



### **What are Your Odds?**

If you're between 18 and 24 years old, you're in the age group that's at the highest risk of developing a gambling problem.

You are exposed to gambling images every day - from lottery tickets at the store to poker tournaments on TV and online. And while gambling is illegal for teens, research shows many do bet on sports and purchase lottery tickets.

### **“Compared to adults, young people are 2 to 3 times more likely to develop a gambling problem.”**

As a young person today, you've probably been bombarded with safer sex and anti-drug messaging. But there are also potential risks associated with betting. Problem gambling can lead not only to the loss of money – but also to the loss of trust and friendships. Gambling can even jeopardize success at school and work.

One of the documented reasons why 18-24 year olds gamble is because of poor coping mechanisms when dealing with stress or pressure. Here are some great and safe coping mechanisms to use when you're under stress.

1. **Work it out:** Go to the gym, take a walk, so something active to readjust your outlook. Exercise has been proven to reduce stress. The key ingredient? Endorphins. When you exercise, these neurotransmitters start pumping and you get a natural “high”.
2. **Meditate:** Meditation is seen by a number of researchers as potentially one of the most effective forms of stress reduction. In our fast-paced society, we often find ourselves rushing through our daily routine, rarely stopping to think. Briefly put, meditation is stopping to think.
3. **Make a plan:** If school work, your job or relationships are overwhelming to you, make a plan and get help.
4. **Breathe:** When you are stressed, your breathing tends to become quick and shallow-and can place even more stress on the body. Deep, focused breathing calms you down, heals the body and can change your life.

For more information or a presentation on problem gambling, please contact Julie Busby, B.S., Prevention Specialist at Community and Family Resources 515-576-7261, Extension 1402.

Resources: <http://gamb-ling.com/get-informed/what-are-the-odds>