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**“LOTTERY TICKETS AREN’T KIDS PLAY”**

**Give Responsibly**

The holiday season is upon us and cheer is in the air. As we begin the joy of gift giving, it is not uncommon for adults to utilize lottery tickets as stocking stuffers or slip them into holiday cards for minors. But is this an appropriate choice? The legal age for gambling on the lottery in Florida is 18 and research shows a strong association between age of onset and the severity of problem gambling among children receiving lottery tickets as gifts. Many problem gamblers report beginning to gamble at or around age 9 or 10 and are in fact, gambling before they use drugs, drink alcohol or use nicotine.

FCCG statistics on underage gambling in Florida indicate:

- 70-80% of adolescents report having gambled for money in the last year
- Almost one in five (18.5%) reported gambling on lottery tickets

National statistics on this issue indicate:

- 96% of adult male recovering gamblers’ gambled before age 14.

As many Lotteries across the country come together with problem gambling advocates to address gifting of Lottery tickets to minors, the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling encourages parents to use good judgment when making holiday gift selections for minor children. It is important to be mindful that more often than not a child’s first gambling experience will occur with a family member, potentially normalizing the belief that gambling is harmless to minors. Minimum age requirements are established to protect minors from early introduction to gambling activities. So as a rule when considering lottery products for gifts, always keep in mind the age of the recipient.

For additional information and interviews, contact:

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