

Responsible Gifting for Graduates

There are thousands of teens and young adults across the nation missing out graduation ceremonies this year, which has been considered a rite of passage for many years. The Class of 2020 may be missing out on this life event, but they are still receiving diplomas and some schools and universities are even holding virtual graduation ceremonies. As things change we will be seeing a shift in the types of gifts being given to these graduates. Traditional gifts to these graduates have been items for their college dorm or future apartment, gift cards, and of course, cash. All of these are fantastic gifts to give to your graduates, but as many stores are closed down and increasing concerns about safety have come into play, there are those who may be considering other options.

Lottery tickets, scratch offs, or other forms of chance games may be fun for those of legal age, but they can be dangerous and must be played with caution. A large number of young people state that their first experience with gambling occurred for them between the ages of 9-11, and for some, that was just the beginning. Early gambling experiences, including lottery products, are risk factors for later problem gambling. Research shows that approximately 80% of high school students report having gambled for money in the last year. The North American Foundation of Gambling Addiction Help states that about 2.6% percent of Americans experience problems with gambling addiction.

There are more ways for individuals to gamble than ever before with online gambling and apps that offer micro-transactions to take place in order to continue playing or try and win special content for games to customize characters or avatars. These micro-transactions are often how free-to-play games make money, and are available to download for anyone who has a smart phone or tablet. Gifts cards for the App Store or Play Store or even video game consoles can also be used for these micro-transactions, and can lead to problems with gambling. While these types of gift cards are also used for various other things such as music or games, consider gifting your graduate another type of gift card.

A final important thing to consider when thinking about giving the gift of a lottery ticket, scratch card, or other chance games is the ability for minors under the age of 21 to actually collect their winnings if they were to win. The legal age for chance games in Iowa is 21, and if the winner is not at least that age, they are not allowed to legally claim their winnings, even if someone legally allowed to purchase it gave it as a gift. Sometimes this means that those winnings go unclaimed, or worse, are never given to the recipient of the gift in the first place.





Rethink giving lottery tickets this spring.

Community and Family Resources welcomes the opportunity to present to your business, meeting, or group, free of charge, to educate communities on the risks of problem gambling. Please contact us at 866-801-0085.

Community and Family Resources (CFR) offers substance use, mental health, and problem gambling treatment and prevention services. Counties served by CFR include Boone, Calhoun, Franklin, Hamilton, Humboldt, Pocahontas, Story, Webster, and Wright. In Fiscal Year 2019, CFR offered treatment services to 2,684 individuals and reached 8,075 individuals through prevention services in schools, businesses, and community groups. For additional information, please visit CFR's website at www.cfrhelps.org or call 515-576-7261.



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