

Tips for Service Providers: Child and Youth Problematic Online Gambling

- Try to remain non-judgmental and open when asking questions.
- Remember to ask about gambling for money, as well as other forms of gambling, such as simulated online games, sports fantasy betting, and betting within video games, or “loot boxes.”
- Ask about other screen time in general, such as videogame play or social media use.
- Ask about gambling among other family members as well. Often, children and youth follow examples set by the adults in their lives.
- Realize that a child or youth may not see the negative impact of their gambling.
- Consider using motivational interviewing techniques to help your client better understand the impact of their gambling.
- Remember to assess for concurrent disorders, such as substance use or mental health challenges, such as depression, anxiety, or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.
- Consider involving parents/caregivers to help create a family media plan and create family rules around screen time and gambling.
- When a client is ready to make changes, Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) and other intervention modalities such as mindfulness, self-help, and motivational interviewing have been shown to be effective around reducing problematic gambling behaviours.
- Consider a referral to AHS Youth Addiction Services at 1-866-332-2322 (toll free within Alberta)
- Find more information for yourself, parents, and youth at MyHealthAlberta.ca: [Growing Up Online](#) and [Teens and Gambling](#).

| A youth might say: | You might say: |
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| It's just a game! I am not betting real money. | Placing bets and gambling can be fun, but we know that gambling can lead to more problems as you get older. How does gambling affect other areas of your life, such as relationships with family and friends, getting things done, like homework or other things you like to do, or sleep? |
| My mom or dad buy lottery tickets and bet on sports. What's the difference? | Yes, sometimes people buy lottery tickets or place bets. It can be fun, as long as it doesn't cause problems, like prevent us from buying the things we need, spending time with family or friends, or become something that we think about often. Learning to set limits is healthy. |