

KNOW THE ODDS

Dear Educator,

The risk of addiction to drugs and alcohol among teens is well known. But did you know that gambling can become an addictive behavior as well?

In fact, young people, ages 14 to 19, are 2 to 7 times more likely to develop a problem with gambling than adults. In addition, an estimated 6 to 15 percent of young people have issues with gambling that fall short of addiction but are still severe, as compared to only 2 to 3 percent of adults. For those who are not of legal age to gamble, there is no level of responsible gambling.

Know the Odds is an educational program designed to help you inform your students about the risks of underage gambling. Developed by the National Center for Responsible Gaming (NCRG) in cooperation with the award-winning curriculum specialists at Young Minds Inspired (YMI), the program alerts students and their parents to the warning signs of gambling addiction and offers strategies to help prevent problems before they begin.

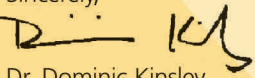
Sometimes, just helping a teen understand that gambling is a game of odds that, by design, favors "the house," and not the gambler, can be important, behavior-changing information. It is also important to help teens understand that there are consequences to underage gambling.

Know the Odds provides you with a reproducible fact sheet filled with important information from the NCRG and a supply of the NCRG's *Talking with Children about Gambling* brochure for parents and others who work with youth. This brochure was developed in consultation with the Division on Addictions at Cambridge Health Alliance, a teaching affiliate of Harvard Medical School. We encourage you to distribute both to every student in your class to help set the stage for an open discussion about underage gambling with their parents.

We hope you will also display the *Know the Odds* mini-poster in your classroom and use it as a springboard for a class discussion about the risks of underage gambling.

Feel free to make as many photocopies of these copyrighted materials as you need in order to share with colleagues, so that they may also take advantage of this unique program. We look forward to learning your opinion of this program and encourage you to return the enclosed reply card with your comments.

Sincerely,



Dr. Dominic Kinsley
Editor in Chief
Young Minds Inspired



is the only company developing free, innovative classroom materials that is owned and directed by award-winning former teachers. Visit our website at www.ymiclassroom.com to send feedback and download more free programs. For questions, contact us at 1-800-859-8005 or email us at feedback@ymiclassroom.com.

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Here are the facts about underage gambling:

- Close to 70 percent of Americans aged 14 to 19 gambled over the past year.
- Studies show that 2 to 7 percent of young people in this age group develop an addiction to gambling, compared to 1 percent of adults.
- An estimated 6 to 15 percent of young people experience behavioral problems related to gambling, compared to 2 to 3 percent of adults.
- Boys are more likely to experience problems with gambling than girls.
- Gambling is a game of odds, and by design, the odds are always in favor of "the house," not the gambler.

If you are below the legal age to gamble, there are consequences for underage gambling.

Warning signs of a problem with gambling:

- Withdrawing from friends and family
- Getting bad grades
- Losing interest in things you really like to do
- Falling into debt and not being able to get out
- Feeling alone and hopeless
- Feeling anxious and sad
- Visible changes in behavior (e.g., mood changes, behavior problems, etc.)

- Stealing money

- Neglecting chores at home or school work

Do these behaviors sound familiar? They're similar to the signs of alcohol or drug abuse and psychiatric problems such as depression.

Here are some examples of underage gambling:

- Wagering on who will make the first three-point shot in a pick-up basketball game
- Creating a betting pool so other students can bet on football games
- Playing poker on Saturday night for pennies or larger pots
- Betting on who will win a video game
- Buying a lottery ticket with leftover change
- Trying to sneak into a casino despite being underage
- Using a parent's credit card to gamble online

How can I learn more?

- National Center for Responsible Gaming's (NCRG) website, www.ncrg.org, is filled with information and resources that provide insight into child and adolescent mental health issues and gambling disorders.
- Gambling Disorders 360°, <http://blog.ncrg.org>, explores the latest news, issues and research relating to gambling disorders and responsible gaming.
- *Facing the Odds: The Mathematics of Gambling and Other Risks* is a middle-school curriculum on probability, statistics and the mathematics of gambling. The curriculum was developed by the Division on Addictions at Cambridge Health Alliance, a teaching affiliate of Harvard Medical School, and the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling with support from the National Institute on Drug Abuse. You can find information on their website, www.divisiononaddictions.org/curr/facing_the_odds.htm
- **CollegeGambling.org**, the NCRG's newest resource, provides college and university students, parents, administrators and campus health professionals the latest research and best practices in responsible gaming and the field of addiction awareness and prevention.



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NATIONAL CENTER FOR RESPONSIBLE GAMING

Advancing Research Education and Awareness

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IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW HAS A PROBLEM WITH GAMBLING, CALL THE NATIONAL PROBLEM GAMBLING HELPLINE AT 1-800-522-4700.

KNOW THE ODDS

Do you gamble? You do, if you...

- bet on who will make the first shot in a basketball game.
- join a betting pool on pro football or even bet on your high school's players.
- play poker with your friends for money—even if it's only for pennies.
- bet on who will win a video game.
- bet on who a classmate is going to go out with.
- buy a lottery ticket.
- bet on who's going to get the highest grade on a test.
- bet on who's going to get the lead in the high school play.

Because you are below the legal age to gamble, any type of gambling activity for money is illegal.

What should I know about gambling?

- Talk to your parents about gambling, even if you feel you may not have a problem.
- Have a conversation with your parents if you have any of the signs of a problem with gambling—withdrawal from friends and family, depression, anxiety, or changes in behavior.
- With your parents' help, see a professional to find out if there are psychological reasons for your gambling, such as being depressed.

Do you know the odds? Let's look at the lottery:

- If you buy a lottery ticket that has a pool of 48 numbers, the probability of selecting the winning combination is 1 in 12,271,512. In other words, you have one chance in about 12.3 million of winning this lottery. You also are 99.99999185% likely to lose.
- Gambling of any kind is a game of odds. By design, the odds are always in favor of "the house," not you.



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