

Majoring in Wagering?

If they're not smoking, drinking, or using drugs, what's the big deal with a little betting?

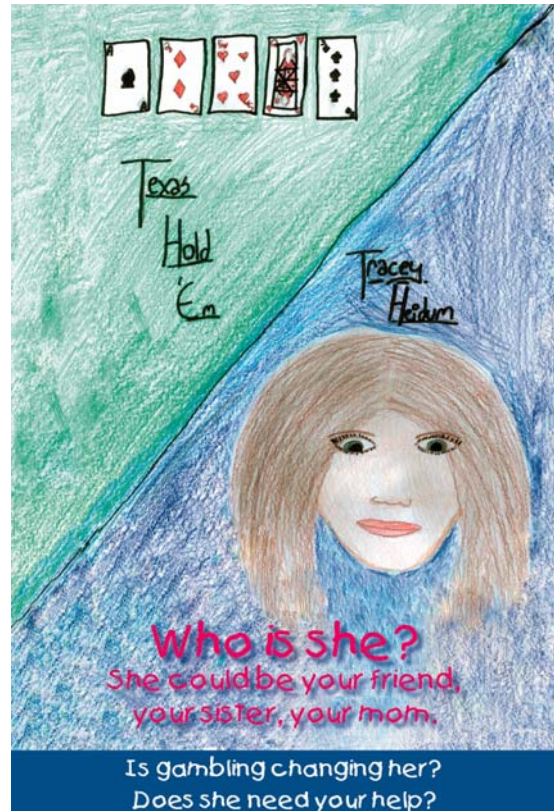
Heard your students talking a lot about poker? Seen them exchanging cash over the big game?

With the increasing availability, accessibility, and acceptability of gambling, more young people are gambling than ever. What may seem like harmless fun can actually develop into a serious problem for some people.

As educators, you play an important role in the prevention of problem behaviors among your students.

Three key points you need to know about youth gambling:

1. Gambling is not a safe alternative to alcohol or drug use. Many people think that poker cards among friends is totally safe because young people are not drinking or smoking. The truth is, while most people don't have problems when they gamble, more young people are developing problems with gambling. Consequences of problem gambling include more than lost money. Depression, social withdrawal, and school dropout are just a few of the consequences of a gambling problem.
2. Many teens already have gambling problems. It may only be a harmless bet of a dollar or two, but it can become a lot more serious. An Oregon study showed that one in every 25 teens (4%) have a gambling problem. An additional 15% are at risk for developing a gambling problem.
3. Teens are only a few years away from being adults who can gamble legally. Honest education about gambling is important to preparing young people to make responsible choices.



Above: Poster created by Hollis Gehrett, 7th grader of Eugene. First place poster statewide for 2005 Oregon Problem Awareness Week poster search.



Why should I be concerned about my students?

- Problem gambling affects school performance and increases the dropout rate.
- Many problem gamblers say they started out gambling at an early age--approximately 10 years old.
- About one in every 25 Oregon teens already has a gambling problem.
- Young people often don't have well developed coping or decision-making skills.
- Young people can easily hide a gambling problem. There are no needle marks, drowsy walking, bloodshot eyes, or other tell-tale signs so that others can get help.
- The problem typically develops over several years. Without prevention efforts now, small problems can escalate into serious consequences down the line.

How we can support you—and not add extra work!

Problem gambling prevention efforts are meant to supplement your current classroom activities—not to add more work for you.

Here are some things we can offer you:

- In-class interactive, informative, and fun workshops
 - Educating youth on responsible, healthy choices
 - Helping youth recognize the difference between responsible and problem gambling
 - Providing resources for which youth can seek help for family or friends who might have a gambling problem
 - Adding an easy plug-in component to your existing alcohol, tobacco, or other drug curriculum
- Presentations to educators, administrators, and parent groups
- Problem gambling awareness poster creation (visit our website to see this year's posters)
- Student incentives provided
- And more—contact us!



Above: Poster created by Bryant King of Eugene's Monroe Middle School for 2005 Oregon Problem Awareness Week poster search.

contact us!

Julie Hynes, Coordinator
(541) 682-3928
Julie.Hynes@co.lane.or.us

contact us!

Also find tools and tips on the web!
www.lanecounty.org/prevention/gambling

