

Reconsider lotto tickets as holiday gifts for minors

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Results from recent studies show a growing number of high school students reportedly receive one or more lottery tickets or scratch cards as gifts. This, coupled with the increasing concern about adolescent problem gambling, has prompted the International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors at McGill University, the National Council on Problem Gambling, along with dozens of other lottery corporations around the globe, to collaborate again this holiday season to increase public awareness about the impact of giving lottery products as gifts to minors.

Strong evidence suggests that 70-80 per cent of adolescents have gambled for money in the past year and approximately 30 per cent are doing so on a weekly basis. Current problem gamblers report beginning to gamble during childhood, between the ages of 9 or 10.

"In a recent study conducted at Yale University by NCPG Board member Dr. Marc Potenza and colleagues, youngsters who received instant lottery tickets as a gift tended to begin gambling earlier in life – a possible risk factor for more severe gambling disorders later," noted NCPG executive director Keith Whyte. The researchers also reported a stronger association between age of gambling onset and problem gambling severity among those who received lottery tickets."

"We know that playing the lottery at a young age is inappropriate and can increase the potential for problem gambling later in life," said McGill professor Jeffrey Derevensky, co-director of the International

Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-[Risk Behaviors](#) at McGill University. "We welcome the [collaborative efforts](#) of lottery corporations to help make everyone aware of this issue. Together we can make a difference in preventing underage gambling and [gambling](#) problems."

Participating lotteries to date this year include: AB Svenska Spel (Sweden), Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission, Arizona Lottery, Atlantic Lottery, Austrian Lotteries, British Columbia Lottery Corporation, California Lottery, Camelot (United Kingdom), Colorado Lottery, Connecticut Lottery Corporation, Illinois Lottery, Hoosier (Indiana) Lottery, Hrvatska Lutrija d.o.o. (Croatia), Iowa Lottery, Kentucky Lottery Corporation, Loto-Québec, Manitoba Lotteries, Maryland Lottery, Massachusetts State Lottery Commission, Minnesota State Lottery, Missouri Lottery, New Mexico Lottery, North Carolina Education Lottery, Nova Scotia Gaming Corporation, Ohio Lottery Commission, Oklahoma Lottery Commission, Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation, Oregon Lottery, Rhode Island Lottery, Saskatchewan Lotteries, South Dakota Lottery, State Lottery of Serbia, Texas Lottery Commission, Vermont Lottery Commission, Virginia Lottery, Washington Lottery, and Wisconsin Lottery. Thanks to the Kentucky Lottery Corporation for graphic design services and the Minnesota State [Lottery](#) for sponsorship of the campaign. In addition, many state [problem gambling](#) advocacy organizations have also agreed to send a responsible gaming message during the holiday season.

Provided by McGill University

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