

WHY TALK ABOUT GAMBLING AND YOUTH



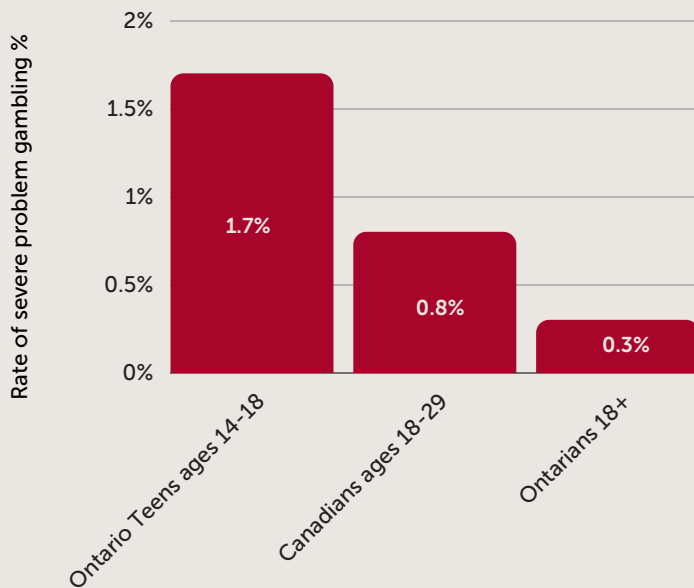
Youth have access to gambling* even though they may not be of legal age** to gamble. This may include placing a bet on a dare/challenge, playing for keeps or participating in sports pools among friends. Some arcade games such as single-play claw-machines youth participate in are forms of gambling. Youth are also exposed to gambling through advertisements. Online gambling is available 24/7 on mobile devices¹ and youth can often get around age verification or access unregulated online gambling. Gambling is also incorporated in games youth play including opening loot boxes or card packs in video games.

WHY AND HOW ARE YOUTH GAMBLING?

Youth may participate in gambling for fun, to win a prize or money, to socialize, to relieve boredom, to cope with stress or as a form of escape.²

14.8% of Ontario teens gamble online (i.e. gaming, online poker, online sports betting, etc.). 44.5% gamble in any form (i.e. betting on a dare with friends, playing claw machines, etc.). 11.7% report betting virtual credits on video games.³

YOUTH REPORT HIGHER PROBLEM GAMBLING RATES COMPARED TO ADULTS



Gambling has the potential to cause harms to individual's finances, relationships, employment or school work, physical and mental wellbeing.⁴ Youth who start gambling at a young age are more at risk of developing problems with gambling.⁵ Brain development continues until around age 25. Youth are more likely to participate in risky activities such as gambling because the part of their brain responsible for emotion and impulse develops before the part of the brain that controls impulses and weighs consequences.⁶

6% of Ontario secondary school students indicate symptoms of a low-to-moderate severity problem with gambling.⁷ According to the graph, Ontario teens aged 14-18 years old show a severe problem gambling rate of 1.7% while Ontarians 18+ are at 0.3%. This means Ontario teens are 5 times more likely to develop a severe gambling problem.^{3,8}

EDUCATION & PREVENTION

It is important to talk to youth about gambling and educate them about its risks and ways to stay safe so they can make informed decisions.

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* Gambling is when you risk something of value, and you don't know if you will win or lose.

** Legal age to gamble is 18 years of age in Ontario, although one needs to be 19 to enter a casino or gamble online.