

Knights of Saint Columba

Accrington Council 188

Bulletin No.2- H26

Source Christian Institute

A new report by the Gambling Commission has revealed that around 55,000 young people are “problem gamblers”.

The report also found that 69 per cent of 11 to 16-year-olds had seen or heard some form of gambling adverts.

Tim Miller, Executive Director of the Gambling Commission encouraged parents, teachers and the Government to help protect children.

'Living nightmare'

The Young People and Gambling Survey 2019 estimated that 55,000 11 to 16-year-olds in England, Scotland and Wales would be classified as problem gamblers.

The findings also revealed one in ten young people have received direct marketing from gambling companies on social media.

The Lord Bishop of St Albans, Alan Smith, said the figures showed that tens of thousands of families could be “living in a nightmare”.

He added: “A civilised, modern society must not accept this crisis as normal or become content with it.”

Concern

The Gambling Commission's Tim Miller said: “Any child or young person that experiences harm from these areas is a concern to us and we are absolutely committed to doing everything we can to protect them from gambling harms.”

“We have tightened rules and requirements around age verification to prevent children and young people from accessing age restricted products, put free-to-play games behind paywalls, and clamped down on irresponsible products.”

He added that it was the duty of parents, charities and Government bodies to work together to protect children and young people from gambling harms.

Exposed

Earlier this month, researchers in Wales found that almost half of children had gambled in the past year.

Academics at Cardiff University found that 41 per cent of 11 to 16-year-olds in Wales had engaged in some form of gambling activity in the twelve months before the study.

Fruit machines in pubs and arcades were the most popular form of gambling. Scratchcards were one of the next most common.

Researcher Dr Graham Moore said: “More work needs to be done, with policymakers, schools, families and young people, to understand how young people's exposure to gambling can be reduced.”

Bernard Holden MBE JP

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