Challenges and Changes with a Gambling Prevention Program for Urban Schools

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Presentation Outline

• Background

• Adaption of Smart Choices

• Implementation of adapted program

• Pre-Post Data

• Focus group information

• Discussion
Background

- Over half of U.S. teenagers report harmful gambling
  - Survey indicated 66% of 14-19 y/o

- Estimates of problem gambling between 5.3-12.7%
  - 8.6-22.7 considered at-risk

- Adolescents with problem gambling more likely to report:
  - Substance use, low grades, sexual activity, depression, and suicidal thoughts

(Dervensky & Gupta, 2000; Jacobs, 2000)
• Gender and ethnicity most significant socio-demographic factor related to gambling activity
  – Adolescent males gamble (10.8%) more than females (2.1%)

• African American youth at increased risk as compared to Caucasian peers
  – African American youth (9.7%) vs. Caucasian (4%)-Nationally
  – 22% of males and 5% of African American males reported problem gambling in an urban sample (Wickwire et al., 2007)

• Greatest population at risk for problem gambling
  (Welte et al., 2009; Dervensky & Gupta, 2000; Jacobs, 2000)
With 4-8% of youth engagement in problem gambling and 10-15% at-risk intervention with adolescents is warranted and necessary
  – Significant negative financial, occupational, relational, and mental health consequences

Smart Choices is a gambling prevention program previously used in suburban schools

Data from Baltimore City schools indicated challenges with program relevance, youth engagement, and behavior management
  – Adapted this year for implementation in Baltimore City

Dervensky & Gupta, 2000; Jacobs, 2000)
Collaboration and Adaptation
The Collaboration

• The Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling
  – Carl Robertson

• The Center for School Mental Health
  – Brittany R. Parham-Patterson
  – Tracy Palmer
  – Phyllis Lee
  – Kelly Willis
Method (Part 1)

• Adapt Smart Choices Program to:
  – Increase cultural relevance for urban youth
  – Increase student engagement
  – Decrease behavior problems
  – Improve program effectiveness

But how...
Adapting Smart Choices
A Conceptual Framework

• Cognitive information processing
  – Language*
  – Age
  – Developmental level*

• Affective-Motivational Characteristics
  – Gender
  – Ethnicity*
  – Socioeconomic status*

• Environmental characteristics
  – Ecological aspects of community

Castro et al., 2004
Adapting Smart Choices Cont’d

• Two basic types of program adaption
  – Program content

  – Form of program delivery

  • Characteristics of the delivery person(s)

  • Channel of delivery

Castro et al., 2004
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<td>• Exploring youth gambling</td>
<td>• Simplification of content</td>
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<td>• Understanding concept of Chance</td>
<td>• Skill vs. Luck</td>
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Adapting Smart Choices: In practice

• Common cultural adaptions (Department of Health and Human Services)
  – *Making activities more interactive & appealing to different learning styles*
    • Session 1 “Let’s Make a Deal”
  – *Tailoring learning activities/instructional methods to youth culture*
    • Session 2 “Games of Skill vs. Games of Luck”
    • Behavior Plan
  – *Customizing role play scenarios*
    • Session 3 “Using 3 Cs to help Kevin make a Choice”
Introducing the Program

Let’s review the behavior expectations..
SMART CHOICES

Rules/Expectations

1. Raise your hand to speak
2. One person speaks at a time
3. Stay in your seat
4. Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself
5. Use kind/respectful words
6. Use teamwork/group participation
Behavior Chart

Positive Behavior Plan: Prize Chart

Group 1

Group 2

Group 3

Group 4

Group 5

Group 6

*START

PRIZE

PRIZE

PRIZE

PRIZE

PRIZE

PRIZE
LET’S MAKE A DEAL 😊
Implementing the MD-Smart Choices Program
Method (Part 2)

- Train SMHP Clinicians to use adapted program
- Create/administer Pre-Post test
- Pilot MD-Smart Choices program in Baltimore City Schools (Year 2)
- Conduct focus group
Participants

- 73 total participants
  - African American (~73%)
  - Caucasian (~18%)
  - Hispanic (~5%)
  - Asian (~4%)
- Ages: 11-18
- Grade in school: 6th – 12th
- 80% of more free/reduced lunch
Findings
Knowledge Questions: Pre-Post Survey

• Understanding of youth susceptibility to related consequences changed significantly
  – Young People cannot develop a gambling addiction

• Student knowledge of the concept of chance changed in expected direction
  – Your chances of winning the lottery are better if you play the same numbers over
Adolescent Gambling: Pre-Post Survey
Student Gambling Behavior Data

• Most students endorsed little to no involvement with gambling
  – However, frequently verbalized knowledge of family members/friends that gamble

• One or 2 students consistently endorsed gambling “more than twice a week”
  – Likely at risk for problem gambling

• Data suggests gambling prevention activities are important
Focus Group Data: Strengths

• Six participants provided feedback about implementation of Smart Choices
  – Strengths of the Program
    • Incentives for students
    • Interactive activities
    • Behavior plan
  – Manual
    • “Very easy to use” and implement
    • “Different colors, bold, italics” helpful
    • Included all necessary information
Strengths Cont’d

• Behavior Plan
  – Easy to use
  – Expectations clear
  – Visually appealing

• Co-facilitation
  – Necessary for program implementation
  – Roles clearly described/evenly split
Focus Group Data: Challenges

• Occasionally “too much material”
  • Need an hour +

• Facilitator roles and expectations

• Exploration of need for behavior plan with HS students
Summary

• Current Directions
  – Material refined to decrease time requirement
  – Modified pre-post assessment and added fidelity checklists
  – MD-Smart Choices currently being implemented in 8 West Baltimore City schools
  – Collecting social validity data

• Future Directions
  – Disseminate and implement state-wide
  – Conduct rigorous research to validate as evidence-based prevention program
Questions?
References


