



MAJOR EXPANSION OF INTERNET GAMBLING ENDANGERS OUR KIDS WITH GAMBLING ADDICTION!

“Sports Gambling and Fantasy Sports Betting by Smart Phones has Problem Gambling rates up to 18.2%.”¹

IOWA UMC ADVOCACY TEAM – MARCH 2019

SUMMARY OF POSITION: We are strongly opposed to sports gambling being legalized in Iowa and we are particularly opposed to the Major Expansion of Gambling by making Sports’ Gambling and Fantasy Sports Betting able to be played from a Smart Phone or a laptop computer.

THE BILLS BEFORE THE LEGISLATURE

Currently there two bills being considered in the Ways and Means Committees of the Iowa Legislature. **HOUSE STUDY BILL 198 (HSB198)** being considered by the **House Ways and Means Committee.** **Senate File 356 Sports Betting/Fantasy Betting** and is now being considered in the **Senate Ways and Means Committee.** They can be considered this week. Call your Representative and Senator and ask them to oppose these bills.



UNITED METHODIST OFFICIAL STATEMENTS

Gambling fosters greed and stimulates the fatalistic faith in chance. . . It encourages the belief that work is unimportant, that money can solve all our problems, and that greed is the norm for achievement. It serves as a “regressive tax” on those with lower income. *(2016 The Book of Resolutions, #4041, p. 424)*
Gambling is a menace to society, deadly to the best interests of moral, social, economic, and spiritual life, destructive of good government and good stewardship.” *(The Social Principles, The Economic Community M.)*
The Iowa Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church urges members of the Iowa General Assembly to resist further attempts to expand any gambling activities. *(The 2017 Iowa Book of Resolutions, p. 34)*
Jesus said: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Mark 12:31b NRSV). We are called to resist those practices and systems that exploit others and leave them impoverished and demeaned.” *(#4041 P. 422)*

1 Rachel A. Volberg et al., Gambling and Problem Gambling in Massachusetts: Results of a Baseline Population Survey, 52 University of Massachusetts School of Public Health and Health Sciences (May 28, 2015),

ARGUMENTS AGAINST SPORTS GAMBLING AND FANTASY SPORTS BETTING

- There are already 19 casinos in the state of Iowa. We are oversaturated with opportunities to gamble.
- The increased likelihood of more people having problems gambling and becoming gambling addicts is a greater danger to our state and to a whole generation of young Iowans when there is greater accessibility of gambling and Fantasy Sports Betting over smart phones and the internet.
- **Young adults are much more likely to participate in “skill based” gambling activities, like Fantasy Sports Gambling.**
- Gambling is a menace to personal character and social morality. New forms of gambling (sports gambling and fantasy sports betting) are harmful and counter-productive to the culture and economy we want to affirm. Education and perseverance are Iowa values we want to affirm.
- Sports Gambling attracts the young and naïve of our communities, creating gambling addicts when our young people’s brains are still under-developed until 25-years-old and susceptible to gambling deceptions. A young person’s risk-averse brain compounds the problem.
- Compared to adults over 30, young people are 2 to 3 times more likely to develop a gambling problem.
- Addiction is a mental illness. Young adults, older adolescents, males, persons with ADHD, and persons from low income families all show greater chances of becoming problem gamblers.
- In 2018, the Supreme Court ruled that states have the power to regulate sports gambling. Three states have now introduced sports gambling. It will not be a “cash cow” producing bountiful revenue for the state. Why take the chances with our young adults’ lives when positive results are still uncertain?

College Gambling

Gambling addiction statistics show people between the ages 20 and 30 have the highest rates of problem gambling. The risk of developing a gambling addiction more than doubles for young adults in college settings. An estimated six percent of American college students struggle with gambling problems. (from article on [//www.addictions.com/gambling/5-alarming-gambling-addiction-statistics/](http://www.addictions.com/gambling/5-alarming-gambling-addiction-statistics/)) That figure goes up to 18.2% when betting is done on smart phones and computers. ¹

Daily Fantasy Sports and Addictive Gambling

Believing a gamble involves more skill than chance sets up susceptible people to develop addictive behavior. Highly popular daily fantasy sports (DFS) sites seem to be just that — games of skillfully choosing your team for the best odds, but the *Council on Compulsive Gambling* has called DFS an “alarming and disturbing trend.” One reason DFS sites are of particular concern is the younger age of its typical participants. It’s certainly easier for a young person to engage in online gambling than in the more regulated in-person gambling at a casino, for instance. Further, fantasy sports sites allow daily participation, which can quickly create a problem. By continually reinforcing the gambling activity, new pathways form in the brain associated with the pleasure and satisfaction of occasional wins. In other words, physiological changes occur in the brain and an addiction is born. ([/carrierclinic.org/resources/the-real-life-dangers-of-daily-fantasy-sports/](http://carrierclinic.org/resources/the-real-life-dangers-of-daily-fantasy-sports/) copyright 2019)

(Submitted on behalf of the Iowa United Methodist Legislative Advocacy Team. For more information about this issue, please contact Brian Carter, briancar@dwx.com, 515-979-5775. Sheila Corsbie sicorsbie@gmail.com (515) 339-9730. Rev. Gary Nims Gary.nims@gmail.com (515) 422-2070. Rita Carter ritaac@mchsi.com (515) 979-0605)