



## FOREWORD

Gambling is a popular activity in Tasmania. There are more opportunities to gamble than ever before. Many people gamble safely, betting within their limits, and many people don't gamble at all.

A worrying number of young people have gambling related problems, as a result of their own gambling or that of a family member. Research<sup>1</sup> suggests that the earlier young people start gambling, the more likely they will have gambling problems later in life.

Starting as young as ten, some young people play poker on the internet, and gamble on scratch lotteries and sports. Young people under 18 may also be at risk of being introduced to gambling illegally at casinos or other gambling venues.

Youth gambling is often associated with other risk taking behaviours, disengagement from school and mental health problems. Young people are also at risk of harm where a family member has gambling problems.

*What's the Real Deal?* will assist teachers to educate young people about the risks and potential problems associated with gambling, supporting students to make informed choices and identify warning signs of problem gambling in themselves and others.

The kit examines odds, beliefs and superstitions about gambling, the pathways to problem gambling and the help available, the role of advertising in influencing gambling choices, and the interests of the different stakeholders in the gambling sector.

*What's the Real Deal?* is designed for Year 7 and 8 students. Students in these years are at an age where they are likely to be developing attitudes to gambling, and may already have had some gambling experiences.

The kit adopts a harm minimisation approach, aiming to reduce the harmful effects of risk taking behaviour; in this case gambling. The kit does not aim to eliminate gambling, but rather to reduce the harm which may result from it. This approach recognises that not all people who engage in a risky behaviour will stop completely.

A key message for students is that gambling is a risky activity. Some forms of gambling, most notably poker machines, are riskier than others.

Some activities and discussion topics in the kit may arouse in students a curiosity about gambling. It is recommended that key messages about the risks and potential harms associated with gambling be communicated consistently and regularly while using the kit. Signs that may indicate that a young person is developing a problem with gambling are shown on page 97.

The kit supports teaching these gambling related issues in a health and wellbeing framework. A useful resource to support this approach is *MindMatters*, a national mental health promotion initiative for secondary schools, which contains substantial material on relevant areas such as help seeking, coping strategies, building resilience, and understanding mental health issues.

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<sup>1</sup> Delfabbro, P., Grabosky, P., Lahn, J. *Adolescent Gambling in the ACT*. Centre for Gambling Research Australian National University 2005.



## OVERVIEW OF THE UNITS

### UNIT ONE: HITS OR MYTHS?

Focus curriculum area	Health and Wellbeing
Supporting curriculum area	Mathematics – numeracy

Students define the term 'gambling' and investigate why people gamble. This includes an exploration of the myths, the beliefs, and the mathematical truths about winning and losing. Students also identify help-seeking strategies to use if they are being adversely affected by gambling.

### UNIT TWO: WHAT'S YOUR VIEW ABOUT GAMBLING?

Focus curriculum area	Health and Wellbeing
Supporting curriculum area	Society and History

Students investigate a range of stakeholders within the gambling sector and explore those stakeholders' attitudes and beliefs. Students will develop skills in analysing the gambling sector and developing and representing a balanced view of the many positions. They will also investigate how people with gambling problems can overcome their difficulties. Based on their investigation, students will develop personal attitudes and choices in relation to the gambling sector.

### UNIT THREE: WHAT ON EARTH IS ADVERTISING?

Focus curriculum area	Health and Wellbeing
Supporting curriculum area	Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

Students investigate how gambling is represented by advertising. They will develop greater critical awareness and sensitivity to media forms and how they are used, or can be used, to promote or criticise gambling. Students will develop a set of skills and attitudes to support them when dealing with advertising in the future, particularly in relation to gambling.

### UNIT FOUR: A GALLERY ABOUT GAMBLING

Focus curriculum area	The Arts
Supporting curriculum areas	Health and Wellbeing English – literacy

Students create a gallery event, using a range of media forms, to provide a chosen audience with an insight into gambling. They will demonstrate their understanding of the truths and myths about gambling, the positions of stakeholders, and how the advertising industry uses a range of techniques to promote gambling. Working in teams and using a range of creative mediums, e.g. posters, videos, text, performance, they will identify what they have learned about gambling in Units One, Two and Three and how they choose to approach it in the future.