

Facilitator Guide: Can You Rank the Risks?

This is an interactive activity designed to increase the education and awareness of the risks associated with gambling. As the facilitator, there are a variety of ways this tool can be implemented within your organization, coalition, school, or community. All cards can be used by one large group (if time allows) or participants can be divided into smaller groups (if divided into smaller groups, give each group an equal number of cards). Each of the twenty cards contain a different scenario. Have participants rank the scenarios listed on each card in order from low risk to high risk. Encourage participants to share with the larger group what stood out to them and discuss why they ranked each card in the order that was selected. Use the information provided below to help guide the conversation (please note there is no correct answer to this activity as all scenarios have risks). If you have any questions, please find our contact information at www.ct.gov/dmhas/pgs. We appreciate your efforts having these meaningful conversations on this important topic.

Scenarios

Living 40 Miles from a casino

- This situation is addressing accessibility
- The rate of gambling disorder or problems with gambling doubles living within a 50-mile radius
- Question to increase discussion: How does access change since online gambling is now legal?

Playing Bingo 2-3 times per week

- This situation is addressing frequency/could indicate a progression of gambling
- Associated risk is dependent on finances, time away from responsibilities, money spent each time, distance spent driving to play bingo vs. virtual
- Bingo age limits (18 at the casino, no age limit in charitable situations)

A middle-aged mom who plans Saturday “getaways” to play her favorite slot machine

- Data point: Middle-aged adults aged 35-54 have higher past year gambling rates than other age groups (NCPG NGAGE Survey 2018)
- “Getaways” implies escapism
- “Favorite” slot machine indicates repetition and a possible established routine

A 10yr old winning \$50 on the first scratch ticket ever given to them

- Age of onset is a risk factor for problem gambling
- Early “Big win” is also a risk factor for problem gambling
- Legal age is 18

Having a parent who has a gambling problem

- Someone’s risk of developing a problem increases when one or both parents are identified as problem gamblers
- Data point: 41% of Connecticut Helpline callers (from Jan 2011 – March 2017) indicated there was a family history of problem gambling (How do CT Helpline callers compare with those who present for problem gambling treatment? Phil Kopel and Bonnie Smith)

Playing free online casino games every night

- “free” online casino game sites have the opportunity to play with and lose real money
- Exposed to increased advertisements
- Free games have increased odds of winning more than paid casino games
- Every night is considered a high frequency of play

High school football player who participates in 2 Fantasy Football leagues

- Questions to consider: Is it gambling or a game of skill?
- Is it a free league, if so age requirement is 16. If money is wagered, legal age is 18 to participate
- Why 2 leagues? How much time per week do you spend on your leagues?
- If gambling is occurring, there is increased prevalence of problematic gambling behaviors with athletes

Buying a lottery ticket every time you pump gas

- Depends on how often you pump gas
- Depends on what is purchased (ex. One \$2 Powerball vs. one \$30 scratch ticket)
- Can you afford to participate/does it financially impact other areas of your life?

Placing a \$100 bet on the Kentucky Derby every year

- Location of bet (online, OTB, with friends/family)
- Depends on the person’s age/early “big win”
- The significance of a \$100 bet to the individual

Placing multiple live (in-play) bets during a sporting event

- Rapid speed of play
- Increases gambling opportunities vs traditional sports betting

Buying 50/50 raffle tickets for a local youth fundraiser

- Raffle tickets are a form of gambling (charitable games)
- Problem gambling is hidden. You may not realize that you could impact someone's recovery by asking them to buy a ticket if the individual is in recovery from gambling disorder.
- Age
- Question for discussion: Are there other fundraising opportunities that do not include a gambling component?

Investing in your 401(k) retirement plan

- The stock market is a form of gambling – risking something of value on an uncertain outcome
- Data point: Long term vs short term investments (day trading). Day trading has been linked to gambling behaviors (<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/27988861/>).

A veteran playing online poker 3-4 hours per day while drinking alcohol

- Data point: Rates of gambling problems within the veteran population is 3.5 times higher than the general population
- Alcohol lowers inhibition and could lead to riskier betting
- Data point: Rates of problem gambling is 10 times higher in individuals with co-occurring substance use or mental health
- Question for discussion: Is 3-4 hours interfering with other activities?
- Question for discussion: Is it free or is money being wagered?

An unemployed 20yr old who plays video games daily and occasionally buys loot boxes

- Unemployed = not currently making money, potentially has a limited budget
- Loot boxes is a form of gambling
- This situation is addressing frequency. Is it interrupting other areas of their life?

Teenagers getting together once per month for poker night

- Is money or other items of value being wagered?
- Legal but becomes illegal if someone (the host) takes money for themselves to host the game
- Participating at a young age/learning to gamble
- Competitive nature of teenagers – are you exacerbating a potential problem?
- Question for discussion: Do we think about playing poker the same way that we think about teenagers getting together to drink alcohol?

Having a young person's birthday party at an arcade

- Arcades can resemble gambling (using money to purchase tokens to win tickets to obtain prizes)
- Speed of play and intermittent rewards have a similar impact on the brain as gambling

Downloading sports betting apps on your mobile devices

- Access to participate 24/7
- Use of credit cards (cashless transactions)
- Age

Youth participating in an e-sport league at school

- Question for discussion: Is gambling involved or is it just a recreational activity?
- How much time is spent outside of the league?
- Do they pay to watch professionals or bet on professionals?

Hosting a casino-themed high school graduation event

- Sends the perception message to youth that gambling is an accepted behavior/low perception of harm
- Early exposure
- Is money being wagered? Is there a potential to win prizes?

A convenience store employee who plays scratch-off tickets on break

- This situation is addressing accessibility/surrounded by gambling opportunities at work
- Question for discussion: Are there ethical or legal considerations if the employee is buying scratch-off tickets from their employer? (If someone is working at a casino in Connecticut, they cannot gamble at their place of employment)