

HOW DO I BRING IT UP?

Here are some tips for raising the issue with your child:

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

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

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

If you would like more information, including materials for teens to read, visit the Responsible Gambling Council website at www.responsiblegambling.org



RESPONSIBLE
GAMING
INFORMATION
CENTRE

The Responsible Gambling Council Focused Firmly on Prevention

Through research the Responsible Gambling Council seeks to better understand the nature of problem gambling and ways to reduce the risks. Through information the Council makes sure that knowledge about problems and prevention gets in the right hands. Through a wide range of awareness programs the RGC helps those who gamble to understand the risks and how to avoid them as well as offers sources of help for those who lose control of their gambling.

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

AND HOW TO DO IT



RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING COUNCIL

www.rgic.org

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

When you think about it, kids are exposed to gambling images almost every day. All they have to do is walk into a corner store to see people buy lottery tickets, or turn on the TV to see ads for casinos, racetracks and lotteries. There are two reasons why it's important for teens to understand all this.

First, any teenager is only a few years from being an adult who can gamble legally.

Secondly, many teens are already gambling. It may only be a harmless bet of a dollar or two over a hockey or card game, but often it can be a lot more serious.

Several studies have shown that somewhere between four and eight per cent of teenagers develop a gambling problem.

*it's only
a game*



HOW DO I PROTECT THEM?

Teens who understand gambling and its risks are less likely to develop a gambling problem. Parents can protect their kids by ensuring that they have this understanding.

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

Did You Know ...

A startling 63% of 18 to 24 year olds in a recent survey believed that their chances of winning are 50/50 or better.

WHAT DO THEY NEED TO KNOW?

Teens need to understand that gambling is not a way to make money. They need to know that the games run by casinos, racetracks, bingo halls and lotteries are all designed so that most people lose in the long run.

Problem gamblers don't seem to understand this. They believe that they are blessed with special skill or special luck. They often "chase losses," betting more and more money in the belief that they will win back money they have already lost. Teens need to understand that these beliefs are illogical and actually dangerous.

They should also understand that adults who are responsible about gambling either don't gamble at all or do so with amounts of money that they can afford to lose. They look at gambling as an entertainment option, not as a way to make money. They understand that, while they may win periodically, over time they will lose.

Finally, teens need to recognize that problem gambling can lead to serious consequences throughout life, including the loss of enormous amounts of money, the destruction of a career, and the loss of friends and family.

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.