

Five ways to engage millennials around responsible gambling

A new generation, the millennials, is set to drive the bottom line of casinos and gambling operators across the country. According to Reshaping the Workforce Survey by PWC, this demographic group is expected to make up 50% of the workforce by 2020 and will soon be the most dominant group with the biggest spending power. For the South African Responsible Gambling Foundation (SARGF) engaging with millennials about how to gamble responsibly is key as casinos and other operators work on creating new products and services to attract this market.

The SARGF has already swung into action engaging with this audience through its National Schools Programme and the campaign “Taking Risks Wisely” which provides millennials with information about problem gambling through public education campaigns, exhibitions, social media, workshops and training. The initiative reaches out to Grade 7-8 and Grade 10-12 and last year 27,000 learners were engaged through this programme.

The dangers of underage gambling for millennials is a key message for the Foundation’s Taking Risks Wisely campaign. “With the proliferation of illegal online gambling sites, social gambling (where players gamble through sites like Facebook) and the accessibility of street gambling activities like Fafi and dice, we do feel there is an urgent need to educate millennials about underage gambling and how it not only illegal but can develop into a sinister problem gambling habit,” says Sibongile Simelane-Quntana, SARGF Executive Director.

Speaking at this year’s Gambling Indaba, Simelane-Quntana highlighted five ways that the Foundation has identified to successfully engage with millennials around responsible gambling and the dangers of illegal underage gambling.

They are:

1. Speak to millennials on their own platforms. With the saturation of mobile phones and the increase in chat apps like WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger it is essential to reach this audience on the communication platforms that they use.



2. Talk to them in their own language. It is believed that millennials are at the forefront of driving the first language shift in this century. Abbreviations like LOL and BTW are commonplace in their world. Simelane-Quntana believes it's not about copying the way millennials communicate as this might come across as inauthentic but it's about being aware of the changes and also keeping the messages concise and simple.
3. Highlighting ethics and social responsibility is very important when connecting with millennials. A recent Nielsen study showed that this group is more inclined to buy from brands and organisations that have a high reputation in corporate social responsibility. "We want to encourage operators to collaborate with the Foundation and promote their affiliation and support of the Foundation and responsible gambling. It can only enhance their reputation as good corporate citizens to this audience." says Simelane-Quntana.
4. Visual content is key. The Foundation has developed its own comic book and information pamphlets to engage with learners around the country. Through a gripping story line, the SARGF comic book educates young people about underage gambling, the dangers of problem gambling and also shows them how to get help.
5. Spark their interest. Millennials are a demanding group who have grown up with access to many different sources of information. The Foundation engages millennials through the medium of Industrial theatre in schools where a vibrant play unpacks the dangers of developing a gambling problem through a meaningful and believable story. Millennials are also kept informed through the Foundation's targeted youth programme that engages with youth who have left school.

"While gambling is an enjoyable leisure and entertainment activity for many millennials who are over the age of 18, it important for this group to realise that occasionally causal gambling can lead to them getting in over their heads. At the Foundation we plan to continue to increase our reach and promote responsible gambling through our youth awareness programmes for this group." says Simlene- Quntana.

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Issued by Kaelo Engage on behalf of the South African Responsible Gambling Foundation

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Editor's notes:

The SARGF is a non-profit company, public-private initiative between Government and the gambling industry that is committed to promoting responsible gambling in South Africa and provides sustainable social solutions to the gambling Industry. The SARGF directs out a number of activities related to responsible gambling, including integrated treatment and counselling; public awareness; education; and training and research. The National Responsible Gambling Programme (NRGP) under the pay offline 'Winners Know When to Stop' is an initiative of the SARGF and The Foundation works closely with operators, regulators and civil society providing training to casino staff and operators to enable them to identify problem gamblers and direct them towards free treatment and counselling.

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