

89% of adults in Indiana report gambling in past year

June 20 2023, by Teresa Mackin



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When gambling first became legal in Indiana, options were limited to lottery scratch-off tickets and draw games; after that, it was riverboat casinos. Fast forward more than 30 years later, and anyone over 18 can

place their bet with a cellphone.

According to a new [survey](#) from Prevention Insights, a center housed within the Indiana University School of Public Health-Bloomington, 89% of adults in Indiana participated in some form of [gambling](#) in the past year, which is slightly above the national rate of 88%.

"With gambling expansions throughout the years, and most recently the inclusion of sports betting, anyone can carry a gambling device in their hand: their phone," said Mary Lay, operations director of Prevention Insights and program manager of the Indiana Problem Gambling Awareness Program at IU.

"With one-third of surveyed Hoosiers participating in some form of online gambling in the last year, and younger adults displaying a higher likelihood for this type of gambling, the numbers are concerning. We will continue to watch this trend to see how it impacts those reporting issues with gambling."

The survey looks at adult gambling behaviors in Indiana. The goal is to assess the scope of gambling activities, the prevalence of problem gambling behaviors and awareness of problem gambling resources among Indiana adults, giving an insight into gambling's impact on individuals, communities and the state.

That data is used to plan prevention and awareness programs, targeted toward individuals and areas of the state with the highest need or at the highest risk. Indiana is one of a few states that uses a portion of the revenues produced by gambling activities to support efforts to address problem gambling treatment needs.

In 2022, 3% of Indiana adults surveyed reported having a problem with gambling, but 0.6% reported seeking treatment. The survey also found

that only 38% of respondents had heard of the Indiana Problem Gambling Referral Line, a toll-free hotline for gamblers seeking help.

"This is an area where we can work to provide more education to increase awareness," Lay said. "Problem gambling is somewhat of a silent addiction. Unlike intoxicating substances, you don't immediately see the impact, but they are just as serious. Gambling can result in debts, lost relationships and lost employment. The impact on one's [mental health](#) is often one of the biggest signs that gambling is becoming an issue."

Other insights from the 2022 survey:

- The lottery is the most popular form of gambling in Indiana, with 2 out of 3 survey respondents, 66.1%, reporting playing the lottery in the past year.
- Casino gambling is also popular, with 55% of Indiana adult respondents reporting visiting a casino to gamble in the past year. Slot machines are the most popular game at casinos (16%).
- Hoosiers with incomes over \$100,000 gamble on sports more than those with lower incomes. However, income is not a factor in whether someone develops a problem with gambling.
- Respondents age 35 to 54 were more likely to report multiple gambling activities, including online sports betting, video-based tables games at a casino and lottery-ticket vending machines.

Researchers surveyed a random sample of residents age 18 and older across the state, collecting data in November and December 2022. The data from responses was weighted to ensure proportional representation to Indiana's overall adult population.

Prevention Insights plan to conduct this survey every other year. The first survey, in 2021, found that 84% of Indiana adults reported

gambling in the past year. Since the timing and questions of the survey changed this year, researchers say they will be better able to compare trends from year to year in their next survey.

More information: Survey: ipgap.indiana.edu/documents/2023-06-adults-indiana-gambling-year.pdf

Provided by Indiana University

Citation: 89% of adults in Indiana report gambling in past year (2023, June 20) retrieved 3 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2023-06-adults-indiana-gambling-year.html>

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