

# Gambling Age in CT: A Guide for Youth and Families



The National Council on Problem gambling reports that:

- 2 million (1%) of U.S. adults are estimated to meet criteria for a gambling disorder—or gambling addiction—in a given year. Another 4-6 million (2-3%) are considered to have problems related to gambling.
- For young people, studies show between 2-7% experience a gambling disorder, compared with the 1% of adults; and an additional 10% of young people experience problems related to gambling.
- One in five people with a gambling problem attempts suicide, a rate higher than for any other addictive disorder.

## What is Gambling?

Gambling is risking money or something of value on an uncertain outcome in hopes of receiving something of equal or greater value.

## What is At-Risk Gambling?

Exhibiting at least one symptom of a gambling disorder / gambling at higher intensity than the norm.

## When does Gambling Become a Problem?

The gambling behavior that results in problems with work, school, family, or finances, but does not meet the number of criteria to be recognized as “Disordered Gambling”.

## What is Disordered Gambling?

(Formerly known as “Pathological” or “Compulsive” Gambling) Meets the APA Diagnostic and Statistical Manual V criteria for the behavioral addiction of Gambling Disorder.

## Keep Gambling Safe & Affordable:

- Set a Limit on how much time and money and stick to it.
- View Gambling as entertainment, not as a way to make money.
- Balance gambling with other leisure activities.
- If you gamble and spend more time and money than planned, take a break.

## Low Risk Gambling Is...

- A form of recreation, not to make money or to make up for previous losses.
- Setting limits on time, frequency, and duration.
- In a social setting with others, not alone.
- With money you can afford to lose.

## High Risk Gambling Is When...

- Coping with grief, loneliness, anger or depression.
- Under financial pressure and stress.
- Recovering from mental health or substance use disorders.
- Using alcohol or other drugs, or is under the legal age to gamble.



Wheeler

CONNECTICUT  
Clearinghouse

a program of the Connecticut Center  
for Prevention, Wellness and Recovery

800.232.4424 (phone)

860.793.9813 (fax)

[www.ctclearinghouse.org](http://www.ctclearinghouse.org)

A Library and Resource Center on Alcohol, Tobacco, Other Drugs, Mental Health and Wellness

## What Can Parents Do?

- Educate yourself and your children about gambling;
- Look for opportunities to discuss the risks and responsibilities of gambling;
- Monitor children’s time and activities on-line and with all electronic devices, set limits and stick to them;
- Help children develop life skills to manage stress and make good decisions, encourage gaming and gambling activities in moderation and in balance with exercise, good nutrition, unstructured play, the arts, and nature.

Gambling Activity	Minimum Gambling Age	Considerations
Casino Gambling High Stakes Bingo	21 18	No age restriction at casino video arcades
Lottery	18	While minors may receive lottery tickets as gifts, it’s illegal for minors to cash in a winning ticket. An “early win” is considered a risk factor for developing future problems with gambling.
Keno	18	Lottery sponsored game available in a variety of locations including convenience stores, bars and family restaurants.
Charitable Gaming	No Age Restrictions	Church fairs, bazaars, bingo, fundraisers
Sealed Tickets/Pull Tabs	18	Not very prevalent in Ct, mostly at fairs and social
Off Track Betting (OTB)	18	Alcohol is served at OTB

*Be mindful of emerging trends with e-gaming, sports betting, and more opportunities to gamble on-line using credit. Contact PGS and CCPG for updated information.*

## Connecticut Resources

The State Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services Problem Gambling Services offers help and hope to people experiencing gambling problems and their loved ones at Better Choice Treatment Programs located throughout the state. Services available at low or no cost. For information on treatment, prevention, informational resources, client stories and more, visit [www.ct.gov/dmhas/pgs](http://www.ct.gov/dmhas/pgs)

Problem Gambling Helpline, 24/7 help and referral service. Call 1-888-789-7777 for more information or to make an appointment.

Connecticut Council on Problem Gambling: a not-for profit agency whose mission is to reduce the prevalence and impact of disordered or problem gambling on individuals and their families. [www.ccpog.org](http://www.ccpog.org)

## The Three Important Messages:

- Gambling is not a risk-free activity;
- Know how to keep the problem out of gambling;
- Help is available for people with gambling problems, and persons affected.

**PGS** PROBLEM GAMBLING SERVICES

Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services

