

GIFT RESPONSIBLY

Gifting Lottery Tickets is Gambling with Their Future

Responsible Gifting Guide

Why Responsible Gifting Matters

The holidays are a time for celebration, connection, and joy. But some seemingly harmless gifts—like lottery tickets or gambling-themed games—can unintentionally expose children to risks. Research shows that early exposure to gambling increases the likelihood of developing problem gambling behaviors later in life.

That's why the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling (FCCG) participates in the Gift Responsibly Campaign: to help families choose gifts that inspire creativity, learning, and positive experiences, while avoiding items that normalize gambling.

Gifts to Avoid

Even when marketed as “fun” or “just for play,” these gifts can encourage gambling-like behaviors in children:

- Lottery tickets, including scratch-offs
- Casino-style toys or board games (slot machines, roulette, poker sets)
- Sports betting gift cards or fantasy sports credits
- Online gaming gift cards that can be used for gambling-style apps or simulated betting games
- Video games with loot boxes – These mechanics encourage players to spend money for a chance at random rewards. Loot boxes mimic gambling by combining risk, chance, and reward, and can normalize gambling-like habits in young players.



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Why It Matters

The Gift Responsibly Campaign strongly urges parents, family members, and caregivers to leave lottery tickets off children's gift lists, and helps to raise awareness of the dangers of youth gambling.

To help understand the risks of gifting lottery products to children, consider these alarming statistics that speak to the inherent dangers and consequences associated with youth gambling. Despite the legal gambling age of 18, Florida prevalence research revealed 18.5% of adolescents ages 13-17 reported purchasing lottery tickets in their lifetime and 12.5% within the past year.

In addition, the study found [1]:

- Lifetime participation in gambling was almost 70% among Florida residents, ages 13 to 17.
- Over 40% reported gambling in the past year and 11.5% identified as weekly gamblers.
- Adolescent problem gamblers also had much higher rates of alcohol, drug, and tobacco use.

It is our role as caregivers to have open conversations and talk about the risks of gambling and most importantly, choose age-appropriate, non-gambling-related gifts for children. **Call or text the 24/7, Confidential, and Multilingual 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine for problem gambling help, hope, and information. Learn more and access live chat on our website at gamblinghelp.org.**

References:

1. Shapira, N. A., Ferguson, M. A., Frost-Pineda, K., & Gold, M. S. (2002). Gambling and Problem Gambling Prevalence among Adolescents in Florida.



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Safer, Exciting Alternatives

Instead of gambling-related gifts, consider options that spark imagination, build skills, and create lasting memories:

Creative & Educational

- Art kits, craft supplies, or DIY projects
- Science experiment kits or STEM toys
- Musical instruments or beginner lessons
- Books tailored to a child's interests

Active & Experiential

- Sports equipment (basketball, soccer ball, jump rope)
- Dance, martial arts, or swim class vouchers
- Family passes to museums, zoos, or aquariums
- Outdoor adventure gear (roller skates, camping supplies)

Tech & Entertainment (Safe Choices)

- Puzzle games or strategy board games
- Coding kits or robotics sets
- Subscription boxes for crafts, science, or reading
- Age-appropriate video games without gambling mechanics

Memory-Making Experiences

- Tickets to a live show, concert, or sporting event
- Family game night bundles (classic board games, card games without gambling themes)
- Cooking or baking kits for kids
- Personalized gifts (photo books, custom puzzles, engraved keepsakes)



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Gifts of Lottery Tickets is Gambling with Their Future

Help Spread the Word!

- Download and share this guide with friends, family, and community partners.
- Talk openly with children about the risks of gambling and why certain gifts aren't appropriate.
- Spread awareness by posting on social media with the hashtag #GiftResponsibly.

