



# Safeguarding Newsletter

There are lots of apps and online games that encourage children and teenagers to gamble, some of the most popular for teens in the UK are; Betway app, Spin Palace app and Jackpot city app.

All the sites have disclaimers stating they are not for under 18s but then they advertise where children will see them and they designs of the games to grab attention and appeal to teens and pre-teens!

We also might think it's a bit of harmless fun, until it begins to interfere with their daily lives, they start to feel controlled by the need to play the apps and gambling becomes more important than everything else!

## When Gambling Becomes A Problem

Even if our students have more access to money than other kids their age, that doesn't make them immune to the harmful effects of excessive gambling. It becomes a problem when it disrupts daily life, damages personal relationships, and becomes a financial burden.

Gambling can easily turn into a destructive cycle, leading to financial turmoil, mental health strains, and fractured relationships. The impact doesn't just stop at the individual; it resonates through our immediate circles, creating a domino effect.

## The Unexpected Popularity of Gambling

In recent years, gambling has gained popularity, particularly with the rise of online gaming. The Young People and Gambling Survey in 2019 revealed that a surprising 11% of 11-16-year-olds reported they had spent their own money gambling in the past week. This was higher than smoking tobacco (6%) and illegal drug use (5%). The impact of harmful gambling includes mental health and wellbeing issues, a higher risk of suicidal ideation, problems with education, criminal behaviour, relationship difficulties - the list goes on!

# Spotting the Warning Signs of Harmful Gambling

If you notice these signs in yourself or someone you know, it might be a red flag:

- **Distracted:** Gambling becomes the focus, not learning or socializing.
- **Emotional:** Less tolerance towards others and heightened emotions due to a preoccupation with gambling mingled with feelings of guilt and shame.
- **Procrastination:** Assignments and responsibilities are neglected due to spending more time and money on gambling than planned.
- **Dishonesty:** Making excuses for what they're doing with their time. This can lead to feelings of vulnerability and disappointment.
- **Avoidance:** Using gambling as an escape from dealing with other problems or issues.
- **Isolation:** Struggling with relationships, resorting to stealing money, and feeling misunderstood.



## How We Can Help

Gambling can carry a lot of shame and guilt, so it is important to be compassionate and not appear judgemental or critical of any student.

- **Understanding:** Show compassion towards those struggling with gambling.
- **Support:** Help find local or international support for them.
- **Professional Help:** Encourage seeking advice, treatment, and counselling to address this addiction, and explore other underlying issues.
- **Positive Activities:** Encourage participation in other activities with family or friends.
- **Address Triggers:** Help them identify their triggers to gamble and their most vulnerable times, and explore what could be put in place to minimise the likelihood of gambling.

**AVOID banning teens from devices fully because this could lead to them feeling emotionally overwhelmed, self harm and also encourage them to hide future problems. Instead discuss with them healthy boundaries, rules and appropriate consequences.**

## **What About The Parents?**

Honest communication is the best policy, but it's a balancing act. Parents will not always appreciate that you chose to respect the student's autonomy and being open about the extenuating circumstances can be a very difficult. However, we have to be realistic, if and when they find out you didn't inform them, you are highly likely to face very upset parents. This is another reason why we work in teams, so that decisions are not made in isolation and actions belong to the Safeguarding Team, not the individual.

However, this is also about developing a school community where parents understand Safeguarding and the school's duty of care, where it is understood that your greatest priority is the wellbeing of their child.

**Encourage self regulation and responsibility but be realistic about how difficult it is to overcome addictive behaviour without significant support.**

**Do they have the right support available?**



# Upcoming Events

Certificates for participants

Here is your chance to put Safeguarding THEORY into PRACTICE!

Apply critical thinking skills to analyse complex safeguarding scenarios and make informed decisions in line with best practice

Explore ethical and legal considerations surrounding child protection, including confidentiality and reporting requirements/ thresholds



**SAFEGUARDING  
IN ACTION :**  
**Ho Chi Minh City**

**PUTTING THEORY  
INTO PRACTICE**

**ENCOMPASS  
SAFEGUARDING**

**BRITISH VIETNAMESE  
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL  
HO CHI MINH CITY**

**Wednesday  
15th May**

Interactive training including:

- case studies
- risk assessment
- decision-making processes
- cultural context
- bias



**SAFEGUARDING  
IN ACTION :**  
**BANGKOK**

**PUTTING THEORY  
INTO PRACTICE**

**ENCOMPASS  
SAFEGUARDING**

**VERSO  
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL**

**9th & 10th  
August**

Interactive training including:

- case studies
- risk assessment
- decision-making processes
- child focused 'SAFE  
Interviewing' method

*Please get in contact if you would like to discuss any specific incidents or situations that you are dealing with or if you would like to organise regular Safeguarding Supervision to further explore any issues.*

