

# YOUTH AND GAMBLING



## **OUR POLICY IS 19+**

Gambling is intended as an entertainment option for adults. Atlantic Lottery continues to increase its efforts around youth gambling awareness and prevention initiatives.

Our products and entertainment facilities are only available to adults over the age of 19. Even if you are over 19, you may be asked to present government-issued photo ID to:

- Enter a casino gaming floor
- Purchase, play or redeem lottery products
- Wager on simulcast or live racing

## WHAT IS GAMBLING?

Gambling is when you risk something of value (i.e. money or personal belongings) on any activity with an uncertain outcome. Examples include sports betting, card games for money, buying lottery tickets, playing gaming machines (VLT's or slot machines) and Internet gambling, etc.

Today's youth are more exposed to legalized gambling than any previous generation. Often, they are exposed to gambling in such a way that the negative consequences are not evident. This leaves youth thinking gambling is glamorous; therefore, it is important that they have information about gambling and the risks associated with it.

## YOUTH RESEARCH

North American studies show a connection between gambling at a young age and the potential for a gambling problem later in life. Some research states that youth problem gamblers:

- Are more likely to be boys
- Often recall a big win early on
- Report gambling at an early age (approximately 10 years of age)
- Often have parents, friends and relatives who gamble
- Report high rates of depression, suicide ideation and attempts
- Have poor general coping skills
- Show signs of lower self-esteem
- Experience difficulty in school or show a decrease in academic performance
- Are more likely to be delinquent and involved in criminal activities to acquire money
- Gamble to escape problems

## **WHY YOUNG PEOPLE GAMBLE**

- To forget their problems
- Relieve boredom
- Relieve feelings of depression
- Gain excitement
- The chance to win

## **TIPS FOR PARENTS**

- Learn the facts, age restrictions and warning signs
- Encourage discussions and questions about gambling
- Ensure you listen to what your child has to say
- Be aware of your own gambling behaviours
- Avoid buying gambling products for your child and keep Internet-connected computers in an open area, never in your children's bedrooms
- Know where your kids are going online and establish clear rules about what online games your children can play

## KNOW THE WARNING SIGNS

- Spends a lot of time gambling and talking about gambling
- Carries or possesses gambling materials (dice, playing cards, scratch tickets)
- Missing school or worsening grades
- Missing money or possessions in the house
- Personality changes - mood swings and stressed when not gambling, lies or secretive behaviour
- Borrows or takes money from family members/friends
- Believes that he/she can win back their money and then stop

- Family members or friends are concerned that youth's gambling is becoming serious
- Gambles as a means to escape or target their problems

It is important to keep in mind that an individual with gambling problems will not necessarily show all of these behaviours.

Some information in this pamphlet has been taken from Missouri's Partners in Prevention: Keeping the Score Program and the International Centre for Youth Gambling Problem Websites.

# **HELP IS AVAILABLE**

**Free and confidential support lines:**

**Prince Edward Island:** 1-855-255-4255

**New Brunswick:** 1-800-461-1234

**Newfoundland & Labrador:** 1-888-899-HELP (4357)

**Nova Scotia:** 1-888-347-8888



**Gam-Anon** – A 12-step self-help organization for those affected by the gambling problem of a loved one.

***gam-anon.org***

**Bet Stopper** – Free computer software to help parents protect their children from visiting gambling websites.

***betstopper.ca***

**GamTalk Forum** – An online forum for anyone who wants to discuss gambling issues or seek advice on ways to keep gambling responsible. ***gamtalk.org/forums***

**International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High Risk Behaviours** – Information on youth gambling, research, tools and more. ***youthgambling.com***