



YMCA
Youth Gambling
Awareness
Program (YGAP)

YMCA
Programme de
sensibilisation aux
jeux de hasard chez
les jeunes (PSJJ)



Provincial Newsletter

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What's happening in (fill in region) Region?

Local YGAP Updates

Un peu de Français!

Le programme de sensibilisation aux jeux de hasard chez les jeunes (PSJJ) est maintenant délivré en français à plus grande échelle à travers l'Ontario. Si Le PSJJ est offert en anglais dans votre région, il peut aussi être offert en français!

Tous les ateliers sont offerts dans les deux langues, aux jeunes de 8 à 24 ans ainsi qu'aux adultes travaillant avec des jeunes. Les présentations offertes pour les adultes sont délivré sous forme de développement professionnel. Les ateliers peuvent être offerts dans les écoles francophones, dans les écoles anglophones offrant l'immersion francophone, dans les organisations offrant des services en français, etc.

Did you know YGAP is a bilingual program? The Youth Gambling Awareness Program (YGAP) is also in French! We deliver free and interactive workshops for youth ages 8-24 years as well as professionals working with youth. Every workshop can be delivered for French schools, French Immersion programs, French language classes, or at a French organization.

To have more information about the programs or book a presentation, please contact the youth outreach worker of you region:

www.ymcagta.org/gambling

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Building healthy communities



It's just a game: The [Changing?] Landscape of Sports Wagering

Whether it's the drop of the puck, kickoff or tipoff, the autumn sports season is upon us! Throw in some Major League Baseball playoffs and you have, undoubtedly, the best time of the year to be a sports fan. Pro Line, Fantasy sports, Internet wagering, and privately organized pools, sports' betting has become a topic of conversation as of late. Bill C-290, a private member's bill, was brought to Parliament Hill in September 2011, with the intention of permitting single game betting in Canada. If this Bill is passed, Ontario Lottery and Gaming (OLG) will offer lottery schemes that involve betting on a single race and/or on a single sport event.

¹ Problemgambling.ca (2013)
http://www.problemgambling.ca/EN/Documents/FA_SportsBetting2013.pdf



As it stands in Canada, sports wagering requires a person to make at least three bets on at least two separate sporting events (For example, an individual bets on the Toronto Maple Leafs to beat the Montreal Canadiens by one goal, they bet the game will have more than 5 goals scored and bet on the Los Angeles Kings to beat the Winnipeg Jets by one goal). This is known as 'parlay betting'; a single bet that links two or more individual wagers, and is dependent on all of those wagers winning together to generate a payout¹. This decision to pass Bill C-290 could be months away as the Senate still has to debate and approve this Bill in order for single sports betting to become a reality in Canada.

In the meantime here are some ways to stay safe if you are wagering on sports.

- Make sure to know the rules and understand the betting odds before you play
- Your betting choices won't change the outcome of a game
- There is no proven system or method you can use to predict the outcome of sports games
- Don't use gambling as a way of supporting your favourite team
- When betting online, use only secure sites and protect your personal information
- Play for entertainment and stay within your limits

If you are interested in learning more facts about gambling, please book a presentation with your local Youth Gambling Awareness Program Youth Outreach Worker.

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Betting on Video Games: Is it true?

Youth continue to be inundated with video games such as 'Call of Duty' and 'Grand Theft Auto' but how can gambling be incorporated into these games?

Simply speaking, gambling is when you bet something of value and you don't know whether you will win or lose. In video games, traditionally, players were unable to wager valuable out-of-game items; only in-game currency could be wagered. It is now possible to purchase in-game currency with real money, making in-game currency valuable, and turning some video games into gambling. An increasing number of video games have a gambling element involved, including wagering on matches, casinos, card games or slot machines, and these video games are being marketed and sold to youth.

Betting websites are also increasingly popular among both adults and youth. Youth can sign up to a betting websites without parental permission, deposit money using PayPal or a credit card, find a competitor and challenge them to a match. After the wager is accepted, both players complete the match and independently report the results to the betting website. The results each player reports to the betting website must match-up; independent, identical, results mean that players were not cheating. If the results are identical, the winner receives the wager. This is how the betting website ensures that people cannot lie about the outcome of a match, since both parties need to agree on the results for a winner to be declared.

Parents need to become more vigilant when purchasing video games. The Entertainment Software Ratings Board (ESRB) is in charge of rating video games for age appropriateness. When searching the ESRB-rated games with the words "poker," "blackjack," or "slots" in the title it revealed more than 91 games. 80% of them were rated "E" for everyone. Parents need to look beyond the ESRB rating and look at what is actually in the game – this may even mean taking a video game for a 'test drive' in store!

Signs of problem gaming are very similar to problem gambling. Youth may have mood swings, experience difficulty in school, begin lying or stealing, lose friends, have trouble sleeping and show a need to constantly play video games. To help reduce the potential harm associated with problem gaming, youth should set time limits when gaming (setting an alarm, having a friend call or text, or establishing a 'Plan B' activity for when the game is over, can all help), and if youth choose to gamble have them set a limit on how much they spend. Youth should also adjust their expectations when playing a video game with gambling elements, and hope to win, but expect to lose, as well as continue to participate in the other activities they enjoy.

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Problem Gambling, Gaming and Internet Use in Adolescents ~ A Brief Overview ~

"Adolescents are especially vulnerable to developing gambling problems...the issue...needs to be considered in light of its relationship with excessive use of other entertainment technologies, such as computer/video games, instant messaging, and the Internet. The popularity of multi-player interactive games (on the internet and on home and portable consoles) also provides adolescents with opportunities to gamble."
Parker et al., 2013

Our 'brave new world' increasingly exists online, and today's youth live in two worlds: one in 'real life', and one in the virtual realm. Undeniably, youth are involved with online gambling and gaming and these technologies quickly continue to grow and adapt.

What the research says

A recent study found that males with identified learning disabilities show a significantly higher risk of problem gambling behaviours than those without a learning disability.

One of the lead researchers for the study, Dr. James Parker (Trent University), sits on the YGAP Advisory Committee for the Peterborough Region, and was able to speak about the study findings at our October meeting.

In youth with identified learning disabilities, numeracy and literacy are often below average, as are emotional and social competencies. These two issues create a very vulnerable sector of youth, especially in regards to problem gambling behaviours – both online and in 'real life'. And, when considered with other research that has shown that Internet gambling frequency is related to poor mental health, there is cause for concern.

What can we do about it?

Many social and educational programs are working to bridge this gap. Perhaps what is most important for the YGAP program to take away from this research is how we can continue to develop and deliver our workshops in order to address the changing needs of diverse youth.

YGAP presentations include a focus and discussion on odds and randomness, helping youth to understand the numbers behind gambling, as well as broadening critical thinking skills. We also promote and engage youth in games and discussions around social issues related to gambling, which includes harm reduction strategies.

Problem Gambling, Gaming and Internet Use in Adolescents: Relationships with emotional intelligence in clinical and special needs samples

James D.A. Parker, Laura J. Summerfeldt, Robyn N. Taylor, Patricia H. Kloosterman, Kateryna V. Keefer

A full PDF copy of the article is available, free of charge, by request. If interested, please contact emily_gray@ymca.ca to have a copy emailed to you.

To read the abstract of the article, or purchase a copy online, [click here](#).

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