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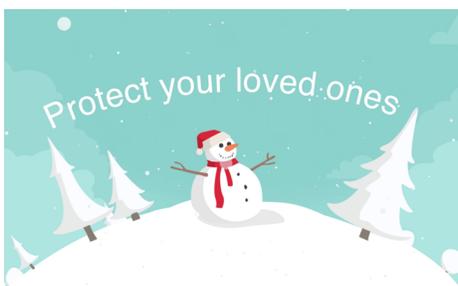
Gift Responsibly This Holiday Season

The Gift of Hanukkah Gelt

Whether your family celebrates Hanukkah or not, you've more than likely noticed "Chocolate Hanukkah gelt" (chocolate coins wrapped in gold foil) in stores. Did you know these little candies are part of a holiday tradition that dates back centuries? While, we are unable to pinpoint the exact moment in time or reason that gelt (Yiddish for "money") became part of the Hanukkah tradition, there are several popular (and interesting) theories.

Some suggest that Hanukkah gelt is linked to the coins created in celebration of the Maccabees' victory over the Ancient Greeks. Others believe that the tradition emerged around the 18th century in Eastern Europe as a way to recognize Jewish religious teachers for their service — similarly to how some families tip service workers or buy gifts for children's school teachers for Christmas. By the 19th century, it's noted that there was a shift in gelt giving from teachers to children, though no one is exactly sure why the shift occurred.¹

Although chocolate gelt has become a popular American tradition, many families in the U.S. and abroad still give money during Hanukkah. If you're planning on gifting gelt to a child or young adult this year, consider using the gift as a teaching moment on the importance of saving and the dangers of youth gambling.



Lotto Tickets Aren't Child's Play, Gift Responsibly

In Florida, statutory law prohibits the sale of lottery tickets to those under the age of 18 — and with good reason. While an adult purchasing alcohol, drugs, or tobacco as a gift for a minor would be widely frowned upon, the same perception does not extend to the various forms of gambling, including lottery tickets. We can no longer afford this double standard when research confirms that the receipt of scratch-off lottery tickets as gifts during childhood or adolescence is associated with risky-problematic gambling later in life.² In fact, many problem gamblers have their first experience with gambling as early as the age of nine.³

"Did you know that a study among Florida Middle and High School students revealed more than half (55%) reported participating in some type of gambling activity, and 24% of those were already classified as medium- to high-risk gamblers?⁴ This study also recognized strong correlations between youth gambling and problematic behavior in school such as truancy, poor grades, disorderly conduct,

and substance use. The adolescent brain is also vulnerable, specifically when it comes to decision making, impulsivity, and emotional reactivity, which can hinder their ability to make a rational and informed decision about whether to gamble," said Jennifer Kruse, the FCCG's Executive Director.

"Even through the cheer of the holiday season, parents and others need to be aware of the problem gambling risks inherent in giving lottery tickets to children. Alternative stocking stuffers are in no short supply, and this simple responsible gambling choice just makes sense for the holiday season," concluded Kruse.

If you would like to learn more about the dangers associated with youth gambling, tips for responsible gift giving, or to get help with a gambling problem, call our 24-hour problem gambling Helpline **888-ADMIT-IT** and connect with a Helpline Specialist today!



GET CONNECTED

Florida's Problem Gambling Helpline

888-ADMIT-IT

321-978-0555

gamblinghelp.org



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2. Kundu, Priya V et al. "Gambling-Related Attitudes and Behaviors in Adolescents Having Received Instant (Scratch) Lottery Tickets as Gifts." Journal of Adolescent Health: Official publication of the Society for Adolescent Medicine vol. 52,4 (2003): 456-64.
3. Derevensky, Jeffrey L, and Rina Gupta. Adolescents with Gambling Problems: From Research to Treatment. Journal of Gambling Studies, 2000. link.springer.com/article/10.1023/A:1009493200768.
4. Lieberman, Louis, and Mary Cuadrado. Gambling among Florida Middle and High School Students. The Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling, Inc., 2006. Gambling among Florida Middle and High School Students. www.gamblinghelp.org/assets/research_pdfs/Gambling_Among_Florida_Middle_and_High_School_Students.pdf.