

Recommendations for Online Gambling Use

In this document, service providers will find a useful list of recommendations based on previous research and clinical practices, which they can use to assist families when gambling becomes problematic.

Recommendations for Service Providers

- Encourage parents to explore possible learning supports.
- Educate families to detect, reflect on, and commit to the possible presence of a gambling problem to achieve positive outcomes.
- Connect with young people to create open communication, and ask what they think about gambling.
- Advise parents and caregivers to engage in open conversations, share, watch, and read together about the content of games, especially the specific ones that may be problematic, without judgement.
- Encourage youth to be observers of their own life, so that they can develop a sense of where they are; empower them to try to learn more about themselves, and talk about themselves using a positive, non-judgmental language.
- Encourage responsible gambling. Refer them to this resource from the Responsible Gambling Council on Facts about young adults and gambling:
<https://www.responsiblegambling.org/for-the-public/safer-play/gambling-and-young-adults/>
- Help support the development of healthy public policy.
- Create supportive environments.
- Strengthen community action and engage in capacity building.
- Offer educational tools to improve personal skills.
- Focus health services toward prevention of illness/harms, which means emphasizing the freedom and responsibility of each individual to make effective decisions.
- Recommend self-help strategies, such as using the Mobile Monitor Your Gambling & Urges (MYGU) application: <https://www.problemgambling.ca/gambling-help/mygu-getmobile/>
- Encourage parents and caregivers to use other services, such as:

Alberta Problem Gambling Resources Network: 1-866-461-1259

Addiction Helpline Alberta Wide 1-866-332-2322

Gamblers Anonymous Support Groups

Alberta Gamblers Anonymous 1-855-222-5542 (Calgary and Medicine Hat)

Voluntary Gambling Self-Exclusion Program: 780-447-7582

HealthLinkAlberta: <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/programs/ps-1026805-clinic-residential-gambling.pdf>

Recommendations for Families

- Start helping yourself: counselling and psychoeducation for family members are good options to navigate problem gambling.
 - When someone has a gambling problem, it can be hard for family members to find hope for the future. Counselling can help see that things can change. It can also help your family's strengths and the positive steps you may already be taking (see information on this topic on the CAMH website: <https://www.camh.ca/en/your-care/planning-your-care/for-families>).
- Regulate your own emotions enough to be calm and create the space to understand and act in an open way.
- Be clear, honest, and straightforward by setting boundaries in managing budget, time, and content.
- Promote responsible and positive play habits.
- Provide financial literacy; for example, give tips that show how your child can save money while still engaging in play.
- Educate your child to only gamble with money they have, and never by borrowing money or using money intended for necessities, like rent or food.
- Discuss reasonable limits on gambling; focus your message on the fact that gambling is not a way to make money or good ways to win money for a trip, pay bills or pay off debt.
- Help your child balance gambling with other recreational activities.
- Communicate to your child how to regulate themselves; for example, you can say: "If you're no longer having fun, stop playing."
- Advise your child that winning does not depend on "luck" strategies.
- Encourage your child to take frequent breaks by moving around, getting some fresh air, or having something to eat or drink.
- Encourage your family to use resources, such as:
 - Centre for Addiction and Mental Health: <https://learn.problemgambling.ca/>
<https://www.camh.ca/en/health-info/mental-illness-and-addiction-index/problem-gambling>
 - Teen gambling: What parents should know: caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/teen-gambling
 - International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors: youthgambling.com/
 - Brain Connections: <https://brainconnections.ca/>
 - Problem Gambling Resource Network Alberta: http://problemgamblingalberta.ca/index.php?area_id=1000&page_id=1000
 - Adolescent Problem Gambling: <https://learn.problemgambling.ca/PDF%20library/handbook-prevention-guide-for-parents-accessible-2017.pdf>

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- AHS: What if my child ask about alcohol, other drugs or Gambling:
<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/amh/Page2390.aspx>
- AHS: Addiction and Mental Health. Gambling: Information for Parents.
myhealth.alberta.ca/Alberta/Pages/What-is-my-role-as-a-parent-to-prevent-a-gambling-problem.aspx