

Choices, Chance & Challenges

A Problem Gambling Prevention Program for Grades 4, 5 & 6

Notes and Content Outline

Purpose of the Program:

To raise preteen's awareness of problem gambling and to encourage them to think through healthy choices they can make for now and in the future.

Introduction: Plate-spinning demonstration

Follow the Die Game:

Students think they can easily win this game but they don't.

"Today we are going to talk about Choices, Chance and Challenges. I am going to challenge you to begin to make some choices about games of chance. We will be looking at gambling, problem gambling and what you need to do to live a balanced healthy life. It is during the preteen years that many students make many decisions about how they will live. Who will your friends be? Will you choose to smoke? Will you go to university? Will you be physically fit? And of course will you choose to gamble?"

1. What Is Gambling? (headings presented on the faces of a giant playing cards):

Definition: Gambling is risking money or something of value on an activity with an uncertain outcome. (also called a "bet" or a "dare" sometimes)

Find the Parrot: Students will think that they can easily win the three card monte game but of course they lose every time. "There is no such thing as a sure bet."

Examples of Gambling: Card games, bingo, lotteries, scratch and win, raffles, casinos (with slot machines, VLT's and dice games), horse racing, casual betting with friends, and daring someone to do something for a reward

Win/lose not win/win activity: With gambling unfortunately there are always just a few winners and many losers.

2. What is Problem Gambling? (playing card):

Gambling that has a bad effect on your life and on the lives of people close to you.

It is gambling that causes students to fall behind in their schoolwork, have arguments with family or friends, or worry about money they have lost.

Rope Trick – demonstrating these levels of involvement:

1. No involvement 2. Fun bets 3. Serious gambling 4. Problem gambling

Addiction: The more gambling you do, the more it can tie you up in knots. When gambling begins to control you rather than you controlling the gambling, we call it an addiction.

3. Do Many Teens Gamble? (playing card):

This is the first generation of teens and preteens that have gambling all around them. Bingo halls are everywhere, schools regularly use casinos to raise funds, our government depends on VLT revenue and every Mac's store tries daily to sell you lottery tickets. It is no surprise that 7 out of 10 teens choose to gamble.

In 1996 AADAC did a research study of about 1000 teens in Alberta to answer this question.

10 Volunteer Card Trick –3 cards say "I choose not to gamble" (3 out of 10)
 -5 cards say "I choose to gamble" (5 out of 10)
 -1 card says "I am at risk" (1 out of 10)
 -1 card says "I am a problem gambler" (1 out of 10)

2 out of 10 (20 kids in a group of 200) students present today could be at risk for problems related to gambling unless they make more positive choices in their lives.

10 Plate Spinning –The 10 students work co-operatively to perform this amazing feat. We are choosing to have cooperative fun together (win/win).

4. Why Do Teens Gamble? (playing card):

The 5 "E's": Teens seem to looking for the 5 "E's" in their lives: Excitement, Entertainment, Esteem (to feel important), Escape (from problems) and Economics (money)

Gambling may be one way in which to find the 5 "E's".

But there are other healthy ways to find the 5 "E's": Fun with friends, Team sports, Individual sports (skiing, golf) Hobbies, Part time jobs, Education, Family activities, Volunteering to help in the community, Playing in a band

Baking Trick: Cook up the 5 "E's" 1 gambling ingredient handkerchief Result: rubber chicken Cook up the 5 "E's" with other ingredient handkerchiefs Result: beautiful steamer and dove

5. Healthy Kids Make Healthy Choices: (playing card):

Live a balanced life and great things can happen –3 Parts: Body, Mind and Spirit

3 Way Juggling Routine: representing balancing Body (balance board), Mind (juggling clubs) and Spirit (plate spinning)

6. Who is the V.I.P.? (playing card):

Picture of a V.I.P. in Envelope: Actually it is a mirror which means every person that looks into the mirror is a Very Important Person. That's all of you and me!

Escape Trick (with all the gambling icons): Tie up a volunteer with ropes and gambling icons

The Challenge: Are you going to allow your heart and life to be all tied up because of a big problem in your life like problem gambling or some other addiction? Or are you going to make healthy choices in your life which allow you to be free to be the V. I. P. you were meant to be?

Closing Story:

The Carpenter: What kind of materials will you use to build your life?