INFORMATION ON RISK OF ADDICTION ASSOCIATED WITH SPORTS BETTING AND ONLINE BETTING SERVICES

OFFERED TO TRAINERS ENGAGED IN VOLUNTARY WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Bundesinstitut für Öffentliche Gesundheit

CHECK DEIN SPIEL

DEUTSCHER FUSSBALL-BUND

Irrespective of whether someone is putting money on their favourite football team in the Bundesliga or on a table tennis match on the other side of the world, there is no shortage of opportunities to bet on sporting events. Particularly when it comes to online betting companies. When it comes to sports betting, it is essential to keep the following in mind:

SPORTS BETTING IS...

... gambling.
The outcome of or what happens in sporting events is largely down to chance and cannot reliably be predicted. It is easy to hugely overestimate the role of sports-related knowledge on one's chance of winning in sports betting. As is the case in all other games of chance, the house always wins!

... risky.
Nigh on one in three people who bet on sporting events exhibits risky gambling behaviour. Nearly one in five of them could be diagnosed with gambling addiction. What most people are unaware of is that sports betting is gambling and can be addictive.[1]

... ubiquitous.
It is virtually impossible to be into sport and not be exposed to sports betting. Adverts are plastered all over pitchside advertising boards. Favourite players' kits are emblazoned with logos. Even television adverts and influencers endeavour to tempt viewers and followers by highlighting the possibility of winning big.

... popular.
Around 10% of those aged 21-35 and around 5% of those aged 18-20 have already had a flutter on a sporting event. It is even the case that nearly 3% of those aged 16-17 have placed a bet already, despite sports betting being prohibited for that age group. Sports betting is particularly popular among men.

1 Buth, S.; Meyer, G.; Kalke, J. (2022): Glücksspielteilnahme und glücksspielbezogene Probleme in der Bevölkerung – Ergebnisse des Glücksspiel-Survey 2021. Institute of Interdisciplinary Addiction and Drug Research (ISD), Hamburg

WHY IS ONLINE SPORTS BETTING SO RISKY?

It is easy to overestimate one's ability to predict outcomes.
Many people feel that their knowledge of sports will enable them to predict results. The problem is that results and certain individual events are largely down to chance! It is just impossible to predict which team will be the winning side in a football match. Studies show that tips from football experts prove no more reliable than those from the uninitiated.

It is fun and exciting.
The dual kick stemming from passion for the sport and the thrill of betting poses a higher degree of risk and can increase the stakes.

Online sports betting is particularly risky because:

It is possible to gamble secretly and anonymously.
Because it is so accessible and the anonymity of it means that family and friends will not always notice that it is happening. It is conducive to secret gambling.

Transactions are made extremely easy.
Online payments make it easy to lose sight of how much you have bet already.

Spontaneous decisions add to the risk of addiction.
Live sporting events in particular encourage (and increase the risk of) spontaneous betting during the course of the event – on the next yellow card, for instance. These tend to be snap decisions with little forethought. Hence the system is designed to make losses more likely.

Sports betting is available round the clock.
It is possible to bet sizeable sums of money with only a few clicks at any time, day and night. This encourages spontaneous, rash betting.

NOTICED SOMETHING AMISS WITH SOMEONE YOU KNOW?

In the case of (online) sports betting, the risk of addiction may be regarded as particularly high. Young people are especially at risk. After all, they tend to be exceptionally **keen to experiment and have a strong urge to try out new things**. In addition, sports betting adverts are mainly targeted at young people, featuring role models such as sporting heroes or streaming influencers.

The **progression** from an occasional flutter to problem gambling behaviour is often **subtle** and not immediately recognisable as an issue. It is usually the case that gambling problems go unnoticed and unrecognised until very late in the day. Friends and acquaintances are often the first to spot that something is amiss.

So be particularly cautious if ...

- ... the person is neglecting hobbies and other interests.
- ... the person is constantly borrowing money.
- ... there are lots of arguments about the betting.
- ... the person becomes unreliable and fails to keep promises.
- ... the person often feels agitated, irritable or in a bad mood.
- ... the person is becoming increasingly withdrawn.
- ... the person is always short of money for important payments or purchases.

If the affected person is unsure as to whether or not his/her gambling behaviour could be considered to be problematic, he/she might wish to take a free self-test at **www.check-dein-spiel.de/tests/selbsttest/**

WHAT CAN I DO? COPING AND PREVENTION STRATEGIES

You can be a role model yourself. Set a good example and take a critical stance on sports betting. **Discuss with young people just how unlikely it is that they will genuinely win money through sports betting in the long run and discuss the associated risks.**

Keep communicating with anyone who is already engaged in betting. Why are they betting? How much money are they betting? Questions like these will automatically prompt the affected person to reflect on his/her gambling behaviour. If someone confides to you that they have some issues with gambling, you can pass on information, explain the self-exclusion option and support them with seeking help.

Speak to the parents too if you notice something amiss. You can draw the parents' attention to the third-party exclusion option and pass on information to them about counselling and support services for gambling issues.

9 tips for responsible betting to pass on:

- Gambling is only permitted for those aged 18+ (Protection of Young Persons Act)
- Setting betting limits
- Always incorporate a pause into the betting
- Pursue different hobbies and interests
- Regard sports betting as an expensive leisure activity
- Do not bet as a way of reducing anger or frustration
- Only bet money that you can afford to lose
- Do not bet under the influence of alcohol
- Avoid live betting, as this is especially risky!

If you notice that the affected person is unwilling or unable to put these tips into practice, this in itself might be indicative of problem gambling behaviour!

GAMBLING ADDICTION IS AN ILLNESS ...

Gambling addiction is an illness classified as an addictive disorder in the official diagnostic systems. **Gambling addiction is possible with sports betting too!** Gambling addiction can be diagnosed by either a general practitioner or a specialist.

... THAT IS TREATABLE!

If the affected person would like to change his/her gambling behaviour, **addiction counselling services** will be able to provide professional support. Addiction counselling is free of charge and can be done online or in person at a centre in the affected person's local area. A medical diagnosis is not required for this. Addiction counselling services will also provide information on further treatment and support options.

Self-help groups are another source of information and support for those affected and will give them opportunities to talk with others in a similar situation and learn from their experiences.

Medical or therapeutic treatment is usually provided in a specialist clinic. Health insurers or pension insurers will generally pick up the tab for the therapy. Find a specialist clinic in your local area at: **www.gluecksspielsucht.de/adr/index.php**.

Many specialist clinics and addiction counselling services offer workshops and appointments **for relatives too**! There are also self-help groups especially for relatives.

Affected persons can find further information on local counselling services at: **www.check-dein-spiel.de/hilfe-fuer-spieler/hilfe-vor-ort/**.

The emergency button guarantees swift help!
You can use the 'emergency' button to impose a temporary self-exclusion. Online sports betting providers are also required to feature these prominently on their websites. Those affected can use the button to block themselves from gambling on the site for 24 hours with immediate effect.

WHO CAN YOU TURN TO? SUPPORT SERVICES FOR THOSE AFFECTED AND THEIR RELATIVES

Information, counselling and tests from the BIÖG's 'Check Your Gambling' campaign

The BIÖG's information portal www.check-dein-spiel.de features

- a **self-test** and a **knowledge test**: **www.check-dein-spiel.de/tests/**
- an **online quitting programme for those affected** called 'Check Out': **www.check-dein-spiel.de/check-out/**
- an **online counselling programme for relatives** called 'Time Out': **www.check-dein-spiel.de/time-out/**
- an **e-mail counselling service for those affected** and their relatives: **www.check-dein-spiel.de/hilfe-fuer-spieler/e-mail-beratung/**

BIÖG advice line

The BIÖG's advice line (**+49 (0) 800 137 27 00**) is aimed at **those involved in gambling, their relatives and any interested parties** and is free of charge and anonymous.

Information material

- Downloadable **brochure containing information for relatives**: 'Nothing working any more? – What relatives of gambling addicts can do to help': **https://shop.bioeg.de/nichts-geht-mehr-was-angehoerigen-von-gluecksspielsuechtigen-helfen-c-386/**
- **Brochure containing information on the topic of sports betting for those affected: https://shop.bioeg.de/wetten-du-gibst-alles-infobroschuere-c-342/**

At **https://shop.bioeg.de/themen/suchtvorbeugung/gluecksspielsucht-praevention/** you will find further helpful information material on the topic of gambling addiction.

Self-exclusion and third-party exclusion

A blocking system exists to help protect people from the potential risks of online gambling (e.g. sports betting) addiction, and this system is mandatory for (online) sports betting. There is also a third-party exclusion enabling relatives to block gamblers from sports betting! Further information on self-exclusion and third-party exclusion: **https://rp-darmstadt.hessen.de/sicherheit-und-kommunales/gluecksspiel/spielersperrsystem-oasis/spieler-faqs**.

INFORMATION ON THE TOPIC OF (ONLINE) SPORTS BETTING AND GAMBLING ADDICTION

BIÖG ADVICE LINE: +49 (0) 800 -1 37 27 00
Free personal advice, anonymous on request:
Monday to Thursday 10:00 – 22:00, Friday to Sunday 10:00 – 18:00

WWW.CHECK-DEIN-SPIEL.DE
Extensive information and help portal with detailed self-test, knowledge test and online quitting programme.

Germany has a **State Treaty on Gambling**. This treaty stipulates that gambling providers must hold a state permit to provide gambling services legally, which is the only way to ensure mandatory compliance with requirements protecting young persons and gamblers! All providers that hold a state permit are featured on the so-called '**White List**' on this website:
www.gluecksspiel-behoerde.de/de/

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