

Gambling Your Life Away

By: Nicholas Brueggeman

Underage Gambling is not what you see as traditionally sitting down at a casino. According to the American Gaming Association youths are gambling less and differently than adults, mostly placing small wagers on private card games, sports and dice. So you ask, well why is this a problem? Well, in the short term your effects are none other than the risk of losing your money, but the long-term stakes are high because gamblers who start young are more likely to develop addiction problems. Reports from CBS news and the AGA say that compulsive gambling affects 5 to 8 percent of young gamblers. The reason most feel this has become a problem is because of the availability to teens. Online poker is accessible with a few clicks of a mouse and needing only a credit card number the anonymity allows a middle school or high school student the ability to gamble. McGill University's Professor Dr. Derevensky told CBS news "They give you an illusion of control, a sense that the more you play, the better you get," he said.

"It's training a whole new generation of kids. Once they get their credit cards, they're off and running." Another outlet for teens is instant lottery tickets that are easily accessible to anyone who wants to buy one, they say don't use if you're not eighteen but who's patrolling them? So what can you do to help prevent underage gambling? Stand up and be a leader for your peers, help guide them away from gambling or any other dangerous habits. If you have younger siblings not only set a good example for them but talk with them or have your parents talk with them about the dangers of underage gambling. According to the AGA in 2008, the National Center for Responsible Gaming the AGA's affiliated charity released talking with Children about Gambling, a brochure designed to help parents and others who mentor youth deter children from gambling and other risky behaviors. The brochure was developed by the Institute for Research on Pathological Gambling and Related Disorders and includes information about the games young people play, the prevalence of gambling-related problems among youth and tips for parents on communicating about gambling. As you can see underage gambling could cost you not only your pocket change, but your future. So you decide, are you ready to gamble your life away?

Works Cited

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