

THE FACTS ABOUT THE LOTTERY

FACT 1: THE LOTTERY VICTIMIZES THE POOR

A California study revealed that 40% of lottery players are unemployed. (*ALCAP)

In Maryland, the poorest 1/3 of the population buys 60% of the daily numbers tickets. (ALCAP)

In Georgia, those who make less than \$25,000 a year spend three times as much on lottery tickets than those who make \$75,000 or more per year (*AFA)

On the national average, lottery gamblers with household incomes under \$10,000 dollars bet nearly 3 times as much on the lottery as those with incomes over \$50,000. (*ERLC)

A 1988 New Jersey study found that among lottery players with income of less than \$10,000 per year, the average percentage of income spent on lottery tickets was almost 21%. (ERLC)

In Massachusetts, individuals in the poorer cities of Worcester and Chelsea spent an average of \$336 and \$445, respectively, on lottery tickets in the early 1990s. Those in wealthier towns such as Weston and Amherst, spent an average of \$30 and \$42, respectively. (AFA)

A University of Texas study found that players with a high school diploma or less spent more than \$250 a year on the lottery. (AFA)

In Michigan, a 1994 study in Detroit found that people with less than a high school diploma spend over five times more than those with a college degree spend. (AFA)

In New Mexico, in 1996, three of its poorest counties ranked among the top-10 best-selling counties in lottery ticket sales. (AFA)

A 1996 Virginia Lottery study found that 13% of those who purchased tickets said playing the lottery reduced the money they would normally spend on household expenses. (AFA)

Economics Professor and lottery expert, Dr. Robert Goodman, says that after 3 to 5 years, many people stop playing the lottery because they can no longer afford it. ("The Luck Business," by Dr. Robert Goodman)

FACT 2: THE LOTTERY EXPLOITS PERSONS OF ALL AGES

In Texas, the Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse found that the introduction of a state lottery increased the number of adults who gambled by 40%. (AFA)

Senior citizens are the fastest growing group of problem gamblers. In 1997 the state of Minnesota saw an increase of 200% in problem gambling among seniors. According to a 1995 survey in Florida, 72% of the senior citizen problem gamblers there said the source of their problem was the lottery. (AFA)

When California legalized a state lottery in 1985, gambling among adolescents increased by 40%. (AFA)

In lottery states, 1/3 of minors have illegally purchased tickets. (ALCAP)

In Indiana, 65% of minors play the lottery. (ALCAP)

FACT 3: THE LOTTERY IS A SUCKER'S BET

The odds of winning the lottery are...

1 chance in 54 million (ERLC)

The chance of winning a jackpot like the record-setting Powerball lottery that occurred in May, 1998 is 1 in 80 million! Compare this to your chances of experiencing some other incidents in life. You have...

a 1 in 3 million chance of freezing to death
a 1 in 2 million chance of being struck by lightning
a 1 in 1 million chance of dying in the bath tub
1 chance in 700,000 of being killed by a dog
1 chance in 86,000 of dying from poisoning. (Baton Rouge Advocate)

A lottery ticket buyer is...

5 times more likely to be eaten by a shark
6,000 times more likely to be hit by a car
500,000 times more likely to die in an airline crash (Seducing America: Is Gambling a Good Bet? By Rex M. Rogers)

For more info on the odds of winning: www.math.byu.edu/~jarvis/gambling/gambling/gambling.html

FACT 4: THE LOTTERY IS BAD FOR THE ECONOMY AND EDUCATION

According to the Georgia DHR, \$221 million in tax dollars are spent annually on social costs directly related to the lottery. (Chilton County News)

The average cost to society of one compulsive gambler is \$13,200 a year. (AFA)

The annual gambling-related cost of job loss, unemployment benefits, welfare benefits, poor physical or mental health, and gambling treatment is \$5 billion. The lifetime cost would amount to \$40 billion. This figure does not include costs of gambling-related incidents of theft, embezzlement, suicide, domestic violence, child abuse and neglect, and the non-legal costs of divorce. (ERLC)

In 1998, almost 25% of all gambling in this country came from the purchase of lottery tickets. (ERLC)

The lottery encourages people to gamble money that would otherwise be spent at pre-existing businesses. In California, one entire chain of grocery stores quit selling lottery tickets after discovering the stores were losing \$1 in food sales for every \$1 in lottery tickets sold. (AFA)

In 1998, the Second Circuit Court of Appeals said that if a state allows any Class III gambling activity (such as a lottery), Indian tribes can engage in all Class III gambling activities (full-blown casinos). (Montgomery Advertiser, Montgomery Alabama)

States sell lotteries as a painless substitute for taxes and a way to raise money for education. But in 1996, an investigation by "Money" magazine revealed that lottery states collect more in taxes and spend less on schools than states without lotteries! (Money)

- *AFA - Alabama Family Alliance
- *ALCAP - Alabama Citizens Action Program
- *ERLC - Ethics & Religious Liberties Commission

For More Information Contact:
Sooner Alcohol Narcotics Education (SANE)
8921 S. Penn
Oklahoma City, OK 73159

Additional Resources:

www.ncalg.org (National Coalition Against Legalized Gambling)

www.family.org (This is the website for Focus On The Family – a search on “gambling” will yield more than 450 hits)

www.afa.net/gambling (American Family Association)