

# Internet Gambling Among Youth: A Preliminary Examination

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# What we know about the Internet

- Access is widespread
- Access is inexpensive
- Internet is anonymous
- Internet is convenient
- Internet is entertaining
- Internet is used for many purposes

# What we know about gambling on the Internet

- Azmier (2000)
  - 0.5% had tried Internet gambling in past year, and 1 out of 2,202 indicated he regularly gambled over Internet
- Griffiths (2001)
  - Community sample: 1% occasionally gamble on Internet
- Ladd & Petry (2002)
  - Health clinic patients: 8.1% lifetime; 3.6% gamble weekly on Internet
  - 74% of individuals with Internet gambling experiences were Level 2 or 3 gamblers (SOGS)

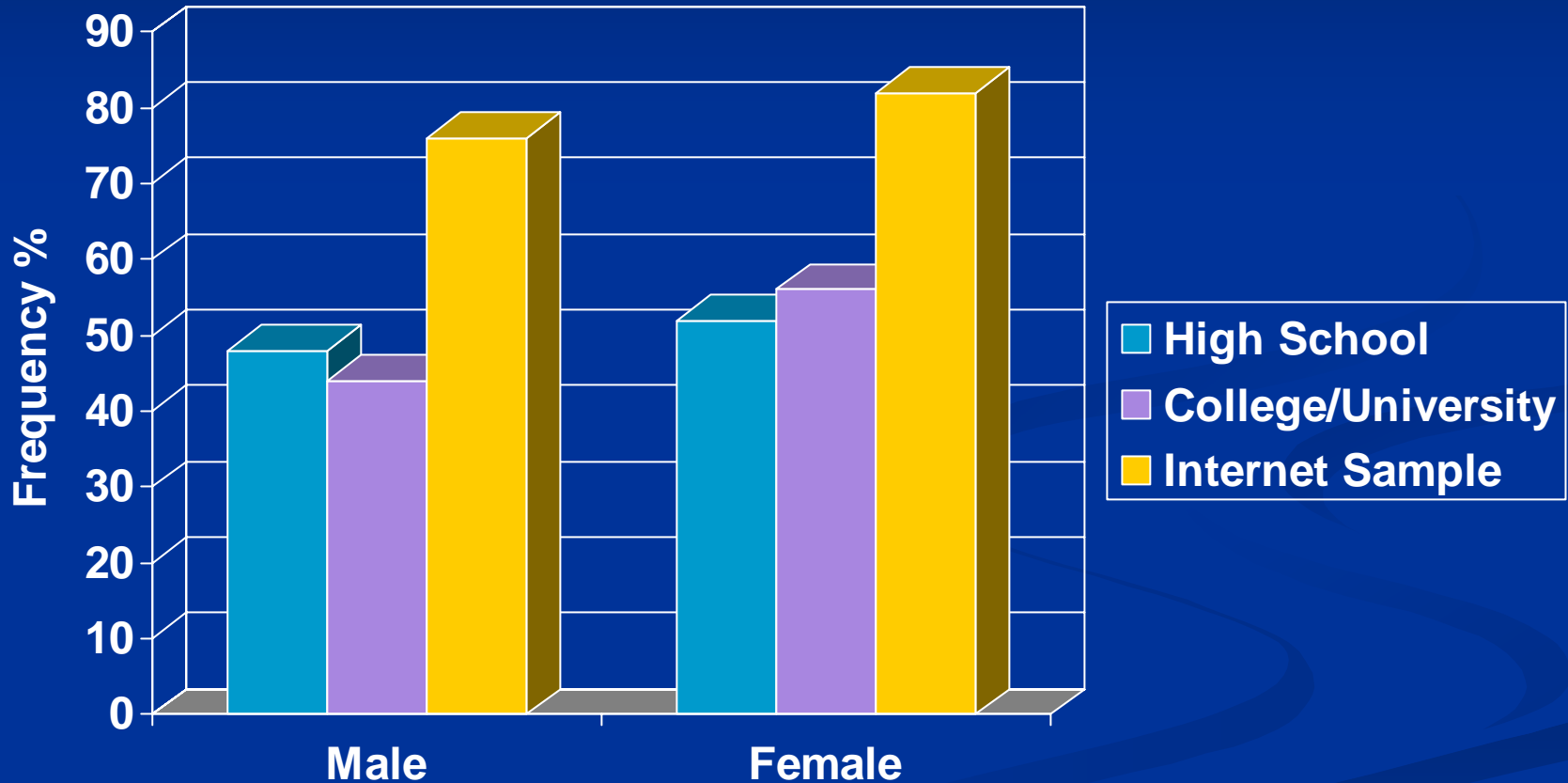
# Are Internet gamblers more likely to have problems?

- Wood & Williams (in press) - Sample of on-line gamblers
- Non-problem gamblers: 34%
- At-risk gamblers: 24%
- Moderate problem gamblers: 23%
- Severe problem gamblers: 20%
- 2/3 of those respondents gambling on the Internet are likely to have problems

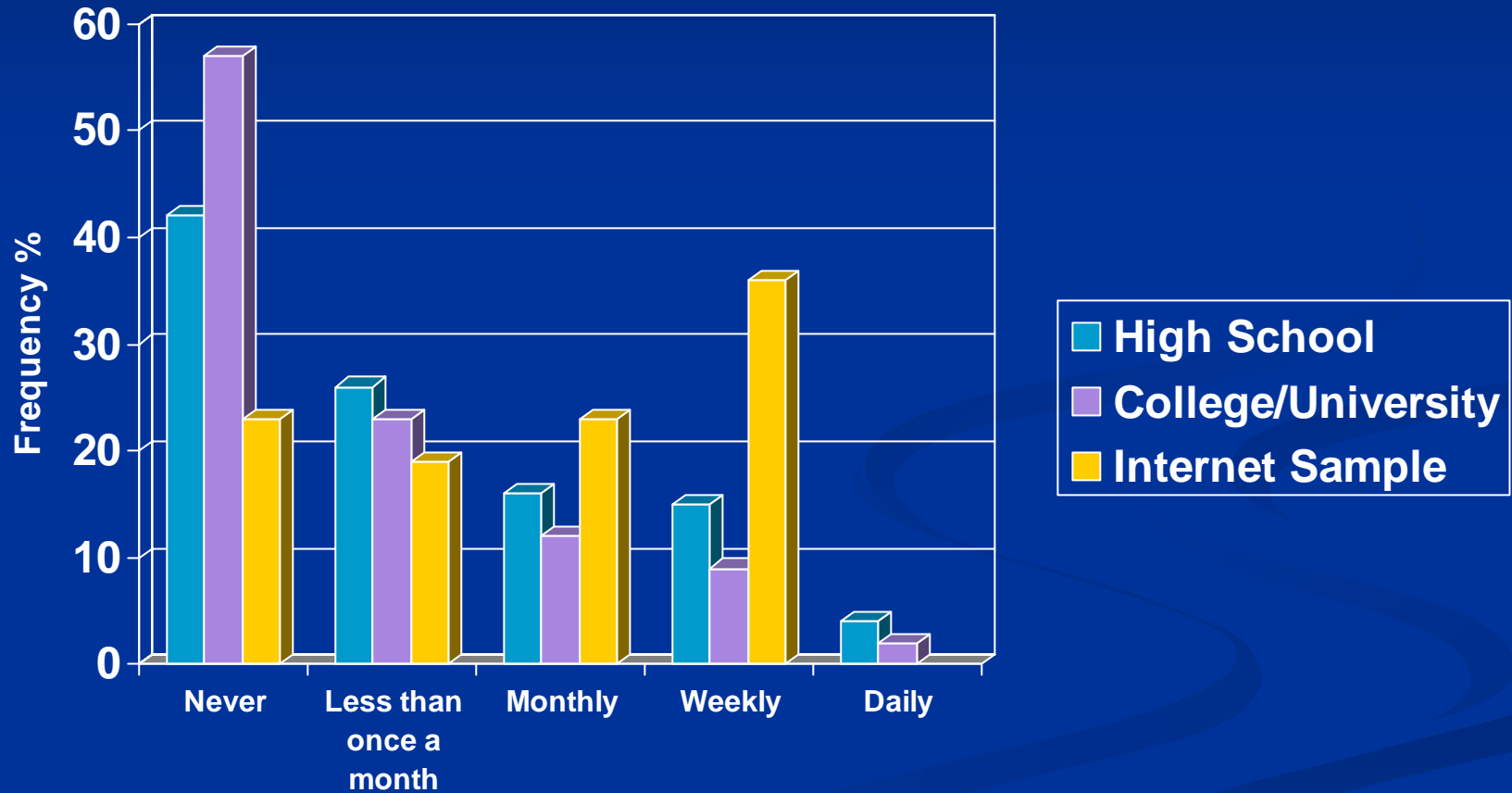
# A New Study

- Montreal high-school students:  $N = 1113$
- Canadian and U.S. college and university students:  $N = 1273$
- On-line gaming newsletter link:  $N = 546$

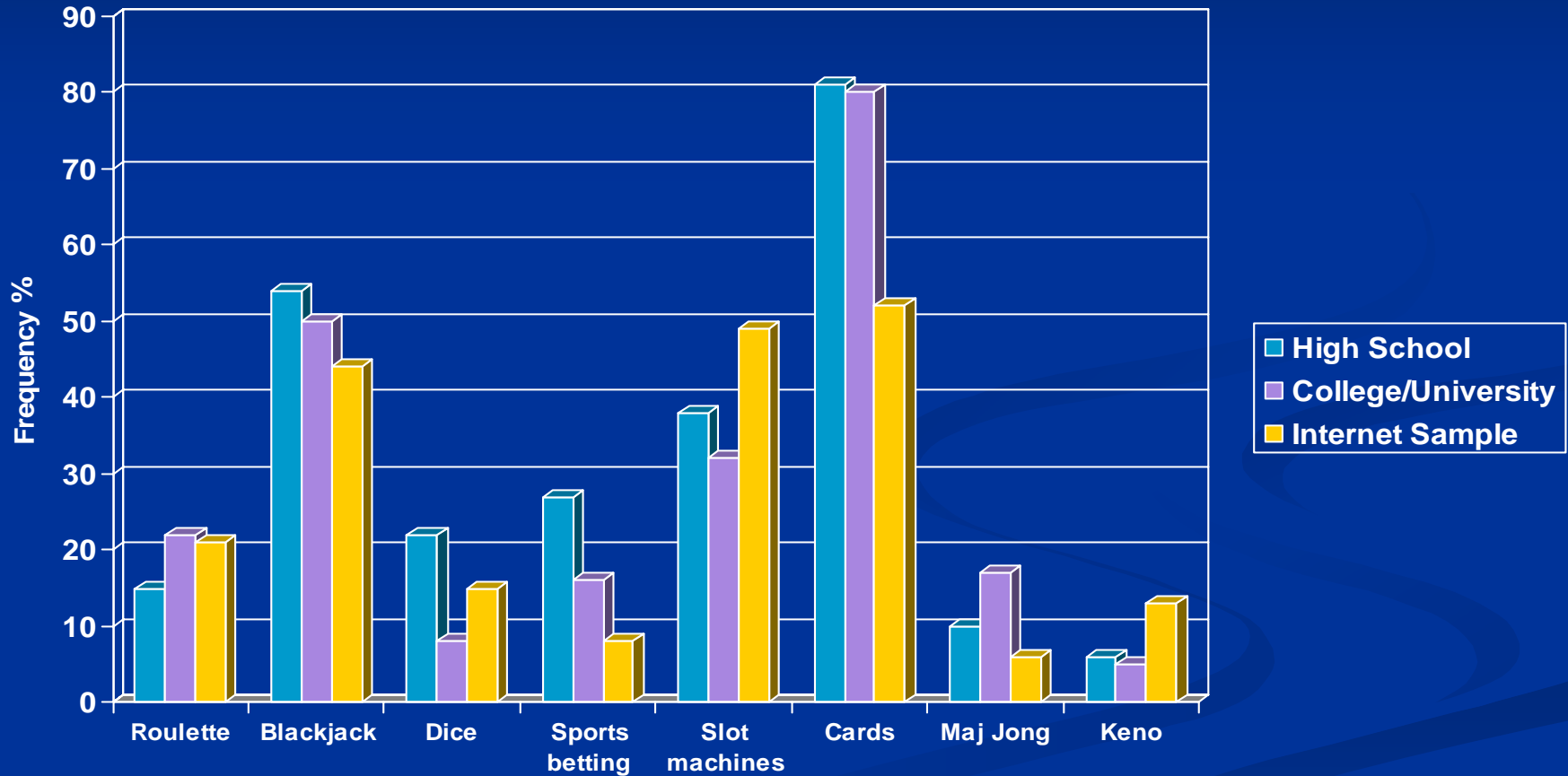
# Use of “Demo/Practice” Sites



# “Demo/Practice” Site Frequency



# “Demo/Practice” Activities



# Gambling for Real Money on the Internet

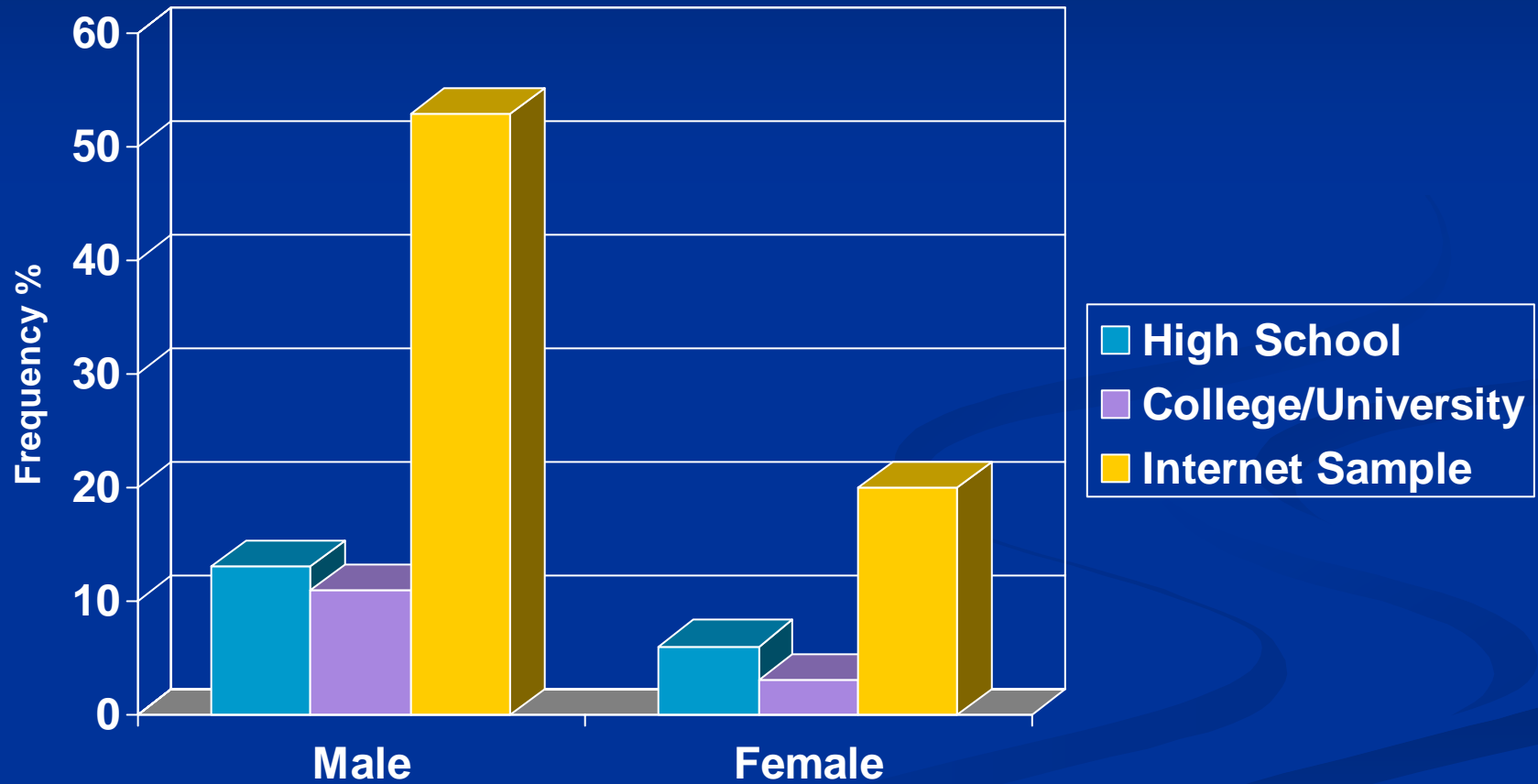
- 9% of high school students have gambled for money on the Internet
  - 13% of males, 6% of females
- 6% of College and University students have gambled for money on the Internet
  - 11% of males, 3% of females
- 42% of the Internet sample have gambled for money on the Internet
  - 53% of males, 20% of females
  - 70% at least weekly

On-line gamblers ...

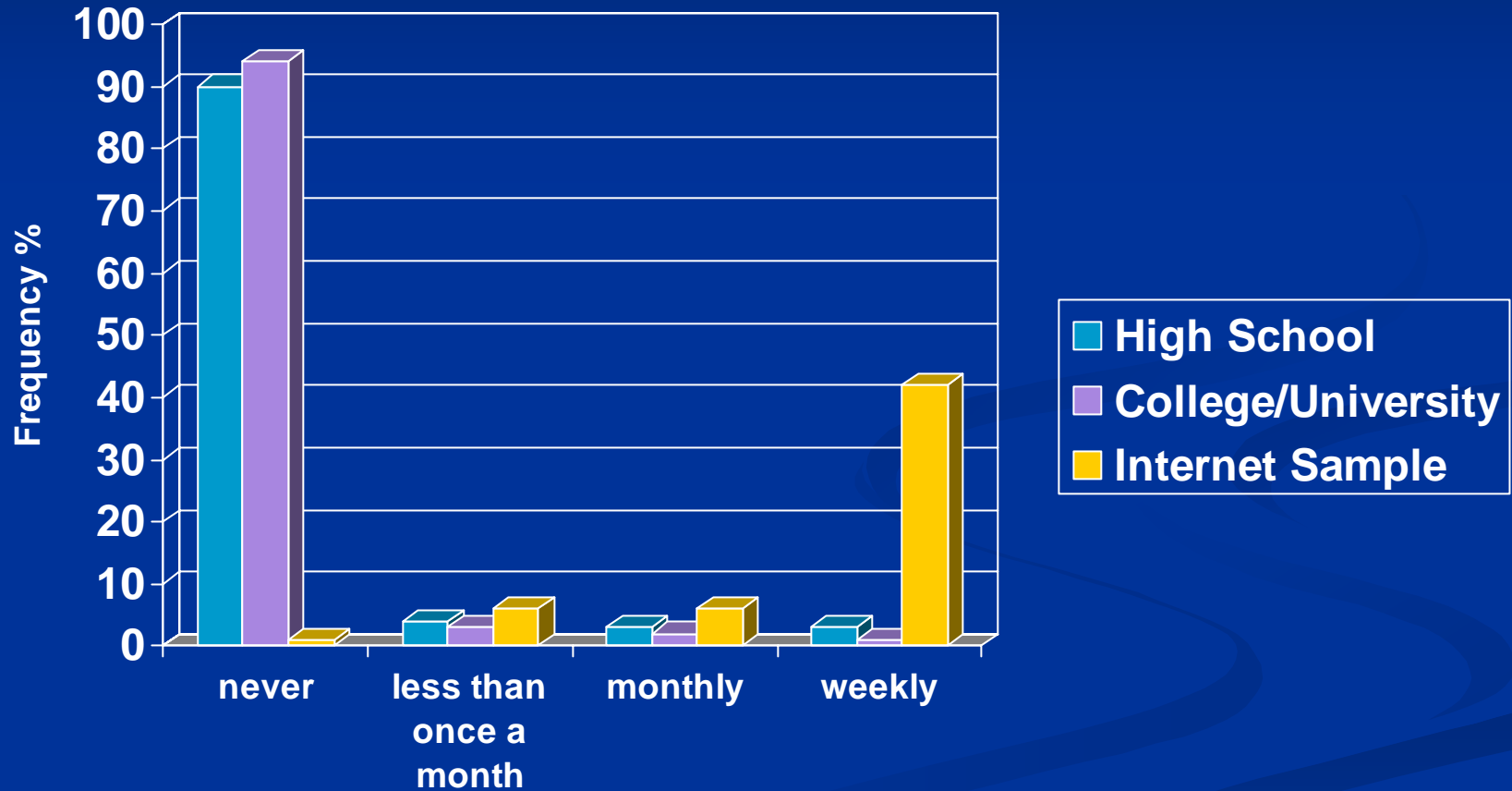
# Profile of Those Who Gamble on Internet for Money

- 85% male, 15% female
- 23% are 18-24
- 28% are problem gamblers

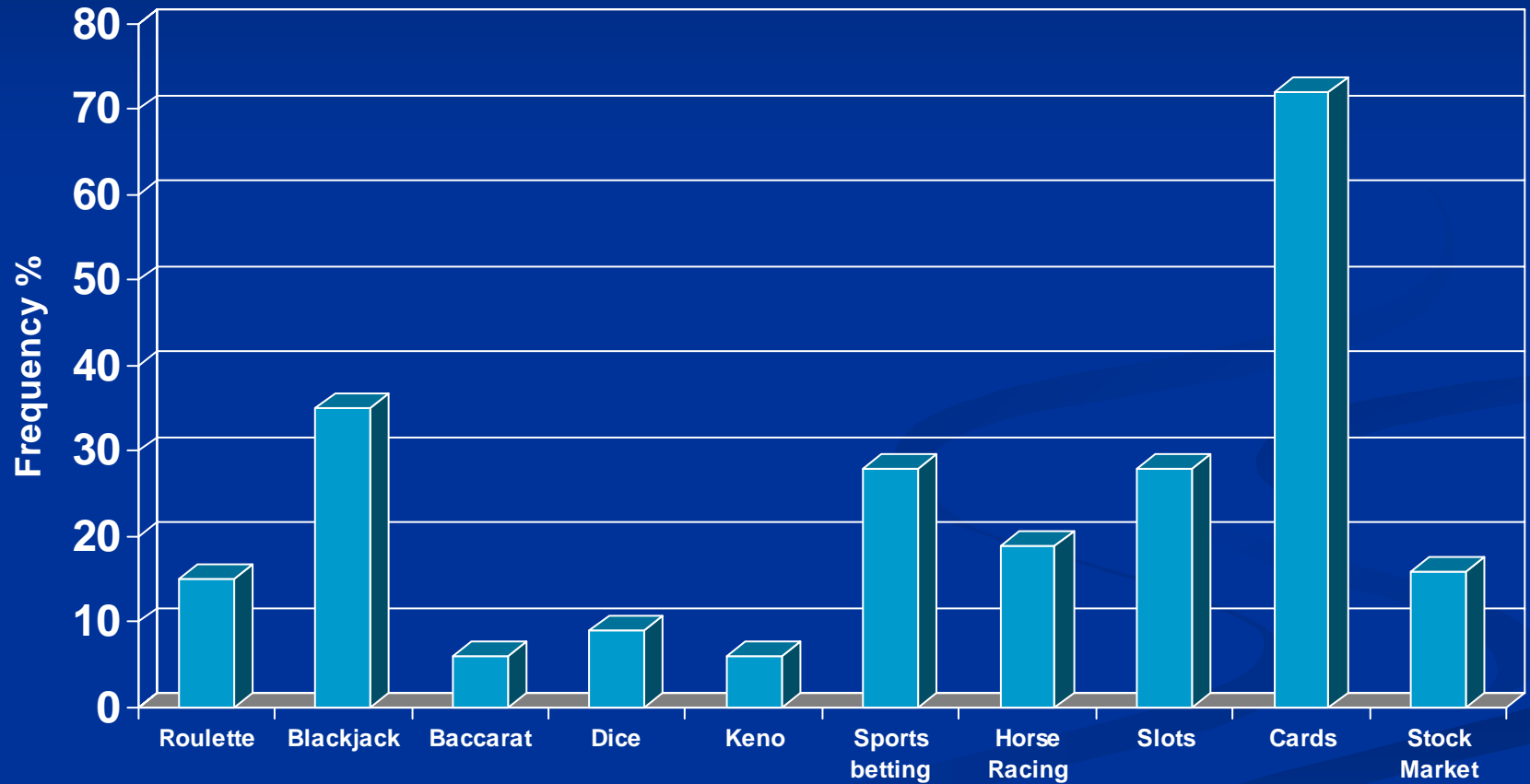
# Gambling for Real Money on Internet



# Gambling for Money on Internet Frequency



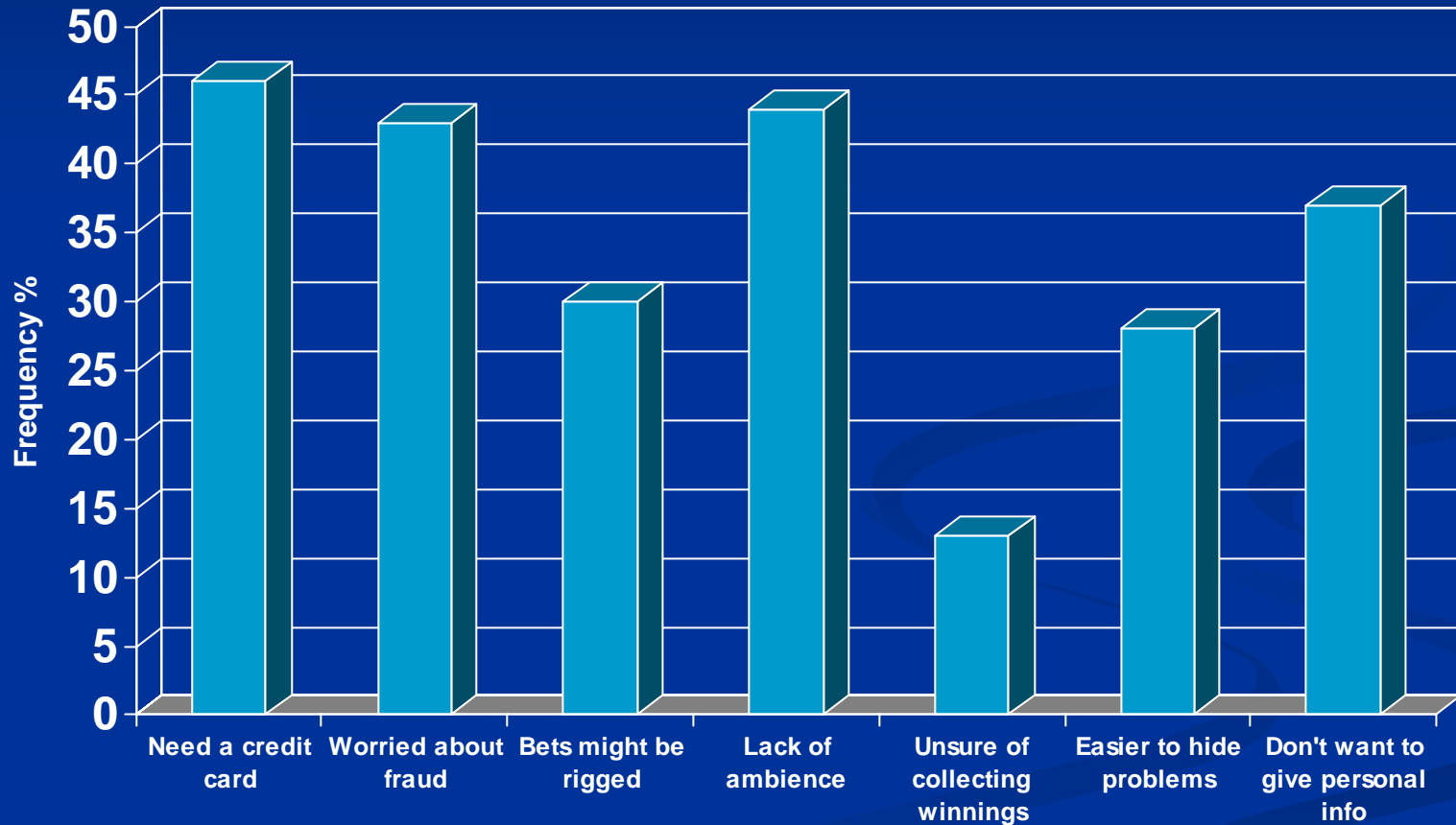
# Internet Sample Online Gambling Activities



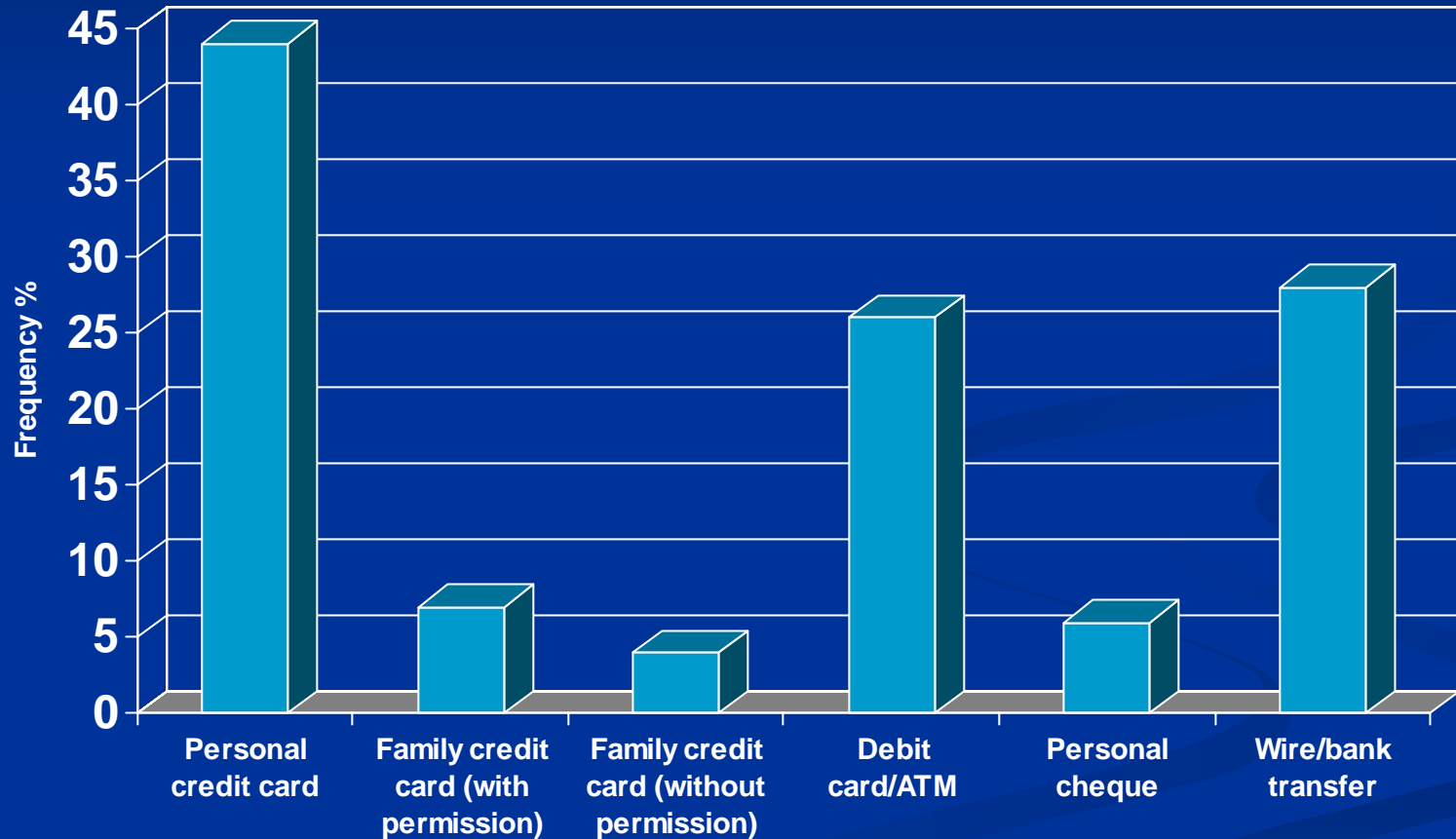
# Youth (18-24) on the Internet

- 93% have gambled for money on the Internet
- 95% of males have gambled for money on the Internet
- 33% of 18-24-year-olds are problem gamblers
  - 95% of those have gambled for money on the Internet

# Reasons Youth Don't Gamble on Internet



# How Youth Are Paying



# Does the Internet contribute to problem gambling?

- There is good news and bad news
- The good news:
  - Fewer youth than adults gamble on the Internet
- The bad news:
  - More youth are playing on “demo/practice” sites than sites for real money
  - The reasons they give are “for practice”
  - 1/3 of the youth who are gambling for money are problem gamblers
- Does “practice make perfect”?
  - Is it just a matter of time before the “practice” players switch to gambling for real money?

# Thank-you's

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- The Engineering Department at the University of New Brunswick, St. John