



GAMING/ GAMBLING



Learning about the risks of online gaming and gambling can help you stay in control and make smart choices. These games and apps are often designed to keep you playing, and they can conceal key facts like the real costs and odds involved.



SIGNS TO WATCH FOR

SPENDING MORE AND MORE TIME on gambling apps, betting sites, or games with gambling features (such as loot boxes or skin betting).

BEING SECRETIVE about your (or a friend's) online activity, spending, or gaming accounts.

FREQUENTLY TALKING about winning money or trying to make money through gambling.

BORROWING OR ASKING FOR MONEY without a clear reason.

BECOMING UPSET, ANXIOUS, OR IRRITABLE when unable to gamble or access gaming platforms.

NEGLECTING school, sports, hobbies, family time, or friendships.



WHAT YOU CAN DO...

Set limits for yourself: Decide in advance how much time or money you're comfortable spending, and stick to it. It's easier to stay in control before you start than once you're in the middle of a game.

Learn how these features are designed: Loot boxes, betting apps, and "just one more try" mechanics are built to keep you engaged. Understanding how they work can make it easier to make informed choices.

Question the odds: If a game or app makes winning seem easy or guaranteed, that's a red flag. The odds are almost always in favor of the app, not you.

Check in and listen without judgment if a friend seems to be struggling: A caring conversation can help them feel supported and less alone.

Share your concerns using specific examples if you're worried about a friend: This can help them recognize behaviors they may not have noticed themselves.

Encourage healthy activities you can do together: Spending time on sports, hobbies, or other interests can reduce the time spent gaming/gambling, for you and your friends.

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IF IT'S ALREADY HAPPENING

Talk to a trusted adult, like a parent, teacher, or counselor, about what you're experiencing. You don't have to figure this out alone.

Take a break from the app or platform. Stepping away, even temporarily, can help you regain a sense of control.

If it's a friend, talk to them privately and let them know you care. People are more likely to seek help when they feel supported, not judged.

Be honest about what you've noticed. Sharing specific concerns can help a friend see the impact their behavior is having.

Avoid lending money. This can help prevent the problem from getting worse and encourages a real solution instead.



REMEMBER

Asking for help is a sign of strength, not weakness. If gaming or gambling is causing stress or affecting school, friendships, sleep, or money, talking to someone today can be the first step toward feeling more in control and getting back to the things that matter most.



National Problem Gambling Helpline Call or text 1-800-MY-RESET (1-800-697-3738) for free, confidential, 24/7 help for anyone concerned about their own gambling or someone else's



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