



Behavioral Addictions and

Problem Gambling

Middle School Integration Toolkit

Presented by



Marion County
OREGON
Health & Human Services

Problem Gambling Prevention Program

Student Guide



Introduction

When people talk about addictions – alcohol, tobacco, and other drug addictions are what often come to mind. Just like using substances can lead to an addiction problem, individuals can develop an addiction to risky behaviors like gambling. Behavioral addictions like disordered gambling can be just as severe to a persons’ livelihood and health as substance use disorders.

This Student Guide is designed to provide middle school students with information, activities, and discussion about harmful behaviors (like problem gambling and even problem gaming) as they relate to substance use disorders. Gambling (and even video gaming) is an activity that carries risk for teenagers and adults. It is important to learn knowledge and skills on the subject to prevent developing a problem. It is also important to learn how to get help for family and loved ones who may have a problem.


How to use this Student Guide

Pages 2: In-Class Activities: Complete this in class.

Page 3: Homework assignments.

Pages 4-10: Extra notes for you to use.

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Problem Gambling Lesson: In-Class & Homework Activities

Complete page 2 in-class (this page), and complete page 3 at home. Be sure to get a parent signature on page 3.

Student Name: _____ Class Period: _____ Date: _____

In-Class Activity: Write down 15 facts or things you found interesting from today's lesson. The first one is written for you to get you started!

Gambling is an activity that carries risk.	1.
2.	3.
4.	5.
6.	7.
8.	9.
10.	11.
12.	13.
14.	15.

Homework #1: Quiz a Parent. Ask a parent or guardian the following true/false questions and mark 'X' for the answers. Be sure to read them the correct answers after they answer. **Obtain a signature when completed.**

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

True	False	Question	Answer
		1. If you flip a coin and it comes up "tails" 10 times in a row, it will most likely come up heads next.	False: The coin does not know which side it landed on last. Each time you flip a coin, there is an equal chance that it will land on 'heads' or 'tails', no exception.
		2. Kids do not develop serious gambling addictions.	False: Kids can develop a gambling problem. Like with alcohol or drug use, gambling affects the same parts of the brain, and kids are susceptible due to their developing brain and habits.
		3. Gambling can affect a student's school attendance, grades, and behavior.	True: Youth gambling has been linked to higher rates of skipping school and having a negative impact on grades and in-school behavior.
		4. Gambling is a great way to make money and become wealthy.	False: Very few people win a lot of money when they gamble. In fact, the most people will lose MORE money than they win.
		5. Treatment for Problem Gambling is FREE in Oregon.	True: By calling 1-877-MY LIMIT or visiting OPGR.org online, anyone who needs it can talk to a trained counselor and receive FREE, CONFIDENTIAL treatment.
		6. Gambling is a safe alternative to alcohol and drug use.	False: People who develop a gambling problem often times also have a drug or alcohol problem as well.

Homework #2: Matching Signs and Symptoms. Behavioral addictions/disorders (like problem gambling) are similar to substance use addictions/disorders. Below are some signs and symptoms of alcohol misuse and problem gambling. Match similar signs and symptoms of problem gambling to alcohol misuse by putting the letter next to the matching option.

Alcohol Misuse Signs & Symptoms

1.		Increasing the amount of drinking to feel the desired effect	
2.		Drinking to escape problems (stress, depression, etc.)	
3.		Alcohol withdrawal (irritable or sick when stopped)	
4.		Cravings for alcohol (think about it a lot)	
5.		Doing risky things when drunk	
6.		Less desire to engage in other activities or interests	
7.		Drinking causes problems with loved ones, work, or school	
8.		Unsuccessful attempts to stop drinking	

Problem Gambling Signs & Symptoms

- A. Increasing intensity of interest in gambling (thinking about it a lot)
- B. Gambling to escape problems like depression, or when there is a crisis
- C. Less desire to engage in other activities and interests
- D. Frequent absences from school, home, or work to gamble
- E. Restlessness or irritable when not gambling
- F. Repeated unsuccessful attempts to stop gambling
- G. Risking losing more by "chasing" losses (trying to win back money lost) or borrowing money
- H. Increasing time and money spent gambling

Addiction & The Brain



Definitions:

The Definition of Addiction: Addiction is a physical and psychological dependence on a substance despite its negative health effects. It is a chronic disease that affects our brains memory and risk reward function.

This means you can form an addiction to activities and behaviors, like video games or gambling.



Other Important Definitions:

- Behavior Addiction: Behavioral addiction (examples gambling or gaming addiction) is an addiction caused by a behavior or the feeling brought about by an action with similar symptoms to substance addictions.
- Gambling: Risking of money or something of material value on an event with an uncertain outcome with the hope of winning something of even greater value.
- Problem Gambling: Gambling despite negative personal, social, or financial consequences.
- Disordered Gambling: Moderate to severe problem gambling, where 4 or more signs of problem are identified by a medical professional.

How Does Addiction Work?



Certain substances change the way your **brain responds to reward**, and this is what creates addiction. Addiction can also occur when you **form harmful habits over time**, producing an effect in the brain similar to that of hard drugs.

Stages Leading to Addiction

Stage 1
Experimentation

Stage 2
Regular Use




Stage 3
Abuse





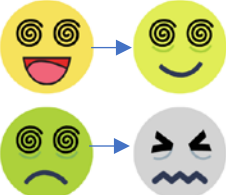

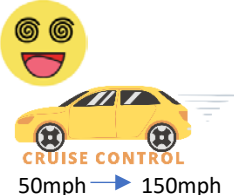

The Reward Hub:

There are three parts of our brain that relate to forming habits

<p>Reward Hub (Ventral Striatum) Like the gas pedal in a car.</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allows us to want or anticipate rewarding things. 2. This can be inner rewards (taste/feels good) or outer rewards (recognition/praise). 3. This is so we do things that keep us alive.
<p>Habit Hub (Dorsal Striatum) Like autopilot in a car.</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When we experience repeated rewards, we develop habits to repeat them. 2. This is how we continue in the activities we like, but also how we develop bad habits too. 3. For some things like alcohol or gambling, it can lead to a risk of the third stage leading to Addiction: Abuse.
<p>Top-Down Control Network (Pre-frontal Cortex) Like the brakes in a car.</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where we process logical decisions. For things that are harmful to us, this keeps us from overdoing activities or eating too much. 2. Develops until age 25. 3. Your brain could become wired for addiction if you start to form a problem or addiction too young. <p><i>This is why for some things there are age limits (example: drinking, gambling, tobacco use).</i></p>

Developing a Problem:

Communication problem between gas & brake pedal

	<p>You start to develop a problem and negative health effects as you continue to increase use.</p>		<p><u>Bad Habits & Autopilot:</u> you may start missing or ignoring the signs to stop and you think about it way too much.</p>
	<p><u>Tolerance:</u> desired effect is only achieved through increased intensity. (higher speed is new normal)</p>		<p>When you see images of what you have a problem to, you start to crave it.</p>

The Cycle of Addiction:



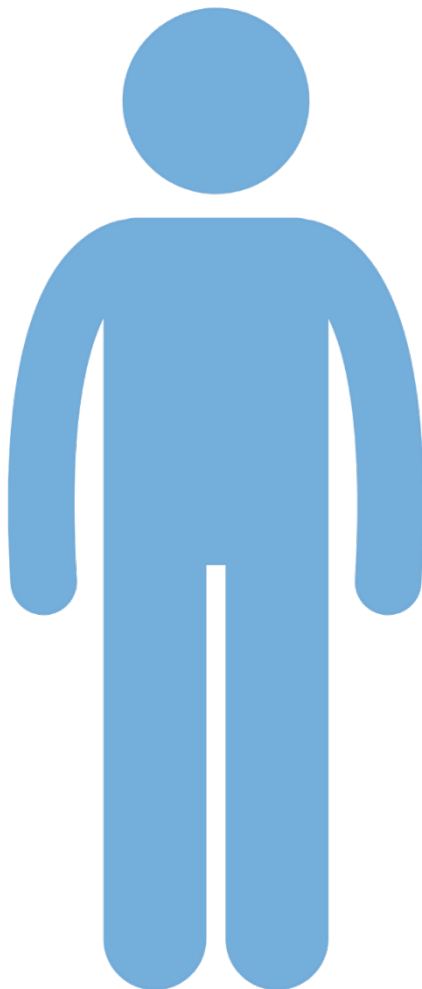
This is when a person loses control and is unable to stop – not really about doing it for fun anymore, you have to do it to feel normal.

Becoming dependent:

1. Not doing it causes more stress and anxiety, because the brain has changed to need that substance or activity.
2. Trying to stop is very difficult – there is withdrawal (psychological and/or physical) often causing relapse.

While quitting an addiction is very difficult, there is hope!

Risk Factors for Alcohol, Drugs, & Gambling Problems:



Genetics: People with alcohol, drug, or gambling problems or addictions in their family are more likely to have a problem with the same thing.



Age: The Top-Down Control Network develops later for teenagers and young adults.

- i. Difficulty controlling impulses.
- ii. Your brain may not develop properly.



Environment:

- i. **Access:** Having access to gambling, alcohol, and drugs.
- ii. **Friends:** Having friends who do it.



Other Addictions: Having one addiction increases the risk of have other types of addictions too.



Mental Health: Having a mental health condition, such as depression or anxiety.



Stress: Trying to escape from stressful times in life or situations.



Did you know?

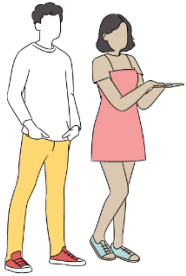
We are learning more and more about problem video gaming and video game addiction. The risks we know of now are environment, mental health, and stress.

Gambling Facts



Gambling is an activity that carries risk!

Teenagers:



1. Most teenagers don't gamble regularly.
2. Teens who do gamble regularly, regardless of if they lose a bunch of money or not, are more likely to struggle with:
 - ii. Depression
 - iii. Suicidal thoughts
 - iv. Drug and alcohol use
 - v. Lower grades

Adults:



1. Most adults who gamble regularly don't have a problem gambling.
2. 8% of adults are estimated to have a low to severe gambling problem:
 - i. **That is an estimated 257,950 people!**
 - ii. You could fill the Moda Center where the Blazers play over 12 times.
3. Adults with a gambling problem are more likely to struggle with:
 - i. Depression
 - ii. Suicidal thoughts
 - iii. Drug and alcohol problems



Did you know?

Co-occurring addictions are common among people with an addiction. This means that someone who has an addiction is more likely to struggle with another problem or addiction too.

Gambling Odds:

The odds are the same each time a person gambles.
Past events do not change future outcome.

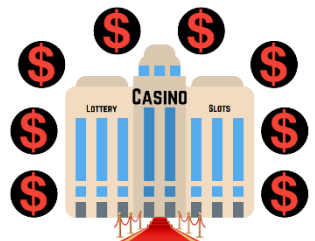


Example: Flipping a coin. A coin flip is a 50-50 chance heads or tails. If it comes up heads 5 times in a row, it still has a 50-50 chance of coming up heads or tails.

The House Always Wins:

Law of Averages: The more a game of chance is played, the closer the odds of winning will be true.

Example: If a gambling game with 20% chance of winning is played 100 times, the win-loss ratio will be about 20 wins and 80 losses.



Gambling odds are never in your favor! It is impossible to make money on games of chance over time.



Powerball Jackpot:

The odds of winning the Powerball Jackpot are 1 in 292,200,000!

Gambling Debt in Oregon:

In Oregon, the average person in treatment for problem gambling owes gambling related debts of:

 **\$23,375** 

This means they lost all the money they had and then went into this amount of debt.

Video Gambling:

The Most Addictive Type of Gambling



70% of Oregonians in treatment for problem gambling cite Video Lottery Terminals (video gambling) as their primary form of gambling.

2,000 estimated locations have video gambling across Oregon.

MOST of the money made from casinos and the Oregon Lottery is from video gambling machines (slots, video poker, video lottery).

There are many different types of gambling, but one type is more addictive than others.

Industry Tactics



Appealing Products: Video Gambling & Video Games

Video gambling machines and video games (on a phone, computer, or console) are designed to make money. Both industries have used these tactics in the past



1. **Flashy graphics, lights, and sounds:** Makes games more exciting.
2. **Faster play:** Spending money faster by playing faster.
3. **Play with credits:** Replacing money with an in-app currency (coins, tokens, etc.) to remove the idea of spending money to advance.
4. **Gambling in video games:** Loot boxes, in app purchases, and gambling specific minigames may be available in video games.
5. **Tons of games:** More options when you get bored.
6. **Lose track of time:** Games designed to play for hours on end.
7. **Spending more money to increase potential reward:** The idea of getting a deal by spending more money.
8. **Play on a comfortable device:** Products designed to keep players comfortable on easy to use devices.



Appealing Advertisements: Tobacco, Alcohol, & Gambling

Similar tactics have been used between industries when advertising

- Advertisers try to convince individuals that using their product will make their life better or more enjoyable.
- Actors are often young, healthy people, celebrities, or cartoon mascots.
- Ads may not tell you the risks of the product, or downplay the risks or potential harms.
- Smoking, drinking, and gambling are learned habits. The industry tries to get people to acquire and maintain that habit.



Getting Help



If you know of someone experiencing an addiction:

Remember the SEVEN C's!

<p>1. I didn't <u>cause</u> it</p> <p>2. I can't <u>control</u> it</p> <p>3. I can't <u>cure</u> it</p>	<p>4. I can learn to <u>cope</u> with it</p>	<p>5. By taking better <u>care</u> of myself</p> <p>6. By <u>communicating</u> my feelings</p> <p>7. By making healthy <u>choices</u></p>
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How to get FREE help!

Oregon YouthLine	Teenage counselors trained to help other teenagers through life stress. No problem is too big or small!	Call: 877-968-8491 Text teen2teen to 839863 Website & Chat: www.OregonYouthline.org Email: Teen2Teen@lifensforLife.org
Suicide Prevention Lifeline	Helping people in crisis and their loved ones prevent suicide and support people in distress.	Call: 1-800-273-TALK Website & Chat: www.SuicidePreventionLifeline.org
Oregon Problem Gambling Resource	Help, information, and resources for a person who gambles and their loved ones.	Call: 1-877-MY-LIMIT Text: 503-713-6000 Website & Chat: www.OPGR.org
Oregon Tobacco Quitline	Help and support for anyone 13 and older quit using tobacco products like cigarettes and vaping pens.	Call: 1-800-QUIT-NOW Text: READY to 200-400 Website & Chat: www.QuiteNow.net/Oregon
Marion County Youth & Family Services	Mental health crisis screenings and services to youth and families in Marion County.	Call: 503-576-HOPE Website: www.co.marion.or.us/HLT/MH/Pages/YouthandFamilycrisiservices.aspx

More information at helplines.MCHealthy.net