

TEEN GAMBLING: IT'S A BAD BET

Gambling

“Gambling” (or “betting” or “gaming”) is any act that involves the risking of money or valuables on the outcome of a game, contest or any other event.

Common Types of Gambling Among Teens

- Cards.
- Sports game bets among friends/family.
- Raffle tickets.
- Games of skill (like beating each other in pool, hoops, etc.)
- Dice games.
- Board games.
- Bingo.
- Lottery.

For most people, gambling is something they do for fun. For some people though, gambling becomes a serious problem. And for teens, gambling is illegal.

Why Do Some Teens Get Into Gambling?

- Someone in the family gambles.
- Problems at home.
- Low self-esteem.
- Peer pressure.
- The action of the game.
- Loneliness and/or boredom.
- Avoidance of pain and stress.
- Competition.
- To win money.
- To gain attention from peers.

Why Gambling Can Turn Into a Bad Bet

- School and family problems.
- Loss of friendships, jobs.
- Big legal and money troubles.
- Much higher rate of suicide.
- Studies show that the earlier people start to gamble, the more likely they are to become problem gamblers.
- Ask anyone in treatment—gambling is as addictive as alcohol or drugs.

Signs of Problem Gambling

- Gambling frequently on things like cards, dice, games, sports or online sites.
- Gambling has become the favorite (or only) activity.
- Trouble concentrating on homework or other things because of thinking about gambling.
- Drinking alcohol or taking drugs.
- Borrowing or stealing money to gamble.
- Missing important events or sneaking out of them to gamble.
- Arguing with friends or family about gambling.
- Thinking that most problems would be solved by getting a big win.
- Thinking that gambling is an easy way to make money.
- Thinking that the odds can be outsmarted.
- Making more bets thinking that money that was lost can be won back.
- Feeling the need to bet more and more money.
- Lying to friends and family about how much was gambled.

If you or someone you know has any of these signs call:

**The Council on Compulsive Gambling of PA Helpline at
1-800-GAMBLER**

Don't wait for the problem to get worse!