

Quarterly News & Updates

Fall | 2024

Welcome to the Division on Addiction's Fall Quarterly Newsletter!

Announcements



New Publication Alert! Dr. Seth McCulloch and his Division on Addiction colleagues recently published a study exploring message fatigue, a feeling of boredom resulting from repeated exposure to messages promoting the same health behavior. Using data from an online panel in the U.S., they identified predictors of responsible gambling message fatigue and modeled the effects of this fatigue on participants' intentions to gamble and share responsible gambling messages. [Click here](#) to learn more! If you would like a copy of this paper, please email info@divisiononaddiction.org.

Outreach Corner



Exciting news! The [Center for Indigenous](#)

Upcoming Events



On November 19, Dr. Sarah Nelson will be a panelist at the National Alliance to Stop Impaired Driving Conference where she will discuss Mental Health and Impaired Driving Research, Practice and Policy: The "What" vs. The "How". [Click here](#) to register and learn more!

[The MA Technical Assistance Center for Problem Gambling Treatment \(M-TAC\)](#) is hosting two upcoming trainings: Cultivating Cultural Humility in Practice: A Critical Self-Reflection Journey on November 19 from 11:00am-1:00pm and Introduction to Gambling & Co-occurring Disorders on December 13 from 10:00am-11:30am. [Click here](#) to register and learn more.

We are proud to partner with Health Resources in Action to produce M-TAC trainings and resources, which are funded by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's

[Research, Collaboration, Learning, & Excellence \(CIRCLE\)](#) is now on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#). CIRCLE is a clinical research and outreach partnership between the Division on Addiction and the Healing Lodge of the Seven Nations. Follow CIRCLE on social media to learn more about the First Face for Mental Health training, stay updated on community outreach activities, gain access to resources, and much more!

Office of Problem Gambling Services.

Did you know?



Kids who are exposed to alcohol advertisements may start drinking earlier than they would otherwise. But how common is alcohol marketing exposure among youth in the U.S, and does this exposure differ by age, gender, race/ethnicity, and media use? One study of 833 adolescents found that just over half of them have been exposed to alcohol advertisements via streaming services (e.g., Netflix), television, movies, or the internet. Hispanic youth, in particular, were more likely than non-Hispanic White youth to be exposed to alcohol advertisements. However, exposure did not differ by gender or media use. These findings reinforce the need for prevention efforts that address underage drinking and correct misconceptions about alcohol use. These efforts should be customized for Spanish-speaking individuals who are more likely to be exposed to alcohol advertisements. Read more about this study at [The BASIS](#).

Research Spotlight



Research Spotlight

Stigma comes in many forms, such as public stigma and self-stigma, and can lead to affected individuals experiencing isolation, discrimination, and negative stereotypes. Mental illness is a commonly stigmatized condition and this prejudice may deter people from seeking treatment, leading to increased health problems and poor quality of life. But how effective are interventions aimed at reducing stigma? [Drs. Seth McCulloch and Rachel Scivano](#) conducted a systematic meta-review of 19 meta-analyses to investigate the effectiveness of interventions aimed at reducing mental health-related stigma while also identifying any gaps and assessing the quality of the stigma-reduction research.

Drs. McCulloch and Scrivano unfortunately found that nearly 50% of meta-analyses in this field were of poor quality. These publications could be misinforming future research and policy initiatives. Keeping these limitations in mind, they did find that some stigma-reducing interventions were effective. Public stigma interventions like *contact interventions* (aimed at building relationships among members of a stigmatized group) and *educational interventions* (aimed at eliminating misconceptions about mental illness) showed promise in addressing mental health stigma. Meta-analyses assessing self-stigma interventions were less prominent. However, the available findings indicated that combining psychotherapy interventions and delivering these interventions at the community level could combat self-stigma and improve treatment seeking. Drs. McCulloch and Scrivano made suggestions for improving the quality of research in this field. If you'd like a full copy of this article, contact us at info@divisiononaddiction.org.

Dr. McCulloch says "I really enjoyed doing this study, and I think it helped to shed light on some significant limitations in mental health stigma reduction research. Some things that were particularly surprising was that most of the meta-analyses in our sample were of poor quality, meaning that their findings should be interpreted with caution. Another surprise was that we found there was very little evidence for the longitudinal efficacy of stigma reduction interventions. A small percentage of the articles in our sample looked at longitudinal effects and only a few of these found that interventions were significant at their follow-up assessments. This was concerning because it means that our current intervention strategies might not be enough to counteract mental health stigma, at least not over time."

Meet the Team

Annette Siu

Research Coordinator

Ms. Annette Siu, BA, joined the Division on Addiction in 2023. Since then, she has contributed to a variety of the Division's projects, including examining the effectiveness of [responsible gambling messages](#) and developing CARS-Silver, an adaption of [CARS \(the Computerized Assessment and Referral System\)](#) for older adults. This year, she presented some of her CARS [research](#) at the Harvard Psychiatry Research Day Poster Session. She is also a writer for [The Brief Addiction Science Information Source \(BASIS\)](#). In her free time, she enjoys ice-skating, reading, and finding new restaurants to try around Boston.

Learn more about our faculty and staff
here.

Our Latest Publications

Shaffer, H.J., Ladouceur, R. & Blaszczynski, A. (2024). Twenty years of responsible gambling: The science-based glass is half full. *International Journal of Mental*

Health and Addiction. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11469-024-01398-7>

Wong, R. H. Y., Chan, E. M.-L., Ching, F. Y., Chan, V. W. Y., Tom, M. A., Grossman, A. B., LaRaja, A. S., Amichia, K. A., & Shaffer, H. J. (2024). Therapeutic alliance and treatment outcomes among treatment seekers with behavioral expressions of addiction. *Psychology Research and Practice*, 2(1), 0–0.
<https://doi.org/10.37155/2972-3086-0302-1>

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