

## PROBLEM GAMBLING AWARENESS: WARNING SIGNS



# WHEN GAMBLING is more than a game, no one wins.

It's not whether you win or lose, but how you play the game. Three percent of the population may have a gambling problem and the way they play puts them and their families at financial and emotional risk.

### Warning Signs

A problem gambler might exhibit one or more of the following warning signs:

- Preoccupied with gambling and unable to stop
- Bragging about gambling, exaggerating wins and minimizing losses
- Restless and irritable when not gambling
- Gambling to escape
- Borrowing money for gambling
- Lying to hide time spent gambling or unpaid debts
- Frequent unexplained absences
- Losing work time because of gambling
- Doing something illegal to get money for gambling
- Jeopardizing a significant relationship or job by gambling

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**Keep It In Perspective**

Problem gambling is not a bad habit or a moral weakness. It is a serious condition and with the help of treatment, problem gamblers can put the game in perspective and make decisions to improve their lives.

**If playing isn't fun any more, call for help.  
National Problem Gambling HelpLine:**

**1-800-522-4700**

Free. Confidential. 24-hours a day. 7-days a week.

## **PROBLEM GAMBLING AWARENESS: REACHING OUT**



# **IF SOMEONE You know is gambling for more than fun, they may have a problem**

### **Reaching Out**

Just thinking about talking to someone about a gambling problem can be scary, but knowing how to begin can help you find the courage to start the conversation. First choose a comfortable place where you won't be disturbed, then keep it simple and straightforward.

- **Tell the person you care about him and you're concerned about how he is acting.**
- **Tell the person exactly what she's done that concerns you.**
- **Tell the person how his behavior is affecting other people – and be specific.**
- **Be clear about what you expect from them (“I want you to talk to someone about your gambling.”) and what they can expect from you (“I won't cover for you any more.”).**
- **After you've told the person what you've seen and how you feel, allow him to respond. Listen with a non-judgmental attitude.**
- **Let the person know you are willing to help, but don't try to counsel him yourself.**
- **Give the person information, not advice. Encourage her to call the National Problem Gambling HelpLine.**

## **PROBLEM GAMBLING AWARENESS: REACHING OUT**

### **When Their Problem Is Your Problem**

If you are the spouse or family member of a problem gambler, it is important for you to take care of yourself and realize that you are not responsible for the gambler's behavior.

Even if your loved one isn't ready or willing to get help, you may want to call the Problem Gambling HelpLine or talk to a counselor yourself.

### **Make the Call**

A problem gambler doesn't necessarily need to "hit bottom" to decide to get help. To get specific advice on how and when to approach the problem gambler you know, call the National Problem Gambling HelpLine **1-800-522-4700**, or log on to [www.npgaw.org](http://www.npgaw.org).

## RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING GUIDELINES



# RESPONSIBLE Gambling Guidelines

**IF YOU'RE CONCERNED** that gambling is becoming more than a game for you, try using these guidelines to moderate your play.

- **Think of the money you lose as the cost of your entertainment. Consider any money you win a bonus.**
- **Set a dollar limit and stick to it.**
- **Set a time limit and stick to it. Leave when you reach your limit, whether you're winning or losing.**
- **Understand that you'll probably lose, and accept the loss as part of the game.**
- **Don't borrow money to gamble.**
- **Don't let gambling interfere with or become a substitute for family, friends or work.**
- **Don't chase losses. Chances are you'll lose even more trying to recoup your losses.**
- **Don't use gambling as a way to cope with emotional or physical pain.**
- **Know the warning signs of problem gambling.**

If your gambling is no longer an enjoyable activity, ask yourself: Why am I still playing? and call the National Problem Gambling HelpLine **1-800-522-4700** or log on to [www.npgaw.org](http://www.npgaw.org).