

## HOW DO I BRING IT UP?

*Here are some tips for raising the issue with your son or daughter:*

Look for a time to raise the topic naturally, for example, after seeing a commercial for a casino or finding out that a friend has won or lost money.

Ask questions first. Explore your child's own ideas and feelings about gambling before giving information or offering your own opinions.

Gambling is a topic full of contradictions for youth. Be specific when you talk about gambling and about your own values.

Be patient. It may take several discussions before your child understands the ideas that you want to convey.

If you would like more information, visit the Responsible Gambling Council Website at

[www.responsiblegambling.org](http://www.responsiblegambling.org)



### *The Responsible Gambling Council Focused Firmly on Prevention*

The Responsible Gambling Council is an independent, non-profit organization committed to problem gambling prevention. RGC designs and delivers highly effective awareness programs. The Council promotes the identification and adoption of best practices in problem gambling prevention through research and information dissemination.



Why It's  
Important  
to  
talk  
to your  
teens  
about  
Gambling

AND HOW TO DO IT



## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

**Teens are exposed to gambling images almost every day.** All they have to do is walk into a corner store that sells lottery tickets or turn on the TV to see a poker tournament.

**Several studies have shown that three to four per cent of teenagers who gamble experience gambling problems. Once they reach the age of 18, the risk of developing a gambling problem will almost double.**

**Youth do not see gambling as risky.** While teens receive numerous prevention and awareness messages on a variety of topics, many are unaware of, or not concerned about, the potential risks associated with gambling.

**Teens are only a few years away from gambling legally.** It is essential to provide your teen with problem gambling prevention information now—when gambling-related attitudes and behaviours are being formed. Many teens are already actively involved in gambling activities. It may be a bet of a dollar or two over a hockey or card game, but it can be a lot more serious.

## HOW DO I PROTECT THEM?

Teens who understand that gambling has risks are less likely to develop a gambling problem. Parents can help protect their kids by talking with them about those risks.

Parents who have never raised the topic with their teens may not realize that they are already communicating some sort of message about gambling through their own behaviour: Parents may buy lottery tickets, play bingo, or visit casinos and seem to enjoy the experience; they may not gamble at all, either out of moral conviction or because they just aren't interested; they may spend too much money gambling and regret it afterwards.

As a parent, it is important to realize the impact your own attitudes and behaviour have on your children.

Talking with your teen about gambling is a way to make sure that you are communicating exactly what you want to get across.

## WHAT DO THEY NEED TO KNOW?

**Gambling is not a way to make money.**

Gambling establishments are set up to take in more money than they pay out. This means over time, people will lose more money than they win.

All forms of gambling—slot machines, lotteries, online poker games, etc.— have the same principle. The vast majority of gamblers will lose so that a very small minority can have big wins.

Virtually all people with gambling problems hold the false expectation that they are the ones who will be the big winners.

**Gambling can lead to serious problems.**

Research shows that youth see gambling as “fun”, “cool” and “exciting”. Teens need to recognize that gambling can get out of control. It can lead to serious consequences like the obvious loss of money and personal possessions. It can also lead to the not-so-obvious losses: feelings of self-worth, opportunities for education, as well as the trust and respect of family and friends.

understanding

communicating

it's only  
a game



risks

### Did You Know ...

Research shows the earlier people start gambling, the more likely they are to develop a gambling problem.

A casino visit has been described as the new rite of passage into adulthood, similar to getting a driver's licence or gaining access into bars