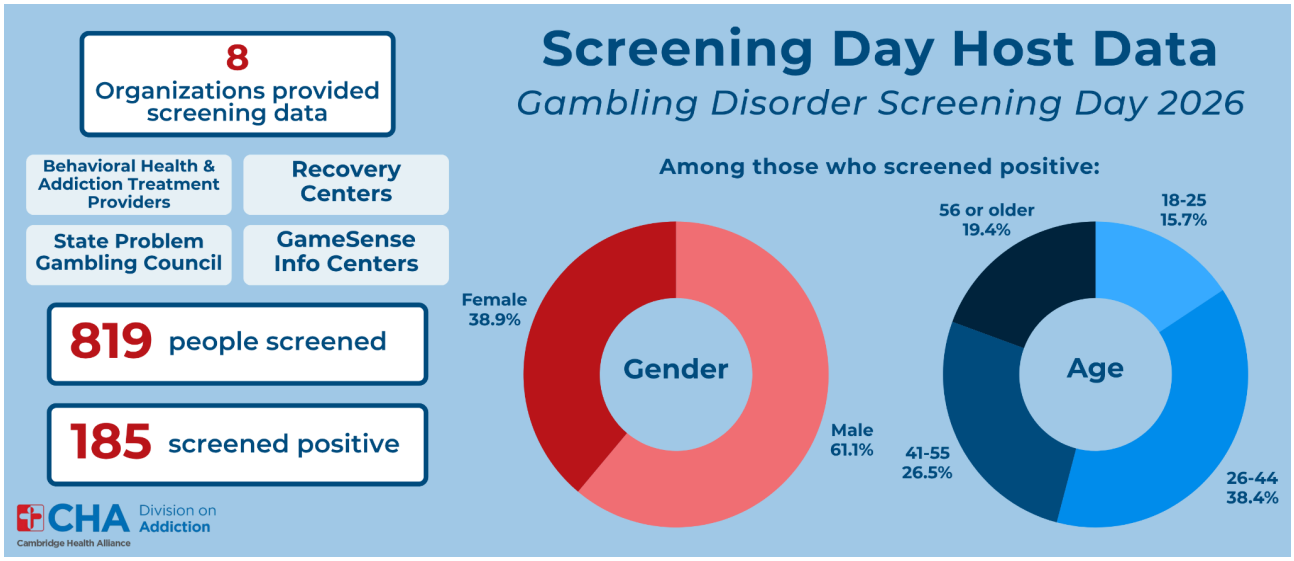


Figure 3. Demographics of people who screened positive, as provided by screening event organizers.

Concluding Remarks

Each year, Gambling Disorder Screening Day brings together individuals and organizations to raise awareness of gambling-related harms and encourage screening. By making screening resources available and encouraging conversations about gambling, this initiative helps more people recognize when gambling may be causing harm and learn where to find support. We're proud of the work that goes into making Screening Day possible and grateful to everyone who took part, shared resources, hosted events, or helped spread the word. Thank you for being part of this initiative. We look forward to continuing this work together!

Acknowledgements

The Division on Addiction coordinates Gambling Disorder Screening Day on a mostly in-kind basis. DraftKings, Inc. provided funding to support the development of four gambling resources for emerging adults, the printing of BBGS pocket screeners in multiple languages, and tabling events at TD Garden during a Boston Bruins game and the Enterprise Center during a St. Louis Blues game. We are grateful to the International Center for Responsible Gaming for providing Screening Day magnets.

Stay ahead of the odds: What to know before you place that bet

Stay ahead of the odds

What to know before you place that bet

What is gambling?

Gambling is risking money or something else of value on a game, event, or outcome you can't control, with the hope of winning more. Sports betting, fantasy sports, scratch-offs, and even card games played for money with friends are all kinds of gambling. These days, gambling is something you can do pretty much anytime and anywhere.

Did you know? Gambling doesn't always look like "gambling." Gambling is taking on new, non-traditional forms. These include prediction markets, cryptocurrency trading, short-term stock trading, e-sports betting, sports card trading, video game features like loot boxes and skins betting, and even blind boxes. People also interact online with gambling *without actually betting themselves*, like watching gambling livestreams on Twitch or TikTok.

Can gambling become a problem?

Yes, and not just in terms of money. Gambling can interfere with your relationships, schoolwork, work, sleep, and mental well-being. It can also monopolize your time, and you can never recover the time you spend gambling. These problems can develop gradually and may not be obvious at first.

Did you know? In one survey of 18–25 year-olds, those who bet on sports were more than twice as likely to report having gambling problems as those who didn't. Other kinds of gambling, like playing casino table games, didn't show the same pattern. Keep in mind that making live (in-game) sports bets, when the odds change in real time, seems to be especially risky, as it can draw you into an immersive mindset and give you more chances to chase your losses.

What are some signs gambling could be a problem?

Here are some signs that gambling might be starting to cause issues for you or someone you know:

- ☐ Frequent money stress like trouble paying rent or tuition (e.g., using student loan money to gamble) or increasing credit card debt
- ☐ Borrowing money from friends or family to cover gambling expenses
- ☐ Missing work or school, falling behind, or having trouble staying focused
- ☐ Continuing to gamble even when it's causing problems, like relationship conflict, lying, and blaming others for your losses
- ☐ Feeling like gambling is out of control and being unable to cut back or stop
- ☐ Thinking about gambling all the time, checking apps, planning bets, or replaying wins and losses in your mind
- ☐ Chasing losses because you feel you can recover them and get back to even
- ☐ Gambling to escape stress, boredom, or problems, or to feel like you belong
- ☐ Using alcohol or drugs routinely when gambling
- ☐ Experiencing FOMO that the bet you don't place will hit

Notice any of these in yourself or a friend or loved one? It could mean gambling is starting to affect your life. Flip over for resources that can help you or someone you care about adjust, cut back, or stop gambling.

(Front)

Choose what works for you

Thinking about making a change to your gambling? Consider sharing your decision with a trusted family member or a close friend. Beyond that, there are lots of helpful resources, and you can choose the path that works best for you.

You're in the driver's seat!

Talk to a professional

National Problem Gambling Helpline: Free, confidential, 24/7/365 help. Call **1-800-MY-RESET** (697-3738), text 800GAM, or chat ncpgambling.org/chat.

Work it out on your own

Evive: An app for people who want to change or stop gambling. Free in most states. getevive.com.

Lower Risk Gambling Guidelines: Learn how to reduce your risk of harm. gamblingguidelines.ca.

Podcasts: Options like the *After Gambling Podcast*; *All In: The Addicted Gamblers Podcast*; and *The Broke Girl Society*.

TikTok and YouTube: Videos from creators like *@OdaatGamblingAwareness* that feature personal perspectives, peer storytelling, and expert conversations about gambling.

Know Your Play: Resources for preventing gambling harm through financial literacy and improved mental health. knowyourplay.org.

Get support from peers

Support groups: Including Gamblers Anonymous and Gam-Anon (for families/loved ones). Learn more at gamblersanonymous.org or gam-anon.org.

Discussion forums: Connect and share experiences. Visit Reddit's *r/problemgambling* forum at reddit.com/r/problemgambling.

Create your own boundaries

Voluntary self-exclusion: Ban yourself from certain gambling options. To learn more, call the National Problem Gambling Helpline or visit nvsep.org.

Gambling blocking tools: Limit or block your access to gambling websites and apps. Options include *BetBlocker* and *Gamban*. Also, most reputable online gambling sites have self-limiting tools like cool-off periods, self-exclusion, and deposit limits.

Note: When searching for expert help online, look for real credentials and expertise—not just big lists of followers. Also, beware of scams that promise a "quick fix" or a "cure" for your gambling.

Visit **DivisionOnAddiction.org/talk-about-gambling** for more information and resources

(Back)

Know the game behind the game: How sports betting really works – and what to pay attention to

Know the game behind the game

How sports betting really works – and what to pay attention to

Sportsbooks set **odds** based on how likely they think an outcome is. These tell you the potential payout.

- **Negative odds** mean that option is favored. At -140 odds, you need to bet $140 to win $100 in profit.
- **Positive odds** mean that option is the underdog. At +120 odds, a $100 bet would win $120 in profit.

Bet type & what it means	Game example: Patriots vs. Bills playoff game
Moneyline: A bet made on who will win an event, regardless of the margin of victory. Pay-out depends on the odds set by the sportsbook, which reflect the probability of each outcome.	**Moneyline: Patriots -140, Bills +120** You bet on the Patriots to win, who were favored. The final score is Patriots 28, Bills 24, so you win your bet.
Over/Under: A bet on whether the combined score in a game will be higher (over) or lower (under) than the number set by the sportsbook.	**Over/Under: 48.5 points (-110/-110)** You bet the under. The final combined score is 52, so the over wins and you lose.
Point spread: The number of points (point margin) by which a team is favored to win over the other team. The bettor wins if the winning team wins by at least the point margin, or if the losing team loses by less than the point margin.	**Point spread: Patriots -4.5 (-110), Bills +4.5 (-110)** You bet on the Patriots to cover the spread. They won by less than 4.5 points, so you lose. If you had bet on the Bills, you would win your bet if they lost by less than 4.5 points, or if they had won outright.
Prop bet: A bet on a specific outcome or individual performance during a game that does not depend on the final outcome or score.	**Prop bet: First play: pass (-105) or rush (-135)** You bet the first play of the game will be a pass. The Bills pass the ball on the first play, so your bet wins.
Parlay: A single bet where multiple events must all happen to win. Can include outcomes from different games, within-game props, or both.	**Parlay: Patriots win & under 48.5 points (+230)** The Patriots won, but the total score was over 48.5 points (52 combined points), so your parlay loses.
Cash Out option: Feature that allows a bettor to receive a payout on a bet before the bet is ultimately won or lost. This pay-out is smaller than the full payout the bettor would get if they waited for the event to happen and won.	**Cash Out option: Partial payout offer of $65** You bet on a Patriots win. They're leading at half-time. The sportsbook offers $65 (a partial payout) to cash out now. If you wait and they win, you get the full payout ($85). If you wait and they lose, you lose.
Promo/boost: Offered by sportsbooks to draw in new customers or encourage customers to bet more. Can include parlay boosts, bonus bets, money-back guarantees, matching deposits, and bonuses for opening an account.	**Promo/boost: 50% parlay boost** You place a parlay on a Patriots win and total score under 48.5 points (+230 base odds). The sportsbook offers a 50% parlay boost, increasing your potential winnings if the parlay wins (+345 boosted odds).

Words to the Wise



- Making many successive in-game prop bets can suck you into an immersive "just one more bet" mindset, which can be hard to escape.
- Adding extra parlay legs can improve your potential payout, but every extra parlay leg increases your odds of losing, usually by a lot.
- Cash out options can create dangerous cycles where bettors cash out to immediately free up funds for more bets. These are a way for operators to save themselves money.
- Promos/boosts can make betting feel less risky than it really is. It's important to read the fine print to understand what is actually offered.

Flip over for some tips to reduce your risk.

(Front)

Tips to help reduce your risk

Quick self-check



Sports betting can be fun and is sometimes presented as a good way to make money. So, are you having fun? Are you making money? Ask yourself these questions to better understand your relationship with these products:

- ☐ Has sports betting created money or relationship problems? If so, have you continued to do it anyway?
- ☐ Do you lie to your friends or family about how much you bet on sports?
- ☐ Do you sometimes feel like you've lost control over your sports betting? Do you place many more bets than you meant to, or bet on sports or props that you didn't intend to?
- ☐ When you have a bad outcome, do you pour in more money in an attempt to get even or blame others for the loss?
- ☐ Are drugs or alcohol a normal part of your sports betting?
- ☐ Do you bet to escape from boredom or painful feelings?
- ☐ Do you feel like you just aren't winning yet, but it's coming?
- ☐ Do you feel like you're using sports betting apps without really understanding them?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, you might want to think about making a change.

Insights to consider

Betting and your brain: An unfair matchup

- If you're between 18 and 22, interesting things are happening in your brain. Your reward system is fully developed – it makes you crave quick wins and excitement. But your self-control and slower thinking systems haven't caught up. That imbalance can make high-speed rewards – like the kind you can get from making live (in-game) bets – especially appealing. It's biology.
- Understanding these facts gives you an edge. You can choose to slow down, spot the ways sports books try to get you to gamble more, and take breaks. You can take steps to protect your money and your future. Positive behaviors can be the foundation for your brain's continued development.
- In-app limits on your sports betting can help you protect yourself. If you start to feel like things are getting out of control, you can always set a cool-off period or block gambling apps and ads.

Betting and drinking: A dangerous parlay

- Maybe you're celebrating a win with your teammates or watching a big game together. Or maybe you're feeling down and want to distract yourself. It's tempting to think that drinking or using drugs just goes along with betting on sports.
- Something to keep in mind is that alcohol and drugs lower your guard. You might end up making more bets, or riskier bets, than if you were sober. Because alcohol and most other substances lower your inhibitions, you also might be more likely to chase losses – especially when you're making live (in-game) bets.
- If you mix betting with drinking or drugs, tune in to changes to the ways you bet. Understanding these changes might tip you off to a need to course correct before things get out of control.

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Smart investment or a roll of the dice?: Boost your risk-taking IQ by learning about financial products and games

Smart investment or a roll of the dice?

Boost your risk-taking IQ by learning about financial products and games

Product	What is it?	What should you watch for?
Prediction markets	Platforms for wagering on sports, finance, politics, and more by purchasing futures contracts.	• Their ads use investment language, but you can lose on these platforms just as with regular gambling. • You're not just up against your peers – sometimes you're up against institutions that have more information, more money, and algorithms working 24/7.
Investment apps	Platforms for buying and selling stocks and other assets.	• Some brands have gamified the process to get you to trade impulsively. • Day trading encourages short-term thinking, but making money usually means doing careful research and holding stocks for the long run. • Crypto and other digital assets have unstable value and are often traded on platforms that offer few consumer protections and involve more risk due to scams and fraud.
Loot boxes/ blind boxes	Digital products (like character skins in video games) and real products (like sports cards) that you buy before knowing what's included.	• There's no skill involved – it's like flipping a coin. • It's a smart strategy to set limits on how much you spend and accept that you likely won't get what you want. • Pay-to-win options can get you the item you want, but they also get you to spend more.
Daily fantasy sports	Fast-paced competitions where you build teams of pro athletes to earn points based on real-world stats. Points translate into cash prizes.	• Your sports knowledge might help, but you're often up against players who use advanced analytics, scraping tools, and lineup optimizers. • Constant opportunities to play can suck you into a "just one more slate" mindset that is closer to gambling than season-long fantasy leagues.
Gambling livestreams	Livestreams where streamers broadcast themselves gambling.	• These can be harmless fun, but they can also make viewers feel an urge to gamble themselves. • Streamers are often sponsored by gambling companies. Wins can be staged and losses may not impact the streamer in the same way they'll impact you.
Social casino games	"Freemium" games that mimic the appeal of real casinos. You can start by playing for free, but often you must pay real money (in-app purchases) to keep going.	• These games use algorithms to keep you playing and spending money. • Some people find themselves escaping into these games to avoid boredom or painful feelings, and these habits sometimes spill over into regular gambling.

Flip over for some tips for reducing your risk from these "gambling-like" products.

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Tips to help reduce your risk

Quick self-check

Social casino games, prediction markets, investment apps, and other gambling-like products can be fun and are presented as a good way to make money. So, are you having fun? Are you making money? Ask yourself these questions to better understand your relationship with these products:

- ☐ Has using these products created money or relationship problems? If so, have you continued to use them anyway?
- ☐ Do you lie to your friends or family about how much you use these products?
- ☐ Do you sometimes feel like you've lost control over your use of these products? Do you use them more than you mean to?
- ☐ When you have a bad outcome, do you pour in more money in an attempt to get even or blame others for the loss?
- ☐ Are drugs or alcohol a normal part of using these products?
- ☐ Do you use these products to escape from boredom or painful feelings?
- ☐ Do you feel like you just aren't winning yet, but it's coming?
- ☐ Do you feel like you're using these apps without really understanding them?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, you might want to think about making a change.

Ways to make a change

Avoid getting played

- Cool-offs, deposit limits, and self-exclusion are available on some prediction market platforms. You can also set your own personal time and money limits.
- Healthier habits are more likely to stick when we reward ourselves for them.
  - *Example: You stick to your social casino time limit, so you reward yourself with an extra episode of your favorite show.*
- Services like *GamBan* and *BetBlocker* allow users to block access to gambling sites.
- Turning off certain push notifications or hiding the app on your phone might also help you cut back.
- Just because a company calls itself a financial product, doesn't mean they're not selling gambling. Take some time to research the risks before participating.

Create healthier habits

- Developing healthier habits might help you avoid escaping into social media, games, or "gambling-like" products whenever you're stressed or bored. Here are some suggestions to consider:
  - **Have a Clear Mind.** After you turn off your morning alarm, instead of checking the market, take five deep breaths to clear your mind for the day ahead.
  - **Stay Socially Connected.** During lunch, send a quick text to check in with a friend instead of looking into crypto.
  - **Practice Gratitude.** When you get in bed for the night, leave your phone charging in another room and write down or just think about three things you were grateful for that day.

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Emerging adults and gambling: A resource for providers

Emerging Adults and Gambling: A Resource for Providers

Gambling has become a widely accessible, normalized form of entertainment. But it is not without risks. Today's emerging adults (i.e., those in between adolescence and full adulthood), in particular, grew up in an age of rapid gambling expansion characterized by evolving game types, widespread advertising, and a complex digital gambling environment. Compared to the general adult population, they (especially men) are at increased risk for experiencing problem gambling and the conditions that commonly co-occur with it (e.g., mood disorders, substance use disorders). Here are some things to keep in mind when treating emerging adults who are struggling with their gambling.

What are gambling harms?

Gambling harms are negative impacts from gambling on the gambler themselves, their loved ones, and their communities.

These harms are not just financial and can include:

- Physical harms like insomnia and obesity
- Relationship issues like conflict with parents/partners/peers – isolating oneself is common
- Mental health concerns like anxiety, depression, suicidality, and substance misuse
- Difficulty fulfilling responsibilities, like missing work or poor academic performance

What are some factors that can increase or decrease someone's risk for problem gambling?

Risk factors can include:

- High impulsivity/sensation-seeking traits
- Cognitive distortions including an inflated sense of their skill/control over the game, motivating them to take additional financial risks
- Poor school performance
- Greater exposure to gambling from family members, peers, and marketing
- Substance use/misuse

Protective factors can include:

- High emotional intelligence and adaptive coping strategies
- Social connectedness and a strong support systems
- Parental supervision/family cohesion
- Higher socioeconomic status
- Education about the early signs and harms from problem gambling

Did you know?

Gambling disorder is classified under the Substance-Related and Addictive Disorders category of the DSM-5-TR.

- Gambling disorder and substance use disorders (SUD) share similar hallmarks, including loss of control and continuing to perform the behavior despite negative consequences.[1]
- Many brain regions implicated in the development and maintenance of SUDs are also implicated in gambling disorder. These include the reward system and brain areas involved in self-control and controlled decision-making that may still be developing during emerging adulthood. These areas are partially responsible for initiation and continuation of gambling and substance misuse among adolescents and emerging adults, by promoting sensation seeking and decreasing inhibition.[2,3]

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What's the first step in identifying gambling-related problems?

The first step is screening. Even if your client does not present with a gambling problem, it is still important to screen. When discussing gambling, use examples that emerging adults are more familiar with, such as sports betting, online poker, and daily fantasy sports. Prediction markets and cryptocurrency trading are non-traditional gambling activities that appeal to many emerging adults, as does watching gambling livestreams on Twitch and TikTok. One screener you can use is the Brief Biosocial Gambling Screen. Learn more by scanning the QR code below. Remind affected clients that they are not alone and that recovery is possible.

What are some options for treating problem gambling among emerging adults?

Intervention	Purpose	Example
Motivational Interviewing	Builds motivation to change behavior by resolving ambivalence about change	*Use open-ended questions to get the client to consider their relationship with gambling, such as, "What do you see yourself doing after college?", "How does gambling fit in with your long-term goals?", and "How does gambling impact your other responsibilities?"*
Cognitive Behavioral Therapy	Changes distorted patterns of thinking and maladaptive behaviors that reinforce gambling	*Help clients address their illusion of control related to sports betting. Ask them to identify an irrational belief, determine why it is irrational, and replace it with a more logical statement. For example, "I did my research on player statistics, so my bets should win" could be replaced with, "I'm familiar with player statistics and that gives me an advantage, but I'm no match for the sports book's massive analytic operation."*
Financial Counseling	Supplements therapy by addressing money-related stress associated with gambling behavior	*Ask if clients have used student loans or credit cards to finance their gambling and, if so, work together to develop a repayment plan (e.g., taking on extra work shifts and exploring income-driven loan repayment plans).*
Family/ Partner Therapy	Helps to resolve relationship conflict and communication issues	*Involve family members, such as parents whose financial picture has been affected by the client's gambling.*

Reminder: Gambling often co-occurs with other mental health and substance use disorders. Consider screening/assessing for these other conditions as part of your treatment plan, as well.

How else should treatment be customized for emerging adults?

Today's emerging adults have been exposed to simulated gambling activities like loot boxes since childhood. They've been exposed to countless ads promoting sports betting as a natural part of sports fandom and identity (e.g., "*THE sports book for sports fans*"). Young men in particular often see sports betting as a path to peer bonding. In short, gambling permeates their lives. These are difficult influences to combat. It might be helpful to encourage emerging adult clients to...

- ☑ Become more consciously aware of how gambling has become embedded into their daily lives, such as by noting the appearance of gambling terms in social media, group chats, financial podcasts, and so on.
- ☑ Critically interpret gambling marketing tactics, especially those that minimize risk or promote sports betting as a part of one's identity.

A variety of self-help options are available to supplement these therapeutic approaches, or as standalone resources for those who want to self-manage their gambling. Scan the QR code to learn more.

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