

Supporting those close to you:

How to talk about gambling harm

How to talk to someone I am worried about?

If you are concerned about a family member or friend, and you worry that they may have an issue with gambling, but you're unsure how to ask them about it, here are some ideas that may help to raise the issue, and what to say that may be helpful.

Stages of change

It might be helpful to think about the stages of change when talking to someone about their gambling, as this will help you understand where they're at, and what support they might need. The stages of change include:

1 - Not thinking about change

What you can do: Talk to them about your concerns and reassure that you care. Describe how their gambling behaviour impacts you, ask about their experiences.

2 - Thinking about change

What you can do: Keep talking to them about the impacts of their gambling behaviour and talk to them about the benefits of getting help for their gambling. Example benefits include having more money for you and your family, having more time and better mental health.

3 - Getting ready to change

What you can do: encourage them to get help from a gambling help service - offer to help them find a suitable service.

4 - Taking action to change

What you can do: Check in about what kind of support they would like to receive.

5 - Maintaining change

What you can do: Continue to check in and offer support.

Starting the conversation

Choose the right timing, let them know you want to listen, that they can come back to you later, that the door is always open for talking about it when they are ready.

Start with reassurance and care. Reinforce the positives. This can sound like:

- "Are you worried about gambling?"
- "I'm worried that something is upsetting you."
- "I'm here for you".
- "It's OK to ask for help".
- "There are lots of support options".
- "You don't need to talk to me, just talk to someone you feel ready and able to talk to."



Keep the conversation going

Once you've started the conversation, and know where they are at, you could support them by:

- staying positive
- reiterating that you care about them
- offering to help them find alternatives to gambling (e.g. social activities)
- building hope - reminding them recovery is possible, even if it takes time.

"Remember, a lapse or relapse is a normal part of the changing journey. If this happens, it might be helpful to normalise this and remind that person you care for that recovery is still possible"

Finding a help service

Getting help from professionally trained gambling counsellors is the most effective approach to starting their journey of recovery from gambling. Long-term recovery without professional support can be hard. This support also extends to anyone affected by gambling harm.

Throughout all stages, don't forget to look after yourself. Remember, you can seek help from a gambling help service if you have been impacted by someone's gambling

Need more information?

Scan the QR code for more information on how to support your family, friends or anyone close to you who may be affected



Visit the
Gambling Harm
Support SA
website

Need more support?

Phone and online counselling services are also available to anyone. These services can offer support and information to help support you or someone you care about.

Gambling Helpline

 1800 858 858

Gambling Help Online

 gamblinghelponline.org.au