

Gambling problems can be overlooked because they are not as visible as alcohol or drug use. Here are some signs to look for:

- Withdrawing from friends and family
- Increased time on their electronic devices
- Intense interest in sports scores
- Spending a lot of time thinking or talking about gambling
- Skipping classes to gamble
- Lying about gambling – how much time and/or money spent on gambling
- Being more secretive, defensive or aggressive
- Poor nutrition, health and sleep
- Borrowing or stealing money or things of value to gamble

For more information or to find local support services, visit: www.ResponsibleGambling.org



YOU CAN CONTACT THE FOLLOWING RESOURCES FOR MORE INFORMATION OR HELP:

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH)
Visit camh.ca or call 416-535-8501 (press 2)

Gamtalk
Online Support for Gambling Issues
Visit gamtalk.org

ConnexOntario
A free and confidential 24/7 helpline for those concerned about their gaming or gambling, or that of a friend or family member. Support is offered in 170 languages.

Call 1.866.531.2600 or visit connexontario.ca.

Responsible Gambling Council (RGC)
All in for Safer Gambling

RGC is an independent non-profit organization dedicated to the prevention of problem gambling in Canada and around the world for over 35 years. We believe that gambling should never come at a human cost. By ensuring the right safeguards are in place, we influence positive change and advance responsible gambling standards.

www.ResponsibleGambling.org



Gambling and Teens:

Understanding the Risks



THE RISKS OF TEEN GAMBLING ARE REAL

Apps, online sites, video games and social media have increasingly made gambling accessible to youth. While legalized gambling is prohibited to minors in all jurisdictions, youth who gamble start as early as age 12.

5 FACTS TO CONSIDER

- 1 A high percentage of teenagers report having gambled in some form or experienced harms from gambling before they reach 19.*
- 2 1 in 10 adolescents has gambled online in the past 3 months, with sports pools being the most popular type of game.²
- 3 Teenagers who gambled online report more gambling problems than those who play offline.³
- 4 12.4% of adolescents have played online simulated gambling games in the past 3 months.⁴
- 5 Those who have played simulated gambling games are more likely to gamble for money and to have gambling problems.⁵

HOW TO HELP YOUR TEEN

Gambling has risks that can lead to serious consequences, like poor health, failing grades, lack of sleep and damaged relationships. Preparing your kids about the risks of gambling now can help prevent problems today and when they reach adulthood, if they choose to gamble legally.

- **Talk about the risks**
Discuss the dangers posed by sports betting, poker, gaming and other non-casino games.
- **Reveal the hidden signs**
Review the tell-tale signs linked to gambling problems.
- **Lead by example**
Talk to your teen about responsible gambling and be a good influence.
- **Be a clear voice**
Youth need to understand that activities provided by casinos, sites and lotteries are designed so that people lose money, not make it.



TALKING MAKES A DIFFERENCE

A bet on a hockey game. A friendly lunchtime card game. The purchase of a virtual loot box. All of these activities seem harmless, but they can lead to serious problems later on. Raising the topic of gambling with your kids before issues arise is important.

STARTING THE CONVERSATION: 5 TIPS TO CONSIDER:

- **Choose the right time:** Initiating conversation after seeing a gambling ad, during a casual walk, or on the couch after a show are all excellent opportunities to begin the discussion.
- **Be relevant:** Tailor the message to their interests. If your teen enjoys video games, consider discussing eSports betting.
- **Listen:** Actively listen and speak conversationally – your teen will be more receptive to the message.
- **Keep it short / Aim for brevity:** Long-winded lectures may have your teen tuning out.
- **Keep the lines of communication open:** Notice negative behaviours like staying up too late or always asking for money? Describe your observations to your teen, without labelling or sounding accusatory.

DID YOU KNOW?

31% of Ontario high school students report gambling on one or more activities in the past year.**

DID YOU KNOW?

The games played the most by Ontario high school students are betting money on a dare or private bet (12%) and betting on sports pools (10%).**

DID YOU KNOW?

Roughly 7% of high school students in Ontario have a low-to-moderately severe gambling problem. About 2% have a high-severity gambling problem.**

* Elton-Marshall, Leatherdale, & Turner, 2016 2. Ibid 3. Ibid 4. Veselka et al. 2018 5. Ibid **Boak, A., Hamilton, H.A., Adlaf, E.M., Henderson, J.L. & Mann, R.E. (2018). The mental health and well-being of Ontario students, 1991-2017: Detailed findings from the Ontario Student Drug Unit and Health Survey (OSDUHS) (CAMH Research Document Series No.47). Toronto, ON.

