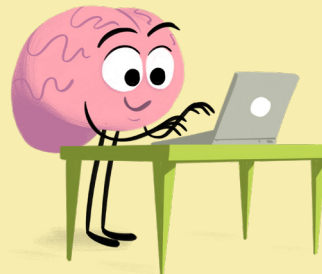




Brain Connections is a series of educational tools designed to share current research about gambling and the brain.



**BRAIN
CONNECTIONS**



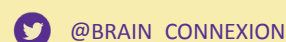
GAMBLING: WHY CAN'T I STOP?

Brain Connections is a collaboration between
The City of Hamilton's Alcohol, Drug, & Gambling Services
&
The Peter Boris Centre for Addictions Research



**GAMBLING RESEARCH
EXCHANGE ONTARIO**
DRIVING KNOWLEDGE INTO ACTION

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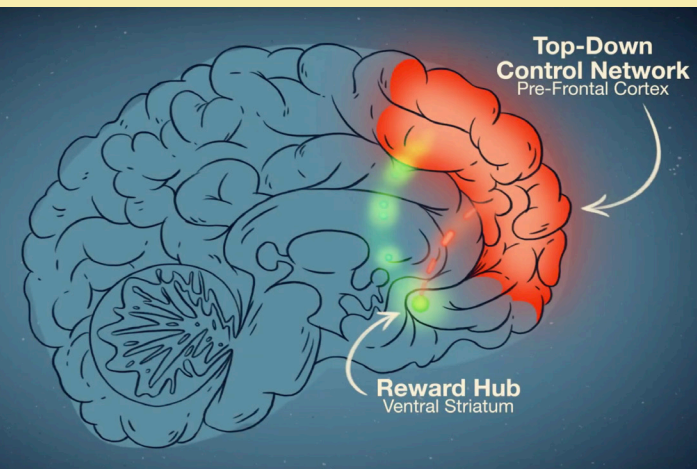
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GAMBLING: WHY CAN'T I STOP?

One reason why gambling is hard to stop is because it affects your brain.

Gambling is like pressing the gas pedal of your car. Your brain's reward hub 'fires up' as you think about a win.

Your brain also has a brake system. The 'top-down control network' is used when you want to stop gambling.

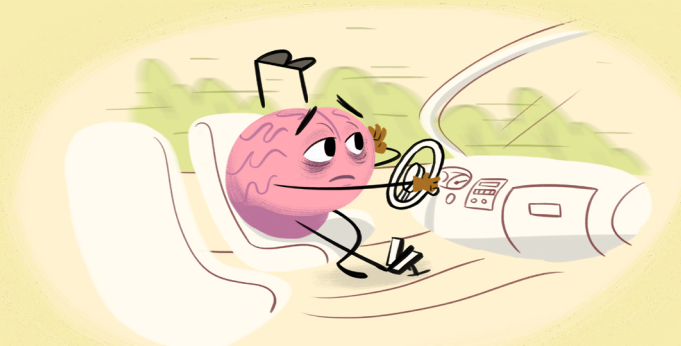


Your brain's gas and brake pedals
The reward hub and the top-down-control network

When your gas and brake pedals work, it's easier to control your gambling.

For some people though, gambling no longer 'fires up' the brain with excitement.

So, to feel pleasure, they 'floor it' by gambling more.



Pressing the gas by gambling too much can lead to problems

Meanwhile, their brakes may be faulty. They might not notice it's time to stop gambling.

Or, if they try to stop, the brakes may not work.

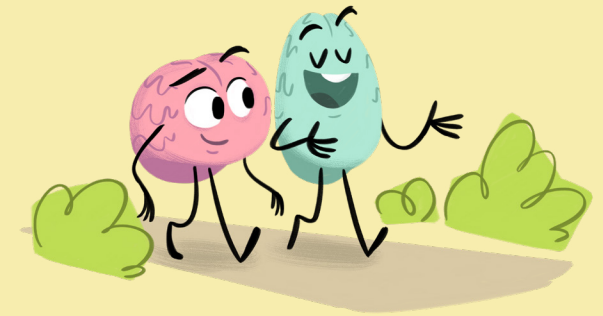


It can be hard to notice signs and put on the brakes

If you think that your gas and brake pedals are worn out:

- Step back from gambling and give your brain a rest.

- Reward yourself with other activities that you enjoy (e.g., a social activity, a good meal, a hug, a hobby).



Give yourself a break and try other rewards!

- Remember that games are designed to keep you playing longer. Set limits on your time and money.

- If you're worried about gambling, talk to someone you trust or get help from a counsellor.