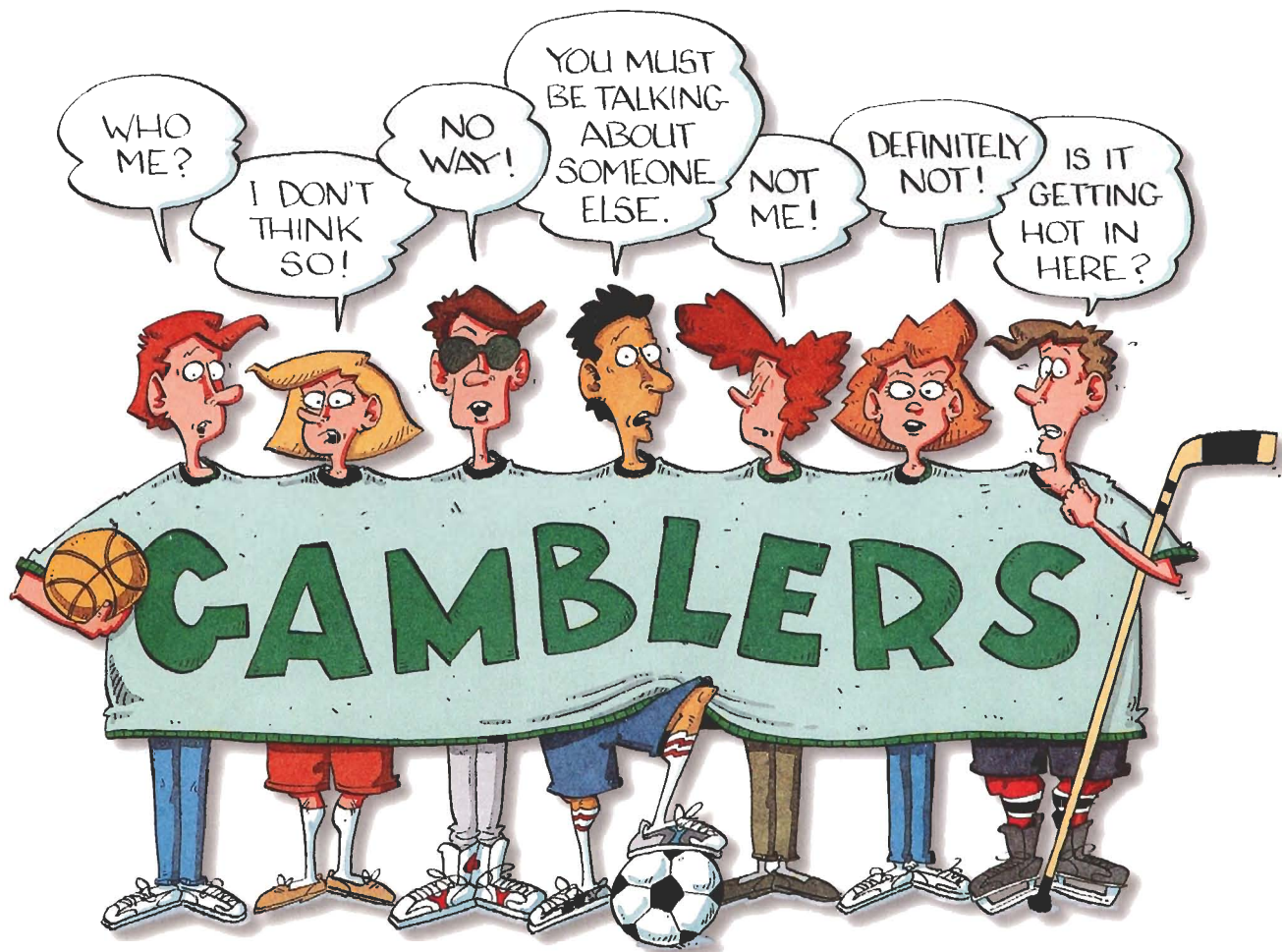


Playing for Keep\$



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Playing for Keep\$

Adolescent Gambling High School Presentation Kit

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Length: 60 minutes (75-90 minutes with recovering gambler as guest speaker).

Target: High school students/youth groups (ages 15-18).

Purpose: To raise adolescent awareness of problem gambling and encourage adolescents to examine their own decisions around gambling and other leisure activities.

This presentation kit is designed for use in the classroom or with community youth groups. It is intended for delivery by individuals who have some understanding of addictions or problem gambling and who are comfortable discussing lifestyle issues with adolescents.

Time allotments are estimates and will vary according to the amount of discussion on each topic.

Materials needed:

Overhead projector
Chalkboard or flipchart
Class set of handouts: quiz, evaluation

Development and pilot testing:

Gaylene McWilliams, Distress Centre/Drug Centre, Calgary, Alberta

Illustrations:

Steve Attoe, Calgary, Alberta

Graphic design:

Greg MacIntyre, Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission

Editing/Project coordination:

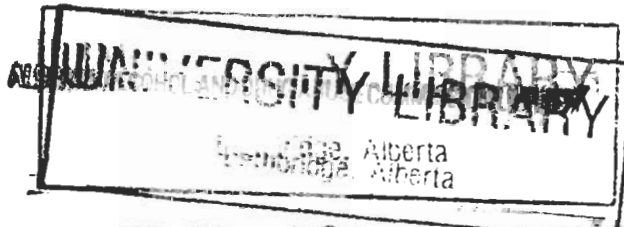
Marcy Dibbs, Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission

AADAC

Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission
An Agency of the Government of Alberta

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**Adolescent
Gambling
High School
Presentation Kit**

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Preamble

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3

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There has been considerable growth in gambling in North America over the past few years. Gambling has become socially acceptable, readily available and easily accessible. Today's youth are the first generation to grow up with gambling all around them.

Given teens' exposure to gambling, it is not surprising that recent studies of adolescents and gambling reveal that there is a great deal of wagering going on among teens. They see gambling as a way to make their games and recreation more fun, a way to enhance the challenge. Much of the gambling is informal wagering among friends, but there is also participation in licensed formats such as sports betting and ticket lotteries.

Teens who experience problems because of their gambling are likely to come from homes where gambling is a conspicuous activity, the major focus of recreation for one or both parents. Adolescent problem gamblers are also more likely to have had early gambling experience, often in the company of a parent or someone else they loved or admired.

It is important that youth receive information that will help them understand that gambling is a behavior that carries some risk—risk beyond that of losing a dollar or two on a single game. The greater risk is that teens who see wagering as a normal part of their day-to-day recreation may carry that behavior over to adulthood, when they have greater income, access to credit and easy entry to gambling venues—a situation which can lead to serious financial and emotional problems for them and their families.

1.0 Introduction

.....

4

🕒 05 minutes

- Welcome
- Presenter self-introduction
- Audience introduction (optional)
- Purpose and overview of presentation

In your own words, tell the students:

The purpose of this session is to take a look at gambling, generally, and adolescent gambling in particular. The session describes the results of some adolescent gambling research conducted in Alberta in 1995, then gives you an opportunity to discuss adolescent gambling from your perspective. It also describes what problem gambling looks like, and what services are available in the community to address it.

Acknowledge that gambling is not an accepted form of recreation in all cultures and that some members of the group may have quite different views or experiences with respect to gambling.

- 1-800 Gambling Help Line and AADAC materials

(Provide a supply of appropriate pamphlets, information sheets, bookmarks, etc. for display and distribution.)

Tell the group:

Additional information is available in the AADAC resources (on display) and by calling the toll-free Gambling Help Line. The help line provides crisis counselling, information and referral for people concerned about their own, or someone else's, gambling. The number is **1-800-665-9676**, and it is on the AADAC bookmarks.

2.0 Student knowledge and perspective

5

⌚ 10 minutes

2.1 Quiz

Begin by telling the students:

Many of you probably know something about gambling already, but there are also many myths about it. Here is a short quiz to try.

Distribute Handout #1.

Allow students a few minutes to complete it. Invite students to relate their answers and to comment on why they chose the answers they chose.

Review Overhead #1.

2.2 Why people gamble

Next, ask students to brainstorm why people gamble. Record their responses on chalkboard or flipchart.

Tell the group:

People who gamble often list the four 'E's:

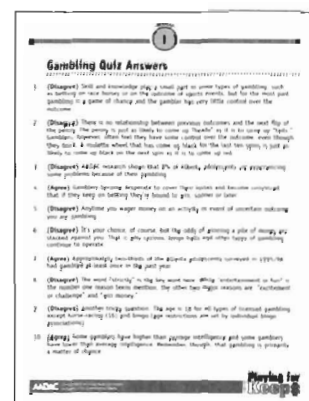
- Excitement
- Entertainment
- Escape (they can forget their problems for awhile)
- Economics (they want the money)

If their list of reasons doesn't already include them, ensure the following are mentioned:

- Ego (the person's pride or reputation is on the line)

Challenge (the person likes the feeling of competition involved in gambling)

- Depression (the person feels better, or forgets about problems, while gambling)
- Boredom (gambling gives the person something exciting to do)
- Loneliness (gambling fills a void in the person's life)



3.0 Definitions

6

⌚ 05 minutes

3.1 Gambling

People often have widely divergent views about what constitutes gambling. Until quite recently, for example, betting at the casino roulette table or on horses at the racetrack was clearly seen as gambling, while playing bingo at the local bingo hall was not. It is helpful to have a common understanding of some of the terms used when discussing gambling involvement. Begin with the definition of gambling itself.

Show Overhead #2.

Then give this definition of gambling:

Gambling is the act of risking money, property or something of value on an activity with an uncertain outcome.

Point out that gambling includes not only the licensed formats (casino, bingo, VLTs, scratch tickets, horseracing, etc.) but also the informal wagering that people do (making bets among themselves, like the students in the cartoon).



3.2 Levels of involvement

7

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People become involved in licensed gambling and informal wagering, to varying degrees.

Show Overhead #3.

Use this overhead as you go through the definitions below:

No involvement

- Casual social gambling

Occasional gambling; people can take it or leave it; the emphasis is on the social aspect rather than on the gambling aspect.

Serious social gambling

Social plans usually have gambling as the focus; the emphasis is on the gambling rather than on the social aspect.

- Harmful involvement

Gambling is having a negative impact on at least one area of an individual's life (finances, relationships with family or friends, job or school performance, health, etc.).

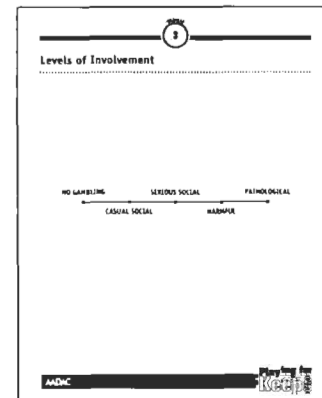
- Pathological gambling

Gambling is out of control and has created major negative consequences for the individual. Gambling at this extreme level is sometimes called "compulsive gambling."

Next, explain:

Problem gambling is the term used to cover the entire range of harmful gambling involvement. What it means is that a person's gambling is having some kind of negative impact on that person's life or on the lives of the gambler's family, friends, co-workers. It can be an occasional impact, or an ongoing and serious situation.

The term "problem gambling" includes harmful involvement, compulsive and pathological gambling.



3.3 Progression

8

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People don't usually start out as problem gamblers. For some people, though, recreational gambling stops being recreational and begins causing serious problems in their lives.

Show Overhead #4.

Point out to the group:

In this illustration, we see the gambler celebrating a win, chasing lost money, and desperately trying to get money. People don't set out with the intention of becoming problem gamblers. In fact, they often don't even see themselves as "gamblers."

Draw student attention back to the reasons people gamble, listed earlier in the session, and ask: What do you suppose might make someone continue to gamble, or even cause a person to increase his/her gambling?

Add any new or expanded ideas to the original list of reasons for gambling.



4.0 Adolescent gambling in Alberta

9

⌚ 05 minutes

4.1 Statistics

Tell the students:

When AADAC added problem gambling to its alcohol/drug mandate in 1994, programs were based on research about adult problem gamblers in Alberta. Since then (in 1996) AADAC conducted a province-wide research study on adolescent gambling to get a clear picture of how much gambling teens are doing, what kinds of gambling they're doing, and what else is going on in their lives that might be influencing why they gamble.

This is what was learned.

Show Overhead #5.

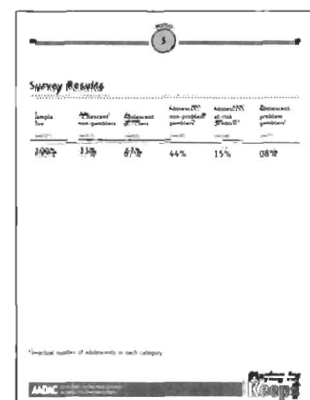
Point out the percentages in each category:

33% (317) of the 972 adolescents interviewed had not gambled at all in the past 12 months.

- **67%** (655) had gambled in the past 12 months.

Among the study population, this is how the gamblers ranked:

- **44%** (430) of the 972 interviewed were non-problem gamblers.
- **15%** (148) of the 972 were considered to be at-risk gamblers. Their gambling was not currently causing problems but could in the future.
- **08%** (77) of the 972 were rated as problem gamblers, meaning their gambling was having some degree of negative impact on their lives.



4.2 Types of teen gambling

10
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The research also told us what kinds of gambling teens are doing.

Show Overhead #6.

Show Overhead #7.

Review the figures, especially for the first five activities listed and any other categories where a significantly high or low number appears. Point out that a large portion of the gambling activity is informal wagering with family and friends, rather than licensed gambling.

Generate discussion by asking these questions:

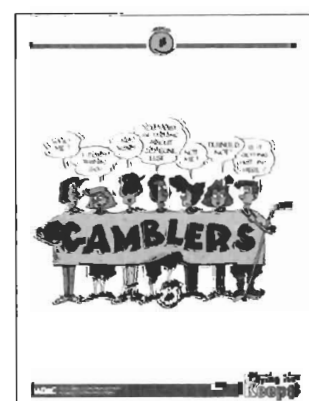
- How do these statistics compare with what you've seen in your school or community?
- Why do you think these teens gamble? What need is it meeting, for them?
- Why do you gamble? What need is it meeting for you?
- How else could those needs be met?

Show Overhead #8.

Refer back to the point previously made (i.e., that a lot of adolescent gambling is informal wagering among friends) and point out that the AADAC research also revealed that teens don't really see what they're doing as "gambling," nor do they consider themselves "gamblers."



Activity	Percentage	Total
Lottery	11	100
Horse racing	11	100
Casino	11	100
Sports betting	11	100
Poker	11	100
Bingo	11	100
Raffle	11	100
Scratch-off	11	100
Other	11	100
Total	100	100



5.0 Problem gambling: What are the signs?

11

....

⌚ 05 minutes

5.1 Personal and interpersonal effects

How would you know if your gambling (or someone else's) was becoming a problem?

Ask the group:

What signs might indicate that someone's gambling is beginning to reach a problematic level? List these on the chalkboard or flipchart.

Show Overhead #9.

If not already mentioned, add these signs which were included in the AADAC adolescent research:

- Spent more time or money gambling than you intended.
 - Went back another day to try to win back money you lost.
 - Felt badly about the way you gamble or about what happens when you gamble.
 - Told others you were winning money from betting when you really weren't.
 - Would like to stop betting money, or gambling, but didn't think you could.
 - Have hidden signs of betting or gambling from your parents, friends or others.
 - Have been criticized for your gambling or been told you have a gambling problem.
- Had money arguments at home, centered on your gambling.
- Skipped or been absent from school or work due to betting money or gambling.
 - Borrowed from someone and not paid them back as a result of gambling.



5.2 Dissociative states

12
....

Show Overhead #10.

Ask the group if any of them have ever felt like this. Explain that the AADAC study showed that problem gamblers were far more likely than non-problem gamblers to experience what are known as "dissociative states." This means they:

- Lost track of time.
- Felt like they were a different person.
- Felt like they were outside themselves, watching themselves gamble.
- Felt like they were in a trance.
- After gambling, experienced a memory blackout for things that happened while they were gambling.

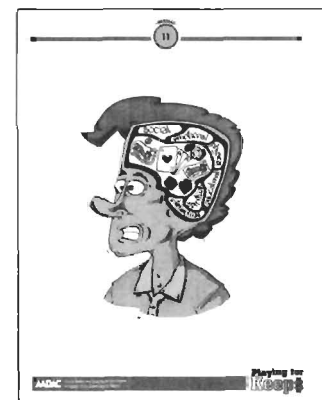


5.3 A matter of balance

Show Overhead #11.

Explain that we all have needs to be met in each of these major life areas. When we have a problem in one area, we often stop looking after our needs in other areas, creating a lack of balance. Too much emphasis in one area can leave other areas under-developed and create difficulties for us. If gambling becomes the major focus, our relationships or school performance (or other aspects) will suffer.

This imbalance may also lead to missed opportunities. People who spend all of their spare time, energy and money on gambling may miss chances to try other activities, learn new skills or develop friendships with others.



6.0 Problem gambling: Why some, and not others?

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13
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🕒 10 minutes

6.1 Contributing factors

Pose the question:

Why do some people develop gambling problems, while other people don't?

With reference to their responses to your question, tell the group:

There are various ways of explaining why gambling becomes a problem for some people. Most likely, it is a combination of factors. These may include:

- **Having parents who gamble**

Children learn from their parents and, if gambling is a conspicuous activity in the home, children will likely copy that behavior.

Having early gambling experience, often with a parent or other close family member

Show Overhead #12.

Children participate with people they admire so they see gambling as a desirable behavior.

- **Difficulty coping with life circumstances, emotional pain or other stressful factors**

Gambling can become an escape.

- **Low self esteem (sense of worth)**

Gambling becomes a way of gaining recognition and a sense of importance, especially if the individual can brag about his/her "big wins."

- **Inability to delay gratification**

Certain gambling formats, especially those with a rapid sequence of wager-play-outcome (VLTs, bingo, casino games, scratch tickets), are very appealing to individuals who always want instant results (immediate gratification) and are not willing to work through all the steps to get results. For example, these individuals may see gambling as a quick-fix way to get money rather than working for their money and saving it.



6.2 Preventing problems

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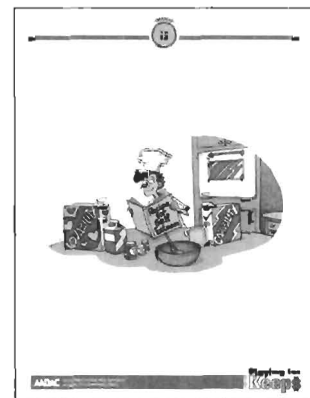
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Show Overhead #13.

With reference to the above point on self esteem, point out that the better we feel about ourselves, the more likely we are to make healthy choices. Gambling may give a temporary sense of esteem but the problems associated with excessive gambling may eventually diminish the gambler's self esteem. There are other ways to generate a sense of worth within ourselves.

Ask the group to identify things they could do, instead of gambling, that might contribute to their self esteem. Record these on the chalkboard or flipchart.

Summarize by pointing out that self esteem is something we can build within ourselves. Tell students that, if they are having trouble or are wondering about their own level of self esteem, they may find it helpful to talk to someone about it—a teacher, the school counsellor, a parent or someone else they feel comfortable approaching.

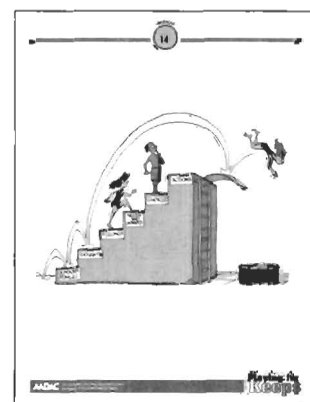


Show Overhead #14.

Introduce the concept of self awareness by explaining to the group:

Another important factor in preventing problems (in all areas of our lives, not just with regard to gambling) is self awareness. We need to be aware of how we are making the choices we make. There is often an emotional aspect to the decisions we make, so we need to know what's "at play" when we respond to situations.

For example, the diver in this overhead is like a gambler who, by skipping some important steps, commits to an action that has negative consequences.



Put this question to the group:

What is an example of a really hard decision that you have had to make?

Once they've identified an example, ask them how they got to that decision. Have them work through each of the self-awareness steps, identifying what was going on for them at each stage.

Or provide the students with an "Action" and ask them to work through the steps that might have preceded that action.

Action: You are sitting in a classroom at summer school instead of working to earn money for a car or taking the summer off to relax.

Ask them:

15
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What might have happened initially (stimulus) that ended with you choosing to go to summer school? What were your thoughts?
What feelings came into play? What wants/needs did you have?
What options/choices did you have, for satisfying those wants/needs?
How will you benefit by having gone to summer school?

Here are some examples if the students have trouble getting started on this.

Example 1

- Stimulus:** Christie, who is 17, is offered a ride home from a party by Scott, who has been drinking beer since he arrived three hours earlier.
- Thoughts:** She has wanted to go out with him for a long time and thinks he might not ask her again if she turns him down now.
- Feelings:** She might discover a range of feelings if she stopped to examine them: Emotional attraction, excitement, perhaps a slight sense of danger.
- Wants/Needs:** She wants to appear mature, in control of her own decisions; a need to be accepted and to feel "desirable" may also be at play.
- Options/Choices:** If she took time to think about it, she has several options available to her. These include: ride with Scott even though he's been drinking; take a "rain check" (she could give him her phone number and ask him to call her); invite a non-drinking friend to drive them. [Ask group to brainstorm other ideas.]
- Action:** She accepts ride / does not accept ride.

Example 2

- Stimulus:** Ron, an insurance salesman who is married and has two children in high school, wakes up one morning and can already "see" the horses racing neck-and-neck to the finish line.
- Thoughts:** His only thought is, "How can I get money to gamble?"

- Feelings: If he stopped to examine how he was feeling, he might say he felt: frustrated, angry, pressured to have more money than he has, depressed about problems in his relationship with his wife, guilty over the money he has lost in previous gambling.
- Wants/Needs: He wants to feel better; he wants to be free of the feelings described above and to be seen as a good husband and father.
- Options/Choices: He knows the ropes: he can withhold the car payment for one month, use the money to gamble, then make a double payment next month; he can stick to the promise he made to his wife about no more gambling, and make the car payment as he is meant to do.
- Action: He makes the car payment and doesn't go to the track/He goes to the track to bet on the horses, using the money intended for the car payment.

Complete the self-awareness exercise with the following point:

When people take time to work through all the steps, and to understand the emotional side of their response, the action they take is often quite different—and possibly better for them in the long run.

7.0 Gambling: Personal experience

⌚ 15-30 minutes

7.1 Video slot machine

⌚ 15 minutes

Note: This option requires the purchase of a hand-held game, available at specialty game stores. Prices vary.

Pre-set the video slot machine game to a credit of \$250 (based on \$10 per student and a class of 25 students) and pass it around the class, instructing each student to take only one turn. Tell the group that this is a voluntary activity and acknowledge that some students may choose not to participate.

Listen to the comments students make as they win or lose and use these to reinforce points made earlier in the session (excitement at winning, reasons they cite for losing, etc.). If the credits run out before the game makes the rounds of the class, draw an analogy to the negative impact gambling can have (money is all gone and is not available for other expenses, etc.).

7.2 AADAC video

⌚ 15 minutes

Show the AADAC video on adolescent gambling, *Spare Time, Spare Cash*. (see section 9.0 Additional resources).

7.3 Guest speaker

⌚ 15-30 minutes

Invite a recovering gambler to speak to the class about his/her experience.

8.0 Discussion / questions / evaluation

18

⌚ 05 minutes

Invite comment and questions on the material and activities from the session. Remind students that the 1-800 Gambling Help Line is available for further information and assistance. Also mention other local services that are available to address problem gambling.

8.1 Evaluation sheet

In advance, make copies of the evaluation sheet (**Handout #2, Evaluation**). At the end of your presentation, distribute the sheet to students and give them a few minutes to complete it.

9.0 Additional resources

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These resources are available through your local AADAC office (listed under Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission, in your telephone directory), or contact:

AADAC

Resource Development & Marketing	1-800-280-9616 (outside Alberta)
200, 10909 Jasper Avenue	(403) 427-7319
Edmonton, AB	(403) 422-5237 FAX
Canada T5J 3M9	

Adolescent Gambling and Problem Gambling in Alberta, Summary

Report (Wynne Resources Ltd. for AADAC, Edmonton, Alberta, May 1996).

This 32-page report, which summarizes the key findings of the Alberta adolescent gambling study, is recommended reading for those using the *Playing for Keeps* high school presentation kit. The research is the basis on which AADAC's youth and parent resources have been developed.

Spare Time, Spare Cash

This 15-minute AADAC video explores gambling from the adolescent perspective—in the style, images and words of the teens themselves.

Stacking the Odds

This pamphlet directed to parents contains key findings from the research report, *Adolescent Gambling and Problem Gambling in Alberta*. It highlights the correlation between parental gambling and adolescent gambling and presents points for parents to consider with respect to their own and their children's leisure activities.

Firewatch on Aboriginal Adolescent Gambling (Nechi Training, Research and Health Promotions Institute, Edmonton, Alberta, November 1995).

This 29-page report presents the findings of Nechi research on the prevalence of gambling and problem gambling among Alberta Aboriginal youth and the personal, cultural and social factors related to Aboriginal adolescent gambling.

Note: To obtain a copy of the *Firewatch* report, contact:

Nechi Institute

PO Box 34007	Toll-free: 1-800-769-6229
Kingsway Mall Post Office	Tel: (403) 459-1884
Edmonton, AB	FAX: (403) 458-1883
Canada T5G 3G4	

Gambling Quiz 1

handout #1

Mark "A" if you agree or "D" if you disagree.

1. Gamblers who lose large amounts of money just don't know how to gamble. ☐
2. If you flip a penny and it comes up "heads" four times in a row, the next flip will be more likely to come up "tails" than "heads." ☐
3. About 30% of teens have some level of gambling problem. ☐
4. "Chasing" is gambling to win back money that has previously been lost through gambling. ☐
5. Buying raffle tickets and betting on school sports events are not considered gambling. ☐
6. It's okay to spend all of your paycheque on gambling because you might win even more than you earned. ☐
7. About 67% of Alberta adolescents gamble. ☐
8. People gamble strictly because it's fun. ☐
9. You must be 18 or older to gamble legally. ☐
10. Some people who gamble have higher than average intelligence. ☐

Gambling Presentation Evaluation: Student

handout #2

Please let us know how you think we could make this presentation better.

1. What did you like about the presentation?

2. What did you learn about gambling?

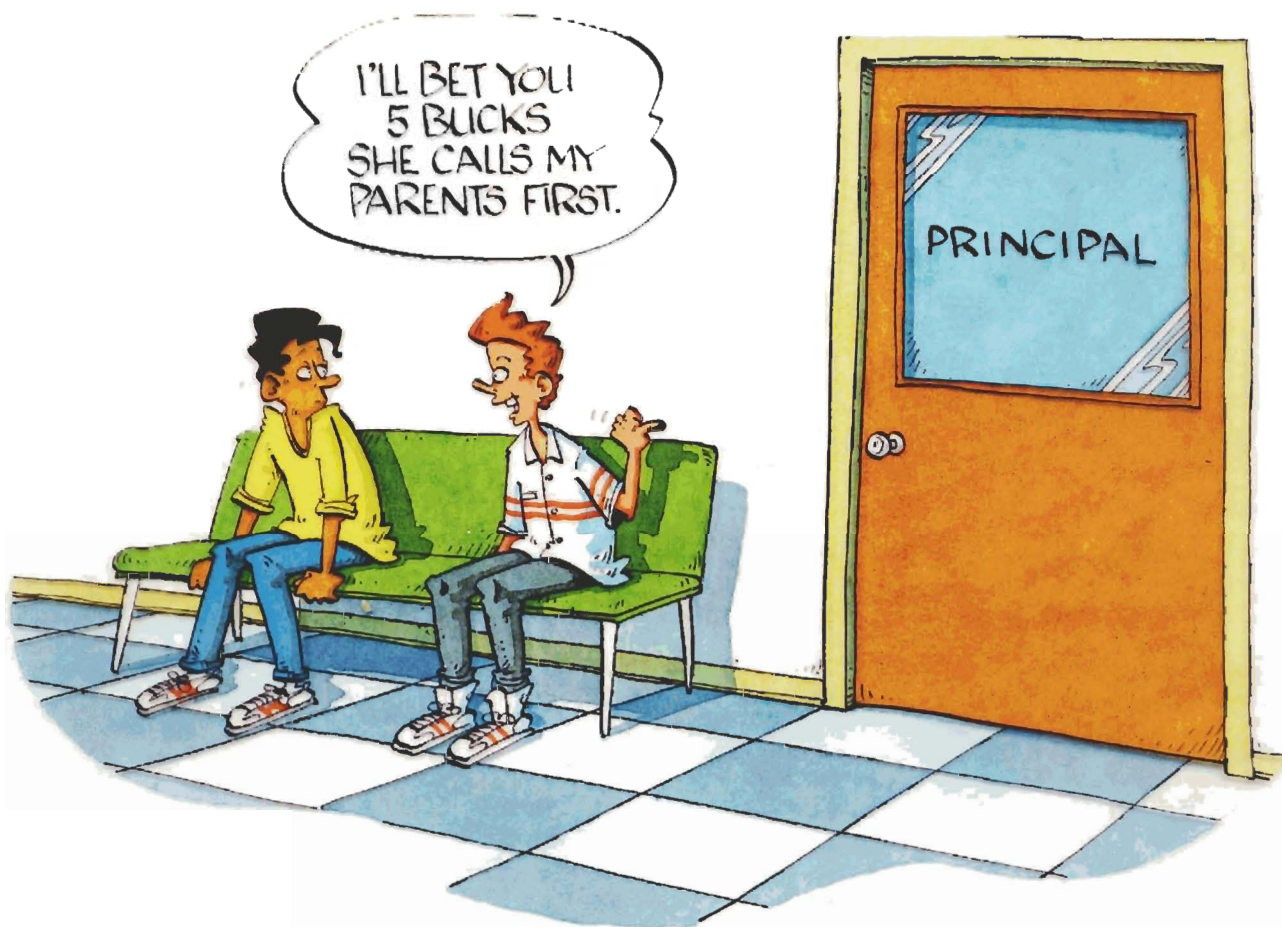
3. Were you aware that some activities you did were gambling?

4. If you had a problem with gambling, where could you go for help?

5. What is one other thing you would like to learn about gambling?

6. How would you rate this presentation? (Please circle)

Poor		Good		Excellent
1	2	3	4	5



Levels of Involvement

NO GAMBLING

SERIOUS SOCIAL

PATHOLOGICAL

CASUAL SOCIAL

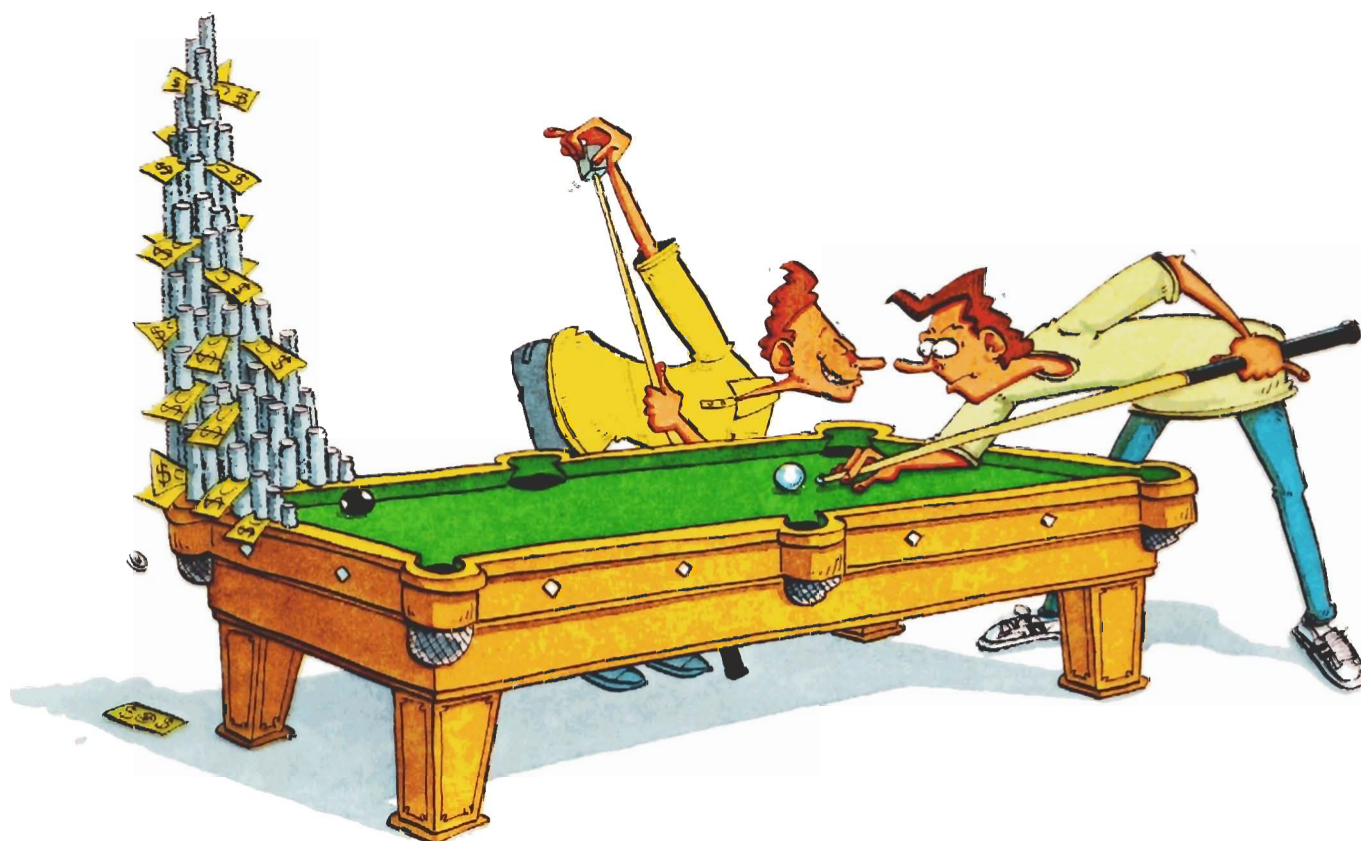
HARMFUL



Survey Results

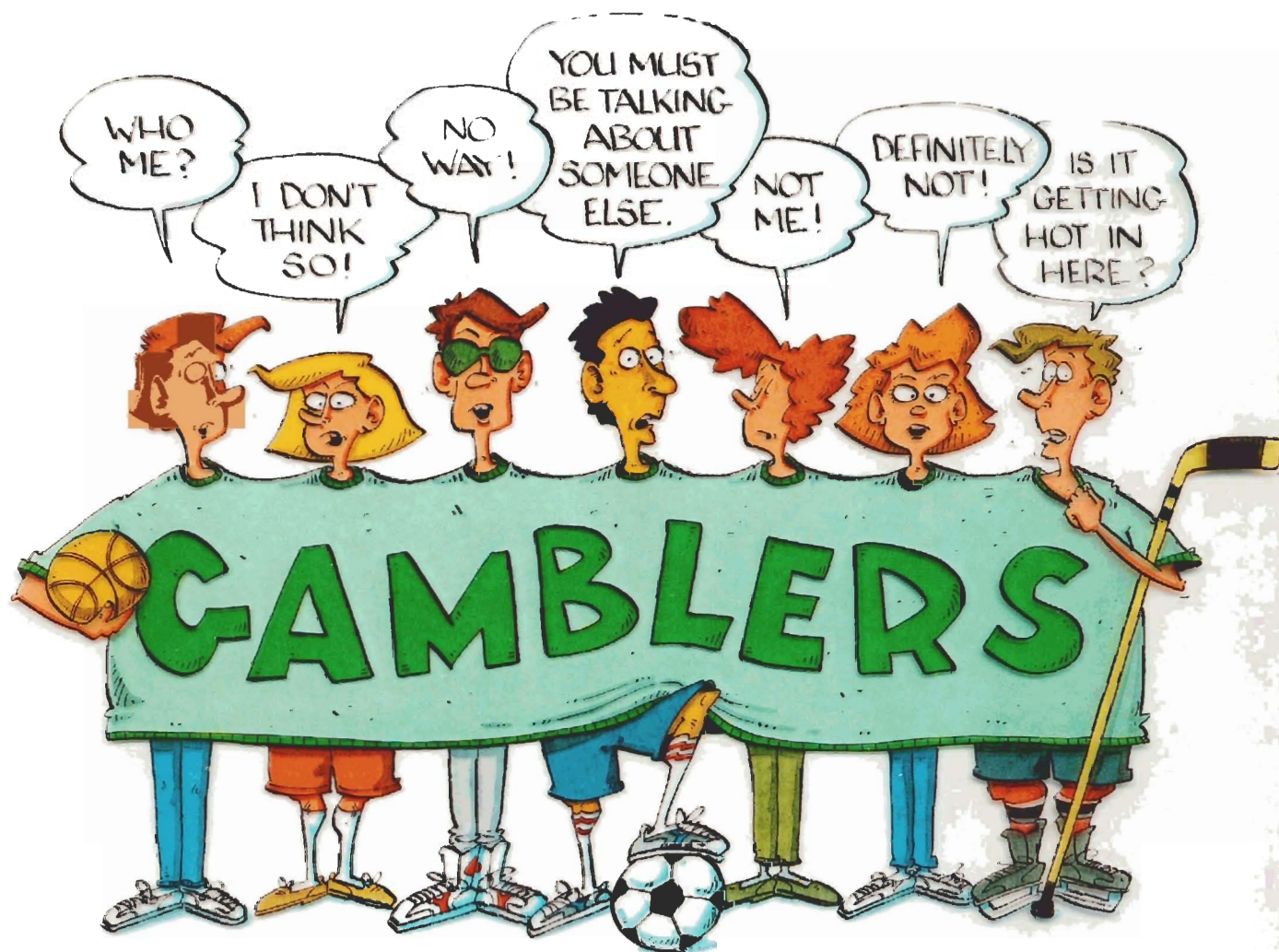
Sample size	Adolescent non-gamblers	Adolescent gamblers	Adolescent non-problem gamblers	Adolescent at-risk gamblers	Adolescent problem gamblers
(n=972*)	(n=317)	(n=655)	(n=430)	(n=148)	(n=77)
100%	33%	67%	44%	15%	08%

*n=actual number of adolescents in each category



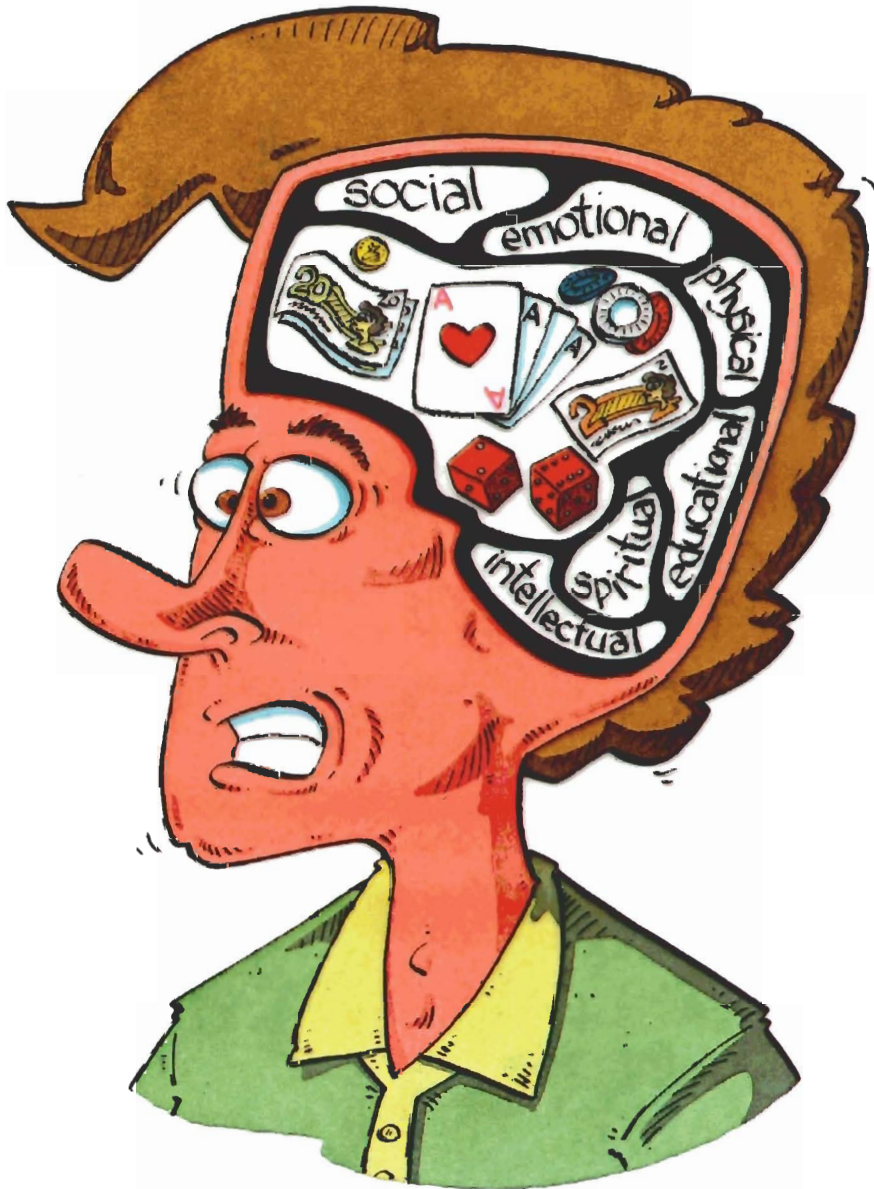
Favorite Gambling Activities

Favorite Gambling Activity	% Non-problem gamblers (n=430)	% At-risk gamblers (n=148)	% Problem gamblers (n=77)
Cards, board games with family or friends for money	17	19	17
Outcome of sports, hockey drafts, or other events with friends, family, co-workers	17	13	16
Instant-win or scratch tickets	13	07	07
Games of skill such as pool, golf, bowling, darts or arm wrestling for money	10	16	23
Raffles or fund-raising tickets	10	07	03
Bingo	07	08	03
Lottery tickets such as 6/49 or Super 7	05	02	00
Sport Select	03	07	08
Arcade or video games for money	03	05	04
Card games in card rooms (e.g., house poker party)	03	01	08
Horse races	03	02	01
Local casinos such as ABS, Elbow River, K-Days or Calgary Stampede	03	03	05
Formal sports pools sponsored by charities (e.g. NAIT hockey draft)	02	05	01



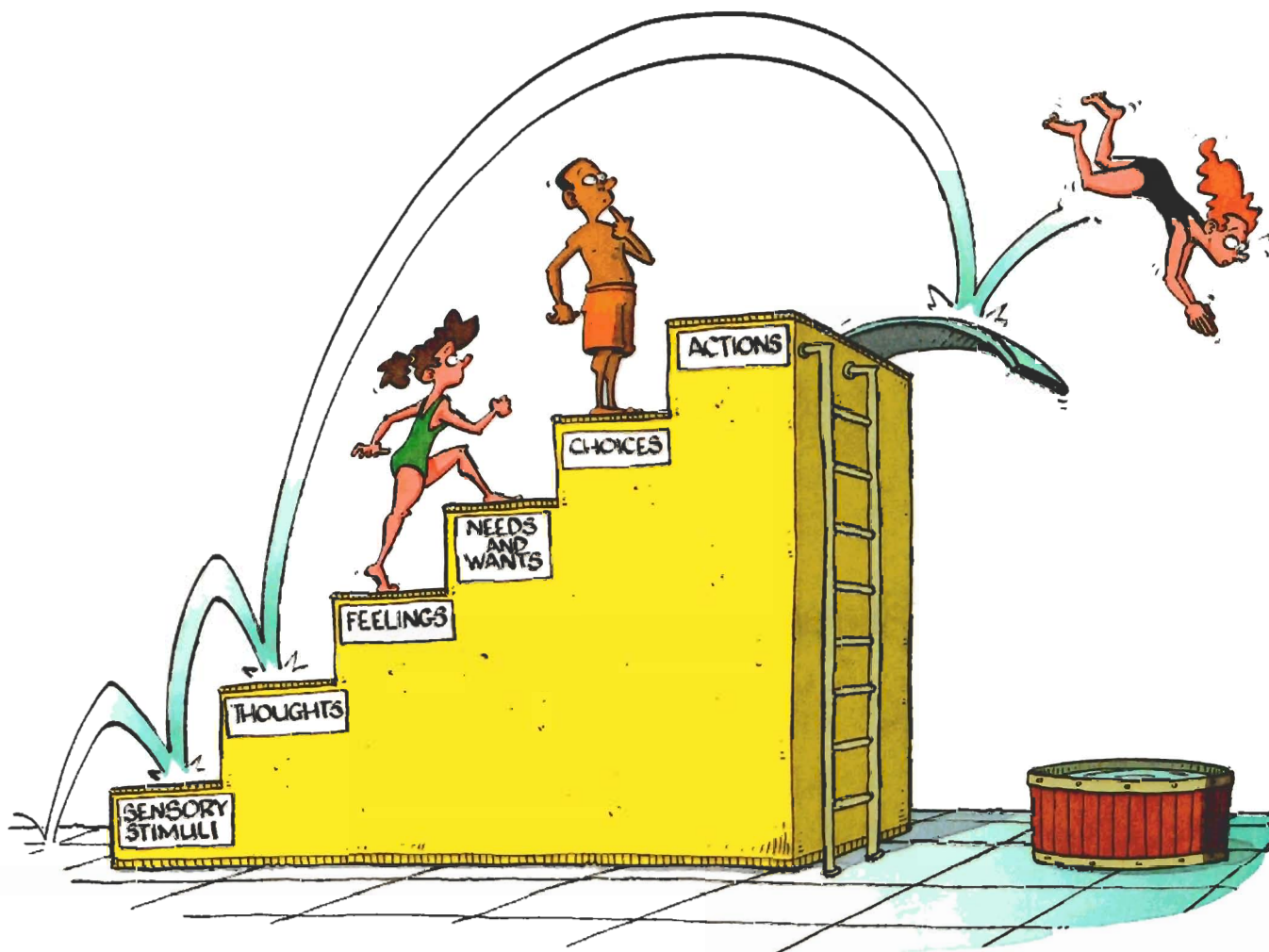












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