# **PACIFIC ISLANDS FAMILIES STUDY 2014: MOTHER AND YOUTH GAMBLING**

# **KEY RESEARCH INSIGHTS**

## **Pacific Islands Families Study focuses upon Pacific children (and their parents) born in 2000**

The Pacific Islands Families (PIF) Study, is following a group of Pacific children (and their parents) who were born in the year 2000 and recruited from a large hospital in South Auckland. Nine-hundred and twenty-three (923) mothers and 931 youth aged 14 years were interviewed in 2014.

## **This project looked at the extent of gambling and possible risk and protective factors for Pacific mothers and youth**

In 2014, the Ministry of Health funded the Gambling and Addictions Research Centre at Auckland University of Technology to:

* Assess the extent of gambling and problem gambling amongst Pacific mothers and 14 year old Pacific youth;
* Assess possible risk factors and protective factors for gambling amongst mothers;
* Investigate associations between youth gambling behaviours and social, familial, environmental and individual factors.

## **The study found that for Pacific Mothers….**

### **More Pacific mothers gambled in 2014 than in 2006**

In 2014, 52% of Pacific mothers gambled on at least one activity in the prior 12 months. This was an increase from 36% in 2006. However, the frequency of gambling reduced and was more likely to be ‘less than monthly’ or ‘monthly’, than ‘weekly’ or ‘daily/almost daily’.

### **One in 28 (3.6%) mothers reported levels of gambling behaviour indicative of moderate and problem levels of risk/harm**

Half of the mothers had not gambled in the prior year (48%). A further 41% gambled in the prior year without any level of harm (non-problem gambler), 7.3% experienced a low level of harm (low-risk gambler), 2.9% experienced a moderate level of harm (moderate-risk gambler), and 0.7% were classified as problem gamblers.[[1]](#footnote-1) Taken together, the moderate-risk and problem gamblers accounted for one in 28 (3.6%) of the mothers.

### **Over time most mothers stayed at the same risk level**

From 2009 to 2014, non-gamblers and non-problem gamblers were most likely to remain in those groups (64% and 57% respectively). A majority (72%) of low-risk gamblers in 2009 became non-problem gamblers or stopped gambling in 2014, and 17% gambled at a higher risk level. In 2014, one moderate-risk gambler and one problem gambler each remained in those groups from 2009, with the remainder transitioning to lower risk levels.

### **One in six (16%) mothers with problem gambling sought professional help**

Sixteen percent of mothers who were problem gamblers reported seeking help from a problem gambling treatment service.

### **There are multiple risk factors for gambling and/or risky gambling amongst mothers**

A risk factor for gambling participation and expenditure, and for risky gambling behaviour (low-risk, moderate-risk and problem gambling) amongst mothers in 2014 was being a gambler five years earlier, in 2009.

Other risk factors for gambling participation were alcohol consumption, being a victim or perpetrator of verbal aggression, and increased deprivation levels.

Low alignment with New Zealand culture while retaining high Pacific culture was also a risk factor for risky gambling behaviour.

### **Most mothers gambled alone**

Sixty-three percent of mothers who gambled in the prior year, gambled alone. Another 19% gambled with a partner or spouse, 10% gambled with other family members, and 8% gambled with someone else.

### **Lotto was the most common gambling activity for mothers**

Forty-three percent of mothers gambled on Lotto. In contrast, only 10% gambled on Instant Kiwi and other scratch tickets, and less than 10% gambled on housie or bingo (8%) and casino electronic gaming machines (EGMs) (6%).

### **Mothers spent in the region of $20 to $30 per month on gambling. Where casino EGM gambling was involved, the amount was much higher at $50**

General monthly gambling expenditure by mothers was $20 to $30. However, where casino EGM gambling was involved the amount was higher at $50. In contrast, expenditure on Instant Kiwi/scratch ticket gambling was $5.

## **One in 14 (7%) of mothers experienced problems due to someone else’s gambling**

One in 14 (7%) of mothers experienced problems due to someone else’s gambling. This was usually a spouse/partner, sibling or friend. More than two-thirds (70%) of the affected mothers sometimes worried about the other person’s gambling and two-fifths (41%) were paying for it financially.

## **The study found that for Pacific Youth aged 14 years….**

### **More than half of Pacific youth reported that they had gambled at least once in their lifetime**

In 2014, 54% of 14 year old Pacific youth reported they had gambled on at least one activity in their lifetime. However, of these, 58% had not gambled in the past year.

### **One in 27 youth (3.7%) could be categorised as problem gamblers**

Of the youth who had ever gambled, 3.7% could be categorised as problem gamblers and two-thirds of those were worried about the time or money they spent gambling.

### **Most youth gambled with family and friends, and bets with them were the most common gambling activity**

Sixty-three percent of youth who had ever gambled, gambled with family members. Another 42% gambled with friends, 12% gambled alone, and 9% gambled with someone else.

Thirty-seven percent of youth placed bets with friends or family, followed by 20% betting on card games. The next most popular activities were betting on sports matches (16%), marbles (13%), housie/bingo (13%) and board games (12%). One in fourteen (7%) youth reported having ever received a scratch ticket as a gift.

### **Youth expenditure on gambling was generally low**

Most youth (57%) generally did not spend any money on gambling. Approximately one-third of youth (34%) spent less than $10 per week, while 4.5% spent $20 or more per week on gambling.

### **There are multiple risk factors for gambling behaviour amongst youth**

Risk factors for gambling participation and expenditure amongst youth were being bullied at school, playing computer/video games, watching television/video/DVDs, gang involvement, and having a mother who gambled.

The research also found that Cook Islands Māori youth were less likely to gamble on continuous activities (sports matches, housie/bingo, keno, Instant Kiwi, games on a mobile phone/tablet and internet gambling) than Samoan youth.

1. These levels of gambling risk and associated harm are defined using the widely accepted Problem Gambling Severity Index (Ferris & Wynne, 2001). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)