

Problem Gambling: Have the Conversation with Your Teen

Tips For Parents

Signs of Problem Gambling Among Youth:

Playing gambling-type
games on the internet

Borrowing money from
family or friends to
gamble

Carrying gambling
materials such as dice,
cards or betting sheets

Selling personal
belongings, unexplained
debts, missing money or
valuables

Preoccupied with
gambling: spending an
unusual amount of time
reading about or
watching sports or
poker on TV

Lying, cheating or
stealing in school

Belief that gambling is
one of the best ways to
make easy money

Teens today are growing up in an environment where multiple forms of gambling exist and are heavily promoted. Most unregulated fantasy sports and online gambling sites are readily available to teens via smartphones and tablets. Prepaid debit cards are often used to make transactions. Many parents do not perceive youth gambling as risky behavior. Recent Oregon data, however, indicates that youth who gamble are more likely to engage in other risky behaviors such as drinking and using other drugs.¹ Even though most kids will not go on to develop a gambling addiction, parents should be aware of the risks associated with gambling. In Linn County the percent of youth reporting gambling activities has remained relatively stable over the last

several years. In 2012, 31% of 6th graders and 37% of 8th graders reported participating in some form of gambling in the last 30 days.² In 2016, 28% of 6th and 32% of 8th graders reported gambling activities.³ The most popular form of gambling among youth in Linn County is betting on games of personal skill followed by betting on sports teams, playing cards or dice, and playing lottery tickets.⁴ A key to preventing problem gambling is talking about it with your teen. A great place to start the conversation is by asking your teen what they think about gambling. Discuss the risks and be clear. If you are concerned that you or your teen is having problems related to gambling visit www.opgr.org.

Sources: 1,2,3,4. Oregon Student Wellness survey, 2012-2016
 available online: <http://oregon.pridesurveys.com/>

Percent of Linn County Youth Reporting Gambling Activities in the Past 30-Days

