

LOTTERY TICKETS ARE NOT CHILD'S PLAY: GIVE RESPONSIBLY

December 9, 2021 –With the holidays quickly approaching, District Health Department #10 (DHD#10) discourages families and friends from giving lottery tickets or scratch-off instant games to children as gifts. While they may seem like the perfect stocking stuffer or gift to throw in a card, giving lottery tickets and scratch-offs to anyone under the age of 18 can have serious unintended consequences.

Lottery tickets and scratch-offs are common gifts across the United States and might seem like innocent fun. They are affordable, convenient, and have an element of surprise as everyone waits to reveal whether they won money or not. However, winning is based on luck and it isn't likely to happen often. Most adults can comprehend this, but for a child, even winning a small amount of money can seem significant. For example, winning a \$40 prize would be appreciated by an adult, but that same prize can have a stronger impact on a young teen, tempting them to play again. According to The National Council on Problem Gambling, research has shown that the earlier children are given opportunities to gamble, the more likely they are to develop a gambling problem.

This year, protect your children by reminding family members and friends that lottery tickets and scratch-offs are not appropriate gifts for your kids. Consider having a conversation about gambling with your kids. For helpful talking tips, visit www.responsiblegambling.org/for-the-public/safer-play/how-to-talk-to-your-kids-about-gambling/. It's never too early to talk to them about problem gambling and why it's important for them to wait until they are older to make any decisions about gambling. Offer them other fun, safe and healthy activities to do instead of scratching lottery tickets and guessing lottery numbers. Other activities could include playing a board game as a family, decorating holiday cookies, or completing a craft project together.

For more information about problem gambling and how to get help for someone experiencing problems, please visit: <https://www.dhd10.org/men-women/problem-gambling/>.

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