

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT TEAM UPDATE

Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects is funded by the Westmoreland Drug and Alcohol Commission, Inc. through a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs.



SAINT VINCENT COLLEGE PREVENTION PROJECTS NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2026

VOLUME 2: ISSUE 6

K-12 SAP Trainings & SAP Thematic Workshops

K-12 SAP TRAINING Dates: March 12&13, 2026; May 14&15, 2026.

Trainings are held at the Fred Rogers Conference Center, Saint Vincent College. The Training is designed for new members of either a secondary or elementary S.A.P. team. This is also appropriate for Mental Health and Drug and Alcohol Liaisons, Treatment Staff, and School-Based Probation Officers who have been assigned the role of "ad hoc" S.A.P. team members. Those individuals needing to make up a training session from a prior training will be able to complete those requirements at these trainings. For additional information or to register, please call Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects at 724-805-2050.

SAP Thematic Workshops: March 25, 2026. Workshops are held at the Fred Rogers Conference Center, Saint Vincent College. Training announcements will be emailed and also posted in the newsletter. For additional information or to register, please call Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects at 724-805-2050.



**SVCPP mailing
Address:**

**300 Fraser
Purchase Road,
Latrobe, PA
15650**

**Phone:
724-805-2050
Fax:
724-420-5930**

Awareness Days

You can easily take advantage of special events to raise awareness of an important issue or cause. **Here are a few up-coming events/awareness days in MARCH.**

Gambling Awareness Month—<https://www.ncpgambling.org/programs-resources/programs/pgam/#:~:text=March%20is%20Problem%20Gambling%20Awareness%20Month!>

Drug and Alcohol Facts Week—March 17-23—<https://teens.drugabuse.gov/national-drug-alcohol-facts-week>

Brain Injury Awareness Month —<https://www.biausa.org/public-affairs/public-awareness/brain-injury-awareness>

National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month—<https://www.nacdd.org/ddam1/>

Self Injury Awareness Month (SAID)—<https://www.iasp.info/2023/03/01/self-injury-awareness-day/>



Trainings, Workshops, Events, & more...



Thematic Workshops— March 25, 2026. We offer Workshops 3 times a year. Each of these will have a SAP process, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse focus. The training announcements will go to your email address and appear when appropriate in our monthly newsletter. For more information or to register, please call the Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects at 724-805-2050. The cost of the training is \$40.00, and this includes continental breakfast and lunch in the cafeteria. Act 48 credits will be given.

K-12 SAP TRAINING— March 12&13, 2026; May 14&15, 2026. Training is designed for new members of either a secondary or elementary S.A.P. team who have not completed the initial training with their team. This is also appropriate for Mental Health and Drug and Alcohol Liaison, Treatment staff and school-based probation officers who have been assigned the role of "ad hoc" S.A.P. team members. Those individuals needing to make up a training session from a prior training will be able to complete those requirements at this training. For information or to register, please call the Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects at 724-805-2050. The cost of the training is \$360 which includes Training materials, lunch and continental breakfast both days.





Events and Community News



SAINT VINCENT COLLEGE

Prevention Projects

STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Spring Thematic Workshop

“From Risk to Resilience: Student Assistance, Recovery, and the Polyvagal Path to Safety”

ANNOUNCEMENT

WASAP Council Meeting (8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.)
March 25th 2026

- TO: SAP Contacts
TIME: 8:30 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.
PLACE: St. Vincent College, Fred Rogers Center
- 8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Registration, continental breakfast provided.**
- 9:00 a.m.-9:15 a.m. “Welcome & Introductions”**
Presenter: Donna Kean, Executive Director
Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects
- 9:15 a.m.- 10:00 a.m. “Streamlining SAP”**
Presenter: Ray Killen, School Counselor and Quinn Matz, Health and P.E. Teacher
West Hempfield Middle School
- 10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. Break**
- 10:15 a.m.-11:00 a.m. “Sage’s Army Teen Prevention”**
Presenter: Amber Yingling, Certified Recovery Specialist
Sage’s Army, Inc.
- 11:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. LUNCH**
- 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. “You Are the Emotional Wi-Fi: Polyvagal Theory and the Science of Safety”**
Presenter: Susan L. Tarasevich, Ed.D.
Susan Tarasevich Learning, LLC
- 1:30p.m.-1:45 p.m. Break**
- 1:45p.m. – 3:00 p.m. “You Are the Emotional Wi-Fi: Polyvagal Theory and the Science of Safety” Continued**
Presenter: Susan L. Tarasevich, Ed.D.
Susan Tarasevich Learning, LLC
- 3:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. Summary/Evaluations/Concluding Remarks/Individual Team Assistance**

REGISTRATION: Phone – 724-805-2050 on or before **March 24, 2026**

ACT 48 Professional Development Credit – 5.00 hours

COST: \$40.00 per person, includes lunch in the cafeteria.

Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects is funded by the Westmoreland Drug and Alcohol Commission, Inc. through a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs.



Events and Community News



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Streamlining SAP

Presenters: Ray Killen and Quinn Matz, West Hempfield Middle School

Looking for a better way to gather information and feedback on the students referred to your SAP team? Tired of endless paperwork and messy records? This session is designed to help! Streamlining SAP will provide participants with tools and strategies for using Google Forms and Sheets to keep your team organized, efficient, and collaborative. You'll also learn effective methods for running productive meetings and explore creative event ideas that can positively impact your school community and help your SAP Team truly shine.

Sage's Army Teen Prevention Program

Amber Yingling, Certified Recovery Specialist, Sage's Army, Inc.

Adolescents with substance use challenges often struggle academically, socially, and emotionally; many do not access formal treatment or feel safe discussing their experiences in traditional school settings.

Integrating CRS and CFRS within the SAP offers students relatable, non-judgmental support from individuals with lived experience, strengthening trust, early identification of concerns, and connection to resources.

SMART Recovery Teen programming complements this support by equipping students with skills that target underlying thought patterns and behaviors, promoting long-term resilience and well-being.

You Are the Emotional Wi-Fi: Polyvagal Theory and the Science of Safety

Presenter: Susan L. Tarasevich, Ed.D. Susan Tarasevich Learning, LLC

Visit us at www.susantarasevichlearning.com

This presentation doesn't just focus on your work with students; it's for you as well. This workshop applies educational neuroscience and Polyvagal Theory to classroom practice and student support systems, equipping educators with trauma-informed, co-regulation strategies that enhance emotional resilience, reduce behavioral barriers to learning, and strengthen supports for referred students.

By reviewing the framework for applying educational neuroscience in schools, we will apply this to classroom practices as well as action planning for referred students.

Leave with real-world applications of co-regulation that you can apply to your everyday educational and personal routines to enhance your emotional resilience and build this capacity in your students.



Events and Community News



Have you heard the news?

PDE has granted all K-12 Public School District employees the opportunity to be SAP Trained free of charge through December 2026. This special grant funding allows for reimbursement for classroom teacher substitute costs up to \$150/day per substitute.

Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects 2025–2026 Training Dates for K-12 SAP Training:

- ◆ **March 12&13, 2026**
- ◆ **May 14&15, 2026**

Workshop cost for all other training participants is \$360.00/person

Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects 2025-2026 Training Dates for SAP Thematic Workshop:



- **March 25, 2026**

Workshop cost is \$40/person

*For information or to register, please call the Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects at 724-805-2050.
Participants will receive training materials, lunch and continental breakfast at all trainings.*

All trainings and workshops will be offered at:

Saint Vincent College 300 Fraser Purchase Road, Latrobe, PA 15650



FREE PROGRAM

For girls 8 to 13 years of age and their parent/guardian



So What's Puberty, Anyway?

Puberty is a time when the body changes and begins to develop toward adulthood. It happens to everyone!

Join our presenter, Krista Perez, PA-C, from Independence Health System OB/GYN – Greensburg, as she helps break down what to expect during this sometimes confusing stage of life and shares helpful tips to make the journey feel easier and less overwhelming. This program is the first in a Women's Health Series created to empower young girls and women with trusted information, encouragement, and access to health care at every stage of life.



YWCA Westmoreland
424 North Main Street
Greensburg, PA 15601



RSVP to the YWCA
Bekah Garland
724-834-9390
Bekah@ywcawestmoreland.org



Thursday, March 12, 2026
6 p.m.

eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca



The Community
Foundation of
Westmoreland
County
Celebrating 30 Years



March is Gambling Awareness Month

About Problem Gambling Awareness Month

Problem Gambling Awareness Month is a nationwide grassroots campaign, held annually in March, that seeks to increase public awareness of problem gambling and promote prevention, treatment, and recovery services.



YOUTH GAMBLING PREVENTION

This section highlights the importance of prevention and early education, particularly among youth and young adults. The goal is to highlight how early exposure can increase long term risk for developing a gambling problem, reinforcing the need for education, open conversations, and proactive community involvement.

[Download Related Visual Assets](#) >

Youth exposure to gambling is increasing through media, advertising, and online platforms. Problem gambling awareness month is a time to raise awareness and educate families and communities about the risks of youth gambling. **#PGAM2026**

For many adults with gambling problems, exposure began during adolescence. Awareness & education helps communities understand that gambling isn't harmless – and early experiences can shape future behavior. **#PGAM2026**

When young people are exposed to gambling early, the impact can extend far beyond adolescence. Raising awareness about the risks of gambling-related harm today helps build healthier futures tomorrow. **#PGAM2026**

Parents, educators, coaches, and caregivers can all play a role in preventing youth gambling. Awareness opens the door to honest conversations that can make a lasting difference. **#PGAM2026**

Info from: <https://www.ncpgambling.org/pa-resources/2026-pgam-toolkit/>



March is Gambling Awareness Month

The 2023 Pennsylvania Youth Survey (PAYS) indicates that over 20% of Pennsylvania middle and high school students have engaged in some form of lifetime gambling, with over 9% doing so within the past 30 days. High school students reported higher rates (23.8%) than middle schoolers. Top activities included sports betting, cards, and online gaming.

Key Findings on Youth Gambling (2023 PAYS)

- **Prevalence:** Roughly 1 in 4 students (21.7% statewide) have tried gambling, and about 1 in 11 (9.3% statewide) reported gambling in the past month.
- **Most Common Activities:** Sporting events, sports pools, or fantasy sports were the most frequently reported forms of gambling.
- **Other Activities:** Students also reported gambling on card games (poker), dice, pool, darts, lottery scratch cards, and video games/online gaming.
- **Demographic Differences:** High school students (grades 10 and 12) were more likely to have gambled (23.8%) compared to younger students in middle school (19.3%).
- **Regional Variations:** Lifetime gambling rates varied by county, with some areas like Elk (30.3%), Philadelphia (25.6%), and Potter (25.4%) reporting higher engagement rates.
- **Associated Behaviors:** Youth gambling in the survey is often linked with other risk factors, including alcohol/drug use and truancy.

The 2023 survey updated its questionnaire to provide more specific definitions of gambling, which helps in better identifying the types of risks involved, such as online and video game-related gambling.

The full 2023 PAYS Survey can be found at: <https://www.pa.gov/content/dam/copapwp-pagov/en/pccd/documents/juvenile-justice/pays/2023-pays/pays%202023%20state%20report%20final.pdf>

The 2025 PAYS survey will be available late Spring, early Summer



PA Problem Gambling Rate: Potentially 3.7 Million Impacted

By Brian Pempus, February 5, 2026

Millions of Pennsylvanians face moderate to severe gambling issues, as the PA problem gambling rate reached alarming levels in 2025.

According to a new study from Penn State University:

- 2.5–6.4% of PA adults were classified as problem gamblers in the past year
- 25.4–29.9% of PA adults were classified as at-risk gamblers in the past year

Consequently, as many as 36.3% of residents aged 18 and over experience issues with gambling, in whatever gambling form that may take. This equates to as many as 3.77 million Pennsylvanians.

This does not include underage gambling and minors impacted by it.

Problem gambling exists on a wide spectrum. The meaning of gambling-related harm can depend on the person or family. On average, a gambling problem causes harm to about six people near the person with a problem.

Definitions

An **at-risk gambler** is defined as an individual who does not meet the criteria for problem gambling according to the Problem Gambling Measure (PGM) but has a risk assessment score of one or higher. At-risk gambling classification is divided into three levels of risk based on risk assessment score: moderate, high, and very high.

The **PGM** is an assessment of problem gambling. It assigns individuals who gamble into categories: recreational gambler, at-risk gambler, and problem gambler.

Record Gambling Revenue in Pennsylvania

Pennsylvanians are spending more on gambling than ever before.

Powered by an increase of 27% in online casino revenue compared to 2024, the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board (PGCB) reported that 2025 combined gambling revenue reached a record high.



GamblingHarm.org continued:

The 2025 calendar year combined revenue figure was **\$6.79 billion**. That figure is **10.74% above the 2024 combined revenue of \$6.13 billion**.

Forms of state-sanctioned gambling in the Keystone State include slot machines, table games, sports betting, online casinos, video gaming terminals (VGTs), and daily fantasy contests.

Online casinos, which likely generate most of their revenue from PA residents with problem gambling, have digital versions of slots, table games, and poker.

The \$6.79 billion figure does not include revenue from the state lottery.

The state is a “partner” in the gambling industry, as one policymaker put it many years ago during the state’s efforts to expand gambling in 2017.

In 2025, Pennsylvania collected \$2.98 billion in taxes from the operation of gambling it regulates (excluding the lottery).

PA Problem Gambling Rate Mitigation

The state provides some so-called addiction safeguards, such as self-exclusion. PA’s self-exclusion program has seen significant growth in recent years. Helpline calls have also surged.

Reflecting growing concerns, in 2025 the Pennsylvania House of Representatives adopted a resolution to further study the impact of problem gambling stemming from online sportsbooks and casinos.

The state also has an involuntary self-exclusion list that includes hundreds of names. Pennsylvania routinely bans people for living a minor unattended in a casino parking lot.

Despite the efforts to reduce harm, state-sanctioned gambling, especially via the internet, is devastating to many Pennsylvanians and their families and communities.



Awareness Month Information



How to Prevent Youth Gambling at School

Published: August 4, 2025

Back-to-school season is an exciting time. As the school year starts up, young people, parents, and educators are getting a jump start on the months to come, including the latest trends in issues affecting youth. One such issue is rising in importance this year: youth gambling.

Children and youth of all ages are increasingly being exposed to gambling and mechanics that resemble gambling, with potential consequences later in life. Youth who gamble are more likely to experience a wide variety of disorders, including substance use disorder and gambling disorder as adults. So, educating yourself on how to prevent youth gambling is more than a smart way to get back into the school-time groove — it's about protecting youth's future.

For Educators

Even with certain schools banning or limiting cell phone usage during school hours, gambling is present in many of the video games and entertainment that students engage with outside of school, which can result in exposure to gambling during school hours from peers. Here's what teachers need to know:

- **Know the Terminology:** With a great deal of initial exposure happening through video games, gambling terminology changes with each new game on the scene. So, educators will need to stay up to date on the terms youth use. Common in-game mechanics like loot and mystery boxes, In-platform chats for streaming services, and social casino apps all use their own terms.



Awareness Month Information



- **Be Ready to Talk About It:** Many youth will already know more than you might think about gambling. But while they might talk about it, their knowledge of the implications of youth gambling are often incomplete. Be ready to educate youth about the long-term risks youth gambling poses for them, and how random chance is different from certainty.
- **Don't Use Gambling Mechanics in Lessons:** While it might be tempting to try to connect with youth by creating sports brackets or engaging them with random-chance games, the risks to their future are very real. To help prevent youth gambling, refrain from using any random-chance or betting games in the classroom.

For Parents

When young people are exposed to gambling, it can potentially stay with them for life, resulting in a gambling disorder when they're an adult. Because of this risk, keeping yourself in the know about the risks that youth gambling poses to your children is important.

Keep yourself in the know about the risks of youth gambling.



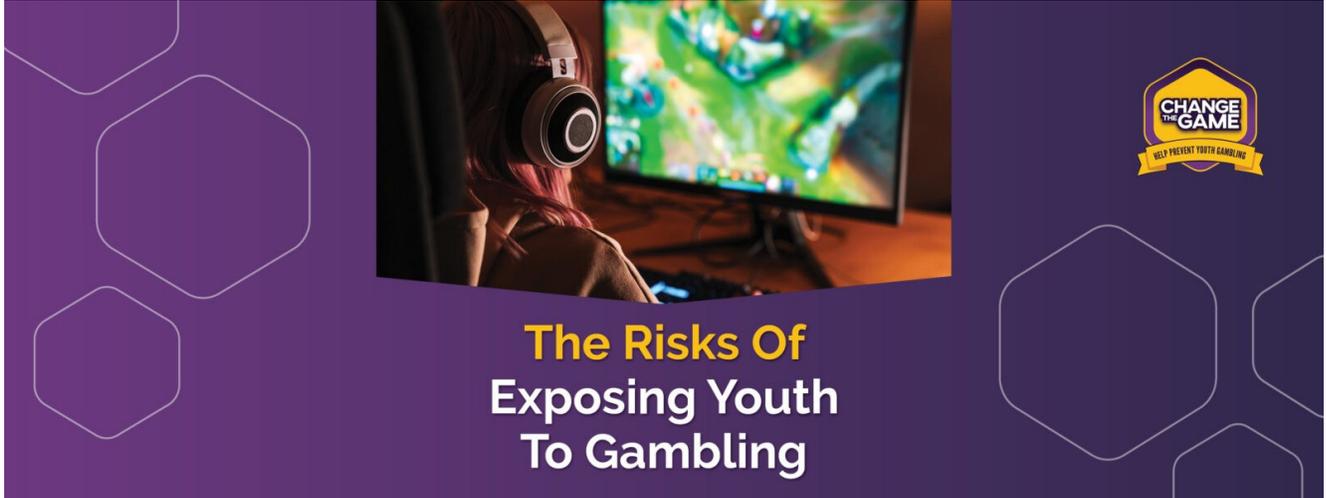
- **Monitor Their Games:** Know which games your children play and what, if any, gambling mechanics are present in them. When you know what they're playing, you can better educate youth about the risks and protect them from engaging.
- **Know the Definition:** Gambling refers to any game in which something of value is exchanged and the game is decided by random chance. While it might seem basic, knowing that definition can help you identify when a game is dangerous and prevent youth from engaging with gambling. Additionally, our quiz can help you determine if a youth you know may be at risk.
- **Be Ready to Listen:** Old-fashioned peer pressure is still a powerful force. No young person wants to feel that they're missing out on fun that their friends are partaking in, which can range from playing video games together to making dares and bets during school hours. Keeping communication with your child open can help them feel less alone, which helps prevent youth gambling.

Want to learn more about the effort to help prevent youth gambling? Follow us at @Pausebeforeyouplay_oh on Instagram, @PBYP_OH on X, and Pause Before You Play on Facebook.

Info from: <https://pausebeforeyouplay.org/2025/08/how-to-prevent-youth-gambling-at-school/>



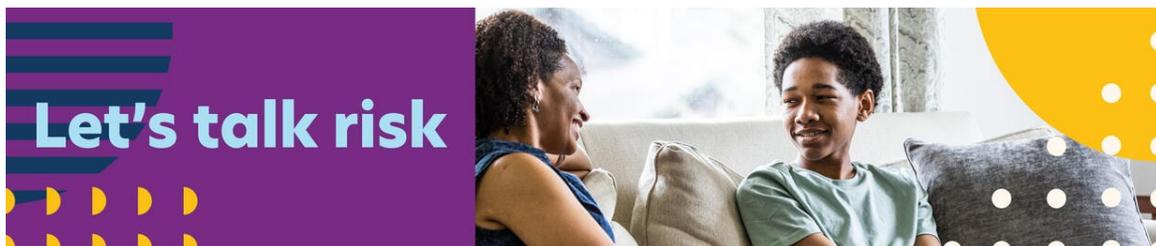
Awareness Month Information



...when exposed to gambling before their brains are fully developed, teens are not always equipped to weigh the risks. This is one reason they experience gambling disorders, Lefkowitz says. Other factors that contribute to a young person's gambling can include stress relief, problems in school, and family histories of mood disorders.

Like drugs and alcohol, exposure to gambling at a young age can have long-lasting effects.

- Higher risk of a gambling disorder later in life: Research suggests that kids who are exposed to gambling – even activities considered “harmless,” like dares or internet challenges – by age 12 are four times more likely to experience gambling harms later on.
- Adverse mental health effects: Early exposure to gambling increases the likelihood of depression, anxiety, mood swings, and financial stress, according to a study from the National Institutes of Health.
- Increased rate of risky behaviors: Children who gamble are more likely to participate in other risk-taking behaviors such as underage drinking, drug use, truancy, and bullying, said Elise Mikkelsen, the director of the Division of Problem Gambling for the Arizona Department of Gaming.
- Increased suicidal ideation: About 32 percent of people experiencing a gambling disorder consider dying by suicide.





Awareness Month Information



And the wide accessibility of online betting, sports betting, and video games is making it commonplace among adolescents. According to the National Council on Problem Gambling, 60 to 80 percent of high school students reported gambling in the past year, and high schoolers experience gambling harms at double the rate of adults.

According to Lefkowitz, helping youth get support at the earliest warning signs, before “any brain chemistry changes,” can help address youth gambling before it starts. Here are a few ways you can help protect your child:

- Talk to teens about the risks of gambling as you would alcohol and substance use
- Monitor screen time
- Teach youth that gambling results in losing more often than winning
- Use parental controls to set guardrails around your child’s gaming, including in-game purchases



Info from: <https://pausebeforeyouplay.org/2024/12/gambling-can-have-long-lasting-effects-on-youth/>





National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week® (NDAFW) in 2026 is an annual, week-long health observance aimed at educating teens and young adults about the science of addiction and substance abuse. While specific 2026 PDFs are typically released closer to the event date by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), here are the key resources and details for Pennsylvania:

Key Pennsylvania Resources & Information

- PA Emerging Drug Trends Symposium (March 31, 2026): The Pennsylvania Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP) is hosting a symposium to explore the latest drug use, overdose trends, and evidence-based best practices for responding to drug threats.
- DDAP Document Library: The Pennsylvania Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs maintains a library for reports, policies, and educational materials.
- County Drug and Alcohol Offices: PA provides local, county-specific resources for prevention, intervention, and treatment.

Drug & Alcohol Facts for 2026 (General Context)

- Underage Drinking and Drug Use: Programs like Project Northland and Project TND are highlighted in PA for reducing teen marijuana, tobacco, and alcohol use.
- Rising Threats: 2026 trends focus on shifting drug supplies and their impact on high-risk populations.
- Safety Statistics: Over 50% of traffic accidents involve alcohol or drugs, and 80% of domestic violence reports are related to substance use.

How to Find 2026 PDF Resources

- NIDA Resources: The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) website (teens.drugabuse.gov) is the primary source for science-based toolkits, posters, and educational PDFs.
- SAMHSA Toolkits: The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) provides toolkits for prevention, particularly for events like National Prevention Week (May 10-16, 2026).
- PA Education Materials: The Pennsylvania Department of Education provides resources on school-wide prevention programs.

For the most up-to-date PDF guides for 2026, it is recommended to search the PA Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP) website directly closer to March 2026.

Info from: <https://nida.nih.gov/research-topics/national-drug-alcohol-facts-week>



2 Resources to Measure Your Screen Time Habits



Reboot & Recover

HOME ASSESSMENTS TREATMENT PREVENTION RESOURCES ABOUT R&R

Donate

DIGITAL OVERLOAD

IN A COMPLEX WORLD

What does it mean to maintain healthy screen habits in a screen-dependent environment?

Learn More



Take our Quiz Programs Reviews Resources Contact Login Book a call

Video Game Addiction Support

Is Gaming Taking Over Your Life?

Take a short quiz and find out.

I'M A GAMER

I'M A PARENT



Available Services Through SVCPP:



LOOK FOR THE SAINT VINCENT COLLEGE PREVENTION PROJECTS AT MANY SCHOOL EVENTS THROUGHOUT WESTMORELAND COUNTY

Special Speaker Presentations

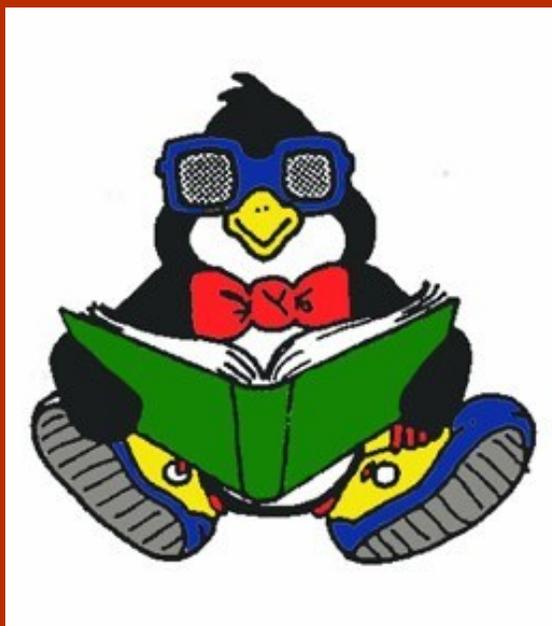
Presentations are available to your community group, business or organization at minimal cost or FREE. Topics include: Current Drug Trends, Power of Parents, Gambling/Gaming Awareness, Responsible Gambling, Talking with your Kids and The Dangers of Underage Drinking, Mobile Bedroom, Social Media, Click-Bait and Other On-Line Potholes, and more.

RADAR (Free Materials)

Regional Alcohol/Drug Awareness Resource, Information Center

The Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects provides free materials (pamphlets, brochures, posters, etc.) to schools, organizations, community groups, and to the general public on various topics that include: alcohol, tobacco, drugs, violence prevention, child guidance, and medications and the elderly.

To schedule a program for your business, school or organization, please contact Beth Potochnik, Prevention Education & Community Outreach Services Manager at Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects at 724-805-2050 or email beth.potochnik@stvincent.edu





Available Intervention Services Through SVCPP:



The following Tier II Intervention Programs are offered to all
Westmoreland County Secondary Schools
 at **NO** cost to the school districts:



N.O.T. (Not on Tobacco) Program

SVCPP Intervention Specialists deliver 6 sessions covering facts vs. myths, triggers and advertising nicotine products, identifying support strategies, benefits to quitting nicotine use and how your body responds, creating healthy habits, and ways to stay nicotine free. N.O.T. explores the various delivery systems, i.e. vape devices, chewing, smoking, etc. N.O.T. is an American Lung Association program aimed to recognize dependence on nicotine and to identify replacement strategies to restore health.

The Blues Program

SVCPP Intervention Specialists provide early intervention service groups for adolescents with observable behaviors displaying depressive symptoms or are at-risk for depression. These are 6 session groups provided weekly within your school.

Marijuana Brief Intervention Program

SVCPP Intervention Specialists use this evidence-based program for early intervention with students who may be experimenting with marijuana in its various forms. During the 6 weekly sessions, students will identify triggers, how their environment can contribute to usage, and practical evidence-based ways to reduce/eliminate marijuana use.

In-Depth Program

The American Lung Association's INDEPTH® (Intervention for Nicotine Dependence: Education, Prevention, Tobacco and Health) program is an alternative to suspension or citation program that is offered as an option to students who face suspension for violation of school tobacco or e-cigarette use policies. This program is administered by a trained adult facilitator in either a one-on-one or group format and can be offered in a school or community-based setting. The program consists of four sessions of approximately 50 minutes geared toward youth and focused on tobacco use, including e-cigarettes, nicotine dependence, establishing healthy alternatives and making the change to be free of all tobacco products. Because the program is offered as an alternative to suspension or citation, attendance is mandatory to fulfill the obligation for the infraction. While INDEPTH is not a cessation program, steps toward cessation are strongly encouraged. Students may decide to quit or reduce their tobacco/nicotine use as result of their participation in the program.

If your school district can benefit from these services, please email: Christina Weimer, SAP Coordinator and Intervention Services Manager, Christina.weimer@stvincent.edu



Westmoreland County Information



1200 Maronda Way, Suite 300, Monessen, PA
Hours: Monday-Friday 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

724-243-2220
<http://wedacinc.org>



Southwestern Pennsylvania Human Services, Inc.

203 S Maple Ave, Greensburg, PA 15601
Hours: Monday-Thursday 8:30am-9:00pm
Friday 8:30am-5:00pm

724-834-0420
<http://www.sphs.org>

Outside In

To the Fullest...

Outpatient Services
PHONE 724-837-1518

Residential Programs
PHONE 724-238-8441

PO Box 639
Greensburg, PA 15601



First Floor Suite 110, 40 N Pennsylvania Avenue, Greensburg, PA 15601
(724-830-3617)

<http://www.co.westmoreland.pa.us/>



SVC Prevention Projects

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Map from: <https://www.city2map.com/en/us/pa/westmoreland-county.html>



From the Desk of Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects: Parent Tips & Resources



What You Need to Know About Youth Gambling



What is Gambling?

Any act that involves risking something on the outcome of a game or contest that is mostly determined by chance. Including money and valuables or non-monetary acts like dares.



How are Kids Doing It?

Young people spend hours playing games on computers and mobile devices. Many times, games have coins, gems, loot boxes, and skins that replicate real-life gambling situations. Other forms include lottery tickets, betting on sports, internet challenges, card games, or dares.



What are the Consequences?

Kids who engage in youth gambling are more likely to experience a gambling disorder as an adult. They're also more likely to experience depression and anxiety, drink and use illegal drugs, get into fights or criminal activity, and think about suicide.

Get in the Know

The following stats are from various Ohio surveys.

15% of teenagers gambled money or personal items within the last year.

41% of 8th graders have spent money to buy a mystery box.

22% of youth haven't been honest with people about how much they gamble.

41% of 8th graders spent money to buy a video game upgrade.

68% of middle school students spent three or more hours per day on screen time, not counting time doing school work.

41% of youth said their parents never limit electronic usage.

Who's at Risk?

Teenagers

With peer pressure and fitting in being top of mind in adolescence, teenagers are more likely to engage in risky behaviors like betting.

Young Children

Gaming apps designed to mimic gambling activities are being targeted towards children as young as two.

College Students

The popularization of sports betting on campuses, combined with newfound independence, put college students at a higher risk than ever before.



From the Desk of Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects: Parent Tips & Resources



How Youth Are Gambling

- Video games and apps
- Bets on school or professional sports
- Fantasy sports
- Lottery tickets
- Card Games
- Dares
- Internet challenges
- Trading card games
- Role play strategy games

Gambling Warning Signs in Youth



Neglect of studies or part-time jobs



Withdrawing from friends



Unexplained absences



Lunch money or valuables go missing



Sudden drop in grades



Unusual interest in sports scores or video games



Less interest in extracurricular activities



From the Desk of Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects: Parent Tips & Resources



Understand Gaming Slang

Many video games feature gameplay mechanics that encourage youth to exchange real-life money for a random chance at digital items, increasing their chances of experiencing a gambling disorder as an adult. By knowing common gaming terminology, you can help prevent youth gambling.

1-up

An object that gives the player an extra life (or try) in games where the player has a limited number of chances to complete a game, a task, or level.

100%

A game is 100% complete once a player unlocks all available content and completes the game. Many players are so determined to get 100%, that they will make multiple in-game purchases for upgrades to achieve this goal.

Battle Pass

A form of in-game monetization that provides additional content for a game through a tiered system, rewarding the player with in-game items as they complete specific challenges.

Downloadable Content (DLC)

Additional content for a video game that is acquired through a digital delivery system. Content could be packs for skins, weapons, characters, alternate worlds, and new levels.

Free-to-Play (F2P or FtP)

Games that don't require a purchase to download and play. But, once downloaded, players are pressured to spend money on upgrade items like loot boxes, skins, and weapons.

Login Rewards

A login reward that creates daily gaming habits by giving players bigger rewards for coming back to play for consecutive days.

Loot Box or Mystery Box

A form of in-game gambling that players can open for a random chance of winning a prize, gain an experience level, or other in-game achievement.

Microtransaction

A business model used in games where players can purchase virtual goods via micropayments in the gaming console store.

Power-Up

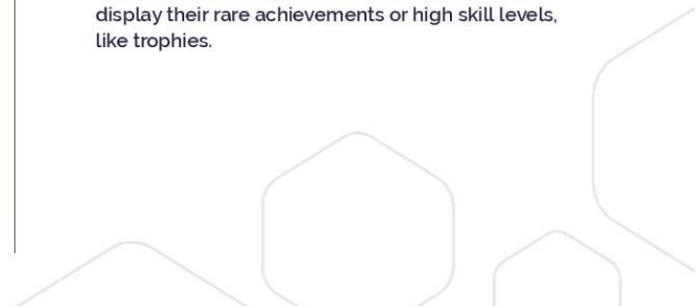
Objects that instantly benefit or add extra abilities to the game character, usually as a temporary effect. Power-Ups can be achieved by completing levels or found in purchased loot boxes.

Mod

Short for "modifying" a game, mods may take the form of new character skins, altered game mechanics or the creation of new game stories.

Skin

An aesthetic change to an item or player that doesn't serve any other function than to make your character look better. Players often use skins to display their rare achievements or high skill levels, like trophies.





From the Desk of Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects: Parent Tips & Resources



How to Talk to Youth About Gambling

Now that you know more about youth gambling, you can feel confident about starting the conversation with the child in your life.

- Explain that gambling results in losses more often than wins. Spending money on things they want is better than losing it all on a bet.
- Speak to students about the risks of gambling just as you would about the dangers of vaping, drug, and alcohol use.
- Teach them to speak up if they suspect gambling is affecting a friend or classmate.
- Publicly express your support for gambling-free youth events.
- Ask questions about their experiences with gambling – and listen to their answers.

Info from: https://changethegameohio.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/ForParents_4Pager.pdf



Interested in more resources to get the conversation started?

Sites like TimeOutOhio.com/gamban and GameQuitters.com are great places to start. Through Time Out Ohio you can receive access to GamBan, which blocks betting apps and third-party skins, at no cost for the first year.

1-800-589-9966



ChangeTheGameOhio.org

Take the Quiz



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