

NCEF's Statement about Teen Internet Gambling

A 2003 Annenberg National Risk Survey of Youth, found that about 8 percent of the young people surveyed showed signs of having a gambling problem.

The problem of adolescent pathological gambling is more pervasive than one might expect. Experts estimate that between 4 and 6 percent of adolescents are pathological gamblers. A significantly higher percentage of adolescents gamble, even if only occasionally. Their games of choice include craps, cards, football pools, sports betting, lottery, dice and pool. Adolescents are gambling before school, during school (in study hall, for example), after school and at home. (1)

Adolescents are actually more likely to become pathological gamblers than are adults. They are at an increased risk due to their impulsivity, the developmental nature of adolescence, susceptibility to peer influence, their emerging egos, the attraction of winning, their belief that nothing negative can happen to them and their lack of understanding that there can be a downside to gambling. (2)

Gambling is big business in America earning the gaming industry billions of dollars in net revenue annually. Americans spend more money each year on legal gambling than they do on movie tickets, recorded music, theme parks, spectator sports, and video games combined (Christiansen, 2000).

The NCEF believes that education is the key in reducing the increasing volume of Teenage Internet gamblers. Teenagers who gamble over the internet have no true concept of the risk involved and lack the ability to understand just how much money they are losing. A internet gambler cannot see is hard earned dollars disappear simply because their is no physical money exchanged. It is done via credit card or bank debit accounts. However, the results are the same as seeing your money disappear on a casino floor. The negative effects of losing money are far reaching and very debilitating for many years to come.

Teenagers who begin gambling on the internet are not necessary bad people and never plan to become addicted. However, when the addiction sets in many of these gamblers will put every penny they have into their addiction and when the money runs out an increasing number of them begin to carryout various crimes to pay for the addiction.

An addicted gambler is every bit as addicted to gambling as a cocaine addict is to cocaine.

Addiction is addiction!

It is the NCEF initiative to educate teenagers to the enormous risk involved with internet gambling. It is our goal to expose the problems associated with this choice and to help teenagers understand the reduced odds of winning and the great potential of losing. We believe with proper education we can reduce the amount of teenagers willing to engage in this very volatile and potentially dangerous habit.

While the NCEF is not political driven regarding this issue we are compelled to address the increasing negative issues associated with internet gambling and it enormous risk to our nation's young people.