



Gambling and Young People

Today's generation of children and adolescents are facing a unique and concerning environment with regard to gambling. Growing up in a digital age characterised by constant connectivity, they have been exposed to significant changes in the gambling industry during their formative years. Research consistently shows that a significant percentage of adolescents engage in gambling activities, which can result in adverse consequences like decreased academic performance and strained relationships. The digital era has made gambling more accessible, and certain risk factors, particularly among those with a penchant for risky behaviours such as alcohol consumption, heighten the chances of problematic gambling in young individuals. Simulated gambling in video games can also increase the likelihood of teenagers transitioning to real-money gambling and developing future gambling-related problems.

It is crucial for parents and caregivers to engage in open discussions about media choices and encourage a balanced approach to screen time and internet use.

Empower confidence using these strategies:

- 1. Start early**
Begin the conversation about gambling at an age-appropriate level. Young children can understand the concept of gambling at an early age.
- 2. Be a good role model**
Demonstrate responsible gambling behaviours and explain the importance of setting limits. Children learn by observing their parents.
- 3. Educate yourself**
Understand the various forms of gambling your child may be exposed to such as in video games, so you can provide accurate information.
- 4. Be non-judgemental**
Create an open and safe environment where your child feels comfortable discussing their thoughts and experiences with gambling.
- 5. Discuss risks and consequences**
Talk about the potential risks and negative consequences of gambling, such as addiction and strained relationships.
- 6. Set boundaries**
Establish clear family rules about gambling, including age restrictions for engaging in different forms of gambling.
- 7. Teach online safety**
Educate your child about the risks of online gambling, including the importance of not sharing personal information or engaging in illegal activities.
- 8. Monitor online activities**
Keep an eye on your child's online activities, including their gaming and gambling apps, and raise any concerns.
- 9. Talk about advertising**
Discuss the influence of gambling advertising and its impact on decision-making. Teach your child to critically evaluate these messages.
- 10. Seek help if needed**
If you suspect your child has a gambling problem or is at risk, don't hesitate to seek professional help from a counsellor or therapist.