 Sports betting and gambling

Suggested duration: 65 minutes

This is one activity in a sequence designed to challenge students to develop a stronger understanding of gambling and the ways in which it presents risks for young people across all socio-cultural groups. This activity aims to deconstruct advertising, recognise the proliferation of sports advertising and support students to develop plan for personal safety. These resources were developed in collaboration with the NSW Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing.

The activity sequence includes four lessons.

1. Some truths about gambling
2. Sports betting and advertising
3. Online and smart phone gambling
4. Gambling – seeking help

Course outcomes

3.1 Evaluate how contextual factors influence attitudes, values and behaviours.

3.2 Analyse the positive and negative implications of technology and digital media on self-concept, independence, relationships and health behaviours.

5.1 Critically analyse situations, attitudes and behaviours that influence independence, health, safety and wellbeing in different contexts.

5.2 Recognise and respond appropriately to situations which may be limiting or harmful to self and others.

What do we want students to know, understand or be able to do?

* Consider the influence of gambling advertisements, particularly for sports betting and online gambling games.
* Critically analyse the mixed messages presented through advertising, media and online sources.
* Consider the ways in which personal values may be shaped by advertising and challenge misconceptions.
* Demonstrate an understanding of taking responsibility for their own actions in relation to gambling and sports betting.
* Challenge misconceptions that people need to be engaging in gambling and betting to enjoy sport.
* Recognise that gambling advertising, particularly associated with sporting, is widespread and can often create mixed messages and influence our decisions.
* Critique the advertising of gambling and challenge advertising techniques that promote excitement, glamour and skill and promise easy financial and social rewards.

Suggested content

| Learning context | Content |
| --- | --- |
| Independence  Focus: Building self-concepts and independence | Personal values and beliefs   * influences on values and beliefs, e.g. technology, social and cultural norms, media, family, relationships * influence of values, attitudes and beliefs on decisions and actions in various contexts   Digital competencies   * online safety, e.g. digital footprint, scams, security, bullying and harassment * positive and negative influences of technology, e.g. online communities, connecting with others, gaming, body image |
| Drugs and alcohol  Focus: Making safe and responsible choices | Responsible behaviour   * gambling responsibly |

Teaching notes

Sports betting and advertisements

The proliferation of online and mobile gambling channels and the normalisation of gambling through advertising within sport have changed the way young people are exposed to and impacted by gambling. For young people who follow sport, gambling promotion is a normal part of lived experience. Ground signage, team uniforms, gambling statistics quoted by commentators and scheduled advertising all add to the ubiquity of the message on both television and radio. A study by Ebiquity noted that in 2012, there were 528 individual online betting advertisements on free-to-air television, shown more than 20,000 times, primarily during family viewing time, with airings on pay-television estimated as many times higher.

Creating a safe and supportive learning environment

There are a number of strategies that can be used to create a supportive learning environment which enables students to feel safe to learn and ask questions. They include:

* making students aware at the beginning of Life Ready sessions that disclosing personal information that indicates they may be at risk of harm will be reported to the school principal in all instances. This includes personal disclosures related to instances of abuse, drug use, neglect or sexual activity under the legal age of consent.
* being aware that some parts of Life Ready can be confronting and sensitive for some students.
* enabling students to withdraw if they find issues personally confronting to protect them from making harmful disclosures. Equally, it is important to be prepared for issues that arise as a result of a student making a public disclosure in the classroom.

More information on creating a safe and supportive learning environment can be found on the [Life Ready website.](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/key-learning-areas/pdhpe/life-ready)

Evaluating resources before use

Preview and evaluate all strategies, resources and teaching and learning approaches in full before use with students to determine suitability for student learning needs, stage of development and local school context. Consider the age, maturity, cultural background, sexuality, gender, sex, health and other characteristics of students in your care. Apply professional judgements to all strategies, teaching and learning approaches and resources including audiovisual materials (e.g. videos, media clips and YouTube), interactive web-based content (e.g. games, quizzes and websites) and texts.

Use the [resource review flowchart](https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/083acd3a-daca-4307-9afe-bc6c888f694a/1/final-resource-flowchart-html5.zip/index.html) to decide about the suitability of teaching and learning resources.

Materials should be reviewed in full and endorsed by the school principal before use in NSW government schools.

Communication with parents and caregivers

Some aspects of Life Ready may be viewed as sensitive or controversial, such as learning about abuse, child protection, drugs, respectful relationships, sexual health, sexuality and violence. Inform parents and carers, prior to the occasion, of the specific details of the Life Ready program, so that parents and caregivers have time to exercise their rights of withdrawing their child from a particular session. In this regard, a parents or caregiver’s wish must be respected.

Establishing how parents and caregivers will be informed about programs and involved in consultation is a school-based decision. Where parents and caregivers indicate they wish to withdraw their child from a program it is useful to negotiate which parts of the Life Ready program they are concerned about. A sample information letter is available on the [Life Ready website](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/key-learning-areas/pdhpe/life-ready).

Learning experiences

Activity one – Gambling advertisements (20 minutes)

* As a whole group, students discuss their favourite sporting activities or events – live and televised or streamed through media. Use the following questions to guide the discussion.
  + Using a show of hands, how many students have seen advertising for sports betting while watching these events, either live or streamed through media?
  + What does this advertising look like – what form does it take? For example, signage, team uniforms, gambling statistics or odds quoted by commentators and scheduled advertising.
  + Approximate how many times sports betting advertisements were observed during a single game, session or match (depending on the activity)?
  + Is this the same for all sports?
  + Who are the audience for gambling advertising? Provide reasons for the answer.
  + Consider the advertising associated with the following sports or activities and identify differences in prevalence and type of advertising and reasons for differences, for example, surfing vs AFL, netball vs basketball, lawn bowls (ABC) vs tennis, Women’s W League soccer vs Men’s A League soccer, cricket vs iron man.
  + What influences the amount and type of advertising and gambling promotion associated with a sport or physical activity? For example, gender of participants, gender of viewers or target audience, how the activity is streamed or viewed (TV, live, internet streaming, YouTube, print publicity), target audience, location, prime time streaming and viewing, social acceptance and popularity of activities and participants, funding and sponsorship.
* Students access examples of sports betting advertisements and critique the messages and methods used to send messages. For example:
  + Sportsbet mobile app — Don’t miss a thing, Faster-er, Easier-er, Better-er
  + Tom Waterhouse — In the blood
  + Ladbrokes — This is the Ladbrokes Life, Gut Trusters Guide to Betting
  + William Hill — Money Back when you miss by one and Cash in My Bet
  + TAB — It’s betting season
* Students critique advertisements and information. Use the following questions to guide the critique.
  + What key messages are the advertisements sending? How do they send these messages?
  + Who are the target audience for these advertisements? Do the messages and methods used vary based on the audience?
  + How do the advertisements encourage people to bet or gamble?
  + How have betting agencies made gambling more accessible and easier for individuals? How may this influence betting behaviour across communities?
  + To what extent have betting agencies made themselves a core part of sport?
  + How might the timing of advertisements be used to influence people’s gambling behaviour?
  + In which ways are the advertisements sending mixed messages or promoting myths about gambling? (link back to Lesson 1 — Activity 5 on myths associated with gambling).
  + Choose another product or service and explain in what ways gambling advertisements are similar and/or different to advertising for other products and services. Are messages and methods of advertising more subtle or obvious?
* In pairs or small groups, students discuss the messages and methods used by advertisers to promote gambling as exciting, glamorous and skilful and promising easy financial and social rewards. Which parts of the advertisements viewed represent reality? Is the reality ever presented in advertisements?
* Conclude the activity by students reflecting on other influences on people’s gambling behaviours.
* Discuss what may increase people’s susceptibility or influence by betting advertisements? In the group discussion, consider the impact of family experience and values, gender, cultural values and beliefs, socioeconomic status, location, religion and peers as well as any others suggested by students or relevant to the school context.

Activity two – KidBet (25 minutes)

* Introduce students to the KidBet advertisement on the KidBet website http://kidbet.com.au or at YouTube [youtu.be/ZAV3GVL0cdM](https://youtu.be/ZAV3GVL0cdM).
* Invite students to share their impressions of the KidBet advertisement and their own understandings of sports gambling with a partner.
* As a whole group, discuss:
  + what is the main message behind the advertisement?
  + how effectively does it use the traditional feel of a sports betting ad to get the message across?
  + to what extent are children exposed to gambling and gambling messages? Do children have a strong understanding of the risks and outcomes associated with gambling?
  + to what extent do you believe gambling has become a social norm within Australian society?
* View the clip “[Children see, children do”.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7d4gmdl3zNQ) Predict the long term impact of regular exposure of children to sports betting advertisements?
* How could you advocate for or make a difference to a child’s exposure to sports betting and gambling behaviours?
* Students work in small groups with the handout KidBet data and facts. As a small group, students discuss the data and facts using the following questions:
  + is there anything in the data that surprises you?
  + to what extent do you believe the data is accurate? Explain your reasons.
  + what are the implications of this data for young people in your community today?

Activity three – Rights and responsibilities (20 minutes)

This activity encourages students to recognise the rights and responsibilities associated with gambling and sports betting.

* Students work in two groups — 1. Rights and 2. Responsibilities.
* Each group is encouraged to brainstorm and create a list of either rights or responsibilities in relation to sports betting and gambling, depending on their group. Rights and responsibilities should reflect individuals, groups or families, venues, communities, governments, organisations, media.
* Allocate 5 minutes for discussion. Invite groups to share ideas from their list which support or conflict with other groups.

An example of individual rights and responsibilities for young people might include:

| Rights – a young person has the right to: | Responsibilities |
| --- | --- |
| * Make their own decisions about where they spend their money. * Receive their own salary/ income from any workplace or business. * Engage in betting or gambling when they are over the age of 18. * Engage in betting or gambling with friends in informal settings. | * Think about the impact their gambling may have on others. * Contribute to household and living expenses as appropriate for their age, situation and income. * Not to cause others to have excessive debts as a result of their actions — for instance parents or caregivers. * To seek help if things get out of control. |

The impact of gambling on the individual and others

* Individually, students record their own name in the centre of a page (paper or online).
* Reflecting on the rights and responsibilities discussed, students record the names or relationship of people who could be affected if they were to gamble outside their means or gamble in a way which was not responsible or demonstrated control.
* Record the impact this gambling may have on the individuals, groups, relationships or other aspects of their life, e.g. financial stress may cause conflict or break up relationships.
* Students review the people they have recorded and reflect on the following:
  + how could these people or relationships provide support and help to avoid habits or behaviours associated with gambling?
  + how could these people or relationships provide a level of accountability or support for you in aspects of personal life? How could this accountability and support be mutually supportive?
  + in your opinion, at what point does gambling become problem gambling?
  + what could you do to keep other people accountable, provide support and seek help if they were to show signs of problem gambling?

Teacher notes – Gambling

As young people are particularly vulnerable to the normalisation of gambling through exposure to sports betting advertising, gambling products, gambling in the home and the increase in the availability and accessibility of gambling, education is an important part of awareness raising.

It is illegal for anyone under the age of 18 to gamble, including Lotto, Scratchies and online gambling.

Young people and gambling

Many people in NSW and across Australia gamble by playing poker machines, betting on sporting events, buying lottery tickets or playing casino games. For most people gambling is an occasional social activity that causes no harm. For others gambling can become a problem and have a negative impact on their social, emotional, mental and financial health.

In 2009, 70% of Australians engaged in some form of gambling and spent over $19 billion on gambling, around $12 billion of which was spent playing the poker machines. Some people who engage in this type of gambling can have serious gambling problems and at present over 500,000 Australians are at risk of, or are, problem gamblers. The Australian Government estimates that only 15% of those affected by gambling problems seek help, and the actions of one problem gambler affects the lives of between 5 and 10 other people. Problem gamblers lose around $21,000 each year which reflects a large portion of the average Australian salary (http://www.problemgambling.gov.au/facts/).

For young people gambling is often presumed to be a small risk due to low access to licensed venues in which gambling takes place. However, this belief does not take into account the ways in which gambling has changed over the last decade and fails to recognise the influence of gambling advertisement on young people. According to the Victorian Responsible Gambling Association, the latest research shows that simulated gambling on social media, video games, smartphone applications and online betting are key issues for young people under 18. The NSW Office of Liquor, Gaming & Racing (OLGR) further suggest that the proliferation of online and mobile channels and the normalisation of gambling through advertising within sport have changed the way young people are exposed to and impacted by gambling.

Recent studies indicate that 77% of young people between the ages of 10 and 24 years of age engaged in gambling over a 12-month period (Australian Council for Educational Research Ltd, 2011). This indicates a far higher proportion of young people engaging in gambling than many other forms of risk taking including alcohol use, smoking and illegal drug use. Further studies indicated that between 3-5% of these young people would be classed as problem gamblers and as many as 19% were considered “at risk” (Australian Council for Educational Research Ltd, 2011). Not surprisingly, many problem gamblers first developed gambling habits while still in their teenage years and have continued to engage in risky levels of gambling well into their adult life.

Most under-age gamblers are introduced to gambling by a family member, and having a parent who gambles or friends who are involved in gambling may further increase the risk of problem gambling among young people (Australian Clearing House for Youth Studies, 2013). Not only would young people ‘likely benefit from school-based intervention and prevention programs aimed at changing idiosyncratic belief systems and superstitious beliefs connected to gambling behaviours’ (Taylor et al., 2014), but it is important that parents, carers, community leaders and educators have an understanding of the current gambling environment to enable them to minimise young people’s exposure to harm.

The proliferation of online and mobile gambling channels and the normalisation of gambling through advertising within sport have changed the way young people are exposed to and impacted by gambling. For young people who follow sport, gambling promotion is a normal part of lived experience. Ground signage, team uniforms, gambling statistics quoted by commentators and scheduled advertising all add to the ubiquity of the message on both television and radio.

A study by Ebiquity noted that in 2012, there were 528 individual online betting advertisements on free-to-air television, shown more than 20,000 times, primarily during family viewing time, with airings on pay-television estimated as many times higher.

KidBet Data and facts - Hand out

* Kids may be exposed to over two hours of gambling advertising per week. (1)
* One in five adults with gambling problems started gambling before they were 18. (2)
* On average, there is one teenager with a gambling problem in every classroom.
* Three to four per cent of teenagers have problems with gambling. That’s one in every
* high school class of 25 students.
* Teenagers are four times more likely to develop gambling problems than adults. (3)
* Boys are more likely to gamble and develop problems than girls. (4)
* Parents’ gambling behaviours and attitudes may influence whether a teenager is likely to
* gamble before they are 18. (5)
* Spending on sports betting television advertising more than tripled between 2010 and 2012.
* In 2012, there were reportedly 20,000 sports betting advertisements on free to air TV. (6)
* The use of sports stars or media celebrities to promote gambling has more impact on
* teenagers than on male sports viewers. (7)
* The number of free-to-play simulated gambling games on apps and social media continue
* to increase.
* 1 in 10 teenagers reported having tried gambling games on Facebook.
* 1 in 20 teenagers reported trying gambling apps on smartphones.
* 1 in 10 teenagers reported playing simulated electronic slot machine games.
* 1 in 20 teenagers have reported playing casino type games through video game franchises. (8)
* The chance of winning top prize at the pokies is 1 in 9.7 million.
* The chance of being killed by lightning is 1 in 1.6 million.
* The chance of winning first division Powerball is 1 in 55 million.
* The chance of dying from a venomous bite or sting is 1 in 1 million. (9)

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