



**E P EPIC**  
**I C RISK MANAGEMENT**

**WHYSUP**

# Gambling, Online Gaming and Mental Health










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**Staff & Parent Resource**

## Section 1

# Ways to protect yourself and spot signs in yourself or others

### Ways to protect yourself and spot the signs of problem gambling in yourself or others

 <p>Use the account management tools available in the 'Responsible Gambling' section of every site</p>	 <p>Setting time limits</p>	 <p>Deposit limits (monthly, weekly or daily)</p>	 <p>Setting loss limits</p>	
 <p>Time-outs and breaks</p>	 <p>Self-exclusion</p>	 <p>Gamban</p>	 <p>Cooling off periods (time away from gambling on a particular site)</p>	 <p>Visible profit/loss statements or records</p>

### Signs of when you might be losing control

#### Financial

- Running out of money before the end of the month
- Borrowing
- Debts
- Overspending on payday



### Gambling

- Using different markets
- Chasing wins and losses
- Gambling in isolation
- Preoccupying thoughts
- No withdrawals

### Mental Health

- Anxiety
- Guilt
- Shame
- Insomnia
- Depression

### Interactions

- Secretive
- In denial when questioned
- Neglecting work or family
- Withdrawn or absent
- Not honouring repayments

### Physical

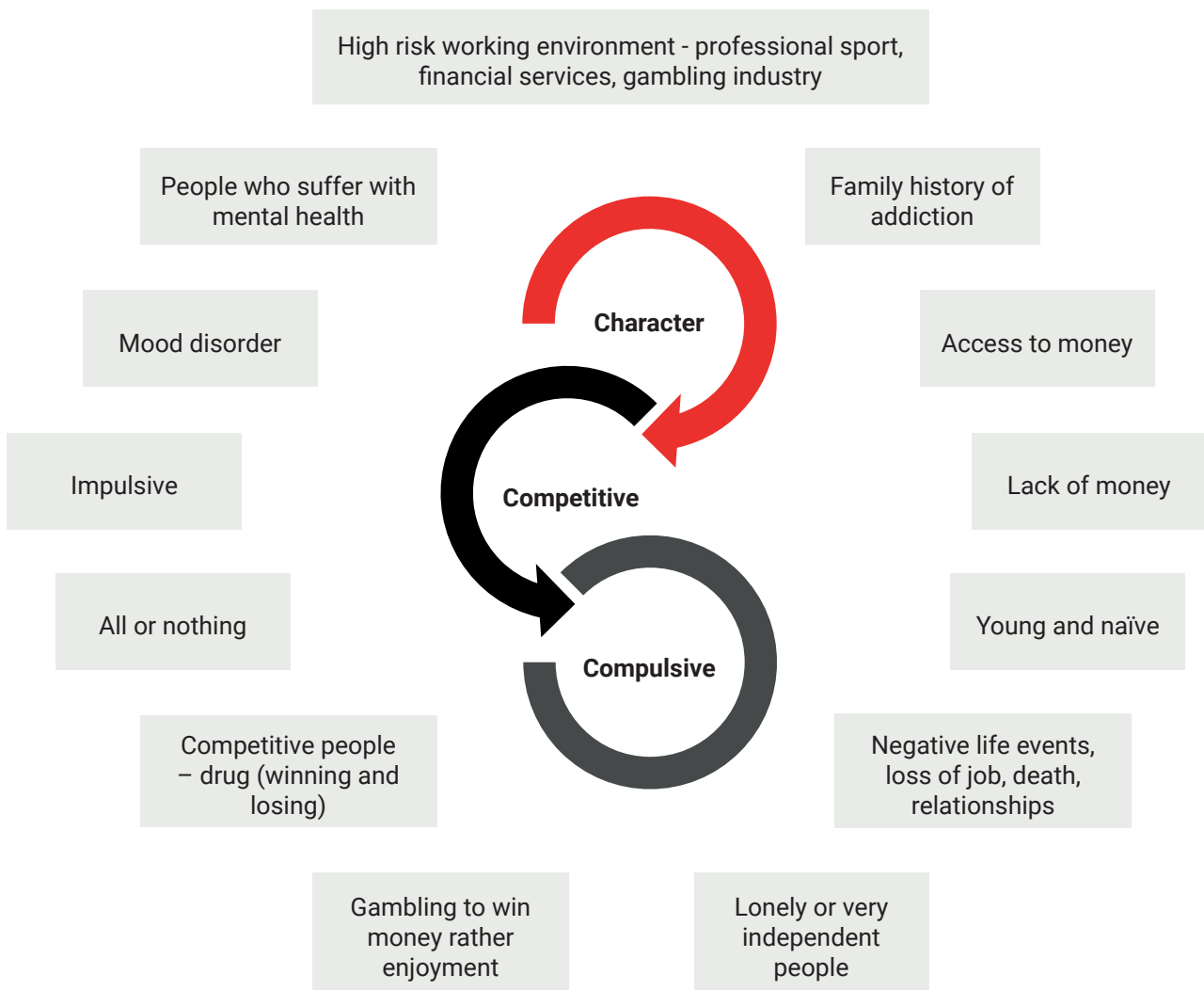
- Losing interest in other activities
- Restlessness
- Irritable
- Changes in personality
- Tiredness/lack of sleep

### Operators

- 'Bonus begging'
- Introduction to VIP Schemes
- Making complaints
- Multiple accounts
- Casino, Sports and Gaming



**Characteristics of someone potentially most vulnerable:**










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### Most obvious signs for someone else to spot?

- Lying
- Constantly glamorising wins
- Preoccupied with gambling
- Debts
- Borrowing money
- Irritable
- Neglecting work and family.
- Distancing self from family and friends.
- They are secretive and spending more time alone.
- If someone you know has suddenly become more withdrawn and secretive about unexplained absences, or takes unusually long to carry out basic tasks they may well be spending that time gambling.
- They are always struggling for money.
- If they're always struggling for money, or are looking for new ways to make money quickly, even after being paid this may indicate they're struggling with a gambling addiction.
- There are noticeable changes in their personality.
- If you're noticing dramatic changes in personality it may well be that they're dealing with the stresses and worries associated with gambling addiction and financial woes
- Promising to pay back money but then not delivering.
- Withdrawal from previously enjoyed activities.
- Withdrawal from family and friends.
- Inability to regulate their time online.
- Denial that there is a problem.

### What to do if you know someone close to you was struggling?

				
Direct questions	Find out what help is	Offer support and guidance	Set boundaries	Know when to step away

## Section 2

# Steps you can take to help others

## 5 Stages/Steps For Helping Someone Get Help

### 1. Acknowledging the Problem

#### Identify

signs of a  
**GAMBLING PROBLEM**



#### Talk

to them about  
**THEIR PROBLEM**



#### Prepare

for any  
**REACTION**

#### Avoid

judging  
**THEM**



#### Explain

the  
**CONSEQUENCES**



### 2. Encouraging Treatment

#### Call

a gambling  
**HOTLINE**



#### Encourage

them to go to a  
**SUPPORT GROUP**



#### Suggest

**TREATMENT**



#### Consider

medication

- suggest they go to their  
**GP OR SPECIALIST**





### 3. Encouraging Treatment Follow Through

**Give**  
ENCOURAGEMENT



**Identify**  
TRIGGERS



**Offer**  
*to be their*  
DESIGNATED PERSON



**Make**  
*a list of*  
*reasons not to gamble*  
WITH THEM



### 4. Supporting The Person

**Keep**  
*the*  
PERSON BUSY



**Encourage**  
*them to*  
PURSUE HOBBIES



**Help**  
*them work*  
ON THEIR FINANCES



### 5. Taking Care Of Yourself

**Join**  
*a support*  
GROUP



**Process**  
*your*  
FEELINGS



**Accept**  
*what has*  
HAPPENED



**Develop**  
*a support*  
NETWORK



## Section 3

# Parental advice and control

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### Parental Advice

#### How can a parent prevent their son or daughter from having an issue?

- Don't glamorise gambling in the household
- Don't gamble in front of them
- Don't be blasé or encourage them to gamble
- Don't encourage small bets from young age (grand national, sports betting etc)
- Never fund gambling
- Encourage open and honest conversation from a young age
- Lead by example
- Don't link your personal banking/credit to games they are playing online
- Set time limits for any online activities
- Talk about the consequences of gambling.
- Promote responsibility
- Manage and scrutinise finances
- Restrict access
- Encourage reading of literature – both gambling and self-help books
- Remove ads from all social media, reduce what they can see on YouTube (block ads)
- Ask what they already know about gambling

#### Practical steps for parents

- <https://www.esrb.org/tools-for-parents/parental-controls/>
- Block by Age Rating
- Control Spending
- Limit Time Spent
- Restrict Communication





### Things for you to consider

- What are their favourite games, and why?
- Which games are on your children's wish list(s)? What do they involve?
- Decide and be firm on which rating categories are OK for your children to play, which ones require permission, and which are off-limits? Don't forget to give them your reasons, too!
- Are there specific types of content or content descriptors that are off limits? Do you know what these are.
  
- Do any of the games your children play include online multiplayer features? If so:



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- Do they need permission before playing online?
  - Are there rules regarding with whom your children can play online?
  - Have your children ever seen or heard inappropriate behaviour from other players?
  - Do your children know what to do and whom to contact, if they're being bullied or harassed online?
  - Do your children know to never give out personal information online?
- Have you set parental controls on your family's video game system(s), mobile device(s), and computer(s)? If so:
    - What's the highest rating allowed?
    - Have you set restrictions on in-game purchases, time spent playing, internet and browser access, or with whom your children can play online?
  - Do you and your children understand what (if any) personal information will be collected in the game, why it's being collected, and with whom it's shared? (If not, check the game's privacy policy.)
  - Are there other house rules regarding which games are allowed, when, and how long they can be played (like number of hours each day, only after homework and chores, etc.)?
  - Are your debit cards, credit cards or bank details linked to an account and does your child have access to this? Do you know that they cannot make purchases on these games even if they say they can.
  - Watch out for games that are initially free or where you get 'credits' but then over time have to start paying for them etc.
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# Childhood Gambling: A Parent's Guide to Risks and Prevention

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## Key Points

- Young children can get introduced to gambling through games they play online or on a mobile device.
- Certain games they play have similar reward and chance structures (e.g., mystery boxes) found in adults-only gambling settings.
- Loot boxes can be considered gambling.
- Freemium games can create addictive behaviours akin to compulsive gambling.
- Parents should be aware of how their children are spending their time online to present gambling behaviours.
- Parents can protect and monitor how their children use the web through things like setting parental controls with home internet providers.
- Parents should discuss the dangers lurking online and about gambling from an early age.

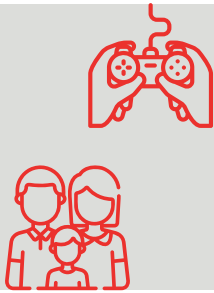
## Loot boxes, skin betting and freemium games

Loot boxes have been considered gambling in countries like Belgium, Sweden and China as players can purchase them and only find out the elements inside when they open them. Skins betting is also an online gaming term that takes the form of gambling but instead of money, players use "skins" to gamble. Players will buy skins using real money and there are third-party websites which allow them to gamble with their skins, using them as a virtual currency. Gamers can also challenge each other, making live bets on the live chat and can use quick payment apps like PayPal and Apple Pay. Young children and teenagers who watch eSports competitions often bet on games with eSports betting expected to reach \$8 billion in the future.

Freemium games such as Pokemon GO can create addictive behaviours akin to compulsive gambling as there is no limit to how much a gamer can spend in real money in exchange for virtual coins that can be used to purchase items in an online game

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## Gambling addiction warning signs for parents



The child neglects relationships with family members and friends in order to spend time on gaming sites.



The child spends most of their free time on online gaming sites.



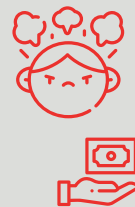
The child has stolen money from the parents to spend on online gaming sites or mystery boxes.



The child's gaming site usage is noticeable to others such as a sibling who brings it up to the parent.



The child has sold their belongings or engaged in destructive behaviour to get money to pay for gambling behaviours.



The child has expressed frustration with a game or mystery box yet spent more money to redeem their loss.



Parents restricted online time for their child or teen's gaming usage, and they've been angry with you for doing so.

## Section 4

# Mental Wellbeing

### Healthy Coping Strategies

- ♥ Facing Problems
- ♥ Breathing deeply/meditating
- ♥ Exercising outside every day
- ♥ Eating well
- ♥ Giving & accepting support
- ♥ Socialising
- ♥ Hobbies – music, art, reading
- ♥ Sleeping – 7–10 hours per night
- ♥ Doing things for others
- ♥ Regular digital timeout/detox
- ♥ Writing a journal

### Unhealthy Coping Strategies

- ♥ Denying problems
- ♥ Procrastinating
- ♥ Using drugs/alcohol to numb feelings
- ♥ Self harming
- ♥ Having risky sexual relationships
- ♥ Gambling & overspending
- ♥ Withdrawing from family & friends
- ♥ Sleeping excessively or too little
- ♥ “Zoning out” for hours on screens
- ♥ Binging or fasting
- ♥ Not exercising
- ♥ Giving up hobbies

- Having a pre-existing mental illness
- Having low self-esteem
- Having low self-efficacy
- Having poor social skills
- Being highly competitive

## Section 5

# Dealing with the 'problem'

### Where to get help



**EPIC**  
RISK MANAGEMENT

<https://www.epicriskmanagement.com>

**WHYSUP**

<https://www.whysup.co.uk/>



<https://www.teentips.co.uk/>



<https://gamequitters.com/>



<https://parentzone.org.uk/home>



**EPIC**  
**RISK MANAGEMENT**

EPIC Risk Management is the world's leading independent gambling harm minimisation consultancy. EPIC raises awareness of gambling-related harm in order to identify and mitigate the human, financial, brand and reputational risks that problem gambling can create.

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