Focusing on positive play to optimize responsible gambling strategy
3 problems with responsible gambling today
Problem 1: Lack of player engagement
Problem 2: RG messages often have a negative or patronizing tone

You must play responsibly!
Problem 3: Lack of understanding of the players’ perspective
What is positive play?

- Focus on maximizing healthy and happy playing experiences (not just fixing problems)
- Using the right language
- Soft touch and inclusive (e.g. normative feedback & nudging)
- RG with a player facing perspective
- Understanding what responsible play looks like
to better understand responsible gambling, we need to measure it.

positive play
Answer three key questions about RG strategy

How do we know if a responsible gambling strategy is working?

Which parts of a responsible gambling strategy work the best?

What works best for different players?
Why not just measure PG to understand effectiveness of RG?

- PG rates are fairly stable over time so may not be sensitive enough to measure change
- Numbers of PGs identified is typically low (e.g. SEIGMA 2016 - PG 1.7% (N=53) At-risk 7.5% (N=235)
- Samples are too small to segment (e.g., by game type)
- Tells us very little about regular players or less responsible players
- Reactive rather than proactive
Introducing the Positive Play Scale (PPS)
Measure and optimize success of RG strategy (what works, what doesn’t work?)

Segment RG strategy (e.g., by age, games played...) by what works best with different players?

Benchmark RG success or failure. Does player RG improve over time?

Better understand the whole player base not just those with problems.

First ever standardized scale to measure RG.

Measure the impact of changes to the gambling climate.

the Positive Play Scale (PPS)

(Wood, Wohl, Tabri, Philander, 2017)
The Properties of the PPS

There are two belief subscales:

- **Personal Responsibility**: the extent to which a player believes they should take ownership of their gambling behavior
- **Gambling literacy**: the extent to which a player has an accurate understanding about the nature of gambling
Beliefs: I believe that...

Personal Responsibility
- I should be able to walk away from gambling at any time
- I should only gamble when I have enough money to cover all my bills first
- It’s my responsibility to spend only money that I can afford to lose

Gambling Literacy
- I should be aware of how much MONEY I spend when I gamble
- Gambling is not a good way to make money
- My chances of winning get better after I have lost (reverse coded)
- If I gamble more often, it will help me to win more than I lose (reverse coded)
The Properties of the PPS

There are two behavior subscales:

- **Honesty & control**: How honest a player is with others about their gambling behavior and feels in control of their behavior.

- **Pre-commitment**: The extent to which a player considers how much money and time they should spend gambling.
Behaviors:
In the last month........

Honesty and Control

- I felt in control of my gambling behavior
- I was honest with my family and/or friends about the amount of MONEY I spent gambling

Pre-commitment

- I only gambled with MONEY that I could afford to lose
- I only spent TIME gambling that I could afford to lose
- I considered the amount of MONEY I was willing to lose BEFORE I gambled
- I considered the amount of TIME I was willing to spend BEFORE I gambled
The PPS is **not** a measure of disordered gambling

A low PPS score is not an indicator of disordered gambling. However, low positive beliefs and behaviors may contribute to disordered play (over time).

PPS beliefs and behaviors are typically moderately correlated with disordered gambling severity (as measured with the PGSI).
Players can be placed into positive play categories

LOW PPS: Not an overall positive player, but may have some positive play tendencies and/or beliefs

MEDIUM PPS: A positive player with room for improvement

HIGH PPS: Clearly a positive player

These scores constitute benchmark data that can be compared again at a later date, to help identify changes in players’ RG related beliefs and behaviors.
Measuring responsible gambling in Canada 🇨🇦
Measuring responsible gambling in Canada

✓ Study commissioned by the Canadian Responsible Gambling Association (CRGA).
✓ In 2017, a representative sample of 7,980 players were contacted.
✓ Online survey including PPS, other scales and items about demographics and game play.
✓ 80% played in last month, all played in last year.
**PPS scores: all players**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-scale</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal responsibility</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gambling literacy</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honesty &amp; Control</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-commitment</td>
<td>79.6%</td>
<td>65.1%</td>
<td>88.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Lowest scoring sub-scale**

- Personal responsibility
- Gambling literacy
- Honesty & Control
- Pre-commitment
PPS scores: by age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Personal responsibility</th>
<th>Gambling literacy</th>
<th>Honest &amp; control</th>
<th>Pre-commitment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>76.3% 51% 3.1%</td>
<td>18.7% 12.6% 10.1%</td>
<td>20.9% 14.1% 12.0%</td>
<td>12.7% 9.1% 7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>86.8% 61% 9.3%</td>
<td>25.4% 17.7% 13.5%</td>
<td>18.7% 12.6% 10.1%</td>
<td>12.7% 9.1% 7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>89.0% 66% 11.8%</td>
<td>29.7% 22.4% 18.5%</td>
<td>15.5% 11.8% 9.3%</td>
<td>12.7% 9.1% 7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>92.5% 73% 11.8%</td>
<td>36.9% 28.2% 23.1%</td>
<td>18.5% 14.1% 10.2%</td>
<td>12.7% 9.1% 7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td>93.9% 79% 10.2%</td>
<td>33.1% 25.5% 21.8%</td>
<td>14.1% 10.2% 7.4%</td>
<td>12.7% 9.1% 7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>93.9% 79% 10.2%</td>
<td>36.6% 28.2% 23.1%</td>
<td>18.5% 14.1% 10.2%</td>
<td>12.7% 9.1% 7.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- low PPS
- medium PPS
- high PPS
Personal responsibility scores: Land-based games

- Lottery draw games: 88.1% (low PPS), 9.3% (medium PPS), 8.7% (high PPS)
- Scratch tickets: 87.4% (low PPS), 11.5% (medium PPS), 3.4% (high PPS)
- Slot machines: 84.9% (low PPS), 12.9% (medium PPS), 3.6% (high PPS)
- Quiz/puzzle games: 83.2% (low PPS), 13.5% (medium PPS), 3.9% (high PPS)
- Bingo: 82.7% (low PPS), 14.6% (medium PPS), 3.9% (high PPS)
- Casino style card games: 81.3% (low PPS), 15.4% (medium PPS), 4.1% (high PPS)
- Video lottery: 80.5% (low PPS), 16.0% (medium PPS), 4.1% (high PPS)
- Sports betting: 79.1% (low PPS), 16.0% (medium PPS), 4.9% (high PPS)
- Casino style table games: 78.0% (low PPS), 17.5% (medium PPS), 4.5% (high PPS)
Gambling literacy scores: Land-based games

- Lottery draw games: 65.2%
- Scratch-tickets: 63.3%
- Slot machines: 60.5%
- Quiz/puzzle games: 56.7%
- Bingo: 56.4%
- Video lottery: 54.5%
- Casino style card games: 53.1%
- Sports betting: 50.6%
- Casino style table games: 47.8%

PPS levels:
- low PPS
- medium PPS
- high PPS
Honesty and control scores: Land-based games

| Game Type                  | 7.1% | 7.7% | 8.8% | 9.2% | 9.7% | 10.0% | 11.3% | 14.5% | 15.9% | 17.7% | 18.6% | 19.0% | 19.7% | 20.1% | 69.0% | 69.1% | 70.0% | 70.1% | 71.0% | 71.6% | 74.9% | 76.7% | 78.6% |
|----------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Lottery draw games         | 81.7%| 80.6%| 76.7%| 74.9%| 72.6%| 71.0% | 70.1% | 69.1% | 69.0% | 69.1% | 70.1% | 71.0% | 71.6% | 74.9% | 76.7% | 78.6% | 78.6% | 80.6% | 80.6% | 81.7% | 81.7% | 81.7% | 81.7% |
| Scratch-tickets            | 11.2%| 11.7%| 14.5%| 15.9%| 17.7%| 19.0% | 18.6% | 20.1% | 19.7% | 19.7% | 19.7% | 19.7% | 19.7% | 19.7% | 19.7% | 19.7% | 19.7% | 19.7% | 19.7% | 19.7% | 19.7% | 19.7% | 19.7% |
| Slot machines              | 8.8% | 8.8% | 9.2% | 9.2% | 9.7% | 10.0% | 11.3% | 10.9% | 11.3% | 11.3% | 11.3% | 11.3% | 11.3% | 11.3% | 11.3% | 11.3% | 11.3% | 11.3% | 11.3% | 11.3% | 11.3% | 11.3% | 11.3% |
| Quiz/puzzle games          | 11.2%| 11.7%| 11.2%| 11.2%| 11.2%| 11.2% | 11.2% | 11.2% | 11.2% | 11.2% | 11.2% | 11.2% | 11.2% | 11.2% | 11.2% | 11.2% | 11.2% | 11.2% | 11.2% | 11.2% | 11.2% | 11.2% | 11.2% |
| Bingo                      | 11.7%| 12.2%| 11.7%| 11.7%| 11.7%| 11.7% | 11.7% | 11.7% | 11.7% | 11.7% | 11.7% | 11.7% | 11.7% | 11.7% | 11.7% | 11.7% | 11.7% | 11.7% | 11.7% | 11.7% | 11.7% | 11.7% | 11.7% |
| Casino style card games    | 14.5%| 15.1%| 14.5%| 14.5%| 14.5%| 14.5% | 14.5% | 14.5% | 14.5% | 14.5% | 14.5% | 14.5% | 14.5% | 14.5% | 14.5% | 14.5% | 14.5% | 14.5% | 14.5% | 14.5% | 14.5% | 14.5% | 14.5% |
| Video lottery              | 7.1% | 7.7% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 5.3% | 5.3% | 5.3% | 5.3% | 5.3% | 5.3% | 5.3% | 5.3% | 5.3% | 5.3% | 5.3% | 5.3% | 5.3% | 5.3% | 5.3% | 5.3% |
| Sports betting             | 7.1% | 7.7% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% |
| Casino style table games   | 7.1% | 7.7% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% |
Pre-commitment scores: Land-based games

- Lottery draw games: 79.5%
- Scratch-tickets: 77.9%
- Slot machines: 74.4%
- Bingo: 70.9%
- Quiz/puzzle games: 70.2%
- Casino style card games: 67.6%
- Sports betting: 66.8%
- Video lottery: 66.6%
- Casino style table games: 64.9%

Low PPS: 7.2%, 7.8%, 8.6%, 10.0%, 10.2%, 11.1%, 11.6%, 11.8%
Medium PPS: 13.3%, 14.3%, 17.0%, 19.1%, 19.6%, 21.3%, 21.6%, 12.4%
High PPS: 79.5%, 77.9%, 74.4%, 70.9%, 70.2%, 67.6%, 66.8%, 66.6%
Key findings & recommendations

- Younger players should be targeted more than older players
- Overall, some games have a lower percentage of responsible players
- Gambling Literacy and Pre-commitment should be area for future RG focus
- Monitor PPS scores over time to identify any changes in levels of players’ RG
How might administering the PPS help improve your RG strategy?

**Benchmark:**
How positive (responsible) are the beliefs and behaviors of your players?

**Segment players:**
How do PPS scores differ according to players (age, games played etc.)?

**Optimize:**
What are the current RG strengths and which areas require additional RG focus?

**Monitor change:**
Are players’ scores improving/worsening? Are PPS scores impacted by changes in RG strategy and/or the gambling climate?
Publication available on request:


Quotation available on request:

We have completed PPS studies all across Canada, in several US states and in the UK. We can run a PPS study for you and provide a report that benchmarks your players and suggests ways to optimize your RG strategy.

Richard@gamres.org
www.gamres.org