



Findings and Recommendations

Parliamentary Working Group

Preventing and minimising harm from gambling for youth

Ministry of Health

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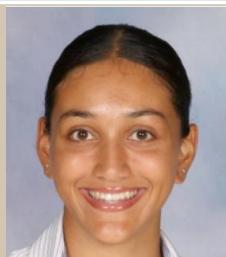
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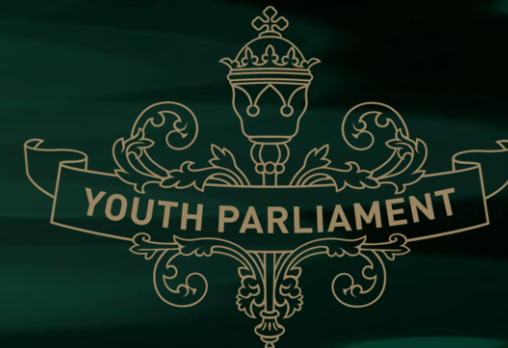


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Inquiry Topic



How effective are current arrangements to prevent young people in Aotearoa New Zealand from experiencing gambling harm, and what could be done to improve them?

The PWG considered

- What do we know about gambling harm being experienced by young people in the context of their families and communities?
- Are existing laws, policies, and services having enough impact on reducing harm to youth from gambling?
- What else could or should be done to reduce or minimise harm from gambling experienced by youth?

Key Findings



Digital influence and media

The digital world has changed the ways young people are introduced to gambling and how they gamble.

Advertisements for gambling are frequent on social media and some influencers promote gambling content which can reinforce pro-gambling beliefs, e.g. “you have to spend big to win big”, “no such thing as losing, just winning and quitting”.

Young people are often introduced to gambling through videogames, including gambling-like mechanisms (i.e. loot boxes).

Young people often begin online gambling through free gambling sites before progressing to paid sites.

Current regulations are outdated

Current regulations are outdated and don’t reflect the current contexts in which gambling occurs.

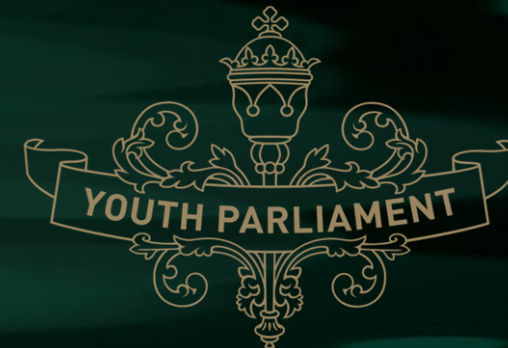
Current steps to regulate online gambling are a step in the right direction, but more is required to minimise the harm young people experience from gambling.

Social normalisation

Like drinking, gambling is often viewed by young people as a rite of passage. While some young people give it a go and stop, many go on to develop harmful patterns of gambling and lose large sums of money.

Many young men participate in online gambling and lose large amounts of money doing so. Stigma and shame about having ‘failed’ often prevents these young men seeking help.

Key Findings



Mental health and social impacts

A range of mental health and social impacts result from young people's gambling behaviours.

The stigma of problematic gambling and feelings of shame often prevent young people seeking help when their gambling becomes harmful.

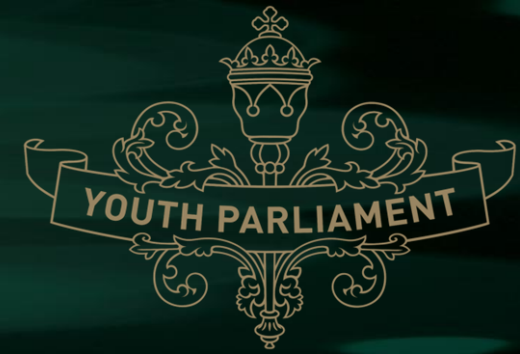
Gambling is difficult for parents to tackle, particularly when young people are gambling with their own money and gambling itself is not illegal.

Need for greater awareness

Harmful gambling does not have the same level of awareness as other behaviours considered dangerous, like drink driving or smoking.

Gambling advertisements promote gambling in a positive light. Currently there are little to no advertising or campaigns to counter this.

Recommendations



From the PWG's findings, the following recommendations should be considered to prevent or minimise harm from gambling for youth:

One

Raise awareness and increase financial literacy

- Targeted and impactful advertising campaigns to raise awareness of the harms of gambling, focused on negative impacts of gambling, in conjunction with promotion of positive services available to support those who need it.
- Young people need more support and education to build financial literacy and better understand the risks of gambling.
- Developing young people's professional supports (i.e. counsellors, psychologists, etc.) to educate on the harms of gambling.

Two

Regulation of industry

- Regulate the companies who provide gambling, using heavier penalties for companies who do not comply.
- Require online gambling companies to use multi-factor identification methods (e.g. facial recognition linked to official ID) to prevent underage young people accessing online gambling.

Three

Prevention – researching ways to counter the addictive qualities of gambling

- The addictive qualities of gambling are well known – more should be done to uncover what can help to counteract these qualities.
- More culturally-informed research on the impacts of gambling and working with these communities to identify the solutions.