

## Lauren Cundall attends 6th International Youth Health Conference (London, England)

I attended the Youth Support 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in London (25-27 October) and presented about youth gambling and the effects of gambling on young people in New Zealand.

The conference was hosted by Youth Support, an independent charity set up in 1986 to provide a focus for working with young people, who were often ignored by the statutory authorities.

A wide variety of adolescent health experts from around the world came together to discuss critical trends in the

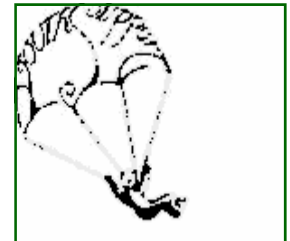
treatment of health issues for young people.

During the three days of presentations, a range of presenters listed the critical issues facing youth. These included; sexuality, pregnancy and parenthood, youth minorities and the role of cultural identity, education, drugs and alcohol, eating disorders, resilience, and physical and mental illness. Interestingly, gambling was not recognised as an issue until after my presentation.

After I had presented, a number of different experts commented that gambling was not something they had ever asked about in their clinical practice.

This highlights the need to continue working with experts throughout the field and to continue raising awareness of youth gambling as an increasing public health issue. We need to work alongside those who work with youth, highlighting the need to ask the right questions. This will help to pick up on those young people who are suffering

as a result of their own or someone else's gambling and allow us to begin breaking down just one of the many barriers for young people to access problem gambling services.



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## Otara Gambling Action Group Removes Pokie-like Machines from Town Centre

Members of the Otara Gambling Action Group (OGAG) in Auckland discovered a new menace in their town: pokie-like machines in the kids' gaming parlour.

The machines which look like lower down (much easier to get at if you are

little) pokie machines were in an area where there was no direct supervision. For \$1 you were able to push a button and spin the reels and if you won, received a ticket which could be redeemed for chips or sweets at the Lotto shop next door.

A complaint was made to the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA), and the story screened on Campbell Live on Monday 13th November. (Check <http://campbelllive.tv3.co.nz/> for the video online).

The machines were removed after Campbell

Live spoke to the Lotto shop owners.

If you do see similar machines in your area, please do let Lauren, Catherine or Chrissi know.

PGF is waiting to find out the legality of these machines from the DIA.



## Young people and gambling: News from around the world

### Arizona Youth Survey State Report 2006 (America)

The Arizona Criminal Justice Commission released its biennial Youth Survey State Report. The survey involved 8th, 10th and 12th graders in public and chartered schools in the state of Arizona.

“The survey is designed to measure the prevalence and frequency of substance abuse by youth, as well as their attitudes toward substance abuse.”

2006 is the first year that recorded attitudes and prevalence of gambling. When asked about participation in gambling in their lifetime the survey found that of all respondents:

- 34% had bet on team sports
- 33.1% had bet on cards
- 30.6% had played the lottery

For the full report go to:  
[http://azcjc.gov/pubs/home/2006\\_AYS\\_State\\_Report\\_Final\\_102706.pdf](http://azcjc.gov/pubs/home/2006_AYS_State_Report_Final_102706.pdf)

### Problem Gambling in Teenagers Difficult to Detect (Canada)

The Canadian government has produced a report, “The Human Face of Mental Health & Mental Illness in Canada 2006”. Chapter 9 (p.117-129) looks at the impact of gambling and problem gambling on Canadians of all ages, and its relationship to mental health.

“Detecting gambling problems [in teens] is difficult because in comparison to other addictions, there are no visible signs such as intoxication or consumption.”

The full impact for this generation to grow up exposed to widespread gambling is only just beginning to be understood.

For the full story go to:  
[http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/human-humain06/pdf/human\\_face\\_e.pdf](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/human-humain06/pdf/human_face_e.pdf)

### Methodist Church Backs Regulation of Internet Gambling (Great Britain)

The Methodist church in Great Britain has reiterated its concern about the increase in internet gambling, particularly in relation to increasingly easier access for young people.

“The Methodist Church remains committed to speaking out to protect children and vulnerable groups from being exploited by gambling, to promote greater education about problem gambling, and to help individuals and organizations working with problem gamblers.”

A Methodist Church representative said they welcomed the opportunity for sharing best practice with the view of protecting consumers.

For the full story go to:  
[http://www.ekkleisia.co.uk/content/news\\_syndication/article\\_061031gamble.shtml](http://www.ekkleisia.co.uk/content/news_syndication/article_061031gamble.shtml)

### Poker: Popular Pastime for Adolescents (Australia)

An increase in poker sets being sold in shops indicates a re-emergence of the game as a popular pastime for many young people and affects more boys than girls.

“While there's no harm if kids are simply playing for poker chips, there is a temptation to play for money and win; suddenly a harmless game has the potential to launch a gambling problem.”

‘Survival Tips’ for parents or young people warn about the potential dangers of developing gambling problems, and that “if kids have to move away from home to study, they can gravitate to venues with pokie machines for companionship”.

For the full story go to:  
<http://www.gamblershelp.org/index.cgi?tid=1757>

## Website of the month: Gambling - Gamtalk4teens

Gamtalk4teens is an interactive website inviting young people under the age of 21 to talk through their concerns around gambling.

The website is laid out in an attractive and easy to use format, with a ‘helping team’ available from 8pm to midnight (Canada) - working in a similar fashion to chat rooms. The team consists of trained professionals who describe themselves as “fun, energetic a most eager to chat with you.”

The service is free and anonymous with the goal of encouraging young people to better understand and manage their gambling behavior, and most importantly, to talk about it.

Visit the website at: [www.gamtalk4teens.org](http://www.gamtalk4teens.org)

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