

Welcome!

The Nevada Opioid Center of Excellence (NOCE) is dedicated to developing and sharing evidence-based training and offering technical assistance to professionals and community members alike. Whether you're a care provider or a concerned community member, NOCE provides resources to support those affected by opioid use.

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Intersection of Gambling & Opioid Use Disorder

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- * Essential Healing and Consulting, Private Practice: Board Approved Supervisor
- * Johns Hopkins University: Health Behavior Specialist
- * Baltimore Crisis Response, Inc.: Mental Health Counselor
- * University of Maryland Addiction Treatment Center - Methadone Maintenance: Addiction Therapist

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Learning Objectives

- ***Increase awareness of the potential harms related to gambling, the impact on the family and importance of financial wellness.***
- ***Understand the connection between gambling and other substance use and addictive disorders and how problematic gambling may affect treatment outcomes***
- ***Identify evidenced based gambling screening tools, ways to integrate gambling conversations into your practice, and resources to support recovery.***

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Gambling Defined

Gambling is the wagering of something of value, on an activity with an uncertain outcome, with the intent of winning something else of value.

Gamblers Anonymous:

"Any betting or wagering for self or others, whether for money or not, no matter how slight or insignificant, where the outcome is uncertain or depends upon chance or 'skill,' constitutes gambling." (1994)

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Problem Gambling Awareness Month (PGAM)

Problem Gambling Awareness Month is a nationwide grassroots campaign, held annually in March, that seeks to increase public awareness of problem gambling and promote prevention, treatment, and recovery services.

PGAM Goals:

- To increase public awareness of problem gambling and the availability of prevention, treatment and recovery services.
- To encourage healthcare providers to screen clients for problem gambling.



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Seeking Understanding

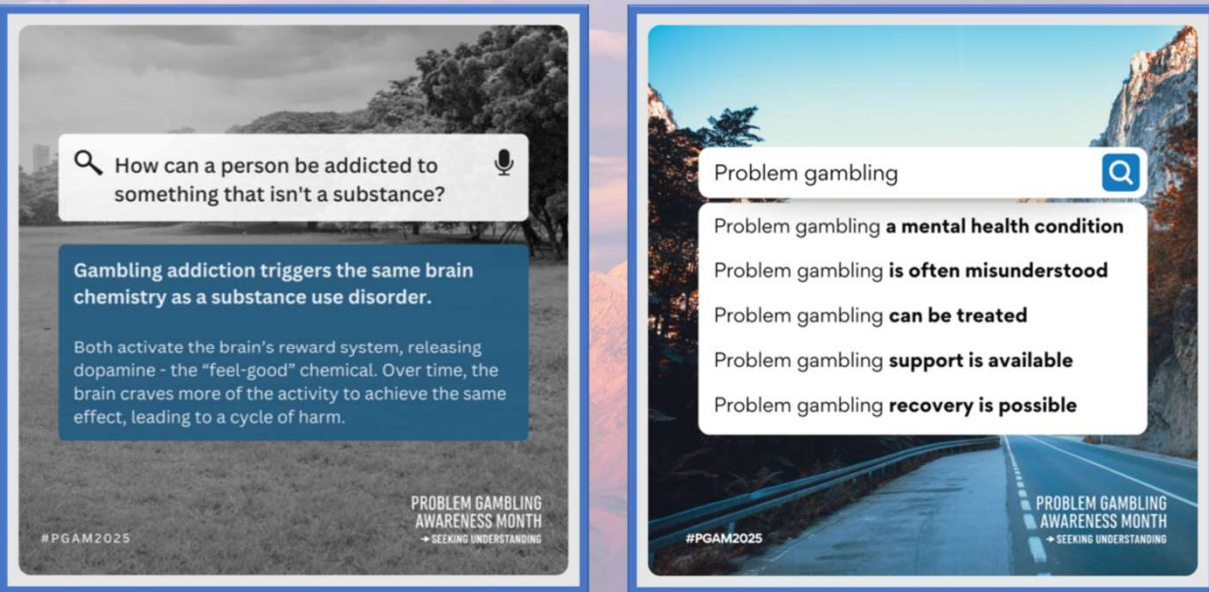
The 2025 Problem Gambling Awareness Month theme, "Seeking Understanding," focuses on increasing awareness of problem gambling as a serious but often misunderstood mental health condition.

By fostering a deeper understanding of the issue, we can encourage empathy, reduce barriers to treatment, and provide support to those affected by gambling-related harm.

#PGAM2025



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How can a person be addicted to something that isn't a substance?

Gambling addiction triggers the same brain chemistry as a substance use disorder.

Both activate the brain's reward system, releasing dopamine - the "feel-good" chemical. Over time, the brain craves more of the activity to achieve the same effect, leading to a cycle of harm.

#PGAM2025

PROBLEM GAMBLING AWARENESS MONTH
+ SEEKING UNDERSTANDING

Problem gambling

Problem gambling **a mental health condition**

Problem gambling **is often misunderstood**

Problem gambling **can be treated**

Problem gambling **support is available**

Problem gambling **recovery is possible**

#PGAM2025

PROBLEM GAMBLING AWARENESS MONTH
+ SEEKING UNDERSTANDING

<https://www.ncpgambling.org/pa-resources/pgam-toolkit/>

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- ***An estimated 2.5 million US adults (1%) meet the criteria for severe gambling problems each year.***
- Another 5-8 million (2-3%) meet one or more of the criteria for gambling disorder and are experiencing problems due to their gambling behavior.
- Disordered gambling can affect 7-10 people in one's immediate circle.



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Prevalence of Gambling Problems in Nevada



Nevada Council on Problem Gambling:

- Nevada has one of the highest rates of adult problem gambling (6%) in the United States.
- Between 10% and 15% of people with substance use disorders may also have a gambling problem.
- 1 in 4 Nevada households report being affected by problem gambling.

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The Costs of Gambling

The National Council on Problem Gambling estimates that the annual national social cost of problem gambling is about \$14 billion




- Decreased quality of life
- Diminished psychological and physical health
- Unemployment
- Debt and poor credit
- Homelessness
- Increased healthcare costs
- Increased crime costs
- Increased risk of suicide


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Many people who gamble, do so responsibly.


Prevention and Treatment is imperative to reduce harms.




Approximately 85% of U.S. adults have gambled at least once in their lives; 60% in the past year.



An estimated 6% of American college students struggle with gambling related problems.




The likelihood of developing gambling disorder increases 23 times for people affected by alcohol use disorders.




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Problematic and Disordered Gambling prevalence rates are higher for:




casino employees




college students




lower socioeconomic status




men, but women are catching up




prison populations




ethnic minority groups



mental health & substance use disorders



veterans and/or first responders



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RISK FACTORS for Problematic or Disordered Gambling in Adolescents

- Having parents with gambling problems
- Having an earlier age of first gambling activity
- Possessing greater impulsivity
- Having areas of poor functioning, including medical, psychiatric, and/or substance use disorders and family/social problems



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Video Game Ratings Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB)

- C for Early Childhood
- E for Everyone
- Everyone 10+
- T for Teen
- M for Mature 17+ (violence, blood, sexual content, strong language)
- A for Adults Only 18+ (intense violence, graphic sexual content and/or gambling with real currency)
- *RP for rating pending is used for advertising and promotional marketing*



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<https://www.esrb.org/ratings-guide/>

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Video Game Ratings Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB)

• **Gambling Themes:**

- Prominently featured images or activities that are typically associated with real-world gambling even if they are not directly simulating a gambling experience.

• **Simulated Gambling:**

- Player can gamble without betting or wagering real cash or currency. Typically assigned to simulations of casino-based gambling.

• **Real Gambling:**

- Player can gamble, including betting or wagering real cash or currency.



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What Is A Loot Box?



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- Found within electronic games that encourage players to purchase chance-based items called loot boxes.
- Spending a small sum of real money on an uncertain outcome.

Gambling?



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Loot Boxes: Risk for Future Gambling

In several studies it is found that those who spend money on loot boxes are more likely to be problem gamers or problem gamblers. *(King, 2019)*

Gamers who buy 'loot boxes' are up to **two times more likely to gamble**, shows new research published today in the peer-reviewed journal *Addiction Research & Theory*.

(Sophie G. Coelho, et.al. 2022)

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DSM-5 Internet Gaming Disorder

Proposed Criteria

1. Preoccupation with gaming
2. Withdrawal symptoms when gaming is taken away or not possible (sadness, anxiety, irritability)
3. Tolerance, the need to spend more time gaming to satisfy the urge
4. Inability to reduce playing, unsuccessful attempts to quit gaming
5. Giving up other activities, loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities due to gaming
6. Continuing to game despite problems
7. Deceiving family members or others about the amount of time spent on gaming
8. The use of gaming to relieve negative moods, such as guilt or hopelessness
9. Risk, having jeopardized or lost a job or relationship due to gaming



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DSM-5 Internet Gaming Disorder

- Under the proposed criteria, a diagnosis of internet gaming disorder would require experiencing five or more of these symptoms within a year. The condition can include gaming on the internet with others or alone.
- Identified as a condition warranting further research and consideration for inclusion in the DSM-5 as a formal disorder. Currently recognized by the World Health Organization and International Classification of Diseases.
- Currently, the criteria for this condition are limited to Internet gaming and **does not** include general use of the internet, online gambling or social media.



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Risk Factors for Problematic Gambling

- Male
- An early big win
- Single or Divorced
- Gambling before legal age
- Lower Socioeconomic status
- Adverse Childhood Events/Trauma
- Family History of gambling disorder
- Hold mistaken beliefs about the odds of winning
- Have a history of risk-taking or impulsive behavior
- History of substance use or other behavioral health disorder
- Proximity to or Working at a casino or other gambling venue



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The granddaddy of them all: Sports betting has been legal in Nevada since 1949

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Sports Betting in Nevada

- While gambling was legalized in the Silver State in 1931 in attempt to recover from the Great Depression, sports gambling wasn't legalized until 1949.
- The state was grandfathered in when Congress passed the Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act (PASPA) in 1992, prohibiting future state expansion of sports betting.
- Thus, Nevada was the only state to offer sports betting until 2018 when the Supreme Court decision *Murphy v National Collegiate Athletic Association* ruled PASPA unconstitutional, allowing states beyond Nevada to legalize sports betting, including online wagers.

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Nevada: American Gaming Association

- **Age Restrictions:** Patrons must be 21 years old to participate in sports wagering.
- **Credit offered to Patrons:** Operators are required to have programs through which patrons may self-limit their access to check cashing and credit issuance.
- **Cashless Gaming & Alternative Payments:** Cashless wagering is permitted per Nevada regulations, including remote ID verification for cashless betting on table games and slot machines.
 - Cryptocurrencies are not permitted as a form of payment for gambling transactions.



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Nevada: American Gaming Association

- **On-Premise Display Requirement:** Problem gambling information must be prominently displayed near gaming areas, cage areas and ATMs. A link to a problem gaming website that is designed to offer information pertaining to responsible gambling must be prominently displayed on the operator's website.
- **Mobile/Online:** Betting on sports via mobile apps is available throughout the state. Wagering app accounts may be established remotely and patrons' identity may also be verified remotely as of January 2022.



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As sports betting expands... the risk of gambling related harm does as well.

The National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) reports a significant increases in calls, texts, and chats to the National Problem Gambling Helpline, ***nearly a 45% increase in calls between 2021 and 2022.***



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Gambling Terms: *Handicapping and Parlay*

- ***Handicapping*** is the practice of assigning advantage through scoring compensation or other advantage given to different contestants to equalize the chances of winning.
 - The word also applies to the various methods by which the advantage is calculated.
- ***Parlay*** is a single bet that links together two or more individual wagers, usually seen in sports betting.
 - Winning the parlay is dependent on all of those wagers winning together. If any of the bets in the parlay lose, the entire parlay loses.



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Why Online Gambling Is The Next Opioid Crisis

Breaking Points: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qJw7II09KeE&t=18s>

- Online sports betting revenue has generated an estimated ½ trillion dollars since 2018
- 50% of online gambling revenue is from individuals that never saw a profit from their gambling, questions are raised about exploiting those with problems or gambling addiction
- Some states require income statements, yet persons may gamble outside of their financial ability
- More likely to be showered with promotional play if (even appear to be) wagering late at night, with increasing amounts, etc. that would indicate some one may have problems with gambling responsibly



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Why Online Gambling Is The Next Opioid Crisis

Breaking Points: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qJw7II09KeE&t=18s>

- Report trends of destigmatization of other substances leading to treatment resources and restrictions to protect the public – what about gambling?
- Parlay bets: biggest pay out and loss rates – 60% placing these types of bets
Marketed by industry
- Online gambling offers limited protections. Anonymous purchasing, no in person verification of ID, ability to use credit cards vs. cash
- Cigarette and alcohol companies are not allowed to target youth, yet DraftKings was the sponsor of the 2024 MTV Video Music Awards best new artist category which allowed social voting from viewers
- Gamblers Anonymous seen an increase in request for help for those as young as 14



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Factors attributed to growth

- *Easy access to mobile sports betting*
- *Increased exposure to sports betting*
 - Sports broadcasts
 - Sports-betting advertisements
 - Celebrity and athlete endorsements/partnerships ~ *normalizing and encouraging betting*

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Women and Sports Betting

<https://sportshandle.com/wagering-women-sports-betting>

As of 2021:

- 4.6 million **NEW** female users joined sportsbook betting apps
- Up **115%** from previous year
 - In comparison, the rate of men using sports betting apps grew by 63% over the same period
- **Faster rate than men**
 - Women comprise less than a third of all sports bettors

- Specific marketing to women
- Legalization
- Mobile Betting: the ability to bet from home, it makes it easier for women to bet on sports
- Interest in Women's Sports: Increase of Women's sports partners and sponsorship by sportsbooks
- Gender and generational

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Gender Differences

- Men still have higher rates of problematic gambling than women.
- Nearly equal numbers of women and men seek treatment for gambling related problems.
- Women are still under-represented in Gamblers Anonymous.
- Men start earlier in life. Women, start later and progress more quickly.
- LGBTQ+ population understudied



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Gambling and Ethnicity: DSM-5

- Higher rates of problematic gambling among Americans of African descent than Americans of European descent.
- Rates for Latinx Americans are similar to European Americans in some studies and higher in others.
 - [Similar conflicting research for Asian Americans.](#)
- Higher prevalence rates among Native and Indigenous populations.

In general, the *most marginalized group* within a region will have a higher rate of developing gambling disorder.



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Gambling and Ethnicity

Reviews of prevalence studies worldwide:

- *Higher rates of problematic gambling among minority ethnic groups*
- *More recent immigrants are likely to have higher rates of problematic gambling*



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Problematic Gambling among U.S. Veterans



- US military veterans have higher rates of Gambling Disorder; including problem gambling/at-risk problem gambling (estimated ranges between **2.3 and 9.0%**) . (Etuk, et al. 2020)
- Three-fourths (**75.3%**) of veterans with at-risk/problematic gambling reported that they had made attempts to either cut down, control, or stop gambling. (Stefanovics, et al. 2023)
- Research finds that veterans are **2-3x more likely** to have a gambling related problem. It is estimated that as many as 56,000 active-duty members of the Armed Forces meet the criteria for gambling disorder. (NCPG)

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History of Incarceration

Ever been arrested for:

- *Theft*
- *Embezzlement*
- *Domestic Violence*
- *Assaults*
- *VEP violation*
- *Illegal bookmaking/gambling*

- Nearly 25% of those who gambled problematically had committed at least one illegal act, such as writing bad checks, stealing, or unauthorized use of credit cards.
- U.S. Department of Justice has found that inmates are three to five times more likely to develop gambling problems.
- Studies show that 1 in 3 prisoners have problems related to gambling.



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"It is rare to observe a disordered gambler without a comorbid condition, and it is often the comorbid condition that ultimately leads the individual to treatment."

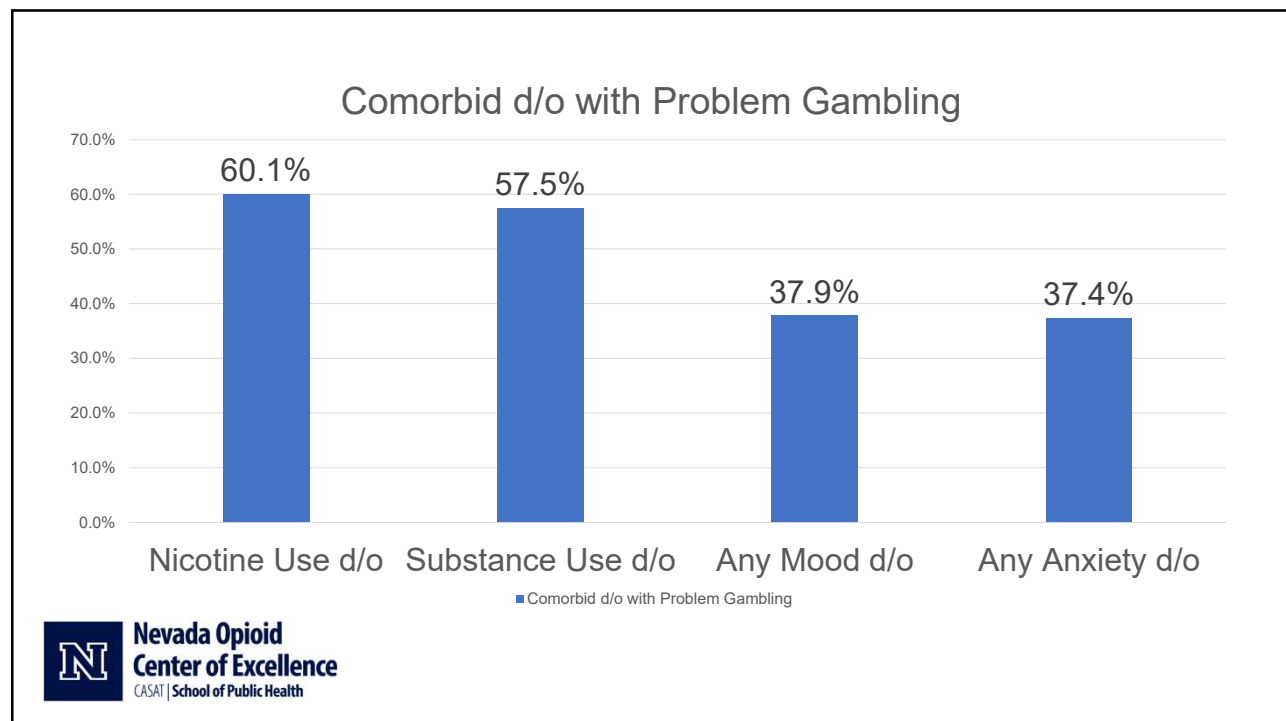
(Afifi, Cox, & Sareen, 2006)



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Persons in methadone maintenance treatment are at risk of severe gambling problems

- Almost half of the 185 participants met the DSM-5 criteria for gambling disorder.
- Of those who met the criteria, the vast majority had either moderate or severe symptoms.
- Compared to those without gambling disorder, those with gambling disorder had been in methadone maintenance treatment for a shorter time.



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Persons in methadone maintenance treatment are at risk of severe gambling problems

- The most frequently reported gambling behavior was buying lottery tickets. This was followed by scratch-off tickets.
- Almost half of the participants had played slot machines, video lottery terminals, or other electronic gambling machines in the past 12 months at a bar, casino or online.
- Those who met the DSM-5 criteria for gambling disorder spent from five to ten times more money on gambling than those who did not meet the criteria.
 - They were also more likely to gamble on a variety of gambling activities including sporting events, bingo and games of skills.

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Why address gambling within SUD and MH treatment programs?

- Gambling and problem gambling may exacerbate psychiatric symptoms.
- Past year SUD severity related to greater gambling problems.
- Gambling may become a sequential addiction for individuals recovering from a substance use disorder.
- Gambling can be a relapse risk factor.
- Relationship violence and child abuse are related to problem gambling and severely aggravated if substance use is involved.



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Why address gambling within SUD and MH treatment programs?

- Individuals with substance use and mental health disorders are at greater risk for gambling related harms.
- 96% of individuals with an identified gambling disorder have one or more co-occurring psychiatric disorders.
- Gambling (even at moderate levels) may have an adverse impact on treatment outcomes.
- Unaddressed gambling harms are likely to add to treatment costs and service utilization.



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*It could be
you or
someone
you know*

Those that have problems related to gambling may be male, female, young, old, wealthy, poor, white or persons of color.

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**Early
intervention
and
treatment
work!**

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Why Screen for Gambling?

Screening can help identify individuals who need further assessment, are impacted financially, and/or are struggling with thoughts of suicide.



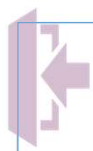
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"I'm right there in the room, and no one even acknowledges me."



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Screening Best Practices



Include brief screen on intake, reduce stigma



Incorporate subtle questions about gambling activities



Be creative – normalize the conversation

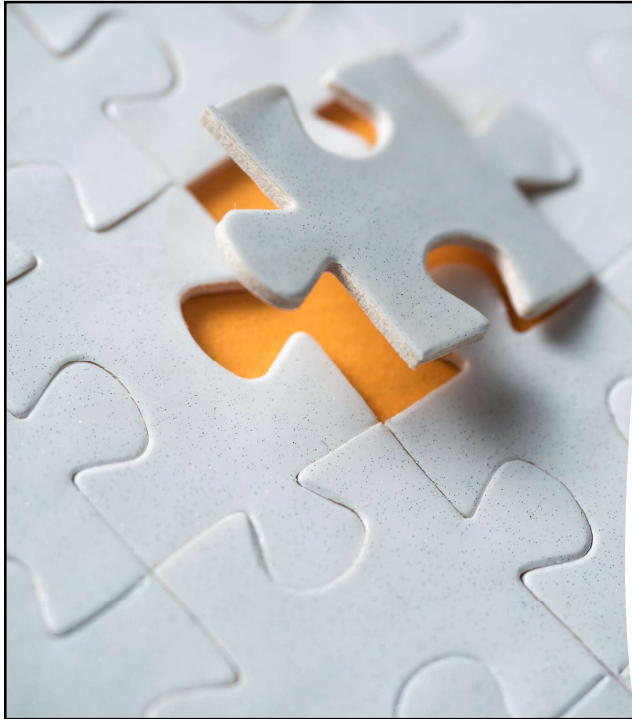


Repeat screening after relationship and trust is established



Provide psychoeducation and understand the impact gambling may have on recovery

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Concerns about Brief Screens

How does Gambling Screening Fit?

- Therapeutic buy-in by patients and providers
- Developed to screen for most severe gambling problems
- Not diagnostic, need more assessment of gambling behaviors
- Need to define what is meant by gambling – list types of gambling

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Client Understanding of Gambling

- Person may not acknowledge gambling in first interview either because they simply don't categorize these issues as problematic or because of shame and the desire to avoid talking about these issues.
- Persons coming into treatment for a substance use or mental health disorder may have any or all the following attitudes toward their gambling:
 - Never thought of it as a problem or potential problem
 - Believe it is a solution to their problems (emotional and or financial)
 - Realize it may be a problem, but don't want to think about giving up "all their fun"
 - Feel overwhelmed by dealing with just one problem, don't want to have to think about any others

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Treatment Providers and Barriers

- In two studies conducted by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) 71–87% of social workers reported working with a client who has substance use (SU) issues
- Despite SU being a prevailing treatment issue, addiction remains under-identified as a primary practice area for clinical social workers
- Clinical social workers report being the least interested in working with substance users compared to other health professions
- Clinical social workers report being pessimistic about substance users' prognosis and their own ability to work therapeutically with clients with SUD



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Barriers for Integrating Gambling Screening

**Unfamiliar with Gambling as a potential problem,
*Underrecognized as an Addictive Disorder***

Limited research on Gambling Disorder

Financial discussions with clients can be difficult

**Lack of understanding of what is included as a
gambling activity**

Individual is not ready to give up gambling

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Barriers for Integrating Gambling Screening *Statements from Providers*

- "Gambling is not a problem for our clients."
- "We already ask clients if they gamble, most say no."
- "We do not want to add another form."
- "If they have a gambling problem, they will tell us."
- "I will mention it to the other counselors."
- "I find gambling enjoyable - it is not dangerous."
- "Our clients can not afford to gamble."
- "What if they say yes?"



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Gambling Screening: What Often Happens



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Gambling Screening: What Ideally Happens

How often do you gamble?
For example, buy lottery tickets, go to the casino, play cards with *friends for money*?

I don't really gamble, but I do buy lottery tickets a few times a week and my friends and I go to the casino to celebrate our birthdays.



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Start the Conversation: *Integrate Gambling into your Regular Practice*



- ✓ *Reduce stigma.*
- ✓ *Universal Screening, not only suspected individuals.*
- ✓ *Gives permission and a safe space to talk about gambling.*
- ✓ *Make connections between gambling and other major life areas, initiating change talk.*
- ✓ *Have gambling conversations as a part of ongoing psychoeducation.*
- ✓ *Not diagnostic, repeat as rapport builds, treatment plan reviews, etc.*



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Before you Screen *Define Gambling* & Give examples of Gambling:



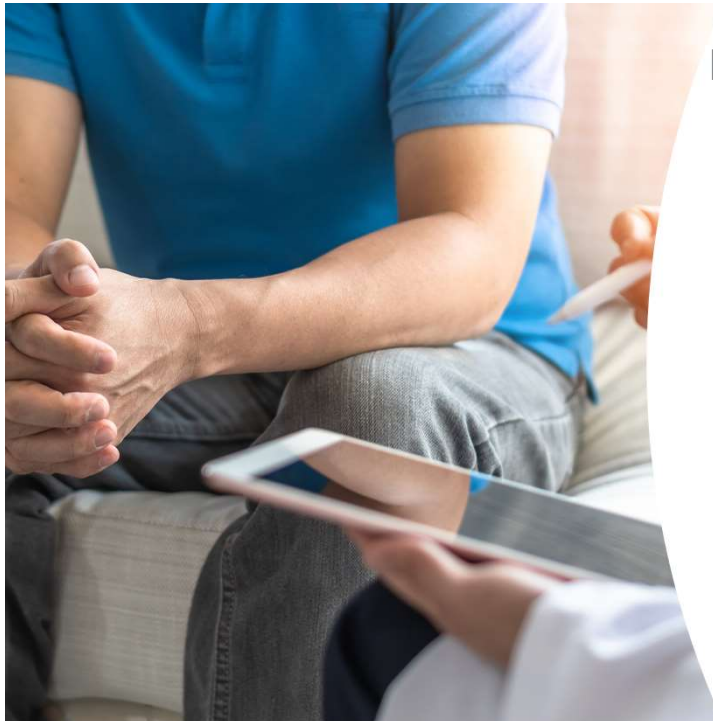
Have you ever risked something of value, including money, on an unknown outcome?



Have you ever placed bets with friends or at an establishment?

- Lottery or Scratch offs
- Bingo
- Raffle
- Keno
- Pull Tabs
- Fantasy Sports
- Day Trading or Cryptocurrency
- Casino (slot machines, table games, sports)
- Card or Dice games, played for money
- *Etcetera...*

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Evidenced Based Gambling Screening Tools

Lie/Bet

BAGS

NODS-CLIP

NODS-PERC

SOGS and SOGS-RA

Brief Biosocial Gambling Screen

Problem Gambling Severity Index

Self Assessments:

helpmygamblingproblem.org

& GA 20 Questions

<https://www.mdproblemgambling.com/for-treatment-providers/>

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Brief Adolescent Gambling Screen (BAGS)

Not in the past 12 months = 0 Sometimes = 1 Many times = 2 All of the time = 3

In the past 12 months....

1. How often have you skipped hanging out with friends who do not gamble/bet to hang out with friends who do gamble/bet?
2. How often have you felt that you might have a problem with gambling/betting?
3. How often have you hidden your gambling/betting from your parents, other family members or teachers?

**Score of four or higher indicates Problem Gambling*



Stinchfield, R., Wynne, H., et al (2017). Development and Psychometric Evaluation of the Brief Adolescent Gambling Screen (BAGS). *Frontiers in Psychology*, 8:2204. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2017.02204

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NODS CLIP *loss of Control, Lying, and Preoccupation*

Loss of Control

Have you ever tried to stop, cut down, or control your gambling?

Lying

Have you ever lied to family members, friends or others about how much you gamble or how much money you lost on gambling?

Pre occupation

Have there been periods lasting 2 weeks or longer when you spent a lot of time thinking about your gambling experiences, or planning out future gambling ventures or bets?

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NODS PERC *Preoccupation, Escape, Risked Relationships, & Chasing*

Have there ever been periods lasting 2 weeks or longer when you spent a lot of time thinking about your gambling experiences or planning out future gambling ventures or bets?

Have you ever gambled as a way to escape from personal problems?

Has there ever been a period when, if you lost money gambling one day, you would return another day to get even?

Has your gambling ever caused serious or repeated problems in your relationships with any of your family members or friends?

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Brief Biosocial Gambling Screen - BBGS

Scoring: A "yes" response to any single item indicates potential gambling-related problems and the need for additional evaluation.

1. During the past 12 months, have you become restless irritable or anxious when trying to stop/cut down on gambling? ☐ Yes ☐ No
2. During the past 12 months, have you tried to keep your family or friends from knowing how much you gambled? ☐ Yes ☐ No
3. During the past 12 months did you have such financial trouble as a result of your gambling that you had to get help with living expenses from family, friends or welfare? ☐ Yes ☐ No

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Lie-Bet Screening Tool

- 1) Have you ever felt the need to bet more and more money?
- 2) Have you ever had to lie to people important to you about how much you gambled?

SCORE: Yes, to one or more of the questions, further assessment is recommended

https://www.ncpgambling.org/files/NPGAW/Lie_Bet_Tool.PDF



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Problem Gambling Severity Index

Thinking about the last 12 months, answer the following questions with the response:

0 Never. 1 Sometimes. 2 Most of the time. 3 Almost always.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Have you bet more than you could really afford to lose? | 6. Has gambling caused you any health problems, including stress or anxiety? |
| 2. Still thinking about the last 12 months, have you needed to gamble with larger amounts of money to get the same feeling of excitement? | 7. Have people criticized your betting or told you that you had a gambling problem, regardless of whether or not you thought it was true? |
| 3. When you gambled, did you go back another day to try to win back the money you lost? | 8. Has your gambling caused any financial problems for you or your household? |
| 4. Have you borrowed money or sold anything to get money to gamble? | 9. Have you felt guilty about the way you gamble or what happens when you gamble? |
| 5. Have you felt that you might have a problem with gambling? | |

Ferris, J., & Wynne, H. (2001). The Canadian problem gambling index: Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse.

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Problem Gambling Severity Index TOTAL SCORE

Score of 0 = Non-problem gambling.

Score of 1 or 2 = **Low Risk**: with few problems or no identified negative consequences.

Score of 3 to 7 = **Moderate Risk**: problems leading to some negative consequences.

Score of 8 or more = **High Risk**: problems gambling with negative consequences and a possible loss of control.

Ferris, J., & Wynne, H. (2001). The Canadian problem gambling index: Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse.

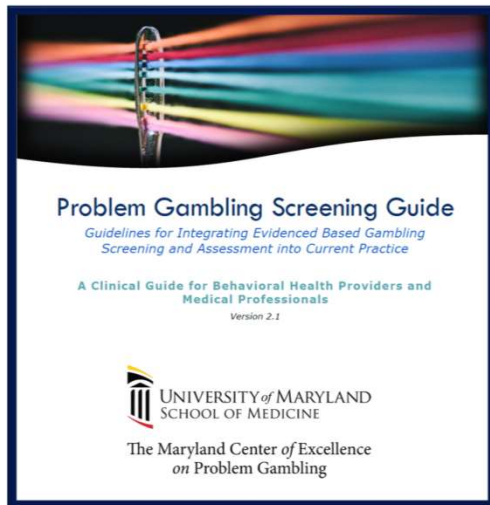


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What's Next?

- **Low Risk**: Review tips for gambling responsibly and offer resources should gambling begin to feel out of control or no longer fun.
- **Moderate Risk**: Discuss ways to set limits with your gambling (loss limits, deposit limits, time limits), talk with someone about your gambling.
- **High Risk**: Seek Help! More assessment may be needed. Connect with Peer support for free and low-cost resources, attend self-help support meetings.
You are not alone!

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1. **Define gambling.** It is the act of risking something of value, including money or property on an unknown, random outcome, in the hopes of gaining something in return.
2. **Provide examples of gambling.** Lottery, scratch offs, slot machines, bingo, keno, card games, etc.
3. **Incorporate an evidenced based gambling screening tool.** Four are presented in this guide, but more are available on the Center's website.

What's Next? This guide provides tips for brief interventions, ways to incorporate gambling related questions into a biopsychosocial assessment, and resources for help.

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History of Gambling Diagnosis

- 1957** • Gamblers Anonymous, a 12-Step program, is started in 1957.
- 1980** • Gambling was first recognized as a disorder in 1980 by the American Psychiatric Association (APA) in the 3rd edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM).
- 1994** • Pathological gambling remained under Impulse Control Disorders in the DSM-IV (1994), until reconsideration by the APA that the term pathological is dated and disparaging.
- 2013** • In 2013, the American Psychiatric Association reclassified Gambling Disorder as a Substance Related & Addictive Disorder.

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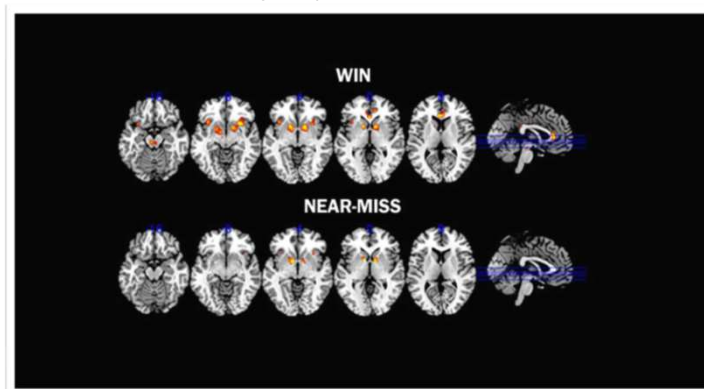
DSM 5: *Substance Related and Addictive Disorders* Gambling Disorder

- Neuroimaging studies suggest similarities between persons who gamble problematically and persons who use substances problematically.
- APA found that the diagnostic criteria is very similar to substance use disorders' diagnostic criteria, sharing several signs and symptoms.
- For these and other reasons, the APA reclassified Gambling Disorder as the first non-substance disorder in the DSM-5.

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Gambling and the Brain

Courtesy, with permission: Luke Clark



Players who almost win a game of chance have similar brain activity in reward pathways to those who actually win.

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Gambling: Effects on the Brain

Serves as an escape from issues, problems, grief, trauma, depression and anxiety.

Produces a trance-like state of awareness

Loss of time and spatial awareness

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Comparison DSM-5 Criteria for GD vs SUD

Gambling Disorder Need 4 out of 9	Substance Use Disorder Need 2 out of 11
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tolerance 2. Withdrawal 3. Control 4. Preoccupation 5. Escape 6. Chasing 7. Lying 8. Impact on social function 9. Bailouts 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Using more or longer than intend 2. Control 3. Time spent in obtaining substance 4. Craving or strong desire 5. Failure to meet role obligations 6. Continued use despite social or interpersonal problems 7. Important activities given up or reduced 8. Recurrent use in physically hazardous situations 9. Continued use despite physical and psychological consequences 10. Tolerance 11. Withdrawal (<i>not for all substances</i>)

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Gambling Disorder

DSM-5 Disorder Class:

Substance-Related and Addictive Disorders

To meet the criteria for Gambling Disorder, the individual must exhibit persistent and recurrent problematic gambling behavior that leads to **clinically significant impairment or distress**.

A minimum of 4 of the symptoms have existed for 12 months or longer and the gambling behavior is not due to a manic episode.

Specifiers and Levels of Severity were added to DSM 5 criteria.



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Gambling Disorder

DSM-5 Disorder Class:

Substance-Related and Addictive Disorders

- lies to family members, therapist, or others to conceal the extent of involvement with gambling
- has jeopardized or lost a significant relationship, job, or educational or career opportunity because of gambling
- relies on others to provide money to relieve a desperate financial situation caused by gambling
- is often preoccupied with gambling (*e.g., having persistent thoughts of reliving past gambling experiences, handicapping or planning the next venture, thinking of ways to get money with which to gamble*).

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Gambling Disorder

DSM-5 Disorder Class:
Substance-Related and Addictive Disorders

- needs to gamble with increasing amounts of money in order to achieve the desired excitement
- has repeated unsuccessful efforts to control, cut back, or stop gambling
- is restless or irritable when attempting to cut down or stop gambling
- often gambles when feeling distressed (e.g., helpless, guilty, anxious, depressed)
- after losing money gambling, often returns another day to get even ("chasing" one's losses)

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Gambling Disorder

DSM-5 Disorder Class:
Substance-Related and Addictive Disorders

Specify if:

- **Episodic:** Meeting diagnostic criteria at more than one time point, with symptoms subsiding between periods of gambling disorder for at least several months.
- **Persistent:** Experiencing continuous symptoms, to meet diagnostic criteria for multiple years.

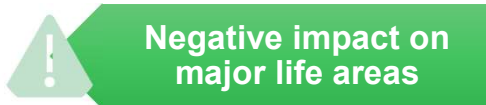
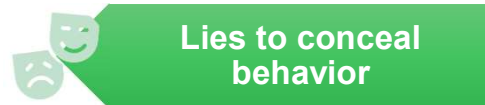
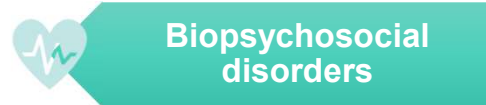
Specify Severity:

- **Mild:** 4–5 criteria met
- **Moderate:** 6–7 criteria met
- **Severe:** 8–9 criteria met

At-Risk:
1-3 criteria
met

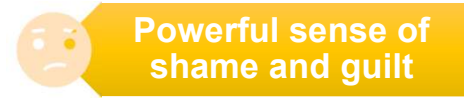
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Gambling and SUD: Similarities



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Gambling and SUD: Differences



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Gambling & Recovery

- Even though individuals in recovery from substance use and mental health disorders are at higher risk for gambling problems, this does not mean that gambling always has a negative impact on someone's recovery
- It is our job to help our patients be aware of and evaluate the risks as well as benefits that gambling can bring to their recovery, and to assist them in making the best-informed decisions regarding the role of gambling in their lives and recoveries.



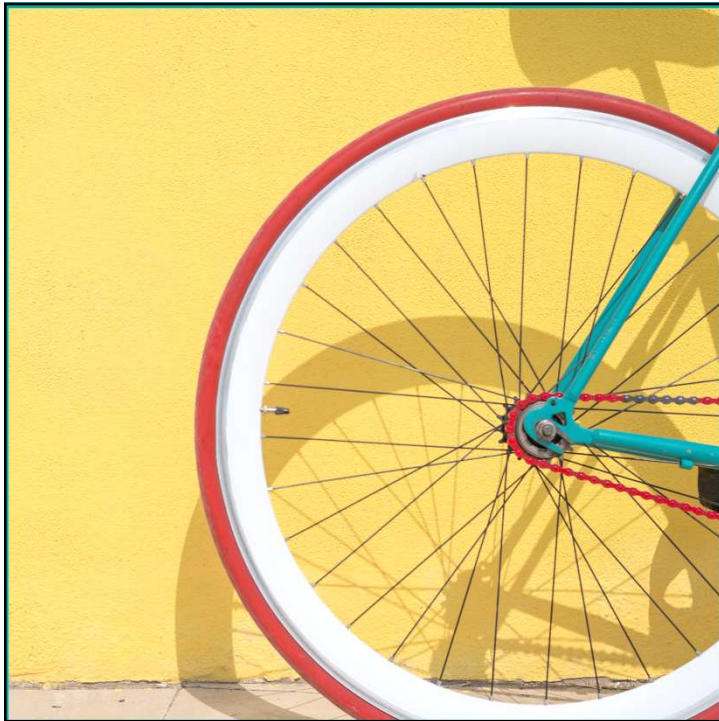
79



Gambling Treatment



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Models Utilized for Gambling Treatment

- Transtheoretical Model
- Motivational Interviewing
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- Solution Focused Therapy
- Narrative Therapy
- Reality Therapy
- Mindfulness Based
- Self-Help Interventions
- Family Interventions

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Tools for Youth

- "Stacked Deck" an evidence-based curriculum for the prevention of problem gambling among teens and young adults. Proven to be effective in changing gambling behavior in youth as well as reducing their risk of developing gambling-related problems.
 - <https://www.hazelden.org/store/item/557330?Stacked-Deck-Second-Edition>
- "Smart Choices" is a youth gambling prevention program focused on educating middle and high school students about the risks of gambling, particularly for young people, and promoting healthy, informed choices.

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Tools for Adults

- Mindfulness-Based Relapse Prevention for Problem Gambling, 2nd Edition (2021)
 - <https://kmb.camh.ca/uploads/80ddaf5e-6a21-4af7-8738-531bbf4fe82e.pdf>
- THE SAFEST BET: A Guide to Understanding Problem Gambling for Veterans and Clinicians (2019)
 - <https://www.mirecc.va.gov/VISN16/docs/problem-gambling-guide.pdf>
- Your First Step to Change 3rd Edition. Massachusetts Department of Public Health Office of Problem Gambling Services
 - <https://www.divisiononaddiction.org/outreach-resources/your-first-step-to-change/>



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Tools for Adults

- UCLA Gambling Studies Program
 - **Individualized Treatment for Problem Gamblers for Problem Gamblers (2009):**
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/OPG/CDPH%20Document%20Library/CBT-Patient-Workbook.pdf>
 - **Freedom From Problem Gambling – A Self-Help Workbook (2014):**
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/OPG/CDPH%20Document%20Library/Freedom-Workbook-ADA.pdf>



84

What about Family? *Who do you consider family?*

- Parents / Step-Parents
- Children/ Step-Children
- Foster/ Adopted
- Siblings/ Cousins
- Aunts/ Uncles
- Grandparents
- Grandchildren (and Great-Grans)
- Friends
- Colleagues
- Fellowship
- In-laws
- Neighbors
- Etc...



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Impact of Gambling Disorder

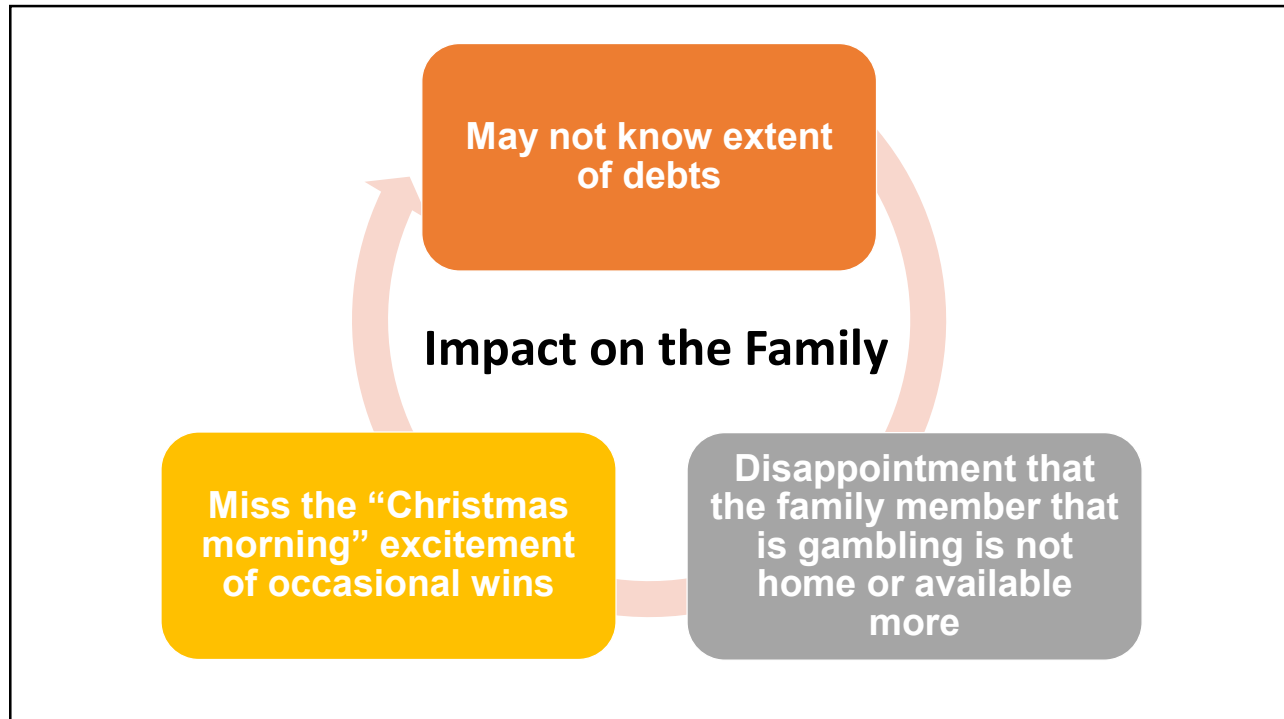
Those identified as having a Gambling Disorder impact **7-10 people** in their immediate circle.

Consequences include but are not limited to:

- Financial devastation
- Employment problems
- Trust Issues
- Chronic lying
- Legal problems
- Domestic violence



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Reasons to Include Family /Concerned Others

- ✓ Able to offer support for loved one.
- ✓ Provides loved one with a more accurate picture of gambling addiction.
- ✓ Familiarizes and/or Includes loved ones with treatment planning and prepares them for further involvement in recovery.
- ✓ Early involvement increases chance the loved one also receives treatment.
- ✓ Viewing the social interaction helps the therapist understand personal (and couple) strengths & weaknesses.
- ✓ Encourages self-care for loved ones regardless of the recovery status of person with gambling disorder.

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Family Interventions

- Is the family willing/able to tolerate limited gambling?
- How can the family feel safe — financially, emotionally, physically? (Assess any history of violence or abuse)
- How can gambling be discussed honestly in the family?
- Asset protection planning: financial transparency



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Addressing Finances in Therapy



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Addressing Finances

- Doing a budget
- Contacting creditors
- Spouse monitoring mail and refusing to cosign
- Monitoring of spending
- Checkbook control
- Concepts of credit
- Direct deposit
- Beliefs about money
- Control of money
- Emotional attachment to money
- Directing towards GA Pressure Relief Group



91

Stigma Related to Money and Gambling

Money carries a negative social stigma.

Talking about money is taboo.

Challenges the convention of working hard, saving money, valuing what you have.

People who waste or lose money are seen as irresponsible.

A person with a gambling problem costs us money and may steal from us.

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Gambling is about Money ...and it is also Not about Money

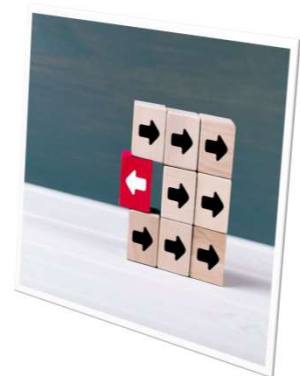
The most direct, immediate consequence is financial

- A person with a gambling disorder who stops gambling is often left with debts.
 - unlike SUD, life may seem worse
 - no hope of a windfall
- Losses and debts are tangible, concrete, and quantifiable.
- Seems easier to focus on money lost than (acknowledging) other
- Behavior/ State of mind is not that different
 - still preoccupied with money, seen as a solution to problems
 - “chasing”, trying to catch up
 - hustling, selling, trying to get people to give them money
 - may be dependent upon a win-lose, all-or-nothing external event

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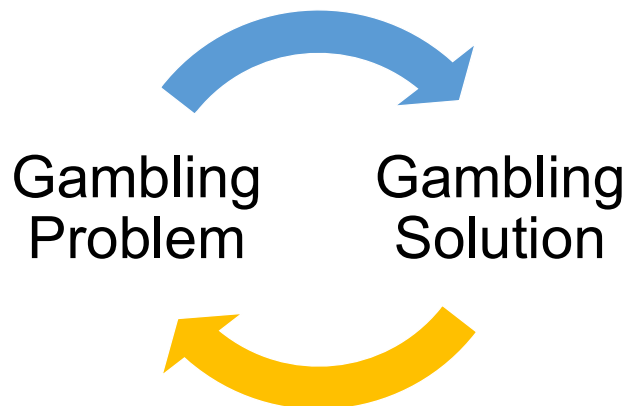
Real Money vs. Gambling Money

- Gambling money cannot be used for anything but gambling.
- Once money undergoes a cognitive conversion into gambling money it is never converted back to real money.
- Gambling money is never really “lost”.
- All accidental or unexpected income is automatically converted to gambling money: a gift from lady luck needs to be spent in her honor.
- Real money coming as loans from others becomes gambling money.



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Gambling Fallacy



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recovery
motivation

gambling
motivation

considering
debt

Looking at debt too
early in the recovery
process can work
against recovery
motivation and
increase gambling
motivation

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Motivation and Finances



"I'll do whatever it takes . . ."



" . . . except . . ."

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Money Protection Plan



How will I safeguard my money from my gambling?



Who can help me?



To whom will I be accountable?



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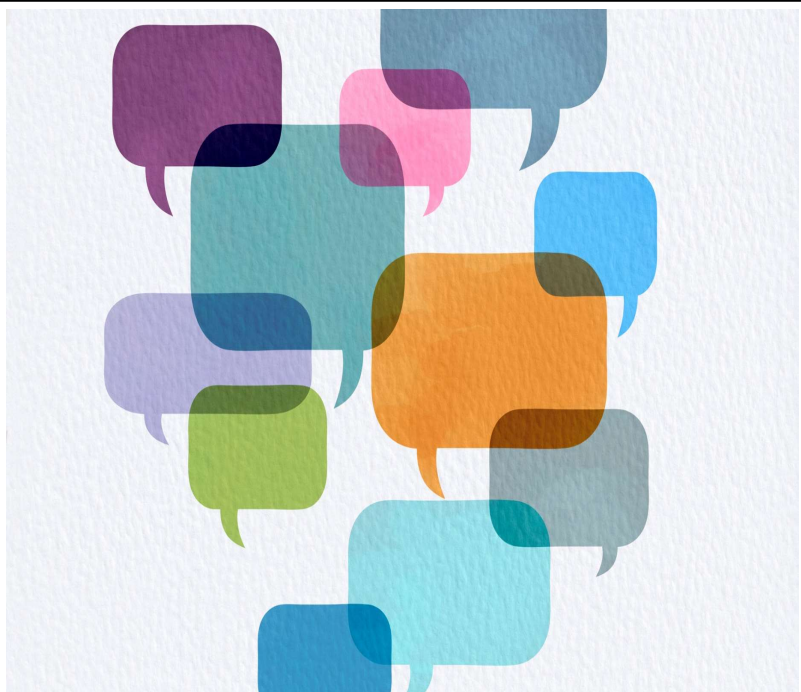
What Makes a Good Financial Protection Plan?

- All parts of the financial planning process covered with realistic recovery goals.
- No bailouts - Support only with accountability.
- Goals are clear and committed to writing.
- Contingency planning and ways to mitigate risk.
- Person with gambling disorder and family and/or support person are committed to plan.
- All involved understand roles and responsibilities.

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Responsible Gambling

Tips for Having the Conversation



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How to Start a Conversation



Choose the Right Time: Initiate conversation after seeing a commercial about gambling or on the couch following a TV show.



Keep it Short: Short conversations will drive the message home and keep their attention.



Listen: It is important to actively listen. Some are more receptive to the message if it is informal.



Be Relevant: Tailor the conversation to their interests. Make connections between gambling and other life areas.

101

Promote Responsible Play

❖ Money

- Never borrow money to gamble.
- Don't gamble money you can't afford to lose.
- Don't gamble money that is for necessities such as food or housing

❖ Know the Game

- Make sure you understand the odds and house edge.

❖ Expect to Lose

- Hope to win but expect to lose. Remember: you're playing to have a good time – never chase your losses.

❖ Team Up

- Consider teaming up with a friend to help each other stick to your personal betting plan.

<https://responsibleplay.org/>

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Promote Responsible Play

❖ Make a Plan

- Have a plan of what to do if you win or lose.
- Know how much you're willing to lose and how long you want to play – set limits of time and money.
- Set a timer on your phone to keep track of time spent betting.

❖ Entertainment

- Treat gambling as a form of entertainment and not a way to make money.

❖ Take a Break

- When gambling is no longer fun, take a break.

❖ Mobile Wagers – Set Limits

- Set deposit limits, loss limits, and wager limits on daily, weekly, monthly maximum amounts.

<https://responsibleplay.org/>

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Gambling Diversion Court

NRS 458A.210

Eligibility for assignment to program of treatment.

a person with an addictive disorder related to gambling who has been convicted of a crime and who committed the crime in furtherance or as a result of problem gambling is eligible to elect to be assigned by the court to a program for the treatment of problem gambling before he or she is sentenced unless:



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Gambling Diversion Court

CHAPTER 458A

PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF PROBLEM GAMBLING

“Problem gambling” means persistent and recurrent maladaptive behavior relating to gambling that causes disruptions in any major area of life, including, without limitation, the psychological, social or vocational areas of life. NRS 641C.110

<https://www.leg.state.nv.us/nrs/NRS-458A.html>



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Gambling Diversion Court

1. The crime is:
 - a) A crime against the person punishable as a felony or gross misdemeanor as provided in chapter 200 of NRS;
 - b) A crime against a child as defined in NRS 179D.0357;
 - c) A sexual offense as defined in NRS 179D.097; or
 - d) An act which constitutes domestic violence as set forth in NRS 33.018;
2. The person with the disorder has a record of two or more convictions of a crime described in subsection 1 or a similar crime in
 - f another state, or of
 - ions of any felony;
3. Other criminal proceedings alleging commission of a felony are pending against the person with the disorder;
4. The person with the disorder is on probation or parole, except that the person with the disorder is eligible to make the election if the appropriate probation or parole authority consents to the election or the court finds that the person with the disorder is eligible to make the election after considering any objections made by the appropriate probation or parole authority; or
5. The person with the disorder has previously been assigned by a court to a program for the treatment of problem gambling, except that the person with the disorder is eligible to make the election if the court, in its discretion, finds that the person with the disorder is eligible to make such an election.

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Self-Exclusion: Nevada

- Nevada has **no laws or regulations** requiring casino operators to have self-exclusion programs.
- Operators are required, however, to have programs through which **patrons may self-limit** their access to check cashing, credit issuance, and direct mail marketing.
- Many operators have company-administered voluntary self-exclusion programs, despite not being legally required to do so.
 - However, Regulation 5A.130 requires that interactive gaming operators put into effect policies and procedures for self-exclusion from their gambling websites.

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Exclusion Technology aka Roadblocks

GamBan: Block Access to Gambling Websites and Apps Worldwide. Whether you're looking to cool off after a big loss or looking for longer-term protection from online gambling, Gamban subscriptions are tailored to suit your needs.

<https://gamban.com/>

BetBlocker: BetBlocker is a UK registered charity offering a [free](#) service to help support people anywhere in the world. There to help you, or those you care about, ensure that they can manage their access to gambling in a safe and appropriate manner. Whether that means restricting altogether or limiting during periods of vulnerability.

<https://betblocker.org/>

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Nevada Council on Problem Gambling

Our Mission: Awareness, Education, Advocacy.

- Preventing and reducing the impact of Problem Gambling in Nevada

Contact Information:

5552 S. Fort Apache Road, Ste 100

Las Vegas, NV 89148

Phone: (702) 369-9740

Email: info@nevadacouncil.org

Website: <https://www.nevadacouncil.org>

NEVADA COUNCIL ON
PROBLEM GAMBLING

Awareness • Education • Advocacy

24-Hour Problem Gambling Helpline: 1-800-GAMBLER



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True Link

Helping families manage the spending of their loved ones.

True Link works to provide life-changing financial solutions for people with complex needs and the people who care for them. Serving vulnerable elders, people with disabilities, and people in recovery – and their families and professional caregivers.

- Customizable spending rules
- Stay up to date with alerts and purchase history

<https://www.truelinkfinancial.com/>

You Can Block:

- Online and over-the-phone purchases
- International transactions
- Money transfers
- Purchases at merchants flagged as potentially predatory or fraudulent
- Subscriptions, Bars & Liquor Stores, Gambling & Casinos, and Travel & Transportation

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Resources for Problematic Gaming

- Delaware's Gaming Website:
www.dangerouslevels.org
- Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB):
<https://www.esrb.org/tools-for-parents>



- *Reboot and Recover:*
<https://rebootandrecover.org/>
- *Online Gamers Anonymous:*
<https://www.olganon.org/home>
- *Game Quitters by Cam Adair:*
<https://gamequitters.com/video-game-addiction/>

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NATIONAL RESOURCES

GAMBLING HELPLINE: 1-800-GAMBLER

Gamblers in Recovery:

<https://gamblersinrecovery.com>

Recovery Road:

<https://recoveryroadonline.com>

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:

<https://988lifeline.org> or Call: 988

Crisis Text Line:

Text **HOME** to **741741**

<https://www.crisistextline.org>

National Council on Problem Gambling:

<https://www.ncpgambling.org>

SMART Recovery:

<https://www.smartrecovery.org/gambling-addiction>

Gamblers Anonymous:

<https://www.gamblersanonymous.org/ga/locations>

Gam-Anon:

<https://gam-anon.org>

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Questions and Comments

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