

Lane County Public Health

Starting Conversations: Building Take-A-Break Toolkits to Spread Gambling Harm Awareness

Presented by:
Natalie Taylor, MHA

Take A Break Toolkits

SMALL ITEMS FOR STRESSFUL MOMENTS

- Focused on grounding through the 5 senses
- Based on Mental Health First Aid Kits
- Unique in the integration of mental health and gambling harm prevention
- Upstream approach of emotional regulation as a protective factor to addiction



TAKE A BREAK TOOLKIT
Small Items for Stressful Moments

COURTESY OF:



MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

This toolkit is a reminder that we can build in small practices that have big impacts on our mental health. Adding short brain breaks in our day leave us more able to regulate our emotions, learn new things, and avoid/manage things that harm us like addiction.

5 SENSES GROUNDING EXERCISE



- Find a comfortable position and relax any tense muscles in your body
- Take a few refreshing, calming breaths
- One at a time, engage each of your senses (hearing, touch, smell, taste, sight). Ex. I hear a fan blowing, I smell the coffee
- Notice if you feel more grounded in your body

CHANGE YOUR SURROUNDINGS

Go for a walk, sit outside, take a bath, go to another room.

Moving to a different environment can be like a reset button.

FIND YOUR AFFIRMATION

Pick a word or phrase that feels meaningful. Write it down or say it to yourself during stressful times.



**I AM STRONG
I AM CAPABLE
I AM RESILIENT**

LIST YOUR LOVED ONES

Make a list of people who are rooting for you. Think of what you wish for them and what they might wish for you.

Included in the Take A Break Toolkits

Journal

Tea

Mints/Sour Candy

Pictures of Nature

Tissues

Earplugs

Affirmation Stickers

Squishies

Self-Care Card

Calm Strips

Acupressure Rings

Fidgets

Coloring Pages & Crayons



RAISING AWARENESS ABOUT GAMBLING AND VIDEO GAMING HARMS

Much like someone can become addicted to substances like alcohol or nicotine; addiction can happen with activities like gambling or video gaming.

While most people who gamble or play video games don't experience harm, those who do often feel like it is their fault and don't know where to go for help.

THERE IS HELP AND THERE IS HOPE



OREGON PROBLEM GAMBLING RESOURCE OFFERS FREE & CONFIDENTIAL SUPPORT AND RESOURCES FOR GAMBLING AND VIDEO GAMING



Call 1-877-MY-LIMIT

Visit [OPGR.org](https://www.opgr.org)
for more info

Having friends and family who can recognize the signs can make all the difference.

Gambling Harm Warning Signs

- Gambling more or longer than planned
- Lying about money spent
- Thinking more and more about gambling
- Connecting less with family or friends
- Borrowing money in order to gamble
- Unable to pay bills or cover expenses
- Trying to win back money lost
- Trouble controlling gambling habits

Video Gaming Harm Warning Signs

- Playing games more or longer than planned
- Lying about time spent video gaming
- Thinking more and more about video games
- Connecting less with family or friends
- Withdrawal symptoms like anxiety, boredom, cravings, or sadness
- Loss of interest in other hobbies
- Trouble controlling gaming habits



CONVERSATIONS AT THE CORE

- Participants share and teach one another
- Opportunity for feedback
- Space to start a conversation about gambling & gaming harm prevention

THE POWER OF CUSTOMIZING

- See the toolkit as their own
- More likely to add items later
- Expands time spent building and engaging with conversation & content
- Able to build toolkit for others

INTEGRATION

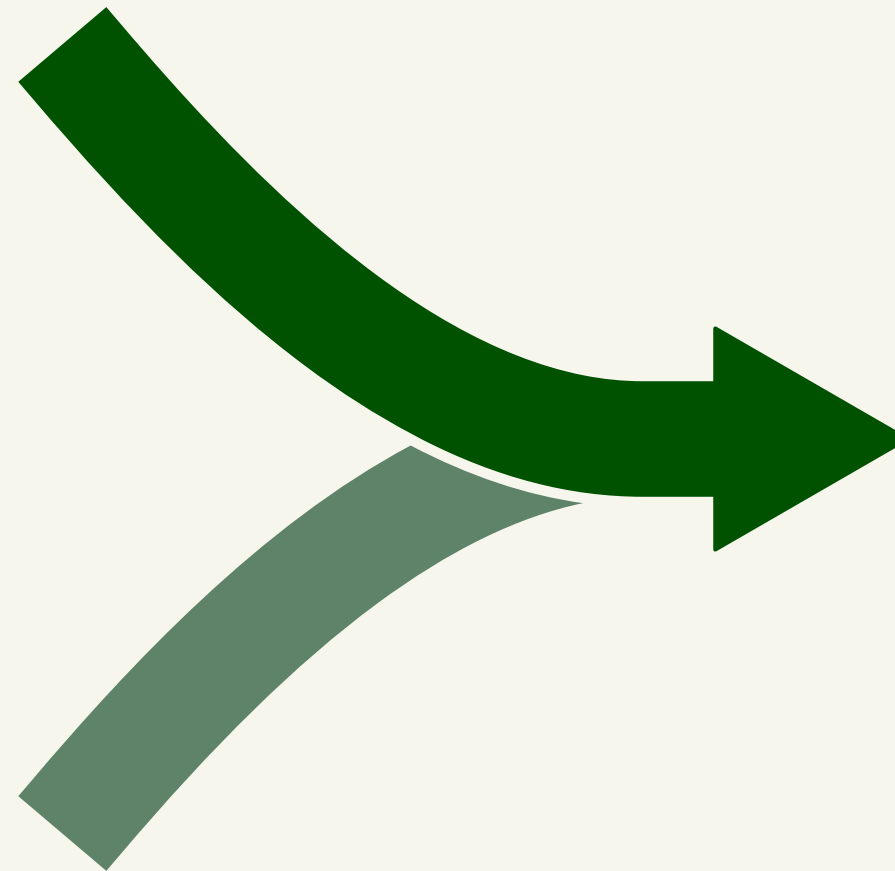
MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION + GAMBLING &
GAMING ADDICTION AWARENESS

Invited into spaces that were
formerly closed doors

Helps people imagine themselves
in the issue

Brings a wider audience

Allows for upstream approach
incorporating protective factors



Lessons Learned

BUILDING COMMUNITY
AWARENESS PROJECTS **WITH**
YOUR COMMUNITY LEADS TO
MUCH LARGER AND RICHER
ENGAGEMENT

KEEP **CONVERSATIONS AT THE
CORE** AND DON'T LET OTHERS
WATER DOWN YOUR MESSAGE




GamAware Coalition of Lane County presents:

TAKE A BREAK
TOOLKITS

THE GUIDE

A STEP-BY-STEP
GUIDE

How to integrate
gambling harm awareness
into mental health sensory kits



PDF
PROJECT
GUIDE
AVAILABLE

Take A Break Toolkits: The Guide12

Amazon Shopping Links
Page 1 of 3

The links provided were last updated in August 2024. When shopping for the toolkits we buy items to best match the community event we are attending. We ensure all 5 senses are represented and at least 10 items are available.

Item w/ Link	Reason for including in Toolkit	Approx. Cost Per Item	
Mesh Bag 9x7 inch	Waterproof bags sized to fit the toolkit items and informational inserts. We previously tried Ziploc bags but found that these have higher probability of long-term use.	\$0.32	
Squishy Pets	Sense: Touch. These cute animal squishies are like mini stress balls. Particularly popular among kids and teens. These are one of our most popular items.	\$0.24	
Play-doh	Sense: Touch. The tactile experience of kneading, rolling and shaping Play-doh can offer a proprioceptive input that is grounding. Offering a few items in each sense is helpful.	\$0.58	
Calm Strips	Sense: Touch. Rubbing the textured surface can help redirect attention leading to increased focus. They are stickers that can go on water bottles, phones, notebooks, etc.	\$0.18	
Acupressure Rings	Sense: Touch. Rolling the ring back and forth can provide a calming, focused activity for the hands, which can help to improve concentration and reduce feelings of anxiety.	\$0.13	
Stress Balls	Sense: Touch. You can also get custom stress balls with your logo on it if it's in your budget.	\$0.43	

GamAware Coalition of Lane County



Lane County Public Health – Prevention
natalie.taylor@lanecountyor.gov



FEEL FREE TO REACH OUT ANYTIME