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.


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.


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.


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


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
n. Exaggerated display of money or other material possessions
o. Daily or weekly card game
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s. Unaccountable explanation for new items of value in possession

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
   b. NY Council on Problem Gambling: www.nyproblemgambling.org
   c. Know the Odds: knowtheodds.org
   e. OASAS Gambling Page: 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
    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