

**BE AHEAD  
OF THE  
GAME**

## Talking to young people about gambling



It's important to have open conversations about gambling with your kids early, much like having 'the talk' about drinking, drugs and sex.

### Ask your school to book a parent information session

Ask your child's school to host a free Be Ahead of the Game information session for parents and carers of secondary school-aged students. These free, 1-hour, online sessions help equip parents and carers with confidence and knowledge to talk to young people about the risks of gambling. [Find out more.](#)

### Tips for starting a conversation

A good time to bring up the topic of gambling can be when in the car, watching sports on TV, or whenever you see a gambling ad. The following prompts can be used to start a conversation about the risks of gambling:

- Have you noticed the betting ads on TV?
- Do you think sports betting is risky?
- Do you think people have to gamble to enjoy sports?
- Why do you think there are so many betting ads?
- What do you think about gambling?
- Do any of your peers gamble?

It's important to create a safe space for young people to talk or ask about gambling without feeling judged. Bringing up the topic frequently will reassure them that it's ok to talk about gambling openly with you.

## Talking points: how gambling really works

Remind young people of these facts when you discuss gambling with them.

- Betting companies make huge profits from people's gambling losses. If gambling was an easy way to make money, betting companies wouldn't exist.
- Gambling products are designed to keep people gambling. Sports betting apps, for example, offer inducements like multi-bets or bonus-bets that are hard to resist but ultimately help betting companies make more money.
- The odds don't improve the longer you gamble. In fact, the longer you gamble, the more likely you are to lose money.
- There's no such thing as a 'sure bet'. Gambling always involves an element of uncertainty.
- Gambling ads make betting look like a fun and risk free. They never show the vast majority of people who lose more than they win.
- Have you noticed gambling-like features in games or apps? What effect do you think these have on young people?
- Harm from gambling involves more than financial loss. Negative consequences of gambling can include feelings of shame, regret and anxiety, relationship stress, reduced performance at school, poor sleep and concentration, and becoming secretive and withdrawn.

LEARN MORE: [Gambling myths](#)

## Discussion tips

### Tell stories

Using your own or the experiences of others to tell stories can be a great way to help young people understand the risks of gambling.

### Let them think for themselves

Explaining to young people the risks and consequences of gambling can be more effective than just telling them not to gamble.

## Learn to listen so they will talk

Young people are more open to discussing issues when they know you're actively listening to them so allow them time and space to talk.

## Choose the right time

Casual situations are good opportunities to talk about gambling. Times like the drive to footy practice or watching a game are often good times to raise start a conversation.

## Keep it light

Try to lighten things up with humour. If the conversation becomes too intense, your kids may switch off.

## Tailor your message

Keep kids interested in the discussion by making it relevant to them, use examples of situations they can relate to.

## Do it in small doses

Lots of short conversations are better than one long one. Bringing up the topic of gambling frequently will let them know it's ok to talk about it anytime.

## Practice what you preach

Young people are more likely to be influenced by what you do, rather than what you say. If they see you gambling regularly, they'll think it's normal. Always explain the risks and negative consequences of any gambling you do and talk about your losses as much as your wins.

## Need some extra support?

[Gambler's Help](#) can provide parents and carers with advice and support on how to help young people navigate gambling issues. Call the Gambler's Help 24/7 telephone line on **1800 858 858** for support and advice.

[Find more support options](#)