

Adolescent Gambling

Are adolescents really gambling?

You bet they are! An estimated 85% of high-school aged adolescents have reported gambling at least once in their lifetime. Seventy-three percent have gambled within the past 12 months. In fact, many researchers have found that the age of onset for gambling ranges from 11- to 13-years. Some of the most popular gambling activities include playing cards, dice, games of personal skill (e.g. sports), and board games.

Are there problems associated with adolescent gambling?

Four to seven percent of adolescents who engage in gambling also appear to experience significant problems because of their gambling. These problems may be psychological, physical, social, educational or vocational. However, some adolescents do not appear to undergo problems related to their gambling perhaps because they are sheltered within their family. The lack of consequences may contribute to increased gambling behavior and even problems later in life.

What other risky behaviors do you see with adolescent gambling?

Some other behaviors reported to be associated with adolescent gambling are cigarette smoking, marijuana use, alcohol use, delinquency, truancy, and low academic achievement. This does not mean that one causes the other, though. What we do know is that those who engage in one or more of these behaviors are more likely to engage in other problem behaviors.

Who's most at risk for problem gambling?

There is no special way to determine who is at risk for a gambling problem. In this respect, most adolescents are at risk for developing a gambling problem. However, those who have gambled early in adolescence, have parents who gamble, are an ethnic minority, and are male appear to be at a greater risk.

What can you do?

Adolescence is a difficult period in life. Parent and peer influences seem to shape how adolescents think and behave. Set a good example! Consider the role of gambling in your life. Talking with your adolescent about gambling and informing them of the problems it may cause can be an important first step in dealing with this issue.

Is there help for adolescent gambling?

YES! Problematic gambling can be successfully treated by professionals who have experience working with adolescents. Individuals interested in learning more about gambling and/or problem gambling should contact The Gambling Clinic at 901-678-7867 or the Tennessee Redline: 1-800-889-9789.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

The Gambling Clinic A Center for Self-Change
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901-678-STOP (7867)
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