

KNOW THE ODDS

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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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.