

# California Friday Night Live Partnership (CFNLP): Youth Perceptions of Gambling Behavior in Their Community

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## Introduction

The California Friday Night Live Partnership (CFNLP) is interested in learning more about the perceptions of youth about gambling behavior. In order to do so the CFNLP worked with the Youth Leadership Institute (YLI) to engage youth in focus group discussion on the topic. This paper reflects what was learned from these groups. Youth connected to the FNL system, as well as those who are not, were asked a variety of questions about their perceptions regarding the prevalence of gambling in their community, as well as its character and nature and likely impact. Report contents draw conclusions about gambling behavior in California from findings that were derived by synthesizing youth responses to these questions, which were asked by facilitators to guide discussion about a variety of related topics. Findings are based on the themes, concepts, and issues youth used to present their views. With that in mind, the remainder of the introduction for this report lays out a plan for presenting findings and the conclusions drawn from them.

Report contents are divided into sections that attempt to make clear how findings were derived and what they might mean for gambling behavior in California. Sections for this report occur in the following manner:

- An overview summarizes key findings and conclusions drawn from them in an effort to highlight next steps for addressing youth gambling behavior in California based on the perceptions of participants.
- Data collection procedures are presented to make clear how information was gathered to assess youth perceptions, which includes the questions posed to them by facilitators to do so.
- Procedures for analyzing data are presented to explain derivation of findings.
- Focus group participants are described to understand the sample of youth responses subjected to analyses and how findings might be generalized to other populations.
- Findings are presented and interpreted to make clear youth perceptions as reported by participants about a variety of topics related to gambling behavior in their community.
- Conclusions are drawn from a summary of findings that provide the framework for discussion in the overview.



## Overview

Most participants seemed to feel that youth are not as capable of gambling responsibly as adults and that they are more likely to develop problems as a result if gambling behavior begins before adulthood – but many also feel that gambling behavior is not a problem for adults. This view is troubling given the prevalence of gambling perceived by participants among adults and other youth, especially male youth 17 years of age and older, and the negative effects. Just as troubling is that few participants felt gambling should be addressed and even fewer felt that something could be done to prevent youth gambling behavior.

Specifically, data from focus groups suggest that gambling behavior is common among adults and youth in the community. Participants indicate that gambling behavior takes on many forms and occurs in many places, and it can be destructive. Surprisingly, gambling behavior is seen as mainly a problem only for youth, not adults, despite the perceived negative effects, such as increased debt or strained family relationships. In other words, youth do not appear to see a connection between adult gambling behavior and its influence on youth in their community like they do for habitual behavior they associate with alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs (ATOD) and their negative effects.

Consequently, male youth in their late teens and older may be particularly vulnerable to gambling problems, if we take the views of focus group participants seriously. Focus group discussion indicated that older, male youth are more likely to gamble and less likely to see it is a problem than their younger counterparts or females. As a result, older, male youth might be more vulnerable to gambling problems, but we must also consider the vulnerability of all youth given the familiarity of participants with many types of gambling behavior. They report exposure to lotto, bingo, poker, blackjack, craps and many other forms of gambling, and say they see it exhibited in their community by adults in many places, such as online, in casinos, and in the homes of friends and relatives.

Perceptions by participants that adult gambling behavior is common in their community suggests we should not be surprised when they report such behavior is also common among peers. They report exposure to poker, blackjack, craps and many other forms of gambling that are exhibited by youth in their community in many places, such as in school for younger youth and casinos for older youth, as well as online and in the homes of friends and relatives.

Ultimately, using findings and the conclusions drawn from them in this report to address gambling behavior in the State of California depend upon the nature and quality of the data, which raises the following key points for next steps:



- ***Further study is necessary of youth gambling behavior that is more comprehensive than the study presented in this report.*** Focus group data is useful for thinking about gambling in California because it reflects the views of diverse participants from many places. However, findings are exploratory and based on perceptions of youth rather than a systematic study of the demonstrated influences on gambling behavior and resulting effects. In other words, discussion here is not definitive, which means more attention should be given to understanding youth gambling behavior as a potential problem and the dynamics and consequences associated with problem behavior.
- ***Educational efforts to address youth gambling behavior might raise awareness among youth about the related problems exhibited by adults as well as their origins, dynamics, and consequences.*** Perceptions of focus group participants suggest youth do not understand the prevalence of problems associated with adult gambling behavior, or how they might be related to youth gambling behavior.
- ***Strategies to address youth gambling behavior might recognize that older, males appear especially vulnerable to problem behavior and that gambling in schools appears to be very common among them.*** Participants clearly indicate many types of gambling in school among youth in their local community, especially by older, males who are the least likely to see it as a problem for adults, and to a lesser extent for youth, relative to their younger counterparts and females.

## Data Collection Procedures

Focus groups were facilitated by adults who followed a protocol developed by the Professional Services Department at the YLI in San Rafael, California. Adult facilitators were either staff employed by YLI or the FNL Partnership, which meant they have extensive experience working with youth in formal and informal educational settings. In some instances youth members of the California Youth Council co-facilitated the focus groups with the adult. The protocol used by facilitators was designed to help them create a productive discussion by youth about a variety of topics related to gambling behavior in their community. It presents instructions with brief supporting rationales for the ways in which facilitators should promote consistently rational, honest, and systematic deliberation across focus groups that reflect responses from all participants.



Consequently, discussion from focus groups reflected meaningful insights about gambling behavior that can probably be generalized to populations in California with characteristics similar to the sample of participants presented in this report, as long as facilitators adhered to specifications in the protocol. The remainder of this section briefly considers, in turn, 3 key features of the protocol to support this point—approach to facilitation, informed consent and confidentiality, and questions posed to youth. Instructions associated with each feature are also described along with supporting rationales to further explain how facilitators and youth participants engaged in discussion useful for this report.

### *Approach to facilitation*

Protocol instructions helped facilitators by providing information that would aid their efforts to promote systematic, comprehensive discussion by establishing an environment of respect and open-mindedness. With that in mind, three types of information were offered to support facilitators:

- **Introductory**: Facilitators were instructed to begin activities by introducing themselves and stating what organization they represent. Afterward, they were to state the purpose for the focus group and make clear the importance of youth participation. Next, they were to offer appreciation for the effort of youth to attend and communicate respect for views youth would share during the upcoming discussion (see ‘informed consent and confidentiality’ later in this section).
- **Procedural**: After the introduction, facilitators were instructed to make clear group expectations for the upcoming discussion by stating that: all opinions were important; there were no wrong or right answers; and it was the responsibility of all participants to develop a set of acceptable rules for behavior. Afterward, facilitators began to pose questions to youth using questions specified in the protocol (see ‘questions posed to youth’ later in this section).
- **Organizational**: Three strategies were specified in the protocol to help facilitators make focus group activities as efficient and productive as possible:
  - Forms attached to the protocol helped the facilitator or an assistant take notes because they designated space for responses to each question by participant.
  - Facilitators were asked to use a roundtable approach by asking youth to sit in a circle and then give each of them enough time to respond to each question while moving along the circle in the same order.
  - Facilitators were asked to review a document entitled “Guidelines for Interviews & Focus Groups” for helpful hints on: how to probe



for additional information during discussions without asking leading questions; and effective methods for re-focusing participants who stray from a specific topic during the discussion.

Additional support was offered to facilitators by:

- Encouraging them to use tape recorders and ask another adult to attend and take notes.
- Providing contact information for Jim Kooler and Lynne Goodwin if they had any questions.

### *Informed consent and confidentiality*

Protocol instructions required facilitators to communicate during the introduction for focus group activities that productive discussion would result from informed consent with assurances that confidentiality would be maintained afterward. Facilitators explained informed consent by stating that participation was voluntary and no one had to answer any question that resulted in feelings of discomfort. They also explained that confidentiality would be maintained because:

- Participants were not allowed to discuss focus group activities with non-participants.
- Facilitators were only allowed to discuss focus group activities with members of the evaluation team at YLI.
- Views expressed during focus group activities that are the basis for findings in this report could not be linked to individual youth when presenting them because no reference would be made to the names of participants or any other individual characteristic, such as gender or ethnicity, that might distinguish them from one another.

Finally, discussion for some focus groups was recorded and where that happened, the facilitator asked participants for their permission to do so.

### *Questions posed to youth*

Focus group participants were asked nine primary questions by facilitators that are specified in the protocol to promote consistent, systematic discussion among youth across focus groups about gambling behavior in their community. Questions begin with a focus on adult behavior that shift toward youth behavior while covering a variety of related topics to better understand youth perceptions, such as the scope and dynamics of gambling behavior as well as its likely impact. Primary questions posed by facilitators as well as secondary questions (in parentheses) to further guide discussion are the following:



1. How common do you think gambling is for adults in your community? (Probe: How often? How much money do they spend?)
2. What types of gambling do adults in your community participate in most often? (Probe: Online, casinos, horse or other races, other sports bets, in-person card games? Any other? What is most popular?)
3. How common do you think gambling is for young people in your community? (Probe: How many young people gamble? How often? How much money do they spend?)
4. What kinds of gambling by young people do you see or hear about? (Online casinos, horse or auto race, other sports bets, in-person card games? Any other? What is most popular?)
5. Among young people, who gambles the most? (Probe: Older or younger youth? Male or female? Does the type of gambling vary by these factors?)
6. Where do young people in your community gamble? (Probe: At home on their computer? At friends' homes? Casinos? Other places in the community? Which is most common?)
7. Why do you think young people in your community gamble? (Probe: What influences them – friends, family members, television, local casinos, ads, billboards, and movies. Probe about whether family members also gamble, community norms or other factors, and youth and adult acceptance of young people gambling.)
8. Does gambling by young people cause problems? If so, for whom – young person, family, or others; and, what kinds of problems does gambling cause? (Probe: At what point do you think gambling is a problem for a particular young person?)
9. What do you think could be done in your community to prevent gambling by young people?

## Data Management and Analysis Procedures

Facilitators sent the forms attached to the protocol for focus groups to staff of the Professional Services Department at YLI for data management and analysis. As mentioned, these forms contained notes describing the responses of participants to questions posed by facilitators about gambling behavior. However, demographic characteristics of participants, names of facilitators, and the



location of activities were recorded on the forms as well. Consequently, data was easily managed for analyses by using spreadsheet software.

Data analyses are qualitative and their purpose is to identify common themes, concepts, and issues reflected in youth discussion about the gambling behavior of adults and youth in their respective communities. Analyses were conducted by using the spreadsheet to sort responses by each question posed to youth to identify trends across focus groups. Responses were sorted further for each question by demographic characteristics to identify factors that might influence perceptions about a specific topic. With that in mind, 4 types of analyses are presented in this report:

- Demographic characteristics are presented in an effort to describe the **sample of youth** who participated in focus group discussions (see the next section entitled 'Focus Group Sample').
- Findings are presented and then interpreted for questions **1 and 2** that are posed to youth about adult gambling behavior. They are then examined further by demographic characteristics in instances where they are associated with different perceptions among youth (see the sub-section entitled 'adult gambling behavior' in the section entitled 'Findings and Interpretation.')
- Findings are presented and then interpreted for **questions 3-8** that are posed to youth about youth gambling behavior. They are then examined further by demographic characteristics in instances where they are associated with different perceptions (see the sub-section entitled 'youth gambling behavior' in the section 'Findings and Interpretation.')
- Findings are presented and interpreted for **question 9**, which is posed to youth about addressing gambling behavior in their community. They are then examined further by demographic characteristics in instances where they are associated with different perceptions (see the sub-section entitled 'community responses to youth gambling behavior' in the section entitled 'Findings and Interpretation.')



## Focus Group Sample

The purpose of the sample for this report was to produce viewpoints during discussion from youth who are diverse and from many places. To that end, voluntary participation was solicited in several counties in California that were connected, in one way or another, to the YLI and the FNL Partnership. As a result, 11 focus groups were populated by 72 youth with an array of characteristics from the following counties in California (number of youth in parentheses) – Butte (4), Fresno (6), Kern (11), Marin (8), Riverside (3), San Diego (4), San Luis Obispo (6), San Mateo (11), Santa Barbara (14), Santa Clara (1), Stanislaus (2), and Trinity (2).

Table 1 presents demographic characteristics of youth participants in focus groups. Percentages in the table refer to the proportion of youth who are in specific age groups, female, and live in residential areas that are suburban, urban, or rural. Percentages are presented for youth overall, as shown in the total column, and by county.

Data in Table 1 clearly show that youth participants:

- Ranged in age from 13 to 22 years and were mostly between the ages of 14 and 18 (83.3%)
- Were just as likely to be female (55.6%) as male (44.4%)
- Lived primarily in suburban areas (67.2%), but also lived in urban (9.8%) and rural (23.0%) areas.

These data suggest views about gambling behavior in the local community reflect views of participants that are diverse with respect to age, gender, and residential location.

Consequently, conclusions in this report are drawn from findings that reflect perceptions on gambling in the local community from male and female youth of many ages from a variety of metropolitan settings. However, views of participants are less likely to be sufficiently diverse with respect to residential location than age and gender given the low proportion from urban settings, which means differences will not be examined by suburban, urban, and rural areas. Nevertheless, meaningful insights about gambling behavior in California can still be drawn from focus group discussion because it likely reflects the views of youth in many areas throughout the State.



**Table 1: Profile for Sample of Youth Participants by County**

Youth Trait	Total n=72	County:											
		Butte n=4	Fresno n=6	Kern n=11	Marin n=8	Riverside n=3	San Diego n=4	San Luis Obispo n=6	San Mateo n=11	Santa Barbara n=14	Santa Clara n=1	Stanislaus n=2	Trinity n=2
<i>Age in Years</i>													
% 13 yrs	<b>1.5%</b>	0.0%	?	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
n=	<b>1</b>	0	?	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
% 14 yrs	<b>13.6%</b>	0.0%	?	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	27.3%	28.6%	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%
n=	<b>9</b>	0	?	0	0	0	0	1	3	4	0	1	0
% 15 yrs	<b>21.2%</b>	0.0%	?	27.3%	0.0%	33.3%	25.0%	0.0%	36.4%	28.6%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
n=	<b>14</b>	0	?	3	0	1	1	0	4	4	1	0	0
% 16 yrs	<b>28.8%</b>	50.0%	?	45.5%	0.0%	33.3%	50.0%	50.0%	18.2%	21.4%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%
n=	<b>19</b>	2	?	5	0	1	2	3	2	3	0	0	1
% 17 yrs	<b>19.7%</b>	50.0%	?	27.3%	0.0%	33.3%	25.0%	16.7%	18.2%	7.1%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%
n=	<b>13</b>	2	?	3	0	1	1	1	2	1	0	1	1
% 18 yrs	<b>1.5%</b>	50.0%	?	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%
n=	<b>1</b>	0	?	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
% 19 yrs	<b>3.0%</b>	0.0%	?	0.0%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
n=	<b>2</b>	0	?	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
% 20 yrs	<b>1.5%</b>	0.0%	?	0.0%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
n=	<b>1</b>	0	?	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
% 21 yrs	<b>6.1%</b>	0.0%	?	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
n=	<b>4</b>	0	?	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
% 22 yrs	<b>3.0%</b>	0.0%	?	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
n=	<b>2</b>	0	?	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Gender</i>													
% Female	<b>55.6%</b>	75.0%	50.0%	27.3%	62.5%	33.3%	50.0%	83.3%	36.4%	64.3%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
n=	<b>40</b>	3	3	3	5	1	2	5	4	9	1	2	2
<i>Residence</i>													
% Suburban	<b>67.2%</b>	100.0%	0.0%	?	100.0%	66.7%	25.0%	16.7%	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
n=	<b>41</b>	4	0	?	8	2	1	1	11	14	0	0	0
% Urban	<b>9.8%</b>	0.0%	0.0%	?	0.0%	33.3%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%
n=	<b>6</b>	0	0	?	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	2	0
% Rural	<b>23.0%</b>	0.0%	100.0%	?	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	66.7%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
n=	<b>14</b>	0	6	?	0	0	2	4	0	0	0	0	2



## Findings and Interpretation

This section presents findings from discussion by youth about their perceptions of gambling in the local community during focus group activities. Discussion follows the plan for data analyses described earlier that defines the following sub-sections (see the section entitled 'data management and analyses'):

- Adult gambling behavior (questions 1 and 2)
- Youth gambling behavior (question 3-8)
- Community responses to youth gambling behavior (question 9)

Each sub-section identified above begins by presenting findings for overall perceptions. Next, findings are presented by age and gender where these demographic characteristics are associated with different perceptions of gambling behavior by participants. Findings are not examined by residential area as stated in the previous section. Finally, findings are summarized and interpreted to begin the process of synthesizing them into a coherent narrative that identifies key themes about gambling behavior likely reflected in the views of many youth from many communities throughout the California.

### *Adult gambling behavior*

This section reports findings on youth perceptions about adult gambling behavior in their community. Participants were asked about the prevalence of gambling behavior in their community (question 1) and the types of gambling behavior exhibited by them (question 2).

**Findings:** Most reported that gambling by adults was common in their community (65%) and also reported many types of behavior. Some types of gambling occurred online and in casinos, such as nickel and dime poker, slot machines, blackjack, and craps, while other types did not, such as lotto, dominos, and even dog and cock fighting. Interestingly, some males (22% of all participants), most of whom were 17 years of age and older, were much more likely than females (5% of all participants) to see gambling behavior by adults as benign.

**Summary and Interpretation:** Clearly, participants perceived gambling behavior among adults as common in their community, which may explain their familiarity with many types. But males older than 16 years of age are somewhat less likely to see it as a problem. As a result, older male youth might be more likely to gamble than younger males and females. If that is so, opportunities to gamble might increase the likelihood they will begin that behavior and continue to do so as adults (and fathers).

### *Youth gambling behavior*

Questions posed to participants about youth gambling behavior were more wide-ranging than those posed to them about adult behavior. As with adults, facilitators posed questions to youth about the prevalence of gambling among them in the local community (question 3) and the types of gambling they exhibited (question 4). However, additional questions were posed to determine what types of youth gamble the most (question 5) and



where they do so (question 6), as well as why youth gamble (question 7) and whether or not it leads to problems (question 8).

Findings: As with adults, most youth reported that gambling among them was common in their community (65% to 74%), which also explains their familiarity with many types. Participants report that youth play poker, craps, slot machines, blackjack, and bingo, mainly online and in casinos, and that peers even flip dollars bills for lunch money in school. Unlike perceptions of adult behavior, prevalence of gambling behavior among youth does not appear to vary by gender, nor does there appear to be a tendency by older males to see it as benign.

Participants elaborated further on youth gambling behavior when:

- More than half (60%) reported male youth are more likely to exhibit gambling behavior than females, and a similar proportion (46%) indicated males of high school age or older are more likely to gamble.
- Few reported frequent gambling by youth online (<5%) but rather in school (35%), the home of a friend (25%), and casinos (21%).

Different perceptions for participants are evident by gender and age only when they considered places where youth might gamble. Data show:

- Females were more likely than males to report casinos as a likely place for youth gambling (17% to 6.4% of all youth).
- Youth older than 19 years of age (14.9% of all youth) were more likely to report casinos as a likely place for youth gambling.
- Youth 16 years of age or younger (29.6% of all youth) were more likely to report school as a likely place for youth gambling.

Participants report that youth gambling is subject to a variety of influences, such as boredom, peer pressure, media exposure, and the thrill of winning money as well as the need for it. They also consistently acknowledge that it can lead to problems when it becomes uncontrollable, although some youth do not feel that happens frequently. Specifically, gambling becomes a problem when it results in unaffordable losses and periods of time spent away from responsibilities and obligations that interferes with meeting them. When that happens, participants overwhelmingly report problem gambling behavior contributes to a lower quality of life in the community due to the following effects:

- Increased personal debt and ruined credit
- Strained relationships with family, friends, and/or co-workers
- Feelings that gamblers are being taken advantage of by hustlers (e.g., casinos, street gamblers, etc.)
- Violence related to unpaid debts after engaging in unsafe gambling (i.e., gambling that is not sanctioned and regulated by government)

Summary and interpretation: Clearly, participants perceive gambling behavior among youth as common in their community and as with adults, they describe many



types. Unlike perceptions for adults, participants report youth gambling is more likely to become a problem when it occurs, which in their view may place older, male youth at risk because they are perceived as more likely to play games of chance.

Findings for participant perceptions of youth gambling behavior are consistent for the most part with those for adults except for one key difference. Youth appear more likely to see gambling as a problem for peers than for adults. Therefore, it does not appear participants understand negative effects of gambling for adults might be more likely if they began such behavior in earlier years. If that is true, participant perceptions that youth gambling behavior occurs in schools and by older youth in casinos is disturbing.

### *Community responses to youth gambling behavior*

Lastly, participants were posed a question about addressing youth gambling behavior in their community (question 9) and it appears they have somewhat mixed reactions. A few (about 10%) reported nothing needs to be done while a larger minority took the opposite view, but few actively considered whether or not anything *could* be done:

- Some participants (23%) thought nothing could be done to prevent youth gambling behavior, and some of them drew upon the persistence of drug use despite efforts to eradicate it as evidence gambling by adults and youth could not be stopped.
- A similarly small proportion of participants (26%) thought something could be done to prevent youth gambling behavior. They tended to focus on increasing awareness about the character and nature of gambling behavior, such as its prevalence and negative effects, and the role of the media in promoting it (e.g., poker tournaments on television and casino advertisements).

## **Conclusions**

As stated in the overview, older, male youth may be especially vulnerable to gambling problems in adulthood relative to females, which means younger males are vulnerable if we assume they follow a behavioral path that is similar to their older counterparts. Findings to support these contentions are quite evident in discussion by participants, and there are implications for addressing gambling behavior in the community.

With that in mind, the remainder of this section supports discussion in the overview by summarizing key findings and the conclusions drawn from them about youth perceptions of gambling behavior in their community. Afterward, discussion in the overview is reinforced further by a brief summary of next steps that are framed by findings and conclusions.



### Key findings

Clearly, gambling behavior in the community is prevalent according to the views of focus group participants. However, it appears youth may not fully understand the risks associated with gambling because they are not making the connection between gambling as a potential problem for adults like they do for youth. Failing to make that connection may place male youth especially at risk relative to females despite acknowledgement from most participants that gambling behavior can be self-destructive. Supporting evidence is provided by the following key findings:

- **A majority of youth report gambling behavior is common among adults (65%) and youth (74%).** This finding suggests youth are exposed to gambling by adults and other youth. Consequently, a potentially powerful behavioral model is in place to tell youth in California that gambling is acceptable in their community. Supporting evidence for this point is reflected in the familiarity of participants with many types of gambling they say is exhibited by adults and youth in many places, such as casinos for adults and for youth in schools and homes of friends.
- **Males 16 years of age and older are less likely to see gambling as a problem for adults (22% of all participants) than their younger counterparts or females.** This finding suggests male youth may be more likely to engage in gambling behavior as adults and to develop gambling problems along the way compared to females.
- **Almost two-thirds of participants (60%) reported male youth are more likely to exhibit gambling behavior than females, and almost half (46%) emphasized older male youth.** This finding confirms conclusions drawn from the previous finding, which stated that male youth are more likely to engage in gambling behavior than their younger counterparts or females. Therefore, it would seem that male youth would indeed be more likely to gamble as adults and develop gambling problems in their lives.
- **Few youth (26%) thought anything *could* be done about gambling behavior in their community, regardless of whether or not they thought something *should* be done about it.** In other words, few youth thought something should be done to address gambling in their community and also articulated strategies to do so. Consequently, there does not appear to be any consensus among youth about how to address gambling behavior in their community.



### *Next steps*

Information obtained from focus group discussion is not definitive, but it is useful for thinking about gambling behavior in California because it offers views from male and female youth of many ages who live in many places (e.g., suburban, urban, and rural). Specifically, key findings summarized above and the conclusions drawn from them suggest the focus for next steps should be on collecting more evidence about youth gambling behavior to develop a specific set of strategies to address it in the community. Those steps are described in greater detail in the overview and they might be:

- **Study the perceptions of youth further by more rigorously assessing their perceptions about the dynamics of youth gambling behavior in their community and its consequences.**
- **Raise youth awareness about the dynamics of gambling behavior and its consequences through educational efforts.**
- **Recognize the vulnerability of male youth in any strategy to address habitual gambling behavior in the community.**

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**YOUTH LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE**

