

Relationship, Health & Behavioural Issues

Relationship Issues

Issues negatively influencing relationship with partner - Australia (2006)¹

Issue	%
Lack of time to spend together	36
Lack of understanding each others' view	23
Lack of communication	21
Different goals/expectations	20
Housework	19
Financial insecurity/difficulties	18
Having/bringing up children	15
Serious illness or disability	12
Inability to solve conflict	10
Accident/traumatic event	10
Sexual difficulties	9
Influence of ex-partners	7
Job loss/unemployment	7
Alcohol or other drug issues	7
Different cultural backgrounds	7
Lack of trust	6
Being pushed around	4
Gambling	3
An affair	2
Violence	1

According to a 2006 survey undertaken by Relationships Australia, the most common reported issues negatively impacting relationships (in this case, with one's partner) included 'lack of time to spend together' (36%), 'lack of understanding each others' view' (23%) and 'lack of communication' (21%). Gambling was reported as adversely affecting 3% of relationships, and was the third least reported factor after an affair (2%) and violence (1%).

Behavioural Issues

Maladaptive behaviours of problem gamblers in counselling - Victoria (2001-02)²

Maladaptive behaviour	%
Gambles as a way of escaping	91.4
Repeated unsuccessful efforts to control gambling	82.8
After losing money, chases losses	80.4
Lies to family members, therapist or others	72.4
Preoccupied with gambling behaviour	69.0
Is restless/irritable when attempting to cut down	65.8
Needs to gamble increasing amounts of money	64.9
Has jeopardised relationships, job, education	57.4
Relies on others to provide money	53.8
Has committed illegal acts	18.3

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The most common maladaptive behaviour new clients presented at problem gambling counselling services in Victoria was gambling as a way of escaping (reported by 91.4% of clients). Other commonly reported behaviours included repeated unsuccessful efforts to control gambling and chasing losses.

Health Issues

Comparison of past year disorder prevalence³

Disorder	%
Any Mental	14.9
Any Anxiety	11.8
Any Substance Use Disorder	6.0
Any Alcohol	5.2
Major Depression	4.0
Obsessive Compulsive	2.1
Agoraphobia	2.1
Dysthymia	1.6
Anti-social Personality	1.5
Panic Disorder	1.4
Kleptomania	1.1
Level 3 Problem Gambling⁴	1.1
Schizophrenia	1.0
Anorexia Nervosa	0.1

In 2002, Shaffer and LaBrie compiled and compared prevalence rates of various disorders in the general community. Almost 15% of people experienced mental disorders while 6% experienced substance use disorders. It was estimated that 1.1% of the community experienced Level 3 problem gambling, a similar prevalence rate to kleptomania.

Problems presented to counselling services by problem gamblers⁵ - Victoria (2001-02)²

Presenting problem	No.	%
Gambling behaviour	3,362	95.5
Intrapersonal	2,262	64.2
Financial issues	2,186	62.1
Interpersonal related	1,972	56.0
Family issues	1,583	44.9
Leisure use issues	1,514	43.0
Employment/work related issues	1,053	29.9
Legal issues	763	21.7
Physical symptoms	696	19.8

The most common problem presented by new clients at problem gambling counselling services in Victoria was, not surprisingly, their gambling behaviour, followed by intrapersonal, financial and interpersonal issues. Less common were physical symptoms, legal and employment/work related issues. Clients commonly presented multiple problems to the counselling services.

¹ Relationships Australia Inc (2006), The State of Australian Relationships Survey 2006

² M. Dickerson (2004) Analysis of Clients Presenting to Problem Gambling Services July 1, 2001 to June 30, 2002, Client and Services Analysis Report No. 8, Melbourne: Victoria Government Department of Human Services.

3 H Shaffer, R LaBrie (2002) What Do Gaming Regulations Regulate – A Public Health Perspective of Disordered Gambling and Regulation, Lecture presented at the Global Gaming Expo, 2002, September 17 2002.

4 People with adverse consequences that are sufficiently serious and co-occurring so as to meet the diagnostic criteria for disordered gambling.

5 New clients.

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