



## Community Concerns Dealing With Gambling Addictions in Teens

### What Is Gambling?

Any act that involves the risking of money or valuables on the outcome of a game, contest, or any other risk-taking event.

### Motives For Adolescent Gambling

Relaxation-Enjoyment, excitement, entertainment - Adventure - Attention - Opportunity - Escape  
Negative feelings.

### Teens Commonly:

- **Live in the moment** and enjoy games that keep them attentive and engaged. The teen is accustomed to immediate communication via cell phone, internet and mobile device.
- **Are technologically literate** and can navigate the internet at the speed of light compared to older generations.
- **Are high risk takers** developmentally. This is a normal part of the teenage experience to challenge the norm and take risks, both physically and emotionally.
- **Have poor control** over impulsive behaviors.
- **Are accustomed to play games** where physical presence, beauty, strength, or acceptance are irrelevant. Skill is all important.

### Major Types of Teen Betting

- Sports betting
- Lottery
- Cards (often poker)
- Games of skill

*“The rite of passage has gone from starting drinking to starting gambling” (Dr. Marvin Steinberg)*

*“This is the first generation of youth to be exposed to relatively easy access to a variety of gambling venues, widespread gambling advertising, and to pervasive social approval for an inherently risky activity.”  
(Dr. Ken Winters)*

### **SIGNS OF TEEN PROBLEM GAMBLING**

- Gambling frequently on things like cards, dice, games, sports, or on line 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, and thinking the 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.
- Sudden urgency for more money.
- Selling prized possessions.

**If you or someone you know has a gambling problem call:**

**1-800-GAMBLE-5**

#### **Risk of Passing It Down**

Studies have shown that children of pathological gamblers are more prone to becoming gamblers themselves. Eighty percent of teens with gambling problems had at least one parent who gambled, according to the “Pathological Gambling” report. With the rise in Internet gambling, it is becoming easier for your children to model their behavior after you and become pathological gamblers themselves.