



TALKING TO YOUNG PEOPLE/RANGATAHI ABOUT GAMBLING

A FACT SHEET FOR PARENTS

In Aotearoa New Zealand, we are seeing an increasing number of gambling advertisements. It's advertised on TV, radio, and online and some advertisements are specifically targeted at rangatahi/young people.

Our children and young people/rangatahi are also exposed to gambling concepts through many online games and apps, which distort the prospect of winning. It can seem like there is no risk associated with gambling and that it is easy, fun and a normal part of life.

Facts and figures

Recent studies show that young people are participating in gambling in Aotearoa and are at risk of harm.



A recent survey revealed that **46 percent of youth aged 16–24 had gambled** in the last year.



A study into New Zealand secondary school students' gambling found that **one in three had participated in gambling** at some point in their lives. Of this subgroup, 11 percent were worried about their own gambling.



Studies have shown that many popular online games that appeal to young people contain simulated gambling such as **loot boxes** or crates. A 2017 study found that almost half of the loot boxes reviewed met the psychological criteria to be considered gambling. Several studies found that people who are experiencing harm from gambling may pay more for loot boxes than people who aren't.

So, how do we talk to our rangatahi about gambling?

Don't worry, you don't need to be an expert! Just having a talk to your kids about gambling is a good idea to make sure they know the facts.

Here's a few things to think about before you have a conversation:

- Have you heard your teenager or young adult talk about gambling or the odds while watching or talking about sport?
- Does your teenager or young adult talk about betting on sports with their peers?
- What online games and apps is your teenager or young adult playing or using?
- Does your teenager or young adult think gambling on sport is safer than other forms of gambling?

You may be surprised to find that your children are more exposed to gambling than you thought.



Conversation starters

Here's some ideas to start a conversation with your teenager or young adult:

- Do you think gambling on sport is normal?
- Why do you think there is so much gambling advertising?
- When you play online games, do you come across loot boxes or crates? How do they work, and do you think you will always win?
- Do your school friends talk about the odds or ask you to gamble? Do you think that's a good way to talk about sport, or to spend your pocket money?

Having these conversations can help our children learn to think critically about the risks associated with gambling and make informed decisions.

REFERENCES

Archer, D., King-Finlay, T., Kuresa, B., & Fleming, T. (2021). Youth19 Gambling Brief. The Youth19 Researchers and The Adolescent Health Research Group, Auckland and Wellington.
Drummond, A., Sauer, J.D. Video game loot boxes are psychologically akin to gambling. *Nat Hum Behav* 2, 530–532 (2018). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41562-018-0360-1>
Te Hīringa Hauora. Results from the Health and Lifestyles Survey 2020. Wellington: Te Hīringa Hauora; 2021.