

Dicey decisions

SPECIFIC OUTCOMES

Evaluate the need for balance and variety in daily activities that promote personal health

Examine how health habits/behaviours influence body image and feelings of self-worth

Analyze influences on decision-making

Identify and develop strategies to overcome possible challenges related to goal fulfillment

- become aware of the different forms of gambling
- understand the factors that influence an individual to gamble
- recognize gambling that is problematic
- evaluate the consequences of gambling activities
- recognize healthier, alternative choices to gambling

CONTENT AND TIME (45-MINUTE LESSON)

3.1 Opening activity: Getting a grip on gambling (10 minutes)

3.2 Probable purposes (10 minutes)

3.3 Weighing wagers (20 minutes)

3.4 Review: What we have learned (5 minutes)

REQUIRED MATERIALS

HANDOUT 3.1: Getting a grip on gambling

HANDOUT 3.2: Probable purposes Ball or beanbag

Chart paper

Notebooks



3.1 Opening activity: Getting a grip on gambling (10 minutes)

Ask the students to discuss their definition of gambling. After a few examples, show the definition provided at the top of HANDOUT 3.1: Getting a grip on gambling. Have the students record this in their notebooks:

Gambling is risking money or something of value on an activity with an uncertain outcome.

Explain that many young people think gambling is an adult activity that happens in casinos and bars. This is true, but gambling is not limited to Black Jack and video lottery terminals (VLTs). Gambling can also take place in your neighbourhood or on the school grounds.

- Certain forms of gambling are monitored by the government to some degree. It is illegal for people under the age of 18 to participate in these forms of gambling.
- Other forms of gambling involve risk-taking behaviour including betting, wagering or daring for an exchange of money or something of value. Many people gamble informally with family and friends.

Have the students provide examples of gambling and record responses on chart paper, as follows:

lotteries	online gambling/gaming
sports lotteries	wagering on a sports game
video lottery terminals (VLTs)	betting on a card, board or video game
casinos	flipping pennies
bingos	playing for keeps
raffles	daring for money or items
horse racing	betting on a skill, like playing darts
scratch or pull tab tickets	
fundraising lotto tickets	

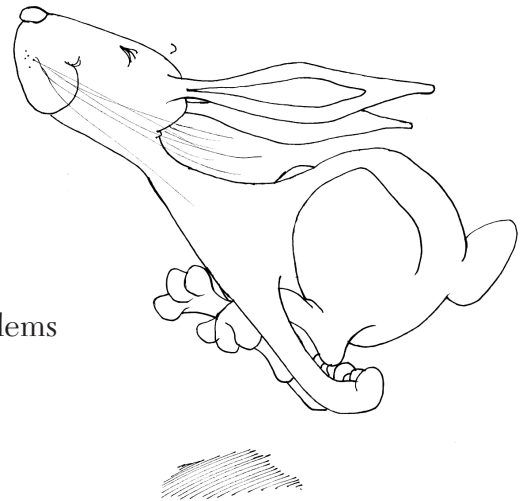
3.2 Probable purposes

(10 minutes)

Have the students work in pairs to complete HANDOUT 3.2: Probable purposes. Their task is to determine two reasons why each character gambles. There are twelve possible answers for this exercise, so the students should not need to repeat ideas. Upon completion, have volunteers report responses. They may offer answers that differ slightly from the suggestions below. Accept answers, provided that they are appropriate to the situation being discussed. Record responses on chart paper. The following list provides appropriate answers:

Reasons why people gamble

- #1 For excitement
To be challenged
- #2 Out of curiosity
For fun or entertainment
To do things with friends
- #3 As a hobby
To forget about everyday problems
- #4 To support good causes
To win
- #5 To be alone
Because they are good at it
To feel good about themselves



Explain that most people gamble occasionally. They enjoy the activity, the interaction with others and the challenge. For these people, gambling is a social activity; winning or losing money or something of value is not the primary goal. For some, however, gambling turns into a serious problem. Such individuals become preoccupied with gambling, despite negative consequences to themselves or others involved. Bets, wagers and dares become much more significant and frequent, which can be just as powerful as an addiction to drugs.



- Experiencing a “rush,” which reinforces continued gambling
- Focusing primarily on winning
- Extending the time and money spent on gambling
- Increasing gambling activities to win back lost money or personal belongings
- Hiding gambling activities from family and friends
- Lying about gambling losses
- Feeling depressed about the outcome of gambling activities
- Wanting to stop, but feeling unable to do so

Remind the class that a gambling addiction affects everyone in a family because a change in one person's behaviour often evokes change in other family members. Gamblers Anonymous provides help to people who are suffering from problem gambling, and Gam-Anon offers support to family members.

3.3 Weighing wagers

(20 minutes)

Have the students identify the first thing that comes to mind when you ask them about a negative gambling consequence. They will probably say “losing.” This is certainly correct; however there are other negative consequences that tend to get missed. Ask the students to consider the examples below. Have them identify the consequences of each. One by one, show the consequences of these examples, provided on HANDOUT 3.3: Weighing wagers. Show the consequence after you have read each example.



Think about...

- Betting more than you can afford to lose
- Gambling to escape emotional or daily problems (like loneliness or stress)
- Skipping school or work for reasons related to gambling
- Arguing with friends and family about money and gambling
- Borrowing money
- Stealing money
- Losing or selling personal belongings
- Exaggerating or lying about your wins
- Worrying about money

Distribute HANDOUT 3.3: Weighing wagers. In pairs, the students will examine the pros and cons of gambling in a variety of situations. The characters from these situations are the same as those introduced in the opening activity.

The students will read through the situations and write down what the characters could “win” or “lose,” should they choose to gamble or not. The terms “win” and “lose” represent the positive and negative consequences of the characters’ decisions. Discourage the students from focusing primarily on money or personal belongings. Have them consider other consequences, such as the examples available on HANDOUT 3.3.

3.4 Review: What we have learned

(5 minutes)

Gather the students in a circle to engage in a simple ball toss. Explain that before tossing the ball, each student must first call out the name of the person to whom he or she is throwing. The student catching the ball must then call out the name of a different person to receive the ball. Ask the students to give everyone an opportunity to catch and throw the ball, but only once. They are to refrain from throwing the ball to somebody who has already had a turn. If a student receives the ball a second time by accident, simply continue the ball toss and try to avoid repeating this mistake. Discourage the class from dropping the ball; however, if this happens, the students simply pick up the ball and keep the ball toss going. Explain that you will keep time, to see how long it takes for everyone to receive and throw the ball.

Challenge the class to a second round of tossing the ball. Remind everyone to catch and throw the ball only once, without dropping it. The students can keep the same pattern of throwing or throw randomly. Encourage the students to improve their time, and ask volunteers to predict the time it will take to finish the next round. This challenge can stop after the second round or continue a number of times.

Afterwards, ask the students how the game went, focusing on why they continued to play, whether they won or lost, what improvements they made and how close they were to their predicted time.

This activity can be used to reinforce the concept of cooperative competition. Together, the students participated in teamwork to experience excitement and challenge. These are some of the same reasons young people begin to gamble. However, during cooperative competition, the concept of winning versus losing is not a priority. The focus becomes accomplishing a goal as a team, celebrating the process of collaborating and achievements made as a result.

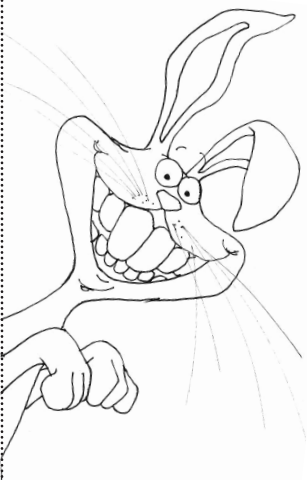
Check the class envelope and respond to any questions asked.

Getting a grip on gambling

Gambling is risking money or something of value on an activity with an uncertain outcome.

Certain forms of gambling are monitored by the government to some degree. It is illegal for people under the age of 18 to participate in these forms of gambling.

Other forms of gambling involve risk-taking behaviour including betting, wagering or daring for an exchange of money or something of value. Many people gamble informally with family and friends.



Probable purposes

Read the situations below and write down two reasons why you think each person gambles. Two of the situations will have three reasons. See if you can find the extras:

1. Manuel likes to bet on card games with family and friends. Recently, he started placing larger and more frequent bets because it excites him and he feels challenged.

2. Judy's friends play bingo once and a while for entertainment. They invited her to join them. Judy was curious to try it, she had fun playing bingo and she enjoyed doing something with her friends.

3. Ian bets on sporting events, like hockey, soccer and basketball. Sports and gambling are hobbies of his. When he is focused on whether he will win his bets, he forgets about his everyday problems.

4. Fadwa loves to buy fundraising, raffle and lottery tickets. She thinks it's important to support good fundraising causes. She is sure that she will have a big win one day because she buys so many tickets.

5. Tim enjoys placing bets on horse racing. He likes to be alone and the horse races are a good place to avoid people who want to "chit chat." Tim thinks he is skilled at picking a winner and this helps him feel good about himself.

Weighing wagers

Being in debt or owing money

Problems not going away and may be getting bigger

Getting suspended from school or fired from a job

Losing the support of friends and family members

People becoming annoyed and maybe stop trusting

Getting into trouble with the law

Feeling regret

Having a low self-esteem and losing the trust of others

Experiencing anxiety, affecting physical and mental health

Weighing wagers

Read the situations below and write down what the characters may "win" or "lose" if they choose to gamble or not.

1. Manuel has begun to spend greater amounts of time betting on card games. He is placing larger and more frequent bets. Tonight, he has a chance to go to the movies with his friends instead.

If he gambles



HE MAY WIN... HE MAY LOSE...

If he goes to the movie



HE MAY WIN... HE MAY LOSE...

2. Judy has promised her family that she will cut back on bingo. She lies about her gambling activities and refuses to explain her behaviour.

If she continues gambling



SHE MAY WIN... SHE MAY LOSE...

If she cuts back



SHE MAY WIN... SHE MAY LOSE...

3. Ian has always been a good student, but his grades have begun to drop. He spends more time betting on sports events and worrying about the outcomes. His teacher has suggested that he join a study group. He is interested in the idea of joining, but he knows he won't have time to gamble.

If he gambles



HE MAY WIN... HE MAY LOSE...

If he joins the study group

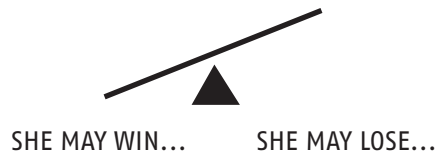


HE MAY WIN... HE MAY LOSE...

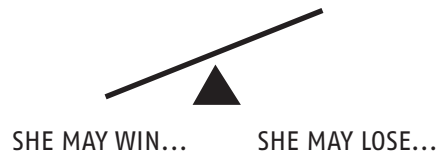
HANDOUT 3.3b

4. Fadwa has been offered a part time job that pays well. She would like to pay off her growing debts from buying raffle and lottery tickets. This job would take time away from looking into different raffles and lottos.

If she gambles



If she takes the job



5. Tim used to bet on horse racing for fun. Lately, he depends more on gambling to feel good about himself. He experiences mood swings a lot. He played on a baseball team last year and his teammates have asked him to join them again this year. He can't do both.

If he gambles



If he joins the team

