

INDICATE YOUR LOCATION



A Public Health Approach to Problem Gambling

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**Education
Development
Center**



OBJECTIVES

- Define Problem Gambling
- Define public health
- Define the nature of problem gambling in a broader societal context
- Describe the relationship of problem gambling to other problems
- Identify 3 public health approaches for problem gambling prevention



PARTICIPANT POLL

What is your primary area of work/expertise?

- a) Substance misuse prevention
- b) Problem gambling prevention
- c) Both
- d) Other





PRESENTER



Odessa Dwarika
Chief Programs Officer,
Massachusetts Council
on Gaming and Health
Prevention Solutions
Consultant

Odessa Dwarika has 25 years of experience as a public health professional working towards healthy and equitable communities. As Chief Program Officer, Odessa oversees training, technical assistance, and capacity building efforts throughout the continuum of care for disordered gambling and gaming. She works to promote a trauma informed understanding of gaming and gambling problems, particularly in communities that have high exposure to racism, economic marginalization, institutionalization, and precarious immigration status. Odessa is a graduate of Brandeis University, received her Master's in Intercultural Relations from Lesley University in Cambridge MA. Odessa is a Certified Trauma and Resilience Practitioner.

The Nature of Problem Gambling:

Definitions and Data



WHAT IS GAMBLING?

“Gambling is wagering something of value on a random event with the intent of winning something else of value.”



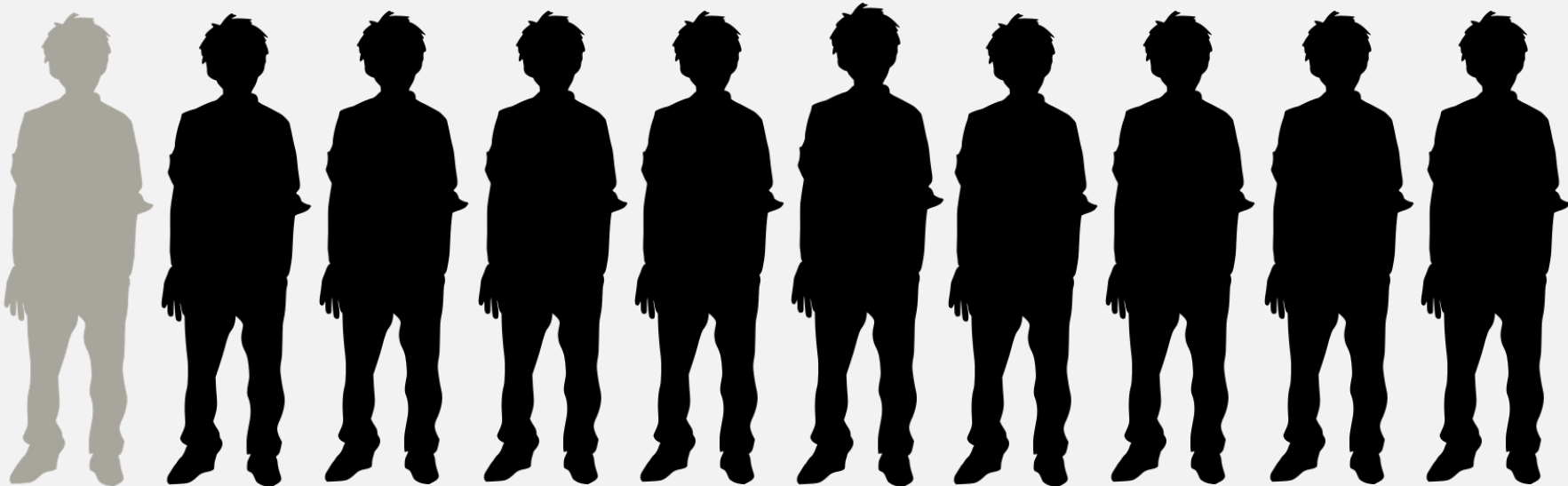
TYPES OF GAMBLING

- Daily or weekly Numbers Games
- Raffles
- **Slot machines**
- Private wagering
- Racetracks (horses or dogs)
- Bingo
- **Online gambling (lottery, sports, slots, etc.)**
- Fantasy Sports
- **Scratch tickets/pull tabs**
- Video poker, video keno, or video blackjack
- Dice games
- Loots boxes in video games
- **Sports betting**



PROBLEM GAMBLING (U.S.)

- Approximately 3% of the U.S. population experiences problem gambling⁴
- Nearly 1 in 10 young people and young adults (6-9%) experience problems related to gambling⁵





DEFINITIONS

- **Gambling disorder:** “Persistent and recurrent maladaptive gambling behavior” (DSM-5)²
- **Problem gambling:** All gambling behavior patterns that "compromise, disrupt or damage personal, family or vocational pursuits"³





COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS

- Gamblers Fallacy
- Near Miss Phenomena
- Inaccurate Loss Recall



POPULATIONS AT INCREASED RISK



- Youth⁶
- Males⁷
- People of color⁸
- People with a high school degree or less⁹
- People with an annual income of less than \$25,000⁹
- People who are unemployed¹⁰
- People with a disability¹⁰
- Casino employees¹¹
- People who are incarcerated¹²
- People who misuse substances¹²

Problem Gambling Prevention: A Public Health Perspective

A public health crisis is something that **impedes individuals and communities from being healthy**



PUBLIC HEALTH IS...

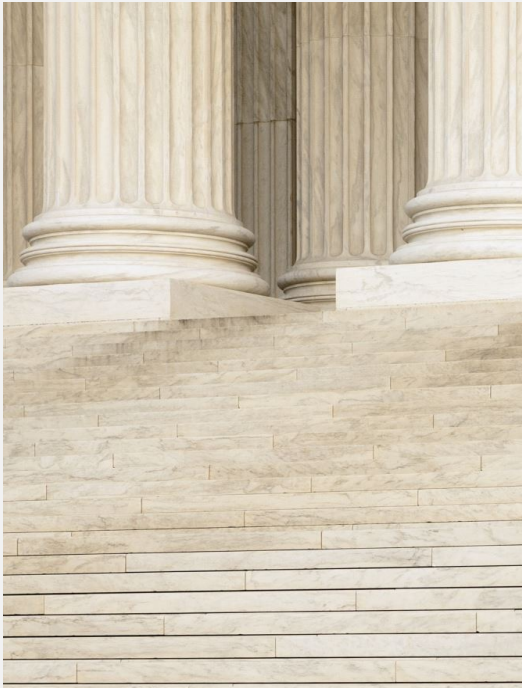


“ The science and art of preventing disease, prolonging life, and promoting health through the organized efforts and informed choices of society, organizations, public and private communities, and individuals.”

— CEA Winslow



HISTORY OF PERSPECTIVES



Gambling has existed since ancient times all over the globe.

Gambling disorder has often been seen as a moral issue or spiritual weakness. Pejorative term 'degenerate gambler' commonly used.

1999 Gambling Impact Behavior Studies were published documenting national impact of gambling disorder.

2013 DSM-5 labels Gambling Disorder as an Addiction for the first time and joins substance-based addictions.



PUBLIC HEALTH PERSPECTIVE



- Contemporary public health perspectives on gambling can address socioeconomic determinants such as income, employment, and poverty.
- Promoting an epidemiological examination of gambling and gambling-related disorders to better understand the distribution of those harms and benefits across populations.



HARMS AND ADVERSE IMPACTS



Resources



Relationships



Health



GAMBLING HARMS

Emotional Health

- Reduced feeling of self-worth
- Feelings of inadequacy, shame, insecurity
- Vulnerability to intense mental stress, suicidal ideation

Physical Health

- Increased sedentary behavior
- Biological impacts of stress (increased blood pressure, insomnia, physical disability)

Cultural Harm

- Cultural shame in relation to culturally-based roles and expectations
- Persistent loss of connection to community
- Reduced cultural practices



GAMBLING HARMS CONT.

Financial Wellbeing

- Loss of savings
- Inability or reduced capacity to meet essential needs
- Sustained financial hardship

Relationships

- Dishonesty, disengagement in core relationships
- Separation/rejection, isolation from partner and society
- Abuse and neglect of children
- Increased risk of relapse into problematic gambling behavior due to missing social support network

PROBLEM GAMBLING RELATIONSHIPS TO OTHER PROBLEMS



Socio-economic



Co-morbidities



Quality of Life



**Criminal
Justice**



**Highly Impacted
Populations**

“A complete understanding of the disease and its impact on society is dependent on understanding how harms are distributed across the population.”

GAMBLING DISORDERS AND OTHER PROBLEMS



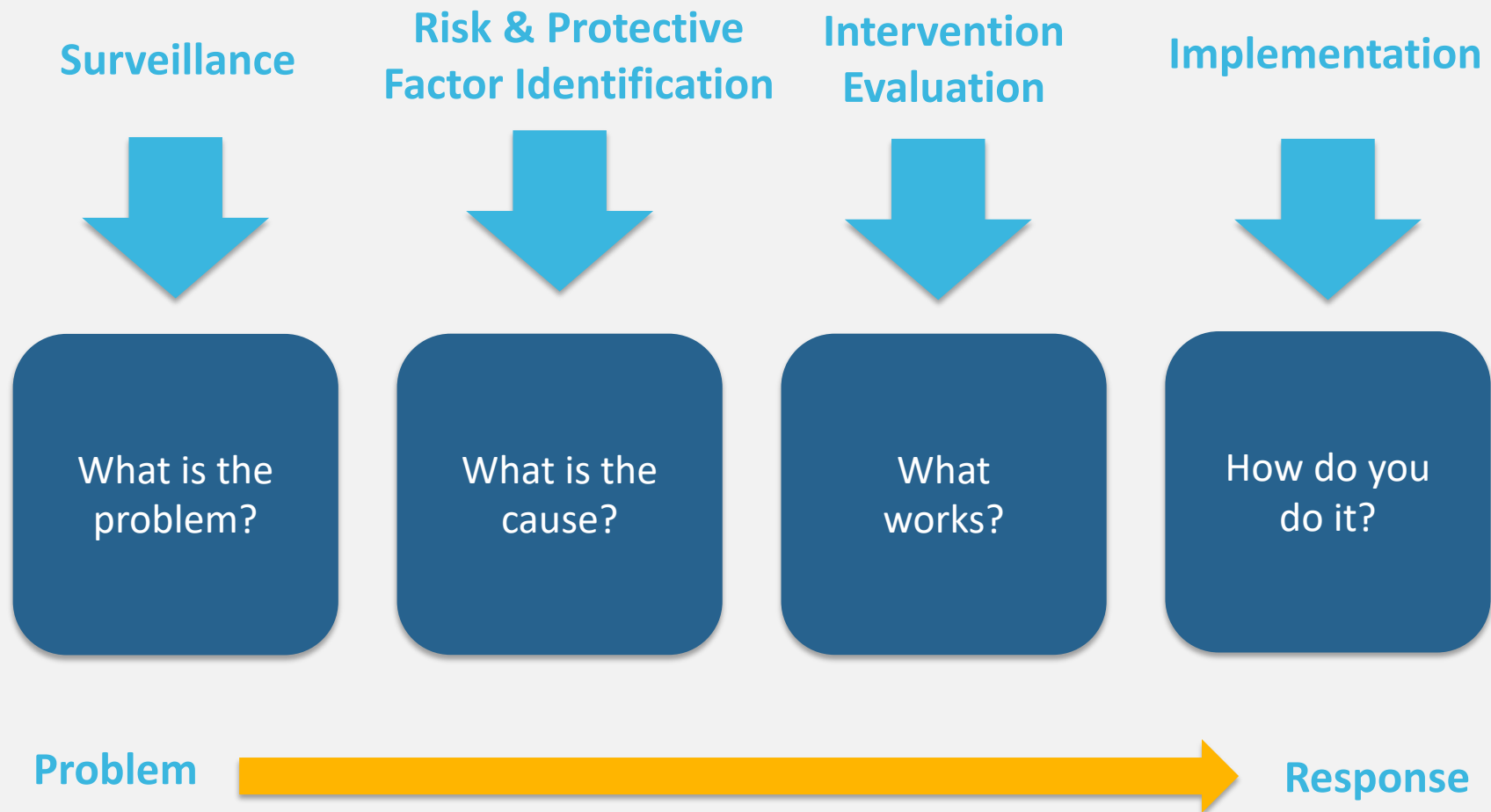
Gambling disorder frequently co-occurs with SUDs and other behavioral health problems.

- 80 percent have a psychiatric disorder
- 38 percent had a drug use disorder,
- 60 percent had nicotine dependence,
- 50 percent had a mood disorder,
- 41 percent had an anxiety disorder
- 25 percent have a family member with Gambling Disorder

Problem Gambling Prevention: Components of a Public Health Approach



A PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH





RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS THEORY

Problem behaviors share common risk factors

Exposure to more risk increases risk exponentially

Protective factors buffer exposure to risk, & build on strengths



RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS FOR GAMBLING DISORDER



Risk Factors

- Low Socioeconomic Status
- Age (Onset and biological)
- Co-morbidity (SUD, MH)
- Friends and Family that Gamble
- Poor Support Networks
- Availability/Normalization of gambling
- Trauma/ACE

Protective Factors

- Low ACE's
- Friends and Family who don't Gamble
- Early Gambling Loss
- Availability of other Recreational activities
- Availability of Employment (Living Wage)
- Limitations on Gambling Availability





EFFECTIVE PREVENTION EFFORTS MUST :

Change conditions in the environment that support and enable the development of problem gambling.

Support populations in acquiring the knowledge and skills they need to develop healthy behaviors.

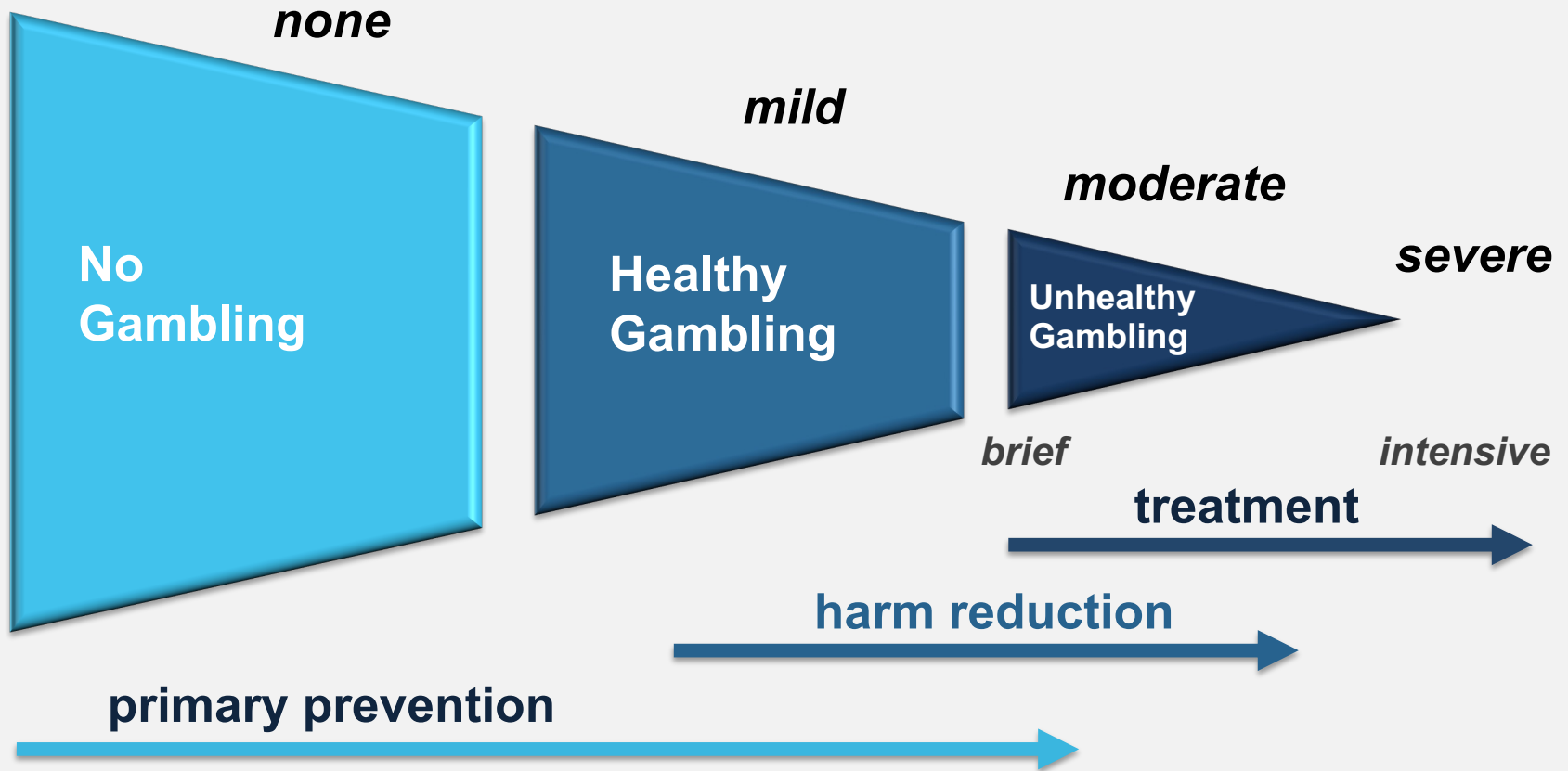


Prevention Approaches: Three Public Health Models to Prevent Problem Gambling

- Socio-ecological approach
- Health Impact Pyramid
- Harvard Medical School – Early Model



PUBLIC HEALTH INTERVENTIONS



Korn D, Shaffer HJ. 1999. Gambling and the health of the public: adopting a public health perspective. *J. Gambl. Stud.* 15:289–365



HARVARD MODEL

Primary:

- Problem Gambling Educational curriculum in high schools
- Limiting age of participation in legal gambling activities
- Limiting number of lottery or casino outlets in an area

Secondary (Harm Reduction):

- Providing pre-commitment tools in online gambling
- Limiting access to ATM's in a casino setting
- Screening for Gambling Disorder during behavioral health intake

Tertiary (Treatment):

- Training clinicians to treat gambling disorder
- Funding a Helpline for Problem Gambling (1-800-BETSOFF)
- Offering free treatment for residents with problem gambling

HARVARD MODEL GAMBLING INTERVENTIONS BY AREA



At the individual and community level

- Community awareness campaigns to increase awareness
- Increase gambling literacy
- Dissemination of research and information to empower community stakeholders

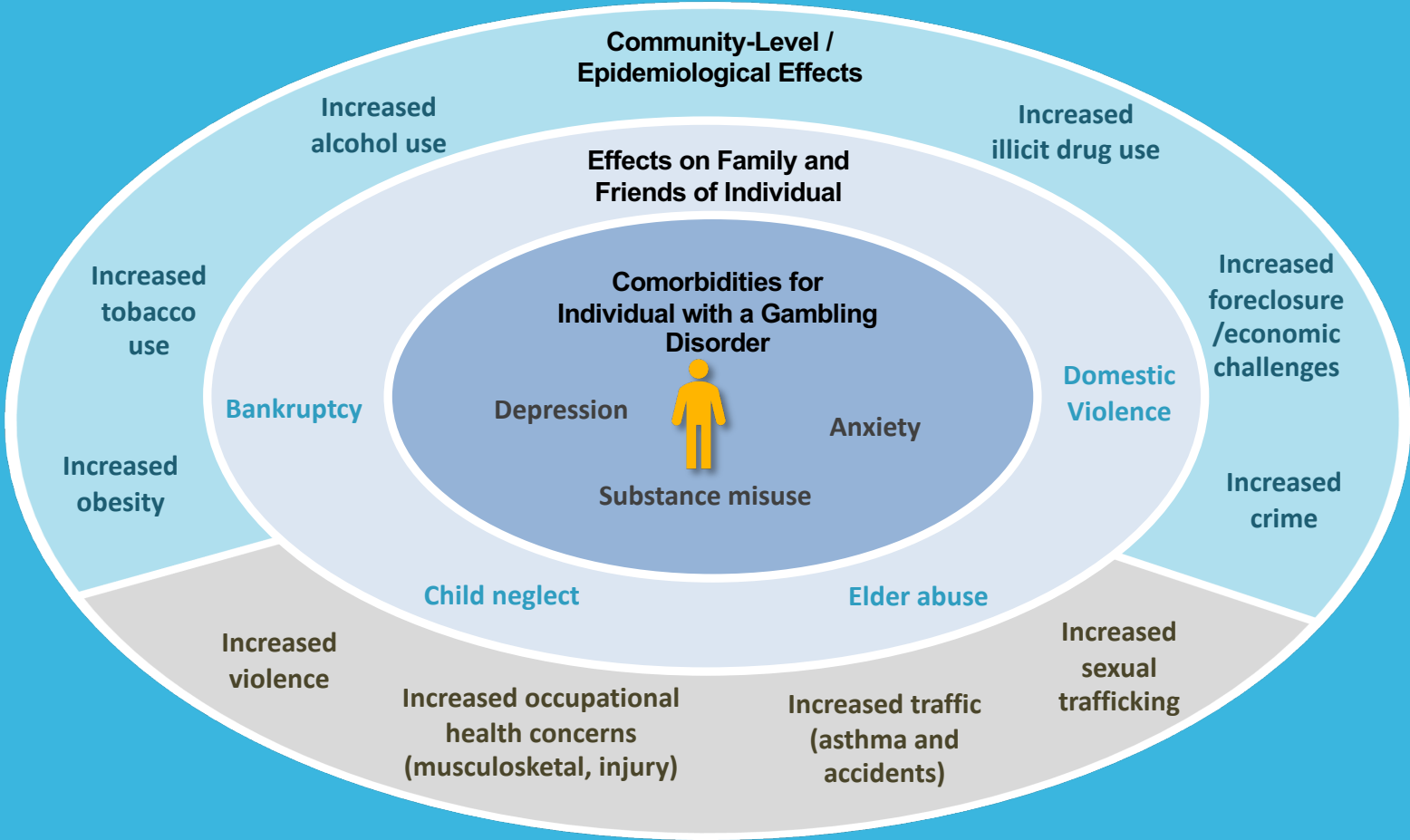
In the gambling environment

- Warning labels
- Design and geographical placement of gambling venues
- Informing policy to regulate density of gambling venues
- Regulate hours of operation and forms of advertising
- Offer self exclusion options

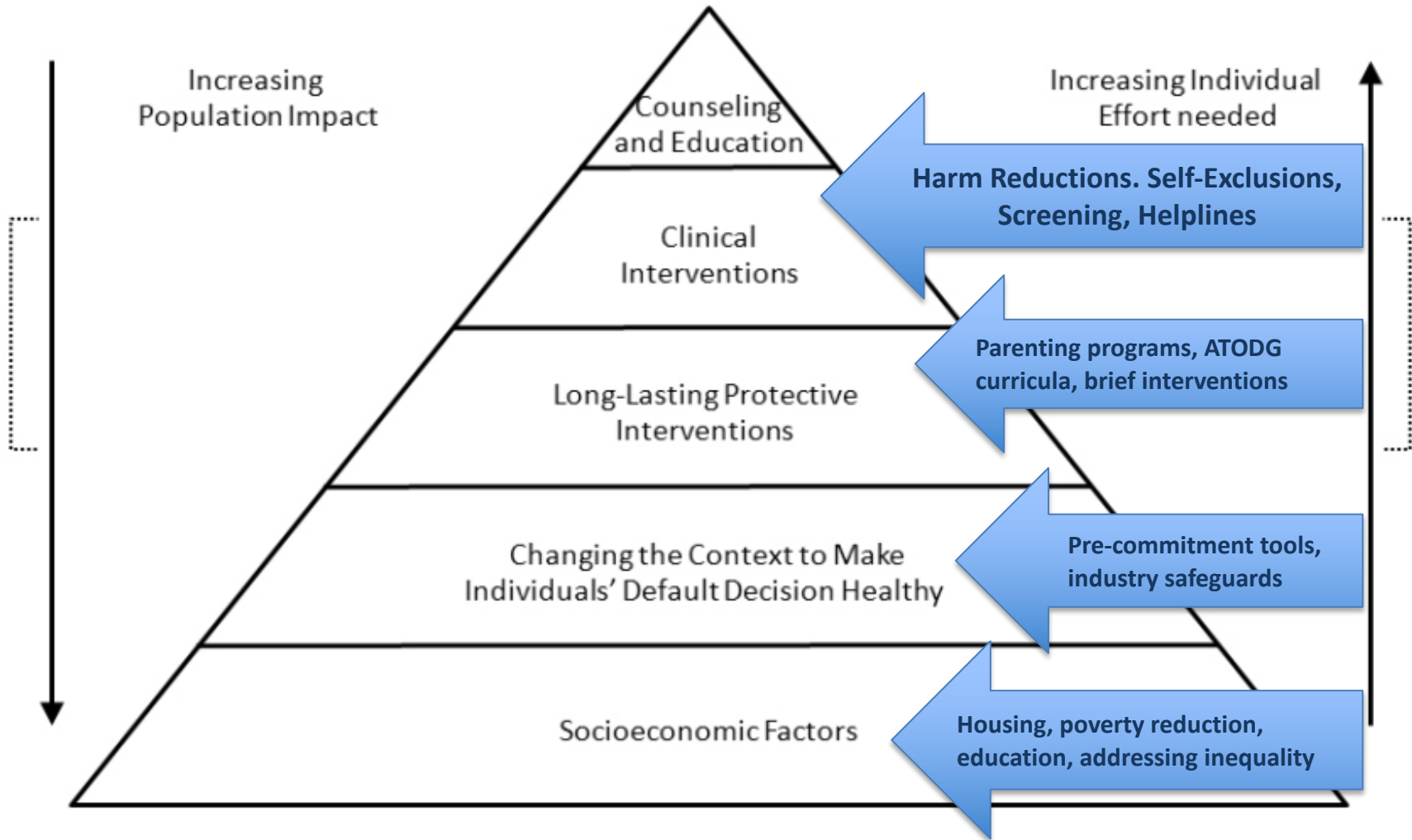
The health and welfare/support system

- Providing referral services and pathways for treatment
- Ensure there is treatment capacity
- Self-Help/Peer support

SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL APPROACH PROBLEM GAMBLING PREVENTION



HEALTH IMPACT PYRAMID



Frieden TR. Am J Public Health 2010;100(4):590-5



QUESTIONS



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7. Allami, Y., Hodgins, D. C., Young, M., Brunelle, N., Currie, S., Dufour, M., ... & Nadeau, L. (2021). A meta-analysis of problem gambling risk factors in the general adult population. *Addiction*, 116(11), 2968-2977.
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12. Velasco V, Scattola P, Gavazzeni L, Marchesi L, Nita IE, Giudici G. Prevention and Harm Reduction Interventions for Adult Gambling at the Local Level: An Umbrella Review of Empirical Evidence. *Int J Environ Res Public Health*. 2021 Sep 8;18(18):9484. doi: 10.3390/ijerph18189484. PMID: 34574405; PMCID: PMC8468790.



RESOURCES

1. Your Life Iowa, this website funded by the Iowa Department of Public Health under the Division of Behavioral Health provides free, confidential support and connects Iowa residents to resources on gambling. <https://yourlifeiowa.org/gambling>
2. Oregon Health Authority, Impacts of Problem Gambling on Public Health, An information booklet on how problem gambling impacts the people we serve, Oregon health and social service providers, program specialist, and policy makers. Available for download at <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/HSD/Problem-Gambling/Documents/Resource-Booklet.pdf>



THANK YOU

