



National Council
on Problem Gambling



McGill

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Lotteries join forces to warn parents of risks to kids

NCPG teams up with McGill Centre and industry partners for responsible gambling message

The National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) joined the International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviours and lotteries on both sides of the border to warn parents this holiday season about the risks of giving lottery tickets and scratch cards as gifts to minors. “NCPG partnered with McGill’s Youth Gambling Centre – the leading academic center on youth gambling issues – on this campaign as we believe these concerns transcend borders and deserve comprehensive and practical responses,” explained Keith Whyte, executive director, National Council on Problem Gambling.

Loto Québec, the Centre’s original partner in this effort, was joined in 2006 by the Atlantic Lottery Corporation. The Centre welcomed the Nova Scotia Lottery and Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation in 2007. This year the Connecticut, Kentucky, Minnesota, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania Lotteries signed up, as did the Canadian Gaming Association and the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission. The collaborative campaign also received unanimous support from the Responsible Gaming Sub-committee of the North American Association of State and Provincial Lotteries (NASPL).

Additional groups are welcome to join as well. Participants received great press coverage and helped to spread this important responsible gambling message.

Research shows that the majority of adolescents gamble at least occasionally, and that lottery products may be a gateway to problem gambling. Gambling also is linked to other risk-taking behaviors. Studies indicate gamblers and problem gamblers are prone to engage in other addictive behaviors such as smoking, drinking and drug use.

“We know that playing the lottery at a young age can increase the potential for problem gambling later in life,” said Dr. Jeffrey Derevensky, co-director of the centre and a renowned expert on problem gambling among young people.

“The vast majority of persons who choose to engage in gaming activities do so responsibly; yet we cannot and do not ignore that gambling can be risky behavior, especially for our youth,” said Anne M. Noble, President and CEO of the Connecticut

Lottery. “While lottery tickets are popular, entertaining and affordable, we ask parents and caregivers to find more suitable gifts for their children and teenagers. We will continue to partner with our retailers and the mental health community to promote a clear message that gambling is not child’s play.”

“Although we make it clear to players in Kentucky that no one under the age of 18 can buy our tickets, it’s important to reiterate that parents shouldn’t give lottery tickets to kids a present,” said Arch Gleason, president of the World Lottery Association and president and CEO of the Kentucky Lottery Corporation. “Holiday-themed scratch-offs are a popular gift this time of year, but they should only be gifted to people who are old enough to play legally.”

On the Web: www.ncpgambling.com www.youthgambling.com

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