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|  | PRESS RELEASE |

**Michigan Gaming Control Board**

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| **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 28, 2022** | **Contact:**MGCB-media@michigan.govwww.michigan.gov/mgcb |

#### Location: Cadillac Place, 3062 W. Grand Blvd., L-700 – Detroit

**Time:** 11:00 a.m.

**For Immediate Release:**

**Talk to ‘tweens’ about responsible gaming behaviors now to avoid problems later, advises Michigan Gaming Control Board**

**Detroit, Nov. 28, 2022** – The “tween” years may be the best time to teach children about responsible gaming because about seven out of 10 students ages 14 to 19 will wager money on poker and other games this year.

“Parents should discuss responsible gaming with their children before they attend high school,” said Henry Williams, executive director, Michigan Gaming Control Board. “National studies have shown young people gamble in betting pools, while on the basketball court sidelines and on video games or even try to do so online or at a casino. As a parent and a former social worker, I know how important it is for parents to look for signs of problem behaviors and to take an active role in educating children to understand consequences of their behavior.”

To help combat possible issues with online gambling, parents can use tools like parental controls on electronic devices. It’s also wise to prevent possible misuse by not leaving stored credit card and personal ID information on devices shared by younger family members or in other places where young people can have easy access to it, Williams said. Families also can create a central space where electronic devices are used under parental supervision.

Studies show anywhere from 2% to 7% of young people experience a gambling problem, according to the International Center for Responsible Gaming (ICRG). The organization estimates 6% to 15% of youth have gambling problems that are less severe. The ICRG says the rate of gambling problems among youth has remained fairly steady during the past 25 years.

Experts say warning signs can be similar to those for other addictive behaviors: low mood, anxiety, stealing money and appearing preoccupied.

ICRG suggests 10 steps to help youth avoid risky behaviors:

* **Start early:** Children often begin gambling during elementary school so start talking to children between the ages of 9 and 13.
* **Listen:** Create an open environment so children will come to you when they have questions or problems.
* **Educate yourself and your kids about gambling:** You can learn about Michigan laws regulating casino gaming, internet gaming, internet sports betting and fantasy sports by visiting the Michigan Gaming Control Board website, [www.michigan.gov/mgcb](http://www.michigan.gov/mgcb).
* **Discuss:** Talk about the realities of chance with your children.
* **Know normal behaviors:** Adolescents are impulsive and like to take risks. They focus on the here and now instead of the long-term consequences of behaviors.
* **Set rules:** Research shows specific, consistent and reasonable rules lead to fewer problems with risky behaviors, including gambling.
* **Monitor activities:** Stay involved without making children feel controlled. Make sure you keep credit cards, personal ID and your own internet accounts secure to prevent children from using them without your knowledge or permission.
* **Be involved:** Ask teachers to include probability and randomness in math classes and teachers and counselors to monitor for students playing cards and other games for money at school.
* **Help children develop coping skills:** Effective coping strategies focus on solving underlying problems instead of escaping them through gambling.
* **Understand the role of the family:** Don’t send mixed messages about gambling behavior. If you have a gambling problem, your children are at increased risk of developing a problem, too.

For more information on talking with children about gambling, visit the ICRG website: [talking\_with\_children\_about\_gambling\_2022.pdf (icrg.org)](https://www.icrg.org/sites/default/files/uploads/imgs/talking_with_children_about_gambling_2022.pdf).

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services maintains a 24-hour helpline, 1-800-270-7117, to call if you or someone you know has a gambling problem. You may contact the Michigan Gaming Control Board at 1-888-223-3044 for educational resources on responsible gaming and information on gambling self-exclusion programs.

"The Michigan Gaming Control Board shall ensure the conduct of fair and honest gaming to protect the interests of the citizens of the State of Michigan."

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