

## Gambling - How do you talk about it?

A good time to bring up problem gambling might be when talking about drugs/alcohol, around discussions on chance/probability, or when gambling is advertised to them in the media.

Don't have the conversation as a one-off, keep bringing it up so that the young person understands it's ok to discuss gambling and even problematic gambling openly. and way advertisers pull us in, repeat it as a topic(don't have the conversation as a one off).

## What can you do?

Talk to young people about gambling! Give them a chance to understand what gambling is about so they can make better choices in the future.

Ideally, you will already have established rapport with the young person. Shame and embarrassment are common amongst problem gamblers, and are likely to present a barrier to disclosure.

The challenge, as with all work of this sensitive nature, is to provide a safe space for the young person to disclose what is going on without fear of judgement.

**Know the facts: Most gambling is illegal for under 18 years olds.** Lottery tickets and scratchcards are legal aged 16, and some machines can be played at any age. The law is put in place to protect young people from the risks of gambling having a serious impact in their lives.

## Conversation starters

Rather than directly asking the person if they have a problem, it might be helpful to start conversations using the prompts below.

- You're watching sport together and see lots of betting ads: Have you noticed all these betting ads? Does it make it seem harmless or easy to win?
- Discussing gambling apps or social gaming: Is this gambling or gaming? What is the difference? Why does it matter?
- At times when betting is heavily promoted like football finals season: Do you think people feel they have to gamble to enjoy the races or football?
- Before going out with their friends: Do you think your friends do risky things like gambling to fit in?



## Information, tools and tips

Top tips to remember:

- Teen attitudes about betting are shaped by advertising, their friends, adults around them, easy access and games that look like gambling.
- You can help them develop a balanced, informed and healthy understanding of how gambling works, and the risks involved.
- Talk to them about gambling harm - you don't need to be an expert on the topic to start a conversation.
- Talk sooner rather than later - even though they're underage, teens are five times more likely than adults to develop an issue with gambling.
- You can reduce exposure to pro-gambling messages. Encourage them to think critically about the gambling promotion they see, so they understand that behind these promotions is a business seeking to make a profit.
- If you consider the person to be at risk – invite them to conduct a brief screen such as the Lie/Bet. If they answer yes to any of the questions, refer them to the BigDeal website or the National Gambling HelpLine for more information.



**More information: [www.BigDeal.org.uk](http://www.BigDeal.org.uk)**

**National Gambling HelpLine:  
Freephone 0808 8020 133 / [www.gamcare.org.uk](http://www.gamcare.org.uk)**

**Advisers available 8am - Midnight, seven days a week**



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