

# Supporting the Wellbeing of Young People



## In Relation to Gambling in New Zealand

*- Final Report and Recommendations -*



Produced by the  
Problem Gambling Foundation of NZ

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## Foreword

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The proliferation of gambling is a relatively recent phenomenon in New Zealand and patterns of gambling are vastly different from a decade ago. Where horse racing and weekly Golden Kiwi tickets were the main form of gambling, the array now includes lotto, scratch tickets, Internet casinos, telephone betting, sports betting and the ubiquitous electronic gambling machine. Gambling opportunities can now be found in bars, clubs, shopping centers, the Internet, bowling alleys, toyshops, supermarkets and family restaurants. Add to this the way the range of options continues to expand. The electronic and psychological technologies are pushing new horizons to products such as Internet casinos, interactive video sports betting, and what looks like a range of partial gambling and skill computer “games”.

As a consequence of this rapid change, adult experiences of gambling differ significantly from those of younger people. The majority of the adult population has grown up in an environment where gambling was tightly regulated. Their gambling options were on the whole the less potent form of non-continuous gambling such as horse betting and national raffles. They have learnt to view the gambling environment as relatively benign. Adults are, therefore, unlikely to fully appreciate the pressure young people are now experiencing in a society with higher availability and intensity of gambling. They may fail to see the significance of gambling to young people as a potential threat to their quality of life.

For young people, the pressure to gamble is augmented by increases in the range and intensity of the commercial promotion of gambling. These activities include advertising on television, advertising in magazines and billboards, advertising on the Internet, sports sponsorship and promotions such as point accrual and loyalty cards. The leading source of these promotions is lotteries. In particular, lottery advertising has gradually introduced gambling as a normal aspect of family routine. It portrays gambling as a product involving fun, excitement, socialisation, wealth and social acceptance. All these associations will appeal to young people who, in the process of establishing their social identity, will take these messages and embed them into their future understandings of the role gambling will play in their lives. However, the good-news promotional material is not matched with the more accurate messages regarding the nature of gambling and its potential for harm. Virtually no promotional material provides information on avoiding harms from gambling. This imbalance does little to provide young people with a base from which to develop a sustainable and positive relationship to gambling.

In preparing young people for their lifelong involvement in a society with high availability of gambling, planners need to take into account how gambling will fit in the long term as both a negative and positive part of their full lifespan. To achieve this, the following document has incorporated current strength-based approaches to youth development as a basis for responding to youth issues. While acknowledging the potential for harm, this approach looks less at problems and deficits and more on processes that build on the strengths of groups of people to prevent and respond to harms.

The Centre for Gambling Studies at the University of Auckland was pleased to assist the Problem Gambling Foundation in the completion of this important document. Members of the Centre have for some time been concerned with the lack of knowledge and information regarding the part gambling plays in the lives of young New Zealanders. One of the strongest issues identified in the document is the almost complete lack of quality research on this topic. The international literature reviewed indicates that the rates of problem gambling for young people are two to three times the rates of adults. Since we lack equivalent research, it is uncertain whether the same rates are occurring in New Zealand, however, it does raise a serious question for the future. The Centre aims to assemble an adequate critical mass of gambling researchers to enable our understanding of gambling in New Zealand to progress. The document's final recommendation stating the need for "independent research in all areas" further emphasizes the importance of developing a research base.

We urge all those interested in either youth development and/or gambling to read this document. It is strongly linked to the *Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa* compiled by the Ministry of Youth Affairs in February 2002. It is written in an informative and accessible style. It summarises information from both overseas and from the small amount that is available in New Zealand. It provides a clear description of key recommendations and pathways for future development. It will be useful to those working with young people in both treatment and public health service settings as well as providing direction to health planners, youth policy makers, funders and educators.



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# Executive Summary

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This report and its recommendations “Supporting the Wellbeing of Young People in Relation to Gambling in New Zealand” arose from a need for a written document to help reduce and minimise problem gambling harms amongst young people in this country. Young people are increasingly at-risk of developing gambling problems, particularly because of the types and availability of gambling, which have substantially increased within the past 15 years.

The Problem Gambling Foundation of New Zealand (PGF) and the Centre for Gambling Studies (CGS), University of Auckland developed this report via the production of a discussion document, which was circulated to young people, youth workers and organisations working with youth, for comment and feedback. Funding was provided by the Problem Gambling Committee. The purpose of this document is to aid and inform the Government (particularly the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Department of Internal Affairs), local authorities, gambling service providers, the gambling industry and other organisations who work with young people regarding the issues surrounding young people and gambling, and to provide recommendations to assist the production of strategies by those groups.

Throughout the development of this report and its recommendations, we have incorporated Treaty of Waitangi principles of Partnership, Participation and Active Protection. We have also adopted a strengths-based approach which focuses on a person’s strengths, ability for personal growth and to develop the skills and attitudes that are needed to take part positively in society.

Young people (12 to 25 years of age) are the first generation to be exposed to a large range and availability of gambling opportunities. They are also growing up in an environment where gambling is considered to be normal behaviour in daily life, for example it may be promoted by their church as a legitimate way of raising funds, or because there is much media attention (e.g., casino television advertisements) extolling the fun, excitement and large amounts of money that can be won. This can lead to erroneous beliefs as to the benefits of gambling, with no counteractive arguments depicting the real harms that excessive gambling can cause.

Young people can also be at risk because they are tempted by technologies with which they are highly familiar. For example, many electronic gambling machines strongly resemble video games, and online Internet gambling brings the event into homes and on to mobile telephones.

Research has already shown that a majority of young people participate in gambling activities and that the prevalence of problem gambling amongst young people is two to three times higher than in the adult population.

Problem gambling is undesirable for many reasons, not least because it can negatively impact on mental health status, social/personal development and physical development. Adolescence is a crucial period in terms of healthy identity formation, as well as physical, mental and spiritual development. Thus, the immediate and long-term consequences of excessive gambling are particularly pertinent for young people.

Section Two of this report outlines the proposed *vision* for young people and gambling which is that “**In a society with high levels of gambling activities, the wellbeing of young people will be ensured**”. Also outlined are four *aims* for young people and gambling in New Zealand, based on: 1) promotion of information, 2) adult understanding, 3) issues pertinent to youth gambling, and 4) working with government departments to develop effective policies around gambling.

Section Two focuses on areas of special concern. There is a brief background to each area followed by relevant actions required to address the areas. The relevant actions have then been summarised into ***Principal Actions*** and an overall encompassing ***Recommendation***. It is hoped that these summaries will be a useful adjunct to the main body of text.

There are seven *action areas* of special concern:

*Action area 1: Ensure a consistent **strengths-based approach** to gambling and young people.* This is based on the need to ensure that issues related to young people build capacity for personal growth and to ensure the active participation of young people in programmes and services for them, whilst acknowledging the diverse backgrounds and cultures of young people. It focuses on positive rather than negative aspects, and on a person’s strengths rather than weaknesses.

*Action area 2: Equip **adults** to better understand the negative impacts of gambling and effectively support young people with regard to these concerns.* This addresses the fact that young people’s positive development is influenced by the adults who interact with them. It also acknowledges that adults may not have a clear understanding of the diversity of positions that young people are facing and adopting, with regard to gambling.

*Action area 3: Ensure **legislation** and its enforcement minimise the harm to young people from gambling.* This focuses on the need for the government to be responsive to young people's perspectives and perceptions in developing social policy and legislation. There should also be policy and legislation for developing safe and responsible gambling among young people.

*Action area 4: Promote appropriate and responsive approaches to gambling that supports positive development of **Māori** youth (rangatahi).* Treaty principles of Partnership, Participation and Active Protection are integral considerations in terms of issues relating to young Māori and gambling. Māori adult populations have been identified as being three times more at risk than Pakeha for developing problem gambling behaviour, and this together with the youthfulness of Māori could contribute to young Māori being particularly vulnerable to gambling-related harm. These issues are the main focus of this action area.

*Action area 5: Promote appropriate and responsive approaches to gambling that support young **Pacific** peoples' positive development.* Pacific adult populations have been identified as being six times more at risk than Pakeha for developing problem gambling behaviour. This makes Pacific peoples the most at risk of all ethnicities in New Zealand. Additionally, Pacific adult populations have also been identified as spending disproportionate amounts of money and more time on gambling-related activities. This together with the Pacific population's youthfulness could contribute to young Pacific people being particularly vulnerable to gambling-related harm. These issues are the main focus of this action area.

*Action area 6: Promote appropriate and responsive approaches to gambling that support young **Asian** peoples' positive development.* Asians comprise the third largest ethnic group in New Zealand, with a high youth population boosted by full fee-paying students. Asian young people may have increased vulnerability to gambling-related harm as they may use gambling as a form of escape or coping mechanism to alleviate loneliness and/or relationship difficulties. These issues are the main focus of this action area.

*Action area 7: Build knowledge on young people and gambling through **information and research**.* There is a current lack of research into young people and their gambling behaviour, with little known about the reasons for gambling-related problems. Most research has focused on risks and problems associated with gambling. New Zealand specific research is even scarcer. Thus there is a great need for more independent research in all areas to look at the role gambling plays in the life of a young person, and to increase the knowledge base regarding gambling and young people in New Zealand.

# Section One

## Introduction

The Problem Gambling Foundation of New Zealand (PGF) in collaboration with the Problem Gambling Committee identified a need for the development of a written paper that would describe strategic directions to help reduce and minimise problem gambling harms amongst young people in New Zealand. Problem gambling by young people was considered to be a priority due to many factors, with a major one being the fact that young people are now growing up in a context/environment of a legal gambling culture, which is substantially different from that experienced by previous generations.

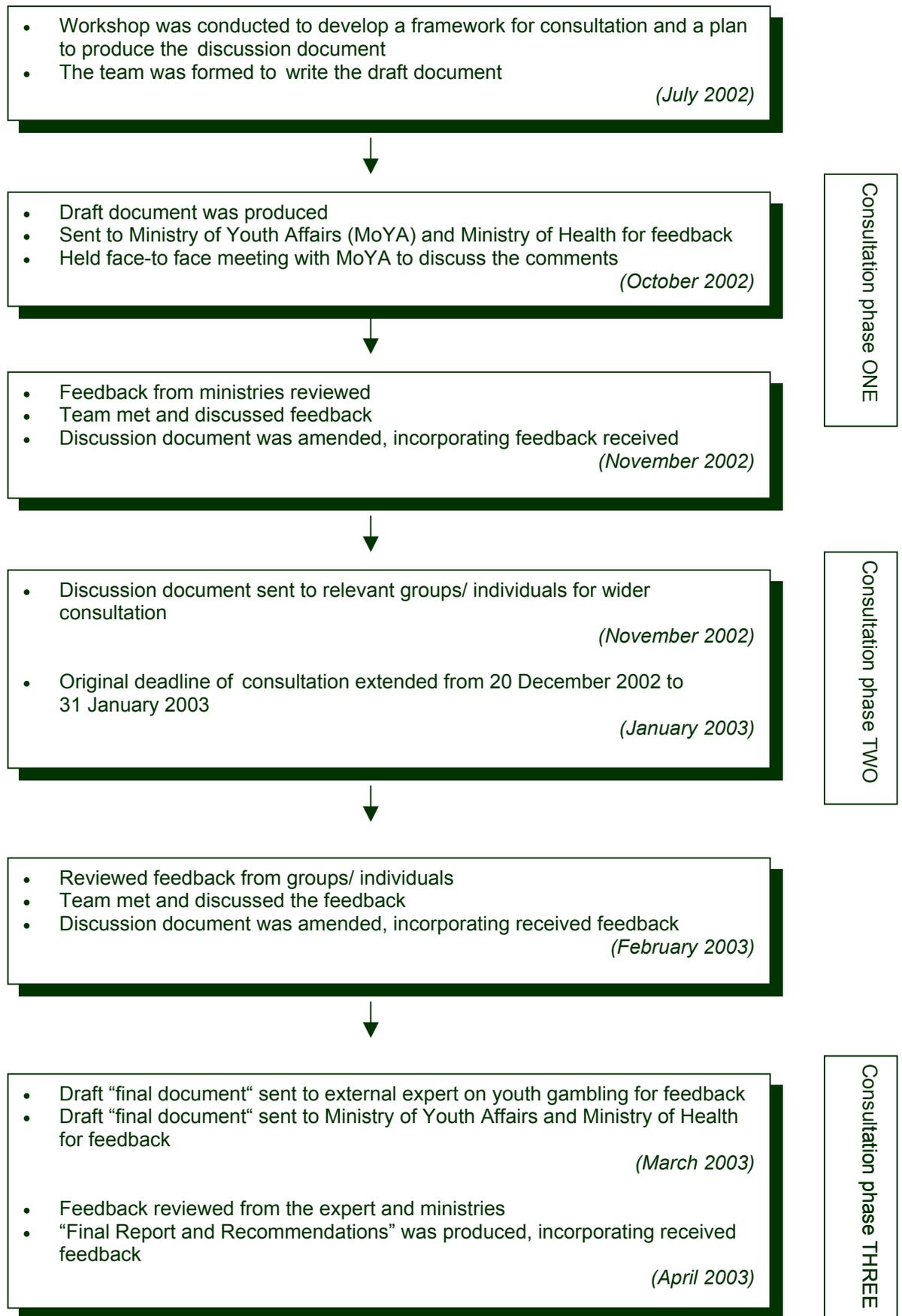
There is currently a lack of any coherent, effective, assessable framework for young people and gambling. Thus, a discussion document concerned with all effects of gambling (both indirectly and directly) on the quality of life of young people was written and circulated to over 150 young people, youth workers and organisations working with youth, for comment and feedback. It is recognised that the scope of consultation for this report was somewhat limited. This was principally due to various timing constraints and available funding. However, every attempt was made to encourage a range of people to respond, including Māori and those from different cultures, young people, and those who work/are involved with young people. From those individuals and organisations who responded, extremely valuable feedback was received on the discussion document, enabling the creation of this final report and its recommendations.

It is hoped that the Government and its agencies, local authorities, gambling service providers, the gambling industry and other organisations who work with young people, will find the recommendations detailed in this report useful to inform the production of their own strategies and directions in regard to the wellbeing of young people living in an environment which gives exposure to a wide range of gambling activities. It is also hoped that these organisations will make available resources to action the recommendations and the relevant actions required in each area of special concern.

The production of the discussion document and this subsequent final report have both been funded by the Problem Gambling Committee, and been produced by the Problem Gambling Foundation of New Zealand and the Centre for Gambling Studies (CGS), University of Auckland.

The development of this report and its recommendations is depicted in Figure 1, overleaf.

**Figure 1. Development of the final report and recommendations**



## Who are young people?

The term “young people” describes young women and young men who are between childhood and adulthood. There are no strict boundaries between “children” and “young people” – they vary depending on the person’s culture and their social and financial circumstances (Ministry of Youth Affairs, 2001). For the purposes of this discussion document, the term “young people” refers to those aged between 12 and 25 years of age unless otherwise stated. It is acknowledged that this age range is relatively large and encompasses those who are adolescent and those who are considered to be young adults and who might have children of their own. As with other activities, aspects of gambling behaviour vary according to the developmental stage of the young person. For example, the preferred mode of gambling, choice of gambling companions, and underlying motivating factors all shift with age. The variable nature of these factors is important when considering the development of appropriate intervention and prevention measures for young people. At present, there is no standard definition for “young people” amongst the gambling field. However, the age range of 12 to 25 for young people has been used by the Ministry of Youth Affairs for their Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa (Ministry of Youth Affairs, 2002) and thus, has also been deemed to be suitable for the purposes of this document.

Laws and government policies are often inconsistent with regard to young people. For example, in New Zealand there is no age limit for gambling on Lotto, Electronic Gambling Machines (EGMs) or on the Internet. Young people can leave school, consent to sex, leave home, get married (with parental consent), be paid the youth minimum wage, and buy scratchie tickets at 16. However, they are not allowed to vote or run as a candidate in national parliamentary elections, buy tobacco and alcohol, or bet at the TAB until they are 18. Young people cannot gamble in a casino until they are aged 20. They cannot do jury service until they are 20 and are not entitled to a student allowance without their parent’s income being assessed until they are 25. Parental rules, social rules, individual circumstances and the law determine young people’s rights and responsibilities. The diversity of these rules and circumstances means that young people are semi-independent and semi-autonomous – somewhere between childhood and adulthood.

## Why is Gambling an Issue for Young People?

### ***Increasing availability and accessibility of gambling activities***

Young people are growing up in a time of extremely rapid social, economic, technological and environmental change. What used to be an activity that had to be sought out has now become a mainstream entertainment in New Zealand. This normalisation of gambling and the proliferation of gambling activities have resulted in increased exposure and easier access to gambling opportunities for young people. The role of gambling in New Zealand has dramatically changed over the last 15 years due to the introduction of new forms of legalised gambling – this history is briefly outlined below:

Pre 1987	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• TAB / Track</li><li>• Community fundraising (Housie / Raffles)</li></ul>
1987	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lotto – national weekly</li></ul>
1988	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Electronic gambling machines (EGMs) introduced</li></ul>
1989	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Instant Kiwi – available in dairies 7 days a week</li></ul>
1990 – 93	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Seven day a week horse / dog racing</li></ul>
1994	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Casino opened in Christchurch</li></ul>
1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Telebingo</li></ul>
1996	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$5m Lotto jackpot</li><li>• Sports gambling</li><li>• Casino opened in Auckland</li><li>• Internet sport / track gambling</li></ul>
1997	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Regular Lotto Jackpot-double draws</li></ul>
1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Casino opened in Queenstown</li><li>• Casino opened in Dunedin</li><li>• Lotto trialed in 30 supermarkets at cashout</li><li>• Almost 14,000 gambling machines</li><li>• Lowered alcohol age and access to machines</li></ul>
2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> casino opened in Queenstown</li><li>• 16,500 gambling machines</li></ul>
2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Casino opened in Hamilton</li><li>• 25,000 gambling machines</li></ul>

This generation of young people is the first to be exposed to such a widely available range of gambling activities. Many of the current forms of gambling are highly attractive to young people. For example, gambling machines strongly resemble video games which are popular with most young people and can lead to the erroneous belief that such forms of gambling can be influenced by skill. These fallacies can be perpetuated due to a lack of knowledge and understanding of the differences between games of chance and games of skill, and the actual (minimal) odds of winning a large sum of money/prize.

Additionally, gambling may often be perceived by young people as being a normal part of life, perhaps because their culture accepts and promotes gambling as a legitimate way of raising funds, e.g., Pacific Islanders playing housie in church to raise funds for the church. Gambling may also be perceived to be “normal” by some young people because they grow up waiting for parents who are at the casino or playing EGMs. Research has indicated that problem gambling is more likely amongst those young people whose parents or family members have also had problems with gambling and that many young people with gambling problems are introduced to the activity by family members or their peers (National Research Council, 1999).

The normalisation of gambling may also occur because gambling activities are widely advertised as being fun and indicate that there are many winners each day/week, e.g., advertisements for the casino on television. Such media portrayals of gambling being socially acceptable, fun and with the potential for (easily) winning life-changing amounts of money can lead to irrational cognitive beliefs regarding gambling. The media also often portray gambling as an activity that returns substantial amounts of money to the community. Whilst gambling can be a harmless entertainment for some people, it is not the case for all people and unfortunately, there are no counter advertisements portraying the number of losers each day/week, the substantial amounts of money lost by gamblers, the profits made by gambling providers or the potential harms that can be caused by excessive or irresponsible gambling.

Technology is rapidly and continuously changing the face of gambling. For example, online gambling offers easy, rapid and anonymous access to gambling for young people in their own homes. This is likely to infringe upon and test young people’s personal limits and control of gambling (Schmekel, 2002).

As most young people gamble for fun and/or excitement these trends are of great concern, particularly as the above fallacies are more common among those at risk of developing gambling problems. At-risk gamblers are more likely than other young people to gamble because they think they are lucky, to win money, to forget problems, or because they think they are good at it (Gupta & Derevensky, 1998a).

## ***Adolescent Problematic Gambling Behaviour***

International research into young people and gambling has established that the majority of young people participate in gambling activities (between 77-83%) (Shaffer & Hall, 1996). Most of these young people manage to engage in gambling in a safe and controlled manner. However, serious problems associated with gambling are increasing, with the prevalence of problematic gambling being two to three times higher for young people than the adult population. International research has found that:

- Between 9.9% and 14.2% of young people are at-risk of developing serious gambling problems (Shaffer & Hall, 1996);
- Between 4.4% and 7.4% of young people are experiencing problem gambling behaviour (Shaffer & Hall, 1996);
- Young males are more likely to be involved in gambling than females (Govoni, Rupcich, & Frisch, 1996; Gupta & Derevensky, 2000; Jacobs, 2000);
- Young males experience more gambling-related problems than females (Govoni et al., 1996; Gupta & Derevensky, 2000; Jacobs, 2000);
- Early exposure to gambling increases the risk of developing gambling problems (retrospective studies have indicated that adult problem gamblers often started to gamble between 10-19 years of age) and often occurs with a parent or someone to whom they are attached (Fisher, 1993; Huxley & Carroll, 1992; Jacobs, 1989); and,
- Preliminary evidence indicates that the earlier a person starts gambling, the more likely they are to develop problems later in life (National Research Council, 1999).

Despite a paucity of gambling research relating to young people in New Zealand (with only two studies focusing on adolescents), similar trends have been observed. One study, a survey of 425 secondary school students indicated that:

- Between 12.7% and 23.8% met criteria for problem gambling;
- Those young people from ethnic minority groups and/or low socio-economic groups were more likely to meet problem gambling criteria;
- More than 10% of young people had gambled on EGMs within the previous 12 months; and,
- Young people who were 'heavy and frequent' videogame players were more likely to think that EGMs could be beaten.

(Sullivan, 2001a, 2001b)

The other study found that young people with gambling problems were more likely to gamble on EGMs and that a quarter had gambled in a New Zealand casino while under the age of 20 (Clarke & Rossen, 2000).

## ***The relationship between gambling and mental health status***

Research in New Zealand on the relationship between problem gambling and mental health status is sparse. However, overseas research tells us that young people who have developed problem gambling behaviour also experience a range of mental health issues.

These include:

- Substance abuse;
- Depression and being unhappy;
- Suicidal thoughts, suicidal behaviour and suicide attempts;
- Anxiety; and,
- Dissociative reactions (such as losing track of time when gambling, experiencing a trance like state, memory black out, feeling like a different person and feeling outside of oneself).

(Blaszczynski, McConaghy, & Frankova, 1990; Dickson, Derevensky, & Gupta, 2002; Gupta & Derevensky, 1998a, 1998b; Jacobs, 2000; Wynne, Smith, & Jacobs, 1996)

It is not yet known if these factors were present prior to the problem gambling behaviour or whether the behaviour caused these responses.

Good mental health is also considered to be related to spirituality, especially in certain cultures which take a holistic view of health, such as Māori and Pacific Island cultures. It would follow, therefore, that problem gambling behaviour could also lead to negative impacts on spiritual well-being.

## ***Impact of gambling on social/personal development***

Young people gamble for a variety of reasons, including fun and/or excitement, entertainment, to do things with friends and to win money. However, young people who experience gambling-related problems are more likely than those who gamble socially, to use gambling as a means to escape problems, alleviate depression, relax, feel older, and for social involvement. Additionally, young people are easily influenced by their peers (if regular or uncontrolled gambling becomes considered the “in” thing to do amongst a particular peer set) and it could lead to a perpetuation of the negative impacts of gambling.

Young people who are experiencing gambling-related problems are more likely than other young people to:

- Be involved in other potentially addictive behaviours;
- Exhibit delinquent behaviours, including illegal or dishonest acts such as stealing money;

- Perform poorly at school (including truanting from school);
- Experience disruptions to family/peer relationships;
- Exhibit anti-social behaviour; and,
- Replace friendships/relationships with gambling associates.

(Fisher, 1998; Fisher, 1999; Gupta & Derevensky, 1998a;  
Volberg & Moore, 1999)

These gambling-related issues can have long-term impacts on the social/personal development of young people and can lead to impairment in the development of a healthy identity.

### ***Impact of gambling on physical development***

Whilst there is a lack of research on the relationship between gambling and health status, certain forms of gambling, especially the sedentary forms such as EGMs (where players may spend long periods of time in one position), have been shown to impact negatively on health.

The associated physical effects associated with gambling in adults have included:

- High blood pressure;
- Back problems;
- Heart disease;
- Alcohol abuse;
- Tobacco-related problems (often from second-hand exposure; passive smoking); and,
- Stress-related symptoms.

(Potenza, Fiellin, Heninger, Rounsaville, & Mazure, 2002;  
Raeburn, 2001)

It would follow that some of these physical health effects could also manifest in young people who spend extended periods playing EGMs, as they arise from poor posture, poor eating and drinking habits and lack of exercise.

Additionally, young people can also be at risk of impaired physical health from indirect consequences of adult gambling, for example if a parent gambles away the housekeeping money leaving little or none for adequate clothing and nutrition (Darbyshire, Oster, & Carrig, 2001).

As adolescence is a period of crucial physical development, the immediate and long-term physical consequences of gambling are particularly pertinent for this population.

# A Strengths-Based Approach to Young People and Gambling

## What is it?

A consistent strengths-based approach to young people and gambling is about young people being able to grow up and develop the skills and attitudes they need to take part positively in society, now and in the future.

We believe the following features are a more appropriate way to address young people and gambling issues rather than the more traditional deficit-based approaches. This approach is consistent with that used and outlined in *Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa* produced by the Ministry of Youth Affairs (Ministry of Youth Affairs, 2002).

Important features of a strengths-based approach involve:

- Highlighting the positive rather than the negative;
- Avoiding defining young people as ‘the problem’;
- Considering the impact of broader social change and the impact this has on young people’s healthy development;
- Recognising individual and collective strengths;
- Endorsing that young people have the ability to bring about change, to make decisions, and to acquire knowledge;
- Recognising that resources are inherent within the person and group;
- Focusing on the building of individual and collective strengths;
- Recognising the importance of resilience, empowerment, and self-determination; and,
- Acknowledging the diversity of the ‘youth’ population (age, culture, socio-economic status, family background).

By adopting a strengths-based approach in this report and its recommendations, we are committed to being focused on strengths as well as problems, interested in building the best things in life as well as dealing with the pathology, and concerned with fulfilling the lives of healthy young people as well as healing the wounds caused by gambling problems or other addictive behaviours. More specifically, this includes:

- When addressing gambling problems, external factors (e.g., family/whanau support, adult role models) and internal factors (e.g., commitment to learning, striving for success, positive values, sense of purpose) will be taken into account;

- Fostering the positive characters of young people including the aspects of hope, wisdom, creativity, leadership, willingness to help others, altruism, courage, spirituality, responsibility, autonomy, self-determination and perseverance; and,
- Acknowledging that young people can sustain their own motivation, directing and monitoring their actions over time. Individuals can create order, meaning and direction in their lives.

(Bernard, 2002; Larson, 2000; Rich, 2003; Steen, Kachorek, & Peterson, 2003)

## ***Protective and risk factors associated with the gambling behaviour of young people***

A strengths-based youth development approach recognises that ‘protective’ and ‘risk’ factors interact and contribute to the positive adjustment of youth – these factors occur and interact throughout a young person’s development.

- **Protective factors** enhance life opportunities and promote good health and wellbeing. Examples of protective factors include: safe, supportive neighbourhoods; staying longer at school; thinking skills, including problem solving and seeing things from others’ perspectives; positive social interactions with people; attachment to one’s community and one’s culture; and a large net of social support from wider family, teachers, school, etc.

Most of these protective factors have been found to be applicable across addictions and for every health risk behaviour measure except pregnancy. While protective factors for problem gambling and young people have not been specifically examined, it has been proposed that these factors may also help prevent young people from engaging in problem gambling (Dickson et al., 2002).

- **Risk factors** increase the likelihood of difficulties in life and poor health and wellbeing. Examples of risk factors include: low self-esteem, poor social or coping skills; academic failure; heavy use of alcohol and other drugs; transience and high mobility; chronic marital conflict and lack of social support from family, neighbourhood and wider community.

Unlike protective factors, there has been a large amount of research into the risk factors for problem gambling and young people. The following factors have been found to increase the likelihood of young people experiencing gambling problems:

- Having poor coping skills;
- Having parents who are experiencing problem gambling behaviour;

- Having peers who gamble;
- Being male;
- Having a reasonably high disposable personal income;
- Being a greater risk taker;
- Having lower self-esteem;
- Dissociating more frequently when gambling; and,
- Starting gambling at an early age.

## **Links between this report and the Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa**

The Government's *Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa* (Ministry of Youth Affairs, 2002) closely informed the development of the discussion document which was the basis for this report (see Figure 2). Among other things, that Strategy provides a policy platform for public sector agencies when developing policy and initiatives for young people aged 12 to 25 years inclusive. It suggested actions that can be taken to support the positive development of young people. The principles encompassed within the strength-based approach to positive youth development outlined in the Strategy were:

- Understanding young people and their needs within their wider social and economic contexts and dominant cultural values with which they grow up;
- Understanding that healthy development is shaped by young people having positive connections with many social environments;
- Applying a consistent strengths-based approach to young people's health and wellbeing, which addresses both risk and protective factors, as well as developing the range of skills they need;
- Supporting and equipping the people who work with young people to enable quality relationships;
- Providing opportunities for young people to fully participate and increase their control of what happens to them and around them through advice, participation and engagement; and,
- Acknowledging that positive, healthy youth development is informed by effective research, evaluation and information gathering.

In relation to gambling, a positive youth development approach:

- Forms the platform for consistent youth policies and programmes to achieve better outcomes for young people within a society with high levels of gambling activity;
- Acknowledges that young people are able to initiate change; and,
- Acknowledges the wider social and economic factors related to gambling that either restrict or enable positive outcomes for young people.

## Links between this report and the Treaty of Waitangi

The Treaty of Waitangi has been identified as the founding document of Aotearoa/New Zealand - and as an establishing contract between Māori and the Crown. The Crown is represented by the New Zealand Government and its organisations which are obliged to recognise and act in accordance with the Treaty.

The underlying aspirations of the Treaty of Waitangi give assurances for the well-being of Māori and non-Māori by recognising the importance of such factors as social and economic issues which are actively promoted under the Treaty. The Treaty is, therefore, a key document which provides a framework for Māori and non-Māori to exercise control over their health and well-being. This includes young people within all contexts.

The Treaty has a key role in addressing inequalities between Māori and non-Māori, particularly within health sectors. It is critical that the Treaty receives formal recognition with regard to gambling-related issues including those for young people. Treaty principles and provisions of particular relevance to health are partnership, participation and active protection.

1. **Partnership** refers to ongoing relationships between the Crown and Māori. A youth gambling health promotion programme collaboratively delivered by a Māori and a mainstream organisation would be one example.
2. **Participation** emphasises Māori involvement in all aspects of society within Aotearoa/New Zealand. This includes involvement of Māori stakeholders in the planning, delivery and monitoring of health programmes that are relevant to Māori. An example would be the inclusion of young Māori people in the design of a youth gambling health promotion programme.
3. **Active Protection** recognises that the Crown needs to be pro-active in health promotion and the development of preventative strategies. This may mean putting in additional resources so that Māori are able to enjoy equal health status with non-Māori. This would include Māori youth.

These three principles have a role in understanding health and sickness, the development of health policy, the delivery of health services and programmes, and is relevant to discussions regarding young people and gambling in Aotearoa/New Zealand (see Figure 2).

It is, therefore, important that any document considering the health and well-being of Māori should encompass Māori determinants of health. In the Te whare tapa whā model of health (Durie, 1994), there are four major aspects of health to be considered, being spiritual (te taha wairua), emotional/psychological (te taha hinengaro), physical (te taha tinana) and social (te taha whānau).

## Links between this report and the Responsible Gambling Bill

Current legislation around gambling is contained in three different statutes, the Racing Act 1971, The Gaming and Lotteries Act 1977 and the Casino Control Act 1990.

As these Acts have very different objectives, the legislation tends to be confusing and in some instances conflicting. Gambling providers and consumers are treated in different ways in different sectors and the varying levels of regulation do not necessarily correspond to the risk posed to players and the community. For example, the age at which young people are permitted to gamble varies widely and depends upon the gambling activity.

This situation reflects a lack of clear strategy or intent in policy. The Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) is the government department responsible for the administration and enforcement of all three gambling statutes. Currently no government agency has responsibility for community education about gambling or for the prevention and treatment of problem gambling.

The proposed Responsible Gambling Bill (RGB) is intended to:

- Integrate the Gaming and Lotteries Act and the Casino Control Act into a single Act;
- Reflect and support clearly the government strategy of minimising harm caused by gambling;
- Strengthen communities and increase local involvement in decisions about availability of gambling;
- Better control the growth of gambling; and,
- Better ensure the role of gambling is to raise funds for community purposes.

Under the RGB, it is proposed that the DIA will continue to be responsible for licensing gambling activities and for administering and enforcing the legislation. It is also proposed that the Ministry of Health (Ministry of Health, 2002a) will have responsibility for developing and managing an integrated public health response that will (seek to) minimise harm and engage in health promotion to:

- **Protect** all population groups from gambling harm through responsible gambling policies, legislation and public safety approaches;
- **Prevent** gambling-related problems in individuals and population groups through public awareness, early identification of problems and provision of information, counselling and interventions for problem gambling; and,
- **Promote** increased knowledge and information, responsible choices, general well-being and community participation in gambling issues and reduction of gambling problems among individuals, families, Iwi and communities.

The Responsible Gambling Bill was introduced to Parliament on 19 February 2002 and was referred to the Government Administration Select Committee. The Select Committee presented its report to Parliament on 19 November 2002. The Government is expected to vote on the RGB later this year (2003).

It is considered important that any legislative document (such as the RGB) should also specifically guide youth gambling policies (see Figure 2). This is especially important considering that youth gambling is less researched than adult gambling, but a majority of young people admit to gambling. Traditionally, changes to gambling policies have occurred in response to social changes, gaming industry pressure, introduction of new forms of gambling and to the negative impacts of gambling. This has led to the enactment and revision of policies in an incremental fashion which can lead to overlapping regulation and policy gaps. The RGB could be a means to remedy some of these shortcomings and ensure that the issue of young people and gambling is concurrently addressed.

## **Links between this report and other relevant documents**

This report and its recommendations is intended to complement other relevant key documents (see Figure 2), such as:

- Ministry of Health's "*A Draft National Plan for Minimising Gambling Harm: Consultation Document*" produced to guide the Ministry of Health during the formative period of transition and initial responsibility for funding services relating to gambling and to develop a longer term strategy to minimise the harm caused by gambling (Ministry of Health, 2002a, p. iii).
- "*Youth Health: A Guide to Action*" produced by the Ministry of Health, in conjunction with the Ministry of Youth Affairs (Ministry of Health, 2002d). It is a plan of action to improve the health of New Zealand's 12 to 24 year olds. It sets out goals, objectives and specific actions aimed at doing this (page iii). It includes two recommended actions relating to gambling which are to:
  - Develop a range of new public health programmes to prevent problem gambling among young people; and,
  - Develop treatment services for young people who are experiencing problem gambling.

- Ministry of Health's "*New Zealand Youth Health Status Report*" (Ministry of Health, 2002c) produced as a companion document to "*Youth Health: A Guide to Action*" (Ministry of Health, 2002d), provides a snapshot of the health of New Zealanders aged 12 to 24 years. It states that further research into the scope of the problem of youth gambling and strategies to address the problem are required.
- Applied Behavioural Science, University of Auckland's "*Discussion Document: Towards a National Strategy for the Development of Research on Tobacco, Alcohol, Other Drugs and Gambling*" (Applied Behavioural Science: University of Auckland, 2002) produced to evaluate aspects of the current arrangements for public-good tobacco, alcohol, other drugs and gambling research and outline possible options for developing or improving them (page iii).
- Ministry of Health's "*He Korowai Oranga: Māori Health Strategy*" (Ministry of Health, 2002b) produced to support Māori families in achieving their maximum health and wellbeing while recognising the contextual inter-dependence of people.

**Figure 2:** *Links between this report, the Treaty of Waitangi and other relevant documents/legislations*



## Section Two

### Vision and Aims

The PGF and CGS proposed vision for young people and gambling is:

***In a society with high levels of gambling activities, the wellbeing of young people will be ensured.***

The PGF and CGS proposed aims for young people and gambling in New Zealand are:

- To promote the provision of appropriate information and the development of skills for young people that facilitates informed choices and responsible behaviour in relation to gambling, within their communities and the wider society;
- To help adult New Zealanders understand the importance of the impact of their values, attitudes, beliefs and behaviours on the development of young people's gambling behaviour;
- To inform groups responsible for gambling products and/or environments such as territorial authorities, central government agencies and the gambling industry, about issues pertinent to youth gambling (particularly the problems and solutions) including what young people have to say in relation to gambling; and,
- To work with the Ministry of Health and the Department of Internal Affairs to develop effective policies around gambling.

### Areas of Special Concern and Recommended Actions

The action areas considered to be of special concern are as follows and are not listed in any order of importance.

Action area 1: Ensure a consistent **strengths-based approach** to gambling and young people

Action area 2: Equip **adults** to better understand the negative impacts of gambling and effectively support young people with regard to these concerns

Action area 3: Ensure **legislation** and its enforcement minimise the harm to young people from gambling

Action area 4: Promote appropriate and responsive approaches to gambling that supports positive development of **Māori** youth (rangatahi)

Action area 5: Promote appropriate and responsive approaches to gambling that support young **Pacific** peoples' positive development

Action area 6: Promote appropriate and responsive approaches to gambling that support young **Asian** peoples' positive development

Action area 7: Build knowledge on young people and gambling through **information and research**

### **Action area 1**

*Ensure a consistent **strengths-based approach** to gambling and young people*

Groups and individuals interacting with young people (e.g., educational facilities, community organisations, sports clubs, families/whanau etc) need to ensure that issues related to young people build capacity for personal growth and highlight the important features of a strengths-based approach as listed on pages 14 and 15.

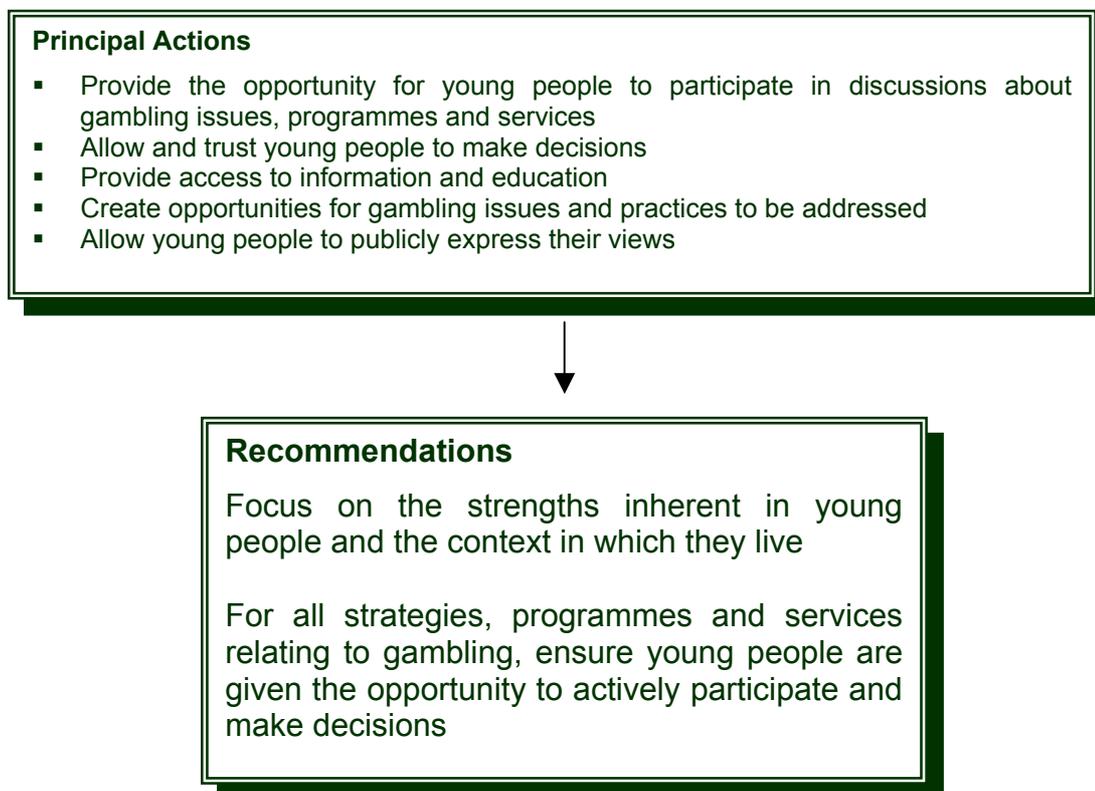
Critical components of a strengths-based approach include focusing on the strengths inherent in young people, the active participation of young people in the programmes and services for them and acknowledgment of the diverse backgrounds and culture of young people. It is acknowledged that it might be difficult to encourage young people to actively participate in programmes and services. However, one way that this might be achieved could be by ensuring that strategies for the development of programmes and services are age-appropriate, taking into account the general cognitive and behavioural development of young people at various ages. For example, the way that a 12 year old views gambling may be very different from the way that a 24 year old views gambling.

Relevant actions to ensure a consistent strengths-based approach to gambling and young people include:

- Ensuring that young people have the opportunity to participate in discussions about gambling issues, programmes and services for them;
- Endorsing that young people have the ability to bring about change, to make decisions, and to acquire knowledge in relation to excessive gambling;
- Providing opportunities for young people to access information and education in relation to responsible gambling, the risks associated with gambling, and the costs which include the negative impact of problem gambling behaviour on health, social and economic outcomes for individuals and their families;
- Getting groups and individuals working with young people, for example schools, to analyse how they currently operate in relation to gambling issues;
- Creating strategies to enable the empowerment of families to address gambling issues and access appropriate support systems;
- Creating networks to enable groups and individuals working with young people to address gambling-related issues;
- Providing opportunities for young people to participate in local communities and to make decisions about the growth of gambling, using a public health approach; and,
- Using public media to help more young people express their views.

The relevant actions detailed on the previous page have been summarised into *principal actions* and an overall encompassing *recommendation*. These are detailed in Figure 3 below.

**Figure 3.** *Ensure a consistent strengths-based approach to gambling and young people*



## **Action area 2**

*Equip **adults** to better understand the negative impacts of gambling and effectively support young people with regard to these concerns*

Young people's positive development is very much influenced by adults who interact with them in a variety of roles and at various levels. Some of the roles that adults play are as parents, grandparents, whanau members, caregivers, neighbours, co-workers, friends, or by working with young people on a voluntary or professional basis.

Young people have grown up in a New Zealand that is very different from the one in which the adults grew up in, with the availability of gambling opportunities over the past 15 years being substantially greater than it was during the time when today's adults were young people. Therefore, adults may not have a clear understanding of the diversity of positions that young people are facing and adopting, with regard to gambling.

A skilled workforce is also needed to work with young people affected by gambling. This includes areas of health promotion, prevention and treatment.

Therefore, it is important that adults are helped to:

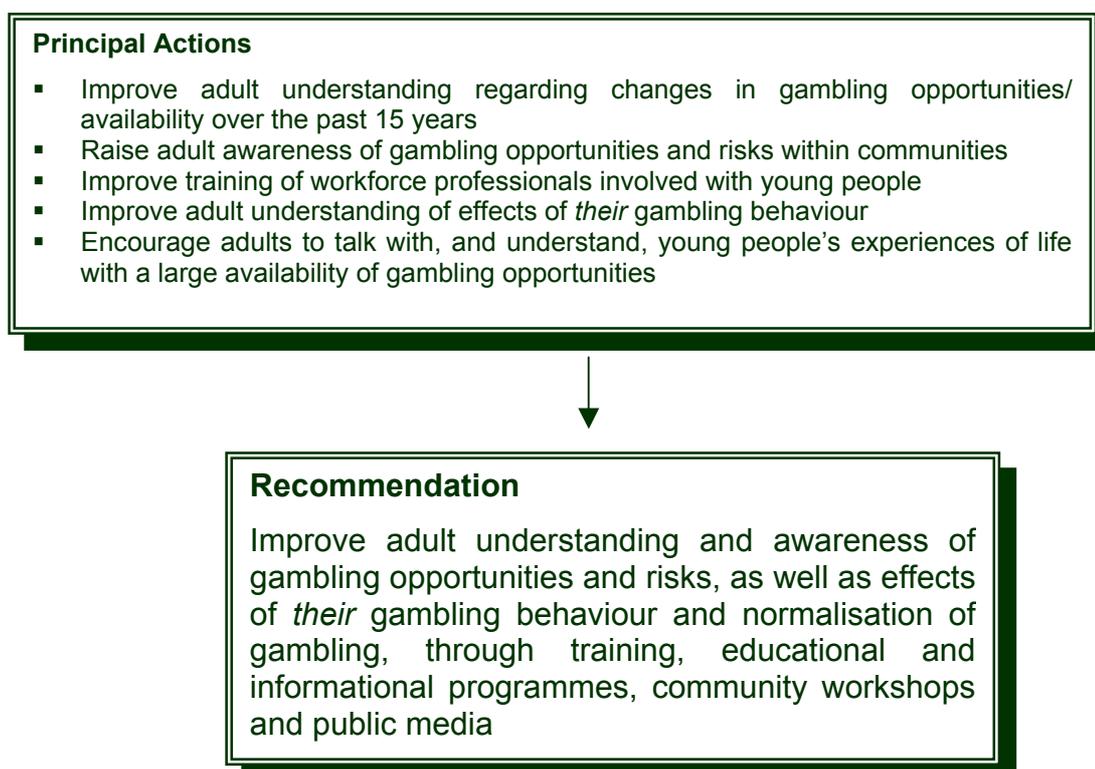
- Understand their position as role models, e.g., how their behaviour regarding gambling can make it a normal event (the "normalisation" of gambling activities);
- Understand the negative impacts of excessive gambling on cultural maintenance;
- Understand the reasons why and how young people gamble, and thereby how to support them;
- Help identify signs of gambling problems amongst young people;
- Effectively deliver appropriate brief interventions/programmes to young people who are affected by gambling, in order to minimise the harm posed by the current environment;
- Be able to respond to young people who are at-risk from gambling problems; and,
- Support the development of young people and to increase positive relationships between themselves and young people.

Relevant actions to equip adults to better understand the negative impacts of gambling and effectively support young people with regard to these concerns include:

- Improving the understanding of adults regarding the changes that have occurred in gambling activities and availability over the past 15 years;
- Raising awareness of gambling opportunities and risks within communities, through educational/informational programmes, community workshops and public media;
- Improving training and facilitating workforce development for relevant professionals (e.g., teachers, social workers, health care professionals, probation officers and others working within the criminal justice system, church pastors and youth leaders) in effective approaches to youth gambling;
- Improving the understanding of adults about the effects of the normalisation of gambling within families/whanau and the concurrent effects that excessive gambling may cause;
- Improving the understanding of adults regarding the impact of *their* gambling behaviour and how it affects the whole family/whanau; and,
- Encouraging adults to talk with young people to understand how the young person experiences a life with a large availability of gambling opportunities.

The relevant actions detailed above have been summarised into *principal actions* and an overall encompassing *recommendation*. These are detailed in Figure 4 below.

**Figure 4.** Equip adults to better understand the negative impacts of gambling and effectively support young people with regard to these concerns



### **Action area 3**

*Ensure **legislation** and its enforcement minimise the harm to young people from gambling*

It is contended that the lack of a clear government gambling policy and supporting legislation has contributed to the rapid increase in consumption of gambling and associated increased harm and growing numbers of problem gamblers. New at-risk groups are emerging, in particular young people, Māori, Pacific peoples, Asian and women gamblers. To consider one example, the lowering of the drinking age to 18 has increased access for young people (in the 16 to 20 age group) to bars where our most potent form of gambling (EGMs) is mainly located. EGMs represent the gambling mode of choice for over 75% of people presenting for help with their gambling problems and many are specifically designed to appeal to young people, by mimicking video games. The design of EGMs and their targeting of young people, therefore, requires appropriate monitoring and regulation to protect this at-risk group.

Some forms of continuous gambling, such as EGMs and Internet gambling, are particularly addictive and carry a higher risk for the development of problems than other forms of gambling. Recent legislation lowering the drinking age (referred to above) mean there is a real danger that young people in particular will be at ever greater risk of incurring significant harm associated with gambling. Without sound policy in place and appropriate legislation being enacted this risk will continue to increase.

PGF and CGS believe that the Government should be responsive to young peoples' perspectives and perceptions in developing gambling social policy and legislation. Furthermore, PGF and CGS believe that government agencies should co-ordinate and work effectively together on policy and legislation for developing safe and responsible gambling among young people.

What is required is a coherent legislative framework set around and supporting a national public health policy that will encourage responsibility in gambling. For example, this could link in with the Ministry of Health's Draft National Plan for Minimising Gambling Harm (Ministry of Health, 2002a).

A coherent legislative framework should ensure that:

- The gambling industry and in particular gambling providers, are aware of and meet their obligations and responsibilities to provide safe gambling environments and to encourage responsible gambling by players;
- Gambling products should spell out clearly the odds, costs and risks associated with the product, i.e., all the information necessary for players to make informed choices about their consumption of particular gambling products;

- Every gambler, and young people in particular, are informed and educated and are fully aware of the risks and real costs of gambling, together with the means to gamble responsibly;
- Other people (which includes not only licensed providers but parents, relatives, and friends of young or underage gamblers) should be aware of and held responsible for their behaviour in providing, promoting or facilitating access to gambling by young people;
- The impact on young people of the growth of gambling should be taken into consideration by the groups responsible for gambling products and/or their environments;
- The relevant government agencies should be appropriately resourced and skilled in undertaking the necessary enforcement and policing of the legislation and regulations, licence conditions, gambling equipment standards and game rules; and,
- A clear, evaluative framework is developed to measure the effectiveness of legislations.

Relevant actions to ensure legislation and its enforcement minimise the harm to young people from gambling include:

- Providing the opportunity for young people to participate in discussions about policies related to gambling;
- Enabling young people to have the opportunity to participate in positively influencing the regulation of gambling through, for example, local community and government processes;
- Reviewing some of the legal age limits related to gambling;
- Encouraging government agencies to work together on policies, legislations and programmes related to gambling;
- Encouraging government agencies to analyse how their policies on gambling affect young people; and,
- Encouraging the enforcement of all policies and regulations to ensure their effectiveness, e.g., through the formation of a government watchdog body.

The relevant actions detailed above have been summarised into *principal actions* and an overall encompassing *recommendation*. These are detailed in Figure 5 overleaf.

**Figure 5.** Ensure legislation and its enforcement minimise the harm to young people from gambling

**Principal Actions**

- Allow young people the opportunity to positively influence/input into policy-making and also in relation to availability of gambling opportunities
- Review legal age limits for gambling activities
- Encourage co-ordinated government policies, legislations and programmes that are monitored for their impact on young people
- Encourage effective enforcing of all policies and regulations relating to gambling



**Recommendation**

Government policies, legislations and programmes in relation to gambling should take into consideration the views and needs of young people, should be co-ordinated, effectively monitored and enforced

#### **Action area 4**

*Promote appropriate and responsive approaches to gambling that supports positive development of **Māori** youth (rangatahi)*

Māori youth (rangatahi) under the age of 25 make up a larger proportion (56% in 2001) of the total Māori population, compared with 36% (young people under the age of 25) of the total New Zealand population (Statistics New Zealand, 2001). The number of young Māori as a proportion of Aotearoa/New Zealand's total youth population is forecast to increase substantially, creating a number of opportunities and challenges for government agencies, Māori and communities in general.

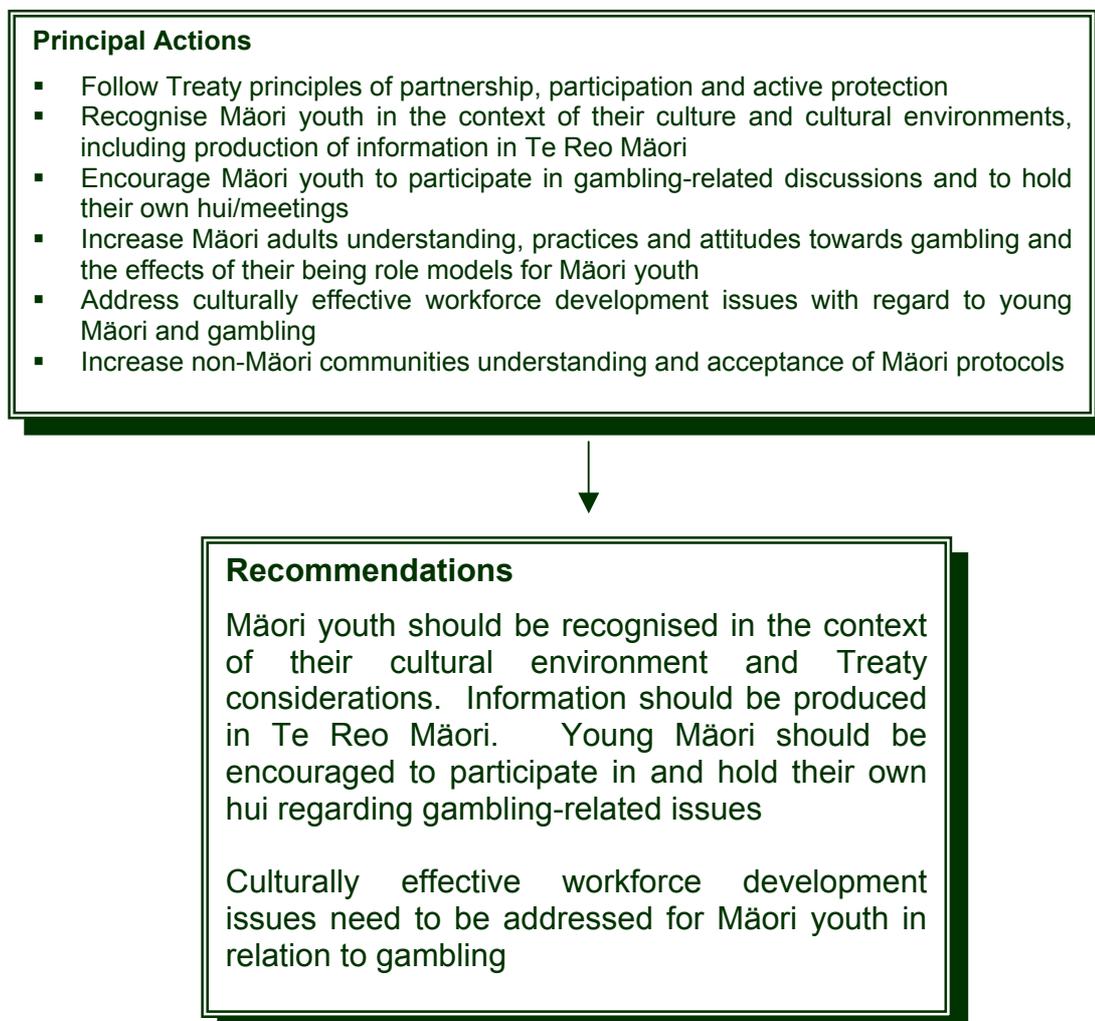
Māori adult populations have been identified as experiencing disproportionate harm from gambling, with a risk three times that of New Zealand European/Pakeha for developing problem or pathological gambling behaviour. However, there is little research or empirical information for Māori youth in New Zealand and gambling. This population's youthfulness contributes to it being more susceptible to gambling involvement and gambling-related harm in this country.

Taking into consideration the Treaty principles of partnership, participation and active protection, relevant actions to promote appropriate and responsive approaches to gambling that supports the positive development of Māori youth (rangatahi) include:

- Recognising Māori youth in the context of whānau, hapū and iwi;
- Recognising that Māori youth often live in conflicting cultural systems;
- Encouraging good adult role modelling for young Māori involved in, exposed to or affected by gambling;
- Enabling young Māori to participate in discussions in relation to gambling that affect them and others they respect;
- Encouraging young Māori to hold hui/meetings to discuss gambling issues and how gambling can affect themselves and others that they respect;
- Encouraging Māori communities to examine their practices and attitudes in relation to gambling;
- Addressing culturally effective workforce development issues to improve capacity building and up-skilling of young people and youth workers in regard to gambling;
- Increasing Māori adults and significant others understanding of gambling and awareness raising in regard to gambling;
- Ensuring information, education and public media regarding gambling are culturally appropriate, including being produced in Te Reo Māori; and,
- Increasing non-Māori communities' understanding and acceptance of Māori protocols and the rights of Māori youth to participate in a culturally appropriate way in regard to gambling.

The relevant actions detailed on the previous page have been summarised into *principal actions* and an overall encompassing *recommendation*. These are detailed in Figure 6 below.

**Figure 6.** Promote appropriate and responsive approaches to gambling that supports positive development of Māori youth (rangatahi)



### **Action area 5**

*Promote appropriate and responsive approaches to gambling that support young **Pacific** peoples' positive development*

Pacific peoples in New Zealand make up a rapidly growing, diverse and changing population (6.5% of the total population). The main Pacific ethnic groups are Samoan (50% of the total Pacific population), Cook Islands (23%), Tongan (16%), Niuean (9%), Fijian (4%) and Tokelauan (2%) (Statistics New Zealand, 2001).

The Pacific peoples' population is predominantly young and highly urbanised, and an increasing number of Pacific youth are of mixed heritage as a result of inter-cultural marriages. In 2001, most of the Pacific peoples' resident in New Zealand were born here (58%), with the median age of the New Zealand born population being just 12 years, compared to 37 years for those born in the islands (Statistics New Zealand, 2001).

Pacific peoples' adult populations have been identified as the most at risk of all ethnicities, with a risk six times that of New Zealand European/Pakeha for problem or pathological gambling behaviour (Australian Institute for Gambling Research, 1998). In 1991, as a percentage of the total Pacific peoples gambling population in New Zealand, 16% were reported as being problem gamblers and 15% as pathological gamblers. This compared unfavourably with all other ethnic groups (Abbott & Volberg, 2000). Furthermore, Pacific peoples adult populations are identified as spending disproportionately large amounts of money, and spending more time on gambling-related activities (Australian Institute for Gambling Research, 1998).

The implications of this for young Pacific peoples are discerning negative gambling-related harms, which impact on the physical, mental, social and spiritual wellbeing of this population.

There is a paucity of research or empirical information regarding young Pacific peoples in New Zealand and gambling. This population's youthfulness contributes to it being more susceptible to gambling involvement and gambling-related harm in this country.

Relevant actions to promote appropriate and responsive approaches to gambling that support young Pacific peoples' positive development include:

- Recognising that young Pacific peoples often live in conflicting cultural systems;
- Encouraging good adult role modelling for young Pacific peoples involved in, exposed to or affected by gambling;
- Acknowledging young Pacific peoples may be significantly affected by gambling problems in the family and empowering them to seek help in addressing the problems;

- Encouraging ethnic-specific research on gambling-related harm and harm minimisation for young Pacific peoples;
- Enabling young Pacific peoples to participate in discussions in relation to gambling that affect them and others they respect;
- Encouraging young Pacific peoples to hold fono/meetings to discuss gambling issues and how gambling can affect themselves and others that they respect;
- Encouraging Pacific communities to examine their practices and attitudes in relation to gambling;
- Addressing culturally effective workforce development issues to improve capacity building and up-skilling of young people and youth workers in regard to gambling;
- Increasing adult Pacific peoples and significant others understanding of gambling and awareness raising in regard to gambling;
- Ensuring information, education and public media regarding gambling are culturally appropriate, including being produced in ethnic specific languages; and,
- Increasing non-Pacific peoples communities understanding and acceptance of Pacific peoples protocols and the rights of Pacific youth to participate in a culturally appropriate way in regard to gambling.

The relevant actions detailed above and on the previous page have been summarised into *principal actions* and an overall encompassing *recommendation*. These are detailed in Figure 7 overleaf.

**Figure 7.** Promote appropriate and responsive approaches to gambling that support young Pacific peoples' positive development

#### **Principal Actions**

- Acknowledge that young Pacific peoples may be significantly affected by gambling problems in the family, are more at risk of gambling problems and empower them to seek help
- Recognise young Pacific peoples in the context of their ethnic-specific cultures and cultural environments
- Encourage young Pacific peoples to participate in gambling-related discussions and to hold their own fono/meetings
- Increase Pacific adults understanding, practices and attitudes towards gambling and the effects of their being role models for young Pacific people
- Address culturally effective workforce development issues with regard to young Pacific peoples and gambling
- Increase non-Pacific communities understanding and acceptance of Pacific protocols



#### **Recommendations**

Young Pacific peoples should be recognised as being more at risk of gambling problems and of being affected by gambling within the family, should be recognised in the context of their cultural environment, and should be encouraged to participate in and hold their own fono regarding gambling-related issues

Culturally effective workforce development issues need to be addressed for young Pacific peoples in relation to gambling

### **Action area 6**

*Promote appropriate and responsive approaches to gambling that support young **Asian** peoples' positive development*

Asians are the third largest ethnic group in New Zealand, after European and Māori. Based on the 2001 census results (Statistics New Zealand, 2002), by 30 June 2001, the Asian population had reached 240,000 or 6.7% of the New Zealand population. Chinese are the largest ethnic group within this Asian population (44%), followed by Indian (26%) and Korean (8%) (Statistics New Zealand, 2002). These populations include New Zealand born as well as migrant Asians. As well as immigrants, over 10,000 refugees from Southeast Asia came to New Zealand between 1977 and 1992. The largest groups are Cambodian, Vietnamese and Laotian. These brief statistics show that members of the Asian communities come from diverse cultural backgrounds.

On the whole, Asian ethnic groups in New Zealand are youthful. In 2001, half of all Koreans and Cambodians were under 24 years of age. Of the Chinese, Indian and Vietnamese groups, the proportions of young people aged less than 24 years were 45%, 43% and 48% respectively, compared with 36% (of children under the age of 25) in the total population (Statistics New Zealand, 2002). In recent years, the growth of Asian full fee-paying (FFP) students has been significant. The number of Asian FFP students in primary and secondary schools more than doubled between 1996 and 2001. The number of Asian FFP students in the public tertiary sector quadrupled between 1994 and 2001.

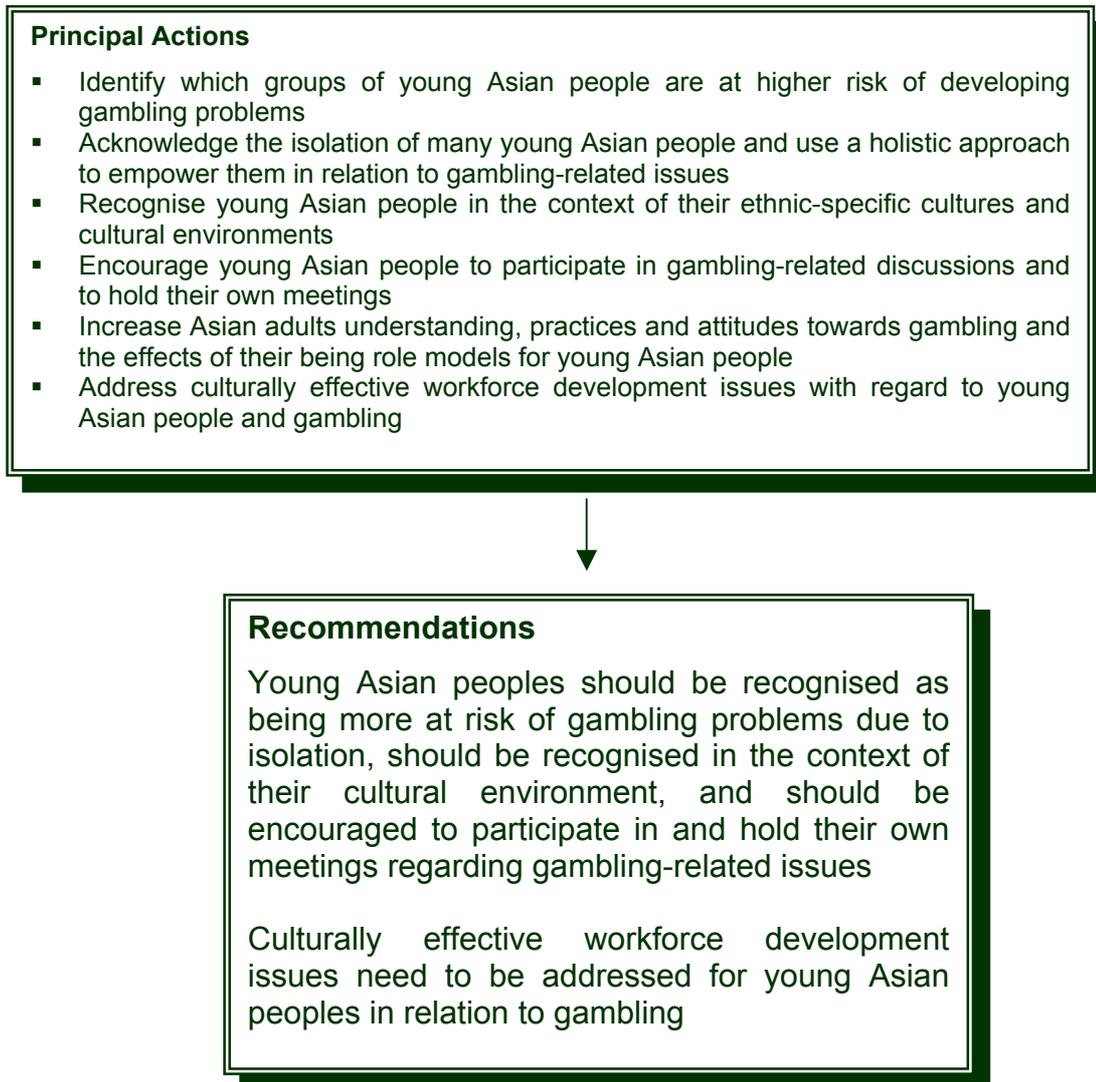
Research suggests that some people may use gambling as a form of escape or coping mechanism when they are confronted by problems. The common problems faced by young Asian peoples include loneliness and relationship difficulties resulting from language barriers, problems associated with adjusting to New Zealand life style, loss of cultural identity, unemployment, and stress at school or work. Although there is little research or empirical information on young Asian peoples in New Zealand and gambling, the Asian population may be more susceptible to gambling involvement and gambling-related harm in this country. Nevertheless, it is important to realise that among the young Asian peoples in New Zealand, there is great diversity in the level of participation in gambling activities, and extent of gambling problems (Tan & Tse, 2002; Wong & Tse, in press).

Relevant actions to promote appropriate and responsive approaches to gambling that support young Asian peoples' positive development include:

- Identifying which groups of young Asian people are at higher risk of developing gambling problems;
- Promoting help-seeking behaviours amongst young Asian peoples who are affected by gambling problems;
- Acknowledging that young Asian peoples may be significantly affected by gambling problems in the family and empowering them to seek help in addressing the problems;
- Recognising that Asian young peoples often live in conflicting cultural systems;
- Encouraging a wider holistic approach to examine the issues of isolation and disempowerment for young Asians and how this may relate to gambling problems;
- Encouraging good adult role modelling for young Asians involved in, exposed to or affected by gambling;
- Enabling young Asians to participate in discussions in relation to gambling that affect them and others they respect;
- Encouraging young Asians to hold meetings to discuss gambling issues and how gambling can affect themselves and others that they respect;
- Encouraging Asian communities to examine their practices and attitudes in relation to gambling;
- Ensuring information, education and public media regarding gambling are culturally appropriate, including being produced in the ethnic-specific languages;
- Addressing culturally effective workforce development issues to improve capacity building and up-skilling of young people and youth workers in regard to gambling; and,
- Increasing adult Asians and significant others understanding of gambling and awareness raising in regard to gambling.

The relevant actions detailed above have been summarised into *principal actions* and an overall encompassing *recommendation*. These are detailed in Figure 8 overleaf.

**Figure 8.** Promote appropriate and responsive approaches to gambling that support young Asian peoples' positive development



## **Action area 7**

### *Build knowledge on young people and gambling through **information and research***

Good knowledge and information from research is needed to increase an understanding of young people and gambling. Research would also indicate what influences a good quality of life and wellbeing for young people in a gambling orientated environment.

Currently there is a lack of research into young people and their gambling behaviour. Most of the research to date has looked at risks and problems associated with gambling. The research has shown that gambling is a common and peer approved activity amongst young people. However, little is known about the reasons for gambling-related problems, for example whether gender or ethnicity are important aspects.

The following areas for research could be important in increasing information regarding young people and gambling in New Zealand:

- A survey to measure the involvement of New Zealand youth in gambling, associated factors and subsequent gambling-related problems. This could include looking at the effects and trends in gambling behaviour over a period of time;
- A wide range of research should be used to enhance the understanding of issues pertinent to youth gambling, e.g., qualitative research to investigate the role of gambling in youth culture;
- The role of gender and ethnicity in relation to young people and gambling;
- The effects on adolescent populations of regulatory policy and the proliferation of gambling; and,
- The design and implementation of appropriate strategies specifically for young people, especially those that build on the strengths of the young people in relation to gambling activities.

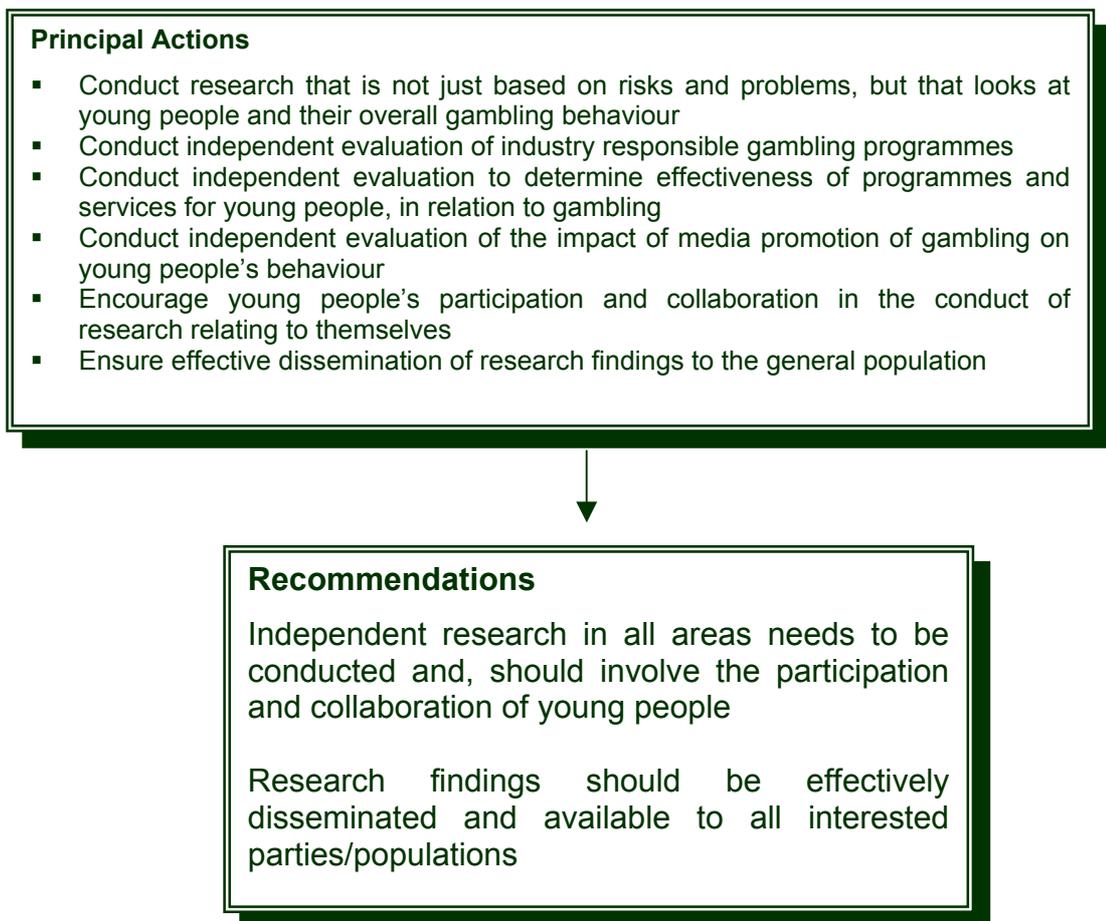
Relevant actions to build knowledge on young people and gambling through information and research include:

- Developing research programmes to initially encompass the areas of concern detailed above;
- Encouraging the gambling industry to undertake independent evaluation of their responsible gambling programmes to determine effectiveness;
- Encouraging independent evaluation of programmes, approaches and services for young people in relation to gambling, to determine effectiveness;
- Encouraging independent evaluation of the impact of media promotion of gambling activities and how it influences the gambling behaviour of young people;
- Ensuring that, where relevant, culturally effective research is conducted;

- Encouraging researchers, groups and individuals to work together with young people and those closely associated with young people and gambling-related issues, to ensure good quality independent research is conducted;
- Encouraging collection of information and delivery of research by young people for young people; and,
- Ensuring effective dissemination of research findings to the population concerned (e.g., educational programmes conducted through hui, fonos etc).

The relevant actions detailed above and on the previous page have been summarised into *principal actions* and an overall encompassing *recommendation*. These are detailed in Figure 9 below.

**Figure 9.** Build knowledge on young people and gambling through information and research



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