

## Gaming and Gambling

**Background:** Gambling involves betting, gaming or participating in a lottery. It is usually a fun & safe leisure activity involving games of chance for money or material goods. However, when a person has the urge to continuously gamble despite negative/harmful consequences or the desire to stop, this is identified as problem or harmful gambling. Problem gambling is gambling to a degree that compromises, disrupts or damages family, personal or recreational pursuits & often requires specialist intervention & support. Excessive gaming is playing for long periods of time. Gaming disorder is a condition which can be hugely debilitating.

**Why It Matters:** Research indicates that 11% of 11-16 year olds spend money on gambling (Gambling Commission 2019) which is higher than illegal drug use (5%). Research indicates that boys as young as 12 have gambled illegally online in Jersey (Statistics Jersey 2021). As many as 55,000 young people in the UK are classified as problem gamblers. Online gaming also puts more young people at risk of being groomed and exploited by criminals online.

**Consider:** Do you talk to children & young people about the different ways people gamble, that you don't win every time and the consequences of losing money? Do you know about the games young people are playing & the terminology they use? YGAM has a jargon guide at [Game Glossary](#). [Childline](#) has information for children & young people on gaming and the [Jersey Gambling Commission](#) and [States of Jersey Police](#) also have useful information for those looking for support with problem gambling.



**Information:** Harms from gambling can include:

**Health:** Mental ill health, feelings of stigma and shame, heart palpitations, difficulty sleeping, drug & alcohol use, self-harm & suicide, anxiety

**Relationships:** Relationship breakdowns, arguing with family and friends, anti-social behaviour, loneliness/isolation, loss of trust

**Social/Financial:** poor concentration, housing issues, work/school problems, reduced productivity, debt, selling possessions, criminality & imprisonment

**What To Do:** Increase your knowledge and try to take a balanced approach. Find an appropriate time and place to talk, be mindful of your tone and any bias, provide reassurance, focus on the behaviour, be empathetic, talk about safety, finance and wellbeing and set/agree boundaries. Avoid shock, fear or shame. Internet Matters offers advice for schools and professionals in relation to gaming. [Gaming Advice Hub - Internet Matters](#). The [Young Gamers and Gamblers Education Trust](#) (YGAM) is a useful resource.

**For parents/carers:** consider & agree a game limit rather than play/time limit, use visual and/or auditory reminders, check game suitability (PEGI/age rating), set controls on the chat functionality and agree behaviour code, provide time to wind down, introduce a bedtime routine. Find information on setting parental controls at [Parental Controls & Privacy Settings Guides - Internet Matters](#)

**Harmful Gambling Indicators:** preoccupation with gambling, tolerance (needing to gamble with more money to get excitement), withdrawal (negative emotions when trying to cut down), loss of control (spending more time and/or money than planned), chasing losses, lying to friends/family, illegal acts (stealing/misusing money to fund gambling)

**Harmful Gaming Indicators:** preoccupation with gaming, downplaying time spent gaming, unable to set time limits, avoiding family/friends, being overly defensive, headaches or migraines, neglective hygiene, extreme fatigue, carpal tunnel syndrome.