

Online Gambling: Recommendations

Youth & Digital Technology: Growing Up Online Toolkit

In this document, service providers will find evidence-based recommendations, which they can use to assist families when online gambling becomes problematic.

Recommendations for Service Providers

- Encourage parent/caregiver engagement to explore possible learning supports.
- Educate families to detect, reflect on, and commit to the possible presence of a gambling problem to achieve positive outcomes.
- Connect with young people to create open communication and ask about their perceptions and experiences with gambling.
- Advise parents and caregivers to engage in shared media consumption (e.g., watching, reading, and discussing gaming content) while maintaining an open and non-judgmental attitude.
- Encourage youth to develop self-awareness, so that they can develop a sense of where they are; empower them to try to learn more about themselves, and talk about themselves using positive, non-judgmental language.
- Encourage responsible gambling habits. Refer them to this resource from the Responsible Gambling Council on facts about young adults and gambling: <https://www.responsiblegambling.org/for-the-public/safer-play/gambling-and-young-adults/>
- Support the development of healthy public policies which prioritize harm prevention.
- Facilitate community engagement and capacity building by connecting with local networks.
- Provide educational tools to enhance personal skills and coping mechanisms for youth and families.
- Integrate prevention-focused mental health services, emphasizing individual responsibility and informed decision-making.
- Encourage parents and caregivers to use other services, such as:
 - Alberta Problem Gambling Resources Network: 1-866-461-1259
<https://informalberta.ca/public/organization/orgProfileStyled.do?organizationQueryId=1007552>
 - Addiction Helpline Alberta Wide: 1-866-332-2322
 - Gamblers Anonymous Support Groups: <https://gamblersanonymous.org/>
 - Alberta Gamblers Anonymous: <https://albertaga.ca/>
 - Voluntary Gambling Self-Exclusion Program: 780-447-7582
 - HealthLinkAlberta: <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/programs/ps-1026805-clinic-residential-gambling.pdf>

For more information, contact

informationandcyfistandards@recoveryalberta.ca

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/info/Page17564.aspx>

Updated: June 2025

Recommendations for Families

Families can play a proactive role in preventing and addressing problem gambling. The following strategies can help create a supportive environment for youth:

- Start by helping yourself: counselling and psychoeducation for family members are good options to navigate problem gambling.
- See information on this topic on the CAMH website: <https://www.camh.ca/>
- Regulate your emotions and maintain a calm, open dialogue with your child.
- Set clear, consistent boundaries regarding finances, screen time, and gaming habits.
- Promote responsible and balanced recreational activities to provide alternatives to gambling.
- Enhance financial literacy by teaching budgeting skills and responsible spending habits.
- Educate youth about the risks of gambling with borrowed money or using funds meant for necessities.
- Discuss and set reasonable gambling limits, emphasizing that gambling is not a way to make money or pay off debts.
- Encourage self-regulation by helping youth recognize signs of problematic gambling, such as:
 - Playing when no longer having fun
 - Chasing losses
 - Using gambling to cope with stress
- Challenge myths about gambling by reinforcing that success is not determined by “luck” strategies.
- Encourage your child to take frequent breaks from gambling-related activities to promote mindfulness and self-care. For example, by moving around, getting some fresh air, or having something to eat or drink.
- Encourage your family to use resources, such as:
 - Centre for Addiction and Mental Health: <https://learn.problemgambling.ca/>
<https://www.camh.ca/en/health-info/mental-illness-and-addiction-index/problem-gambling>
 - Teen gambling: What parents should know: caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/teen-gambling
 - International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors: youthgambling.com/
 - Brain Connections: <https://brainconnections.ca/>
 - Problem Gambling Resource Network Alberta: http://problemgamblingalberta.ca/index.php?area_id=1000&page_id=1000

Online Gambling: Recommendations | 3

- Youth Problem Gambling: <https://kmb.camh.ca/ggtu/knowledge-translation/youth>
- AHS: What if my child asks about alcohol, other drugs or gambling: <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/amh/Page2390.aspx>
- AHS: Addiction and Mental Health. Gambling: Information for Parents. myhealth.alberta.ca/Alberta/Pages/What-is-my-role-as-a-parent-to-prevent-a-gambling-problem.aspx
- Youth Addiction and Mental Health <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/HealthTopics/youth-addiction-mental-health>
- AHS: Addiction and Mental Health. Gambling: Teens and Problem Gambling. <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/alberta/pages/a-gambling-problem-how-can-you-tell.aspx#:~:text=Gambling%20is%20a%20problem%20when,more%20money%20than%20you%20wanted>.

By integrating these recommendations into practice, service providers and families can work together to reduce youth gambling harm and promote safer play habits.

© 2025 Recovery Alberta – Clinical Business Initiatives



This work is licensed under the [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivative 4.0 International licence](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/). You are free to copy and distribute the work (including in other media and formats) for non-commercial purposes, as long as you attribute the work to Recovery Alberta, do not adapt the work, and abide by the other licence terms. To view a copy of this licence, see <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>. The licence does not apply to Recovery Alberta trademarks, logos or content for Recovery Alberta is not the copyright owner.

This material is intended for general information only and is provided on an "as is", "where is" basis. Although reasonable efforts were made to confirm the accuracy of the information, Recovery Alberta does not make any representation or warranty, express, implied or statutory, as to the accuracy, reliability, completeness, applicability or fitness for a particular purpose of such information. This material is not a substitute for the advice of a qualified health professional. Recovery Alberta expressly disclaims all liability for the use of these materials, and for any claims, actions, demands or suits arising from such use.

For more information, contact
informationandcyfistandards@recoveryalberta.ca
<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/info/Page17564.aspx>

Updated: June 2025