

## Background Information/Talking Points for Presenters

*This document is meant to be used by the presenter as background information for presentations.*

### 1. Gambling Defined

- a. Webster says: "to stake or risk money, or anything of value, on the outcome of something involving chance"

### 2. Probability and Winning vs. Losing

- a. The law of probability proves that the longer one spends gambling, the more he/she will lose
- b. Gambling establishments are set up as businesses – they need to make money to stay open. If the "house" wins – the gamblers lose. This also means that big wins are rare.

\*Source: Probability, Random Events, and the Mathematics of Gambling, Retrieved from <http://www.problemgambling.ca/EN/Documents/HPG%20Probability%20Final.pdf>

### 3. Problem Gambling Defined

- a. Problem gambling is gambling behavior which causes disruptions in any major area of life: psychological, physical, social or vocational. The term "Problem Gambling" includes, but is not limited to, the condition known as "Pathological", or "Compulsive" Gambling, a progressive addiction characterized by increasing preoccupation with gambling, a need to bet more money more frequently, restlessness or irritability when attempting to stop, "chasing" losses, and loss of control manifested by continuation of the gambling behavior in spite of mounting, serious, negative consequences.

\*Source: National Council on Problem Gambling website: [www.ncpgambling.org](http://www.ncpgambling.org)

### 4. Gambling in the U.S.:

- a. Approximately 85% of U.S. adults have gambled at least once in their lives; 60% in the past year.
- b. 2 million (1%) of U.S. adults are estimated to meet criteria for pathological gambling in a given year.
- c. Another 4-6 million (2-3%) would be considered problem gamblers.

\*Source: National Council on Problem Gambling, Retrieved from <http://www.ncpgambling.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3314#widespread>

### 5. U.S. Adolescent Prevalence

- a. US residents age 14-21
  - i. Prevalence of problem gambling was 2.1%
  - ii. 68% had gambled in the past year
  - iii. 11% gambled twice a week or more
  - iv. 6.5% at risk or problem gambling
- b. Adolescent involvement in gambling is believed to be greater than their use of tobacco, hard liquor, and marijuana

\*Source: Welte, 2007

## 6. Consequences of Problem Gambling

- a. Effects on Individual:
  - i. Mood swings
  - ii. Problem with loved ones
  - iii. Eating less or willingness to go without food, medications, household supplies, etc. to have money to gamble
  - iv. Cashing in insurance policies and/or spending retirement funds, college savings, etc.
  - v. Suicide
  - vi. Bankruptcy
- b. Effects on Family
  - i. Lack of trust
  - ii. Financial difficulties
  - iii. Anticipation of loved one's mood
  - iv. Concern over physical well-being of loved one
  - v. Frustration with PG's inability to stop and related consequences
  - vi. Anxiety, Depression
  - vii. Abuse
- c. Effects on Community
  - i. 20% of addicted gamblers have filed for bankruptcy.
  - ii. 20% of the homeless are gambling addicts
  - iii. 60% of those addicted to gambling will commit crimes
  - iv. Up to 50% of spouses of addicted gamblers are abused.
  - v. When casinos opened in South Dakota child abuse rose by 42%.
  - vi. 20% of gambling addicts commit or attempt suicide.
  - vii. The cost of problem and pathological gambling does not only affect individuals and their families. Society also bears the brunt of gambling, with the overall cost to taxpayers estimated at \$56,000 for each problem gambler, including cost of treatment, health-related costs, absenteeism at work and time spent in courts

\*Source: April 14, 2008 **Casino Watch Policy Briefs by Joseph Day**, retrieved from [http://casinowatch.org/studies\\_research/New%20Casinos%20Impact.pdf](http://casinowatch.org/studies_research/New%20Casinos%20Impact.pdf)

## 7. Warning Signs

- a. Increased time spent engaged in gambling activities
- b. Decrease in previously enjoyable activities and primary interest in gambling related activities
- c. Increased anxiety and depression
- d. Problems at home and/ or with friends, significant other
- e. Financial difficulties despite regular income
- f. Selling possessions to finance gambling
- g. Unexplained absences from school or classes
- h. Exaggerated display of money or other material possessions
- i. Daily or weekly card game
- j. Bragging about winning at gambling
- k. Intense interest in gambling conversations

- l. Unusual interest in newspapers/magazines/periodicals/sports scores
- m. Unaccountable explanation for new items of value in possession
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8. Getting Help

- a. Talking about the problem
- b. When a parent is addicted - Reminding the child that it isn't his/her fault
- c. NYS HOPEline: 1-877-8-HOPENY

9. Resources

- a. Go Away Monster Video/Toolkit: [www.dontbetyet.com](http://www.dontbetyet.com)
- b. NY Council on Problem Gambling: [www.nyproblemgambling.org](http://www.nyproblemgambling.org)
- c. Know the Odds: [knowtheodds.org](http://knowtheodds.org)
- d. National Council on Problem Gambling: [www.ncpgambling.org](http://www.ncpgambling.org)
- e. OASAS Gambling Page: [www.oasas.ny.gov/gambling](http://www.oasas.ny.gov/gambling)

10. Ways that adults can make difference in how children respond to risk activities such as gambling?

- a. Listen to kids – let them know that they can come to you with ANYTHING
- b. Stay informed so that you can keep kids informed.
- c. Know the warning signs of a problem.
- d. Monitor kids' activities – who, what, where, and when?
- e. Establish CLEAR rules and enforce them
- f. Be involved
- g. Be a good role model – demonstrate the behaviors that you want your children to learn
- h. Talk to kids EARLY – if they don't hear this information from you first, they'll get it from someone/something else (friends, media, etc.)

11. Tools for Talking can be found at [DontBetYet.com](http://DontBetYet.com)

- a. Go Away Monster video and storybook
- b. Activity Sheets:
  - i. Gambling True/False
  - ii. Fill in the Blank Worksheet
  - iii. Create Your Own Budget
  - iv. Solving Problems Math Activity
  - v. What Does Gambling Look Like to You? Activity
  - vi. Healthy Activities Word Search
  - vii. People to Talk To Work Scramble