

# Touchpoint

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## Young Adults in Nova Scotia at Highest Risk for Gambling Problems

It is no secret that the gambling industry in Canada has grown at exponential rates since the early 1990s and that gambling has infiltrated all levels of public consciousness. Gambling is now marketed as mass-consumption entertainment and is seen as a main-stream consumer activity.

Contemporary youth and young adults are of the first generation in Canada to grow up in a culture where gambling has been “normalized” and an accepted part of daily life. In an interview for *Deal Me In*, a youth-made documentary about youth gambling, Jeffrey L. Derevensky of the International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors at McGill University, refers to this reality as “an enormous social experiment.” His concern is that the present generation is “the first that will spend their entire lives in which gambling is legalized and government supported. We don’t know what’s going to be the long-term impact on these kids.”



It is perhaps in part due to this fact that research has repeatedly shown young people to be at increased risk for gambling problems. In Nova Scotia, Health Promotion and Protection’s 2007 Adult Gambling Prevalence Study revealed that young adults 19 to 24 in Nova Scotia are in fact at *highest* risk for developing gambling problems.

The youth-made gambling documentary, *Deal Me In*, was created by the Youth Voices Gambling Project at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health at the University of Toronto and the YMCA Youth Gambling Awareness Program. Watch *Deal Me In* online at [www.youthvoices.ca/node/44](http://www.youthvoices.ca/node/44).

### Get Your Essay In! Deadline for the 2010 Student Scholarship Contest is May 28, 2010

In an effort to mitigate the potential harm of gambling for youth, the Nova Scotia Gaming Foundation invites graduating high school students to craft a 1200-word essay that explores the potential risks of Internet gambling for youth. Essays are due **Friday, May 28, 2010**.

The top three essayists will receive scholarships towards their postsecondary education: \$2,000.00 for 1st place, \$1,000.00 for 2nd place, and \$500.00 for 3rd place.

For more information, please visit [www.nsgamingfoundation.org/pages/Essay-Contest.aspx](http://www.nsgamingfoundation.org/pages/Essay-Contest.aspx) or contact Jen Wheatley, NSGF Communications and Events Coordinator at 902.424.2147 or [jennifer.wheatley@gov.ns.ca](mailto:jennifer.wheatley@gov.ns.ca).

**Do you believe online gambling is a relevant concern for Nova Scotia youth?**

Take the latest NSGF informal website poll at [www.nsgamingfoundation.org](http://www.nsgamingfoundation.org)

Until next time,  
Jen Wheatley

