

# What You Need to Know About Youth Gambling



## What is Gambling?

Any act that involves risking something on the outcome of a game or contest that is mostly determined by chance. Including money and valuables or non-monetary acts like dares.



## How are Kids Doing It?

Young people spend hours playing games on computers and mobile devices. Many times, games have coins, gems, loot boxes, and skins that replicate real-life gambling situations. Other forms include lottery tickets, betting on sports, internet challenges, card games, or dares.



## What are the Consequences?

Kids who engage in youth gambling are more likely to experience a gambling disorder as an adult. They're also more likely to experience depression and anxiety, drink and use illegal drugs, get into fights or criminal activity, and think about suicide.

## Get in the Know

The following stats are from various Ohio surveys.

**15%** of teenagers gambled money or personal items within the last year.

**41%** of 8th graders have spent money to buy a mystery box.

**22%** of youth haven't been honest with people about how much they gamble.

**41%** of 8th graders spent money to buy a video game upgrade.

**68%** of middle school students spent three or more hours per day on screen time, not counting time doing school work.

**41%** of youth said their parents never limit electronic usage.

## Who's at Risk?

### Teenagers

With peer pressure and fitting in being top of mind in adolescence, teenagers are more likely to engage in risky behaviors like betting.

### Young Children

Gaming apps designed to mimic gambling activities are being targeted towards children as young as two.

### College Students

The popularization of sports betting on campuses, combined with newfound independence, put college students at a higher risk than ever before.



## How Youth Are Gambling

- Video games and apps
- Bets on school or professional sports
- Fantasy sports
- Lottery tickets
- Card games
- Dares
- Internet challenges
- Trading card games
- Role play strategy games

## Gambling Warning Signs in Youth

- Neglect of studies or part-time jobs
- Unexplained absences
- Sudden drop in grades
- Less interest in extracurricular activities
- Withdrawing from friends
- Lunch money or valuables go missing
- Unusual interest in sports scores or video games

## Understand Gaming Slang

Many video games feature gameplay mechanics that encourage youth to exchange real-life money for a random chance at digital items, increasing their chances of experiencing a gambling disorder as an adult. By knowing common gaming terminology, you can help prevent youth gambling.

### 1-up

An object that gives the player an extra life (or try) in games where the player has a limited number of chances to complete a game, a task, or level.

### 100%

A game is 100% complete once a player unlocks all available content and completes the game. Many players are so determined to get 100%, that they will make multiple in-game purchases for upgrades to achieve this goal.

### Battle Pass

A form of in-game monetization that provides additional content for a game through a tiered system, rewarding the player with in-game items as they complete specific challenges.

### Downloadable Content (DLC)

Additional content for a video game that is acquired through a digital delivery system. Content could be packs for skins, weapons, characters, alternate worlds, and new levels.

### Free-to-Play (F2P or FtP)

Games that don't require a purchase to download and play. But, once downloaded, players are pressured to spend money on upgrade items like loot boxes, skins, and weapons.

### Login Rewards

A login reward that creates daily gaming habits by giving players bigger rewards for coming back to play for consecutive days.

### Loot Box or Mystery Box

A form of in-game gambling that players can open for a random chance of winning a prize, gain an experience level, or other in-game achievement.

### Microtransaction

A business model used in games where players can purchase virtual goods via micropayments in the gaming console store.

### Power-Up

Objects that instantly benefit or add extra abilities to the game character, usually as a temporary effect. Power-Ups can be achieved by completing levels or found in purchased loot boxes.

### Mod

Short for "modifying" a game, mods may take the form of new character skins, altered game mechanics or the creation of new game stories.

### Skin

An aesthetic change to an item or player that doesn't serve any other function than to make your character look better. Players often use skins to display their rare achievements or high skill levels, like trophies.

# Policy Ideas and Advice

By working together to implement education and policies, school administrators and school boards can help reduce the risks of youth gambling. Consider the following:

- No form of gambling will be allowed.
- Students should not participate in gambling themed events.
- No school related gambling fundraisers should involve students: selling raffle tickets, running bingo, working a casino night, etc.
- Gambling is prohibited at any school sporting events.
- Online gambling sites will be blocked on school servers.
- Have a clear outline of when and where all rules are in effect.
- Have a list of consequences (detention, suspension, parent notification) and how they'll be enforced.



## Educate Students About Gambling

Here are some activities from youth health organizations. You can either integrate gambling prevention into these programs or use them to promote general healthy decision-making and mental health awareness. Want a local prevention specialists to speak about youth gambling to your students? Email [info@pausebeforeyouplay.org](mailto:info@pausebeforeyouplay.org) to get in contact with local prevention specialists.



### Lion's Quest:

- Three core units of evidence-based, elementary, emotional learning programs.
- The units help you discuss making responsible choices with youth.
- Learn more at [lions-quest.org](http://lions-quest.org).



### Life Skills:

- A program designed to discuss decision-making and coping with stress and anxiety.
- Learn more at [overcomingobstacles.org/curriculum](http://overcomingobstacles.org/curriculum).



### Project ALERT:

- 10 Sessions that cover nicotine, marijuana, alcohol, prescription medications, and pressure from media, family, or peers.
- Each session comes with homework students can do alone and with their parent(s).
- Learn more at [projectalert.com](http://projectalert.com).



# How to Talk to Youth About Gambling

Now that you know more about youth gambling, you can feel confident about starting the conversation with the child in your life.

- Explain that gambling results in losses more often than wins. Spending money on things they want is better than losing it all on a bet.
- Speak to students about the risks of gambling just as you would about the dangers of vaping, drug, and alcohol use.
- Teach them to speak up if they suspect gambling is affecting a friend or classmate.
- Publicly express your support for gambling-free youth events.
- Ask questions about their experiences with gambling – and listen to their answers.

## Interested in more resources for your school?

Sites like [TimeOutOhio.com/gamban](https://www.timeouthio.com/gamban) and [GameQuitters.com](https://www.gamequitters.com) are great places to start.



## Could Your Student Be at Risk? Take the Quiz.

Scan the QR code to gauge your student's relationship with gaming and other gambling-related activities.

# ChangeTheGameOhio.org

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