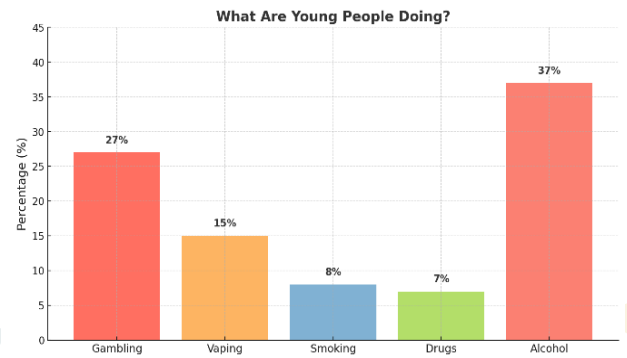


Preventing Gambling Related Harm in Adolescents

Findings from a small study in 6 secondary schools

Why do young people need to know about gambling harm?

- In 2024, 27% of 11-17-year-olds had gambled with their own money in the past year
- This is more than those who reported vaping, smoking or using illegal drugs
- Gambling from a young age can lead to worries about money, affect your mental health, and make school more difficult
- While schools have programmes on smoking and drinking there aren't any independent programmes to help prevent gambling harm



A 2024 UK study found that more young people gambled than smoked, vaped or used drugs. Only alcohol use was higher.

What is PROGRAM-A?

PROGRAM-A stands for Preventing Gambling Related Harm in Adolescents. It is a school-based programme that aims to:

- a) Explain how gambling marketing works
- b) Explore the links between gaming and gambling
- c) Raise awareness about the risks of gambling

Instead of formal classroom lessons, PROGRAM-A uses a peer led approach – students learn from each other and share ideas through everyday conversations.



How does PROGRAM-A work?

* Students were asked to nominate classmates they looked up to

* Students with the most nominations were invited to become peer supporters

* The peer supporters received two days of training

* Over 10 weeks, peer supporters had casual conversations with friends and family about what they had learned

* They were given a pen and access to a website, with key facts to help them do this

SPREAD THE WORD!



Where was it tested?

- Six secondary schools in Scotland took part in the study
- Four of these schools used the PRoGRAM-A model
- Two of these schools were comparison/control groups and did not use the programme

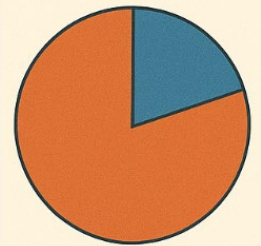
How do we know if PRoGRAM-A worked or not?

In 2023/24, we carried out a study – a small-scale test designed to prepare for a larger study that will take place in multiple schools across the UK

Researchers wanted to see:

- If schools and students would take part
- If the programme could be delivered in real school settings
- If the students found it useful and relevant

They used surveys, interviews, and group discussions to collect feedback



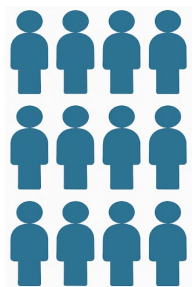
What were the results?

The study was successful:

- All six schools took part and stayed in the study
- Enough students completed both the starting and follow-up questionnaires
- PRoGRAM-A was well-received by students and staff
- It was delivered as planned, following the official training guide

Peer supporter impact:

- 146 Peer supporters took part across four schools
- Together, they had over 1,500 conversations about gambling
- 80% spoke to at least 5 people
- 51% spoke to 10 or more
- 12% spoke to 20 or more



This showed that the programme could reach many people through peer influence

The importance and the next steps

- Gambling affects many young people, but is often overlooked
- Unlike smoking or drinking, there are no trusted, evidence-based school programmes in the UK to prevent gambling harm
- PRoGRAM-A is one of the first studies to create a fully independent, student focused resource to prevent gambling harm in schools
- The next step is to try out Program-A in 50 to 60 schools across the UK. This will help us see how well it works for different schools and students. By testing it in more places, we can find out what works best and make it even better