Interventions, practices and systems to support young people at risk of gambling-related harm: A scoping review.

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Background:
- People aged under 18 years engage in both illegal gambling and legal gambling-like entities (e.g., loot boxes)[1,2]
- Innovations in mobile technology have increased access to gambling-like experiences for CYP[3]
- However, limited information about types of available services to support CYP experiencing gambling-related harm, or what kinds of interventions are most effective for this population [4]

Aims:
- Explore nationally (GB-wide) and internationally available evidence related to existing services and interventions for children and young people (CYP) experiencing gambling-related harms.
  - Are there any networks of organisations that effectively implement interventions for children and young people (CYP) experiencing gambling-related harm? If so, what types of interventions do they offer, and how have they evaluated their outcomes?
  - How have cross-disciplinary programmes been utilised and organised within high-functioning systems

Methods:
Scoping review of the academic literature using the PAGER framework
- Phase 1: Defined research terms and inclusion and exclusion criteria
- Phase 2: Identified search terms based on authors' existing knowledge and in collaboration with professionals with experience working with children and/or in gambling
- Phase 3: Ran systematic searches in academic databases: CINAHL, PsycINFO, The Cochrane Library, Web of Science, Medline, SCOPUS, Google Scholar
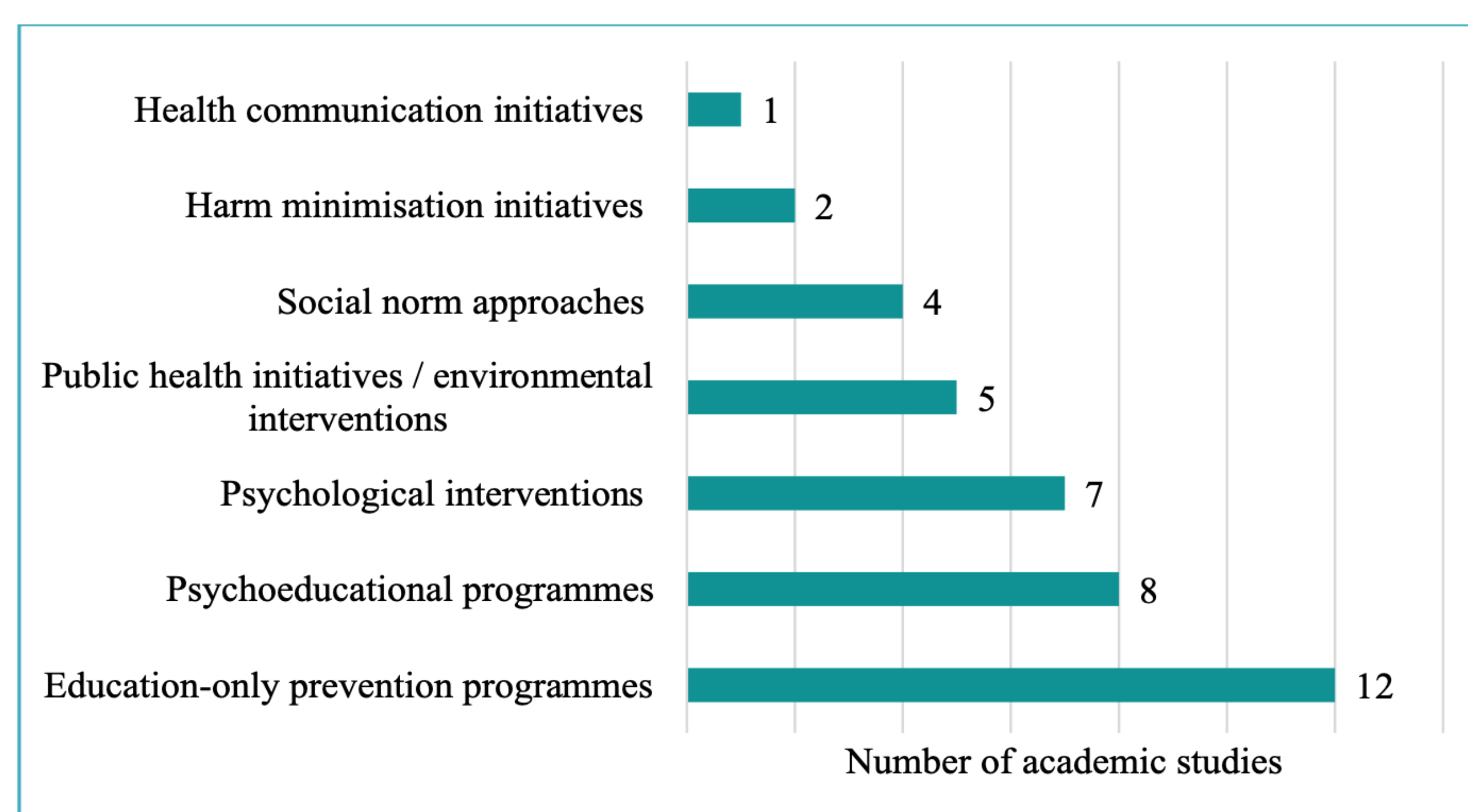- Phase 4: Reviewed academic papers to identify key themes

Table 1: Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
• Research involving participants aged 25 or younger • Interventions for children and young people experiencing gambling-related harm • Peer reviewed primary research or grey literature that is not peer reviewed • Study written in the English language	• Research involving participants aged over 25 years (including if adults and children involved in the research) • Study conducted before 2008 • Country where the intervention took place not comparable to GB (e.g., gambling is illegal for all ages, not just children aged under 18 years.

Results

267 studies screened
39 studies identified

Figure 1: Numbers of studies in each category of intervention

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- Health communication initiatives: 1
- Harm minimisation initiatives: 2
- Social norm approaches: 4
- Public health initiatives / environmental interventions: 5
- Psychological interventions: 7
- Psychoeducational programmes: 8
- Education-only prevention programmes: 12

Number of academic studies

Table 2: Numbers of studies using each methodological approach

Methodology	No of studies
Randomised controlled trials	20
Repeated measures cross-sectional studies	5
Experimental pre-post designs: 1 group	5
Experimental pre-post designs: 2 groups	4
Longitudinal studies	2
Pilot studies	2
Exploratory studies	1

Key Findings:
- Effective interventions include multiple methods
- Effective interventions involve active and varied engagement of participants
- Multiple exposure interventions may be more effective than single exposure interventions
- Effective interventions are theory-driven
- Family support and influence may be an important factor
- Effective interventions are developmentally appropriate
- Effective interventions are adapted for individual characteristics
- Effective interventions are relevant to the target population
- Effective interventions may involve engagement with digital technologies
- Effective prevention interventions may be delivered by professionals with training in gambling-related harm
- Effective interventions use past evaluation to improve interventions
- Standardised, validated and age-appropriate scales should be used to ensure accurate measurement and conclusions

Recommendations for research and practice:
- Conduct more research on innovative interventions with CYP
- Involvement of CYP in intervention design and focus on young people's strengths
- Development and implementation of interventions that look at the wider social environment, social support, developmental and individual factors.
- Use of multiple delivery modes to address the multifaceted issues related to gambling
- Consideration of family and the wider environment in intervention design
- Exploration of the needs of CYP with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and those who may not be part of the mainstream school system, such as those with mental health difficulties, caring responsibilities, or who are home-schooled.
- Further research to understand how to make gambling harms treatment for CYP accessible and user friendly
- Encouragement of partnerships with social media companies or mental health charities

References:
[1]UK Gambling Commission (2022). 2022 Young people and gambling report. Available from: https://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/news/article/2022-young-people-and-gambling
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[3] Clement, J. (2023). Online gaming among children in the United Kingdom (UK) 2015-2022, by age. https://www.statista.com/statistics/274427/online-gaming-among-children-in- the-uk-by-age-group/
[4]McMahon, N., Thomson, K., Kaner, E., & Bambra, C. (2019). Effects of prevention and harm reduction interventions on gambling behaviours and gambling related harm: An umbrella review. Addictive Behaviors, 90, 380-388. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.addbeh.2018.11.048