

Tips for Service Providers: Child & Youth Problematic Online Gambling

Youth & Digital Technology: Growing Up Online Toolkit

- Approach conversations with a non-judgmental and open-minded attitude.
- Inquire about different forms of gambling, including gambling for money, simulated online games, sports fantasy betting, and betting within video games (e.g., "loot boxes).
- Discuss general screen time habits, such as videogame play or social media use.
- Explore whether online gambling is present within the family, as children and youth often model adult behaviors.
- Recognize that a child or youth may not see the negative impact of their gambling.
- Consider using motivational interviewing techniques to help your client better understand the impact of their gambling.
- Assess for concurrent disorders, such as substance use or mental health challenges, such as depression, anxiety, or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.
- Consider involving parents/caregivers to help create a family media plan and create family rules around screen time and gambling.
- When an individual is ready to make changes, cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) and other intervention modalities such as mindfulness, self-help, and motivational interviewing have been shown to be effective around reducing problematic gambling behaviours.
- Consider a referral to AHS Youth Addiction Services at 1-866-332-2322 (toll free within Alberta) Mental health & addiction helplines | [Recovery Alberta https://recoveryalberta.ca/](https://recoveryalberta.ca/)
- Find more information for yourself, parents, guardians and youth at <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/growing-up-online/online-gambling/tips-for-parents>

A youth might say:	You might say:
"It's just a game! I am not betting real money."	"Placing bets and gambling can be fun, but we know that gambling can lead to more problems as you get older. How does gambling affect other areas of your life, such as relationships with family and friends, getting things done, like homework or other things you like to do, or sleep?"
"My mom or dad buy lottery tickets and bet on sports. What's the difference?"	"Yes, sometimes people buy lottery tickets or place bets. It can be fun, if it doesn't cause problems, like prevent us from buying the things we need, spending time with family or friends, or become something that we think about often. Setting limits and understanding risks can help keep gambling enjoyable and safe."

Tips for Service Providers: Child and Youth Problematic Online Gambling | 2

© 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

