

Preventing problem gambling this holiday season

December 9, 2020



Celebrations look different this year as we make changes to keep our families and communities safe.

In addition to preventing illness, there are ways to help prevent loved ones from developing a gambling problem. Similar to substance use, gambling carries risk. Breaks from school and work provide opportunities to check in on your loved ones about their gambling activities and to talk with youth about the risks of gambling. A change in someone's behavior or an increase in their gambling are both warning signs of problem gambling.

Gambling in youth is linked with other risks factors for youth. Oregon 11th graders that reported participating in gambling activities also had higher rates of skipping school, being in a physical fight, being sad for two or more weeks, and using alcohol, marijuana, or other drugs. Parents or caretakers talking about the risk of gambling with teens can increase their perception of risk and can reduce their risky behaviors.

For adults that choose to gamble, you can reduce your risk of developing a gambling problem by using the following guidelines:

- Set a time limit
- Set a dollar limit
- Don't gamble on credit or borrowed money
- Don't gamble to win back lost money (also known as "chasing losses")
- Don't gamble to cope with negative feeling or to escape
- Don't let gambling be your only social or recreational activity
- Don't let youth gamble
- Seek help if gambling becomes a problem for you or a loved one

In Oregon, problem gambling treatment is free and confidential. Treatment and support are available to anyone with a gambling disorder and anyone affected by someone's gambling. For support and resources call or visit:

- The Lincoln County Problem Gambling Treatment Program (541) 265-4196 (Mon-Fri 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.)
- Oregon Problem Gambling Resource at 1-877-My-Limit or OPGR.org (available 24 hours a day)

If you would like to get involved with problem gambling prevention or would like more information, please visit: co.lincoln.or.us/hhs/page/problem-gambling-prevention

Lincoln County Public Health, in collaboration with our community partners, provides leadership to assure the conditions for healthy communities.