

A message from Lauren Cundall, Youth Project Leader

Words are powerful, even if you can't speak them. Writing can help individuals to understand their own motivations and the motivations of others. It can help to work through your feelings and face difficult situations. It can raise awareness about subjects which are often taboo or largely undiscussed.

In other words, writing can challenge attitudes and beliefs, and assist in breaking down stereotypes.

It was for this reason that the Youth Services Team at Problem Gambling

Foundation of New Zealand decided to run a national short story competition to link in with Youth Week 2006 – Re:Define.

Applicants were required to write a story which challenges gambling as a normalised behaviour in society, and encourages young people to think of gambling as more than purely a recreational activity. It also asked the writers to break the misconception that young people cannot become problem gamblers.

Posters and applications were sent to every high

school throughout the country, and to many other alternative education programmes and youth centres. By the closing date over 50 entries had been received. These ranged from purely fictional pieces, to personal experiences, essays and poems.

These have currently been narrowed down to six finalists, and our first, second and third place winners are currently being decided by New Zealand author David Hill.

It is hoped that these stories will become a useful resource in educat-

ing young people around the potential harms of gambling, including problem gambling.

Tune into our next newsletter for the winning story and information about the young people and why they wrote their stories.

I am always happy to answer any questions you have, or arrange a presentation for a school or education facility in your area.

I can be contacted on (03) 379-2824 or lauren.cundall@pgfnz.co.nz

Young Person's Initiative Award

It's that time again. We are looking for young people or organisations - such as schools, youth groups or community centres - that we can present the Young Person's Initiative Award to.

The Award was created to

acknowledge and honour the significant contributions of young people to raising awareness of the impacts of gambling in Aotearoa.

Please contact Lauren Cundall if your students, organisation, or school has

raised awareness about youth gambling in a creative way.

TE RŌPŪ ĀWHINA MATE PETIPETI O AOTEAROA Problem Gambling Foundation of New Zealand		
Young People's Initiative Award		
<i>Presented to</i>		
Name of Student or Organisation		
This award is to acknowledge and honour young people's significant contributions to raising awareness of the impacts of gambling in Aotearoa.		
John Standfield Chief Executive Officer	Lauren Cundall Youth Services	Date



Young people and gambling: News from around the world

Blind bet: A teen's perspective (USA)

This is an opinion piece written by Andy C, a New York teenager, concerned about how gambling - and in particular, poker - affects young people. "Although the gambling phenomenon has infected all ages, teenagers seem to be the most influenced."

Andy identifies the poker craze - televised on ESPN and played by celebrities - as the main reasons for teenagers becoming 'hooked' on gambling.

"What teens don't realise, however, is that celebrities are not really losing money when they play, while teens can potentially lose substantial amounts."

Andy then recaps on a young person's gambling problem and signs of gambling problem.

For the full story go to:
<http://teenink.com/Past/2006/May/20210.html>

SA's children gambling their lives away (South Africa)

A recent South African study has raised concerns of problem gambling in high-school aged young people.

The report stated that, "more than one in three high schoolchildren surveyed believed people should 'enjoy life and stop worrying about condoms, HIV and Aids. ... These same pupils spent R200 [NZ\$52] or more a session on gambling."

The study found that students believed that understanding maths, and organising their own pastimes to bet on, meant they were more likely to have a win. Between 3-5% of adolescents could be classed as problem gamblers.

For the full story go to:
http://www.int.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=125&art_id=vn20060421054901658C844192

2004 Youth Study of SA Youth and Gambling (South Africa)

This report is the result of a study by Wits University and representatives of the National Gambling Board in late 2004 until early 2005. Twenty-eight schools from South Africa's nine provinces participated, with data collected from principals, teachers and students.

"The survey suggests that South African youth gambling trends are in line with international trends ... 5.1% [of students] indicated a strong predisposition to gambling. This points to a core of potential problem gamblers."

The report recommends raising public awareness about problem and responsible gambling.

For the full report go to:
http://www.ngb.org.za/uploads/A_Profile_of_Youth_Gambling_in_South_Africa.pdf

One-in-Ten Ontario Students Reports Poor Mental Health (Canada)

Canada's Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) released this report in early May. The report surveyed gambling and other factors affecting Ontario students, grades 7-12.

Findings included:

- The percentage of all students that played cards for money significantly increased between 2003 (24%) and 2005 (33%)
- About 4% students are at risk for a gambling problem"

Co-author Dr Adlaf said that increased poker activity has not yet led to gambling problems, but could.

For the full document go to:
http://www.camh.net/Research/Areas_of_research/Population_Life_Course_Studies/OSDUS/OSDUS2005_mental_detailed_fnl.pdf

Website of the month: In Ya Face

New Zealand's youth problem gambling website was developed especially for young people by the Helpline. It advertises the phone number for the youth gambling helpline.

Five characters on the home page give their stories of how their gambling is a problem, how they are affected or what to do if they notice gambling is a problem for someone they know. They are used throughout the site,

correcting myths and answering FAQs.

In Ya Face concentrates on providing information, rather than interactive games, like many North American and Canadian sites. Visit <http://www.inyaface.co.nz>

For more information on these stories contact Lauren Cundall on (03) 379 2824 or email lauren.cundall@pgfnz.co.nz