

## YOUTH GAMBLING: A SUMMARY OF INSIGHTS FROM YOUTH, PARENTS, & CAREGIVERS

Focus group and survey outcomes with Oregon youth and parents/caregivers indicate that many middle- and high-schoolers have already gambled at some point in their lives. Youth perceive gambling as both risky and fun, noting parallels between gambling and video gaming features.

Parents and caregivers may not be aware of the extent to which youth are exposed to gambling or participating in such activities. Over the course of focus group discussions, parents/caregivers recognized a range of ways in which youth may be exposed to gambling content and expressed worry about the normalization of gambling among youth, its addictive potential, impacts on financial habits, and links to other risky behaviors, such as substance use and excessive screen time.

### FORMS & CONTEXTS OF GAMBLING

#### Youth report gambling in a variety of ways,

including sports betting, card games, scratch tickets, bingo/lotería, dice games, fantasy sports, raffles, and bets tied to dares or school events. Gambling occurs on apps and in-person.



#### Youth and parents/caregivers connect gambling and popular gambling-like activities,

such as loot boxes, in-game/app purchases, trading Pokémon cards, arcade games, and “pay-to-win” mobile games.



#### Youth are exposed to gambling in a variety of ways,

like family gatherings and tradition, peer activities, school events, social media, a variety of advertisements, movies and television, and community events.



### RISKS & INFLUENCES

- Youth, parents, and caregivers identified potential harms associated with youth gambling, such as addiction, financial loss, strained relationships, and mental health concerns.
- Substance use and excessive video gaming are perceived as risk factors for youth gambling, with overlap in addictive potential and co-occurring participation.
- Peer influence is strong and may include normalization of youth gambling, particularly for younger youth observing older peers.

## EDUCATION & PREVENTION NEEDS

Youth, parents, and caregivers support early education about gambling risks and financial literacy, beginning even before middle school.

**Youth** report a preference for learning from teachers, parents, and social media platforms that they already use.

**Parents & caregivers** express a desire for toolkits, culturally relevant resources, and guidance for conversations.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR YOUTH GAMBLING PREVENTION

#### Integrate Gambling Prevention into Financial Literacy Education

- Leverage Oregon Senate Bill 3 (passed in 2023), which requires financial education hours as a diploma requirement, to teach gambling risks and odds, highlight disguised gambling in games, and provide materials for educators and parents.
- Introduce content in an age-appropriate manner early on. Collaborate with educators to determine the best way to approach and support these efforts.

#### Develop and Distribute Multilingual Parent Toolkits

- Include conversation guides for youth of different ages, accurate information and definitions of gambling, basic addiction science information, and technology use tips.

#### Share Accurate Information in Peer- and Youth-Led Efforts

- Distinguish between cultural games, gambling-like activities, and gambling. Deliver messages through trusted community leaders.
- Expose youth to realistic outcomes, like losses and gambling-related consequences. Use stories from peers that youth can relate to.
- Engage youth in prevention campaign development, peer discussion leadership, and school presentations to challenge inaccurate gambling beliefs.
- Work with youth to create social-media prevention content tailored toward a youth audience.

*This brief was based on two research reports. Use the following links to find the full reports and take a deeper dive into the content found within this brief:*

[Youth Report](#) | [Parent/Caregiver Report](#)