

Sporting Clubs Gambling Harms Forum Factsheet

July 2024



Sporting clubs tackling the impact of gambling harm

Gambling harm is recognised as a significant, global public health concern.

Youth gambling harm has become a significant issue, research indicates that it will get worse – unless something changes. Coaches and club representatives can have a positive influence on players, teams, and club culture.

You don't need to be an expert about gambling harm to start a conversation about it.

Learn about the issue and get ahead by encouraging your team to love the game, not the odds:

- Be a leader, kids respect and look up to coaches and club representatives to lead them on and off the field.
- Kids' exposure to gambling ads now will influence their attitudes and behaviour later, start the conversation

Harm starts early

Alarmingly, one in five adults who suffer significant gambling harm start gambling before the age of eighteen.

Research shows that in Victoria, young men between the ages of 18–24 years bet on sport more than any other age group. They make up a third of all sports gambling.

Young people are a vulnerable group and are particularly at risk

The earlier that a person starts gambling, the greater the risk for serious harm.

Young people feel social pressure and want to be accepted. Gambling, like vaping and underage drinking, can be perceived by young people as a normal. It can be considered fun thing to do and something that everyone is doing.

Opportunities to gamble are easy to find, in social media, games, apps and advertising. Online forms of gambling are available 24/7, with the click of a button.



Interpreter service

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Gambling products are designed to entice people to start gambling, and to keep them betting and spending.

Why should we be concerned?

All forms of gambling have the potential to affect the health and wellbeing of individuals, families, and the wider community.

Gambling harm refers to any negative consequence experienced by an individual, family unit or community due to participation in gambling.

Signs of gambling harm are not always obvious, and it remains under-reported and/or unidentified. Many do not seek help and are afraid to talk about problems associated with gambling due to fears of stigma or misunderstanding.

Negative consequences of gambling harm include:

Social Harm

- **Relationship stress**, including financial problems, borrowing money, loss of trust and neglect of responsibilities. This includes increased likelihood of domestic or family violence
- **Increased levels of isolation**, withdrawal from support and social networks which can result in the decline of overall mental health and general wellbeing
- **Negative impacts on work or study performance** including loss of professional reputation, struggles with employment and academic failure. This can include skipping school or failing to attend work

Individual Physical and Mental Harm

- **Health issues related to stress**, including insomnia, mood swings headaches, and depression
- **Neglect of self-care** and a tendency to stop prioritising nutrition, exercise, or medical care
- **Financial harm** includes credit card debt reduced ability to prioritise spending on essentials

Community Harm

- **Crime**, in some cases individuals with a gambling problem will take part in illegal activity to support their addiction to gambling
- **Behavioural impact**, can include becoming obsessively preoccupied with finding gambling opportunities
- **Economic impact**, can include increased financial strain on families and social groups which can have broad implications

Community sport and recreational clubs

There are several ways that local sporting clubs become associated with normalising gambling:

- Through ownership or operation of electronic gaming machines
- Receiving direct sponsorship or benefits from a gambling venue
- By hosting gambling fundraisers that clubs host – poker nights, raffles etc
- Normalising gambling through club practices/culture e.g., having horse racing on tv's or encourage patronage of gambling venues
- Receiving sponsorship or benefits from a betting company; or
- Hosting events or functions at gambling or racing venues

When young people are regularly exposed to sports gambling advertisements and promotions, they absorb the content. Continuous offers aim to make betting on sport look normal and fun, but gambling is a risky activity.

How you can make a difference

So, where do you stand? Where does your club stand?

Learn more about how to get this topic started at your club by joining us for a special forum event.

Register here: [Website Story EVENT BRIGHT LINK]

Useful Resources

[Love The Game](#)

[Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation, Victoria, Australia](#)

[Gambling help for under 25s](#)

[Understanding gambling harm and ways to identify those at risk | Australian Institute of Family Studies \(aifs.gov.au\)](#)

[gamblershelp.com.au](#)

[Code of Behaviour - Play by the Rules - Making Sport inclusive, safe and fair](#)