

## 2013 ART CONTEST AWARDS

### Local students earn gambling awareness art awards.

Two Tillamook County students earned first and second place awards for their artwork submitted to the 2013 Tillamook County Middle School Student (grades 6-8) Problem Gambling Awareness Art Contest sponsored for the third consecutive year by Tillamook Family Counseling Center.

**Jeremiah Gingrich**, a seventh-grader at Tillamook Junior High School, earned first place (\$50).

**Jennifer Verdin**, an eighth-grader at Tillamook Junior School, earned second place (\$25).

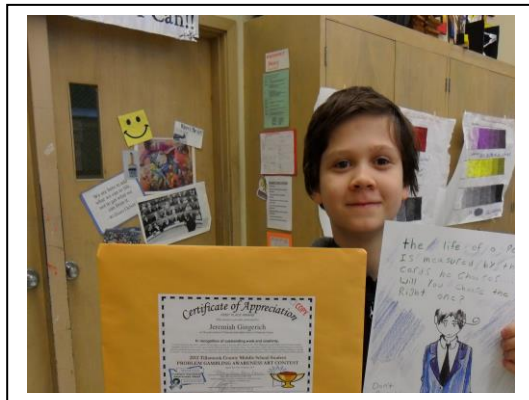
Gingrich's award-earning entry features a boy holding one card in each hand, with one card reading "Life" and the other card reading "Death" with the words "Don't gamble" written next to the "Death" card. The message at the top of the entry reads, "The life of a person is measured by the cards he chooses... Will you choose the right one?"

Verdin's entry features playing cards and stacks of poker chips and this message, "Gambling addiction is a problem many of us are not aware of."

Both students received their award at TJHS, in art teacher Nancy Bernard's classroom.

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Jeremiah Gingrich, TJHS 7th-grader earned 1<sup>st</sup> place.



Jennifer Verdin, TJHS 8th-grader earned 2<sup>nd</sup> place.

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**Why a youth art contest in Tillamook County?** The contest aims to increase awareness of problem and addictive gambling in Tillamook County and related risks – especially to youth. The contest coincides with "Problem Gambling Awareness Week in Tillamook County" proclaimed for a week in March by Tillamook County Commissioners for the past 3 years, based on a request by Mary Ann Dearborn with Tillamook Family Counseling Center, following Dearborn's presentation of facts:

- Gambling can be as addictive as alcohol or drugs for some people – and gambling is especially risky for youth.
- Exposing children and teens to addictive substances (like alcohol or drugs) or addictive behaviors (like gambling) increases the risks of developing addiction in adulthood, because of adolescent brain development.
- Youth gambling in Tillamook County is a serious concern:
  - Gambling was the Number 1 youth risk behavior reported by Tillamook County youth, according to the Oregon Student Wellness Survey (OSWS), 2010 data.
  - Tillamook County 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> graders reported much higher rates for gambling than use of substances, i.e., alcohol and other drugs – including tobacco (OSWS, 2010).
  - Tillamook County youth also reported that adults (parents and teachers) talked to them less about risks of gambling than risks of substance use (OSWS, 2010).
  - Tillamook County youth gambling rates exceed statewide rates, according to a more recent Oregon Student Wellness survey (OSWS), 2012 data:
    - Tillamook County 8<sup>th</sup> graders report Internet gambling at higher than statewide rates (OSWS, 2012).
    - And, Tillamook County 11<sup>th</sup> graders report higher than statewide rates for Lottery, dice and card gambling (OSWS, 2012).
  - Tillamook County 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> graders who reported gambling also reported higher than statewide rates for problems related to gambling, i.e., lied about betting or gambling; bet or gambled more than I wanted to; felt bad about my betting or gambling, etc. (OSWS, 2012).

**What can YOU do to help?** Learn about risks -- share what you know – don't expose youth to gambling. Information about the problem is available – and help for problem/addictive gambling, in Oregon, is free, confidential – and it works! Call 1-877-MY-LIMIT or visit [www.1877mylimit.org](http://www.1877mylimit.org) .

By Mary Ann Dearborn, LCSW, CPS  
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