

HOW TO KŌRERO ABOUT GAMBLING

A GUIDE FOR WHĀNAU, LOVED ONES AND SUPPORTING KAIMAHI

Starting the conversation about gambling harm can be difficult. Whether it is a whānau member, loved one or someone we are supporting, we can be fearful about getting it wrong.

Some things to keep in mind

- The most important thing is to **be kind and non-judgmental**. If you go into the kōrero with this mindset, any discussion about gambling harm is a good one.
- **They might not open up the first time** – this is okay. It is likely to be multiple conversations, not just one.
- **The goal is not to get an answer or solution straight away**, but to plant the seed for them to think about their gambling. Consider bringing it up as a huge win.
- Even if they shut down or get defensive, you have shown that you care and are there for them. **Remember: you can only offer your support.**
- It's important to **make sure your language doesn't make people feel shame**. Instead of terms like “gambling addict” or “problem gambler” we can turn this into phrases like, “gambling seems to be causing you harm”.



NEED HELP?

If in doubt, contact PGF Services on our freephone 0800 664 262, text 5819 or visit www.pgf.nz for our live chat feature, and talk to a trained duty counsellor ready to support you – to have the kōrero, but also because someone else's gambling can affect anyone. To support someone else, you need to be supported too.

For more guidance navigating the conversation, visit www.pgf.nz/knowledge-hub

Tips to navigate the conversation



Keep it simple.

Whatever starts the conversation is the right thing to say. It may look like “Hey, I noticed you haven’t seemed yourself recently?”, or “I’ve noticed you have been gambling a lot recently. How does it make you feel?”. You can also keep the conversation less focused on them, such as, “Have you noticed those ads for the new TAB app Betcha? I’ve been seeing them constantly!”



Find a comfortable spot to have the kōrero.

This may be a private space at home, or while you do a shared activity, such as a walk.



Listening and silence is important.

You don’t have to know the right thing to say, even if this feels uncomfortable. Give them time to speak without interruption.



Remember language is your friend

Avoid words like ‘problem’ to stop them from feeling shame. Try ‘harm’ instead.



Be inquisitive

Coming from a place of intrigue can help. “What’s that game you are playing? How do you get those cool outfits? What is a loot box?”.



If they get defensive, be okay with that.

It may be the first time they are confronting this. It may help to give them time and space and revisit the conversation another time.

Focus on concrete examples of what you have noticed, such as time or money spent, or your own feelings about it, or how the gambling is affecting you. Try not to make assumptions about how they feel.



Offer to help them seek support.

If it feels right, let them know there are free and confidential services to speak to, and you can help them navigate this.



Remember to keep yourself safe financially

Do not loan them any money. If you need to, seek legal advice about any debts that may impact you or your family.



REFERENCES

TALKING TO YOUNG PEOPLE/RANGATAHI ABOUT GAMBLING

[Talking About Gambling - GambleAware](#)
[Worried about your Gambling? Sharing & Talking Helps | Safer Gambling NZ](#)
[Alcohol & Drug - Helping Others Supporting someone | Depression and Anxiety | Welcome to a Brand New Day](#)
[Conversations About Gambling - Mental Health First Aid Australia](#)