



Administering Responsible Gaming Programs

**A Research-Based Approach to
Achieving Public Policy Objectives**

Massachusetts Gaming Commission
June 25, 2012



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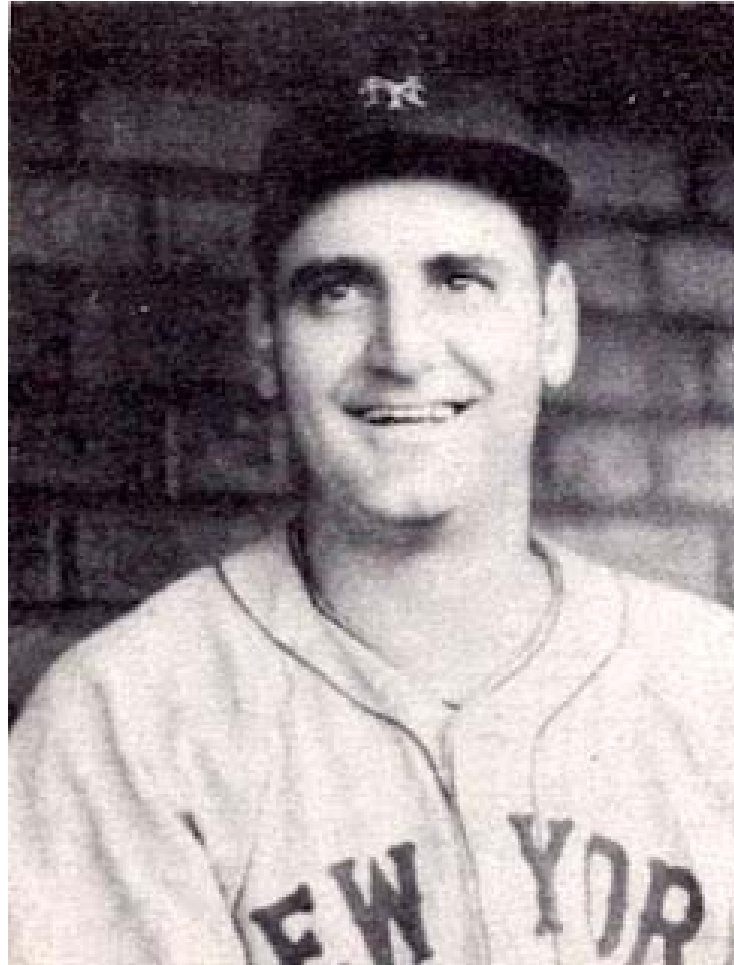
Summary



- **History of Self-Exclusion**
- **Public Policy Objective**
- **Morphing the Vision**
- **Research Findings**
- **Key Policy Components**
- **Administrative Considerations**



Zeke Bonura Rule



History of Self-Exclusion



- **Rooted in early U.S. casino “informal” practices**
- **Formally emerged in Canadian jurisdictions**
- **First U.S. program was developed in Missouri**
- **Originally had little basis in research**



Establishing a Clear Policy Objective



- **Understanding Public Policy Objectives**
 - What risk are we trying to mitigate?
 - What public “good” are we trying to advance?
- **Objective of Self-Exclusion**
 - Control the amount of gambling?
 - Permanent abstinence
 - Good mental health?
 - Whole person treatment
 - Harm reduction



**If you only have a hammer,
you tend to see every
problem as a nail.**

Abraham Maslow



Enforcement Model Issues



- **Regulatory agencies tend to skew towards command and control.**
- **Natural human desire to “do” something.**
- **Consequences are helpful.**
- **Problems with Enforcement Emphasis**
 - Assuming the responsibility for stopping the gambling
 - Micro-management of behavior

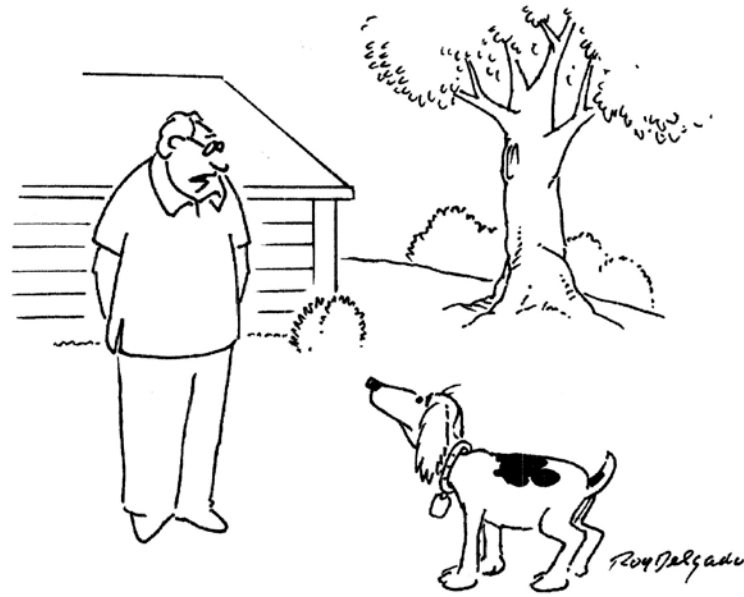


Micro-Managing



"You know, I REAL-L-L-L-L-Y hate it when he micromanages."

Control



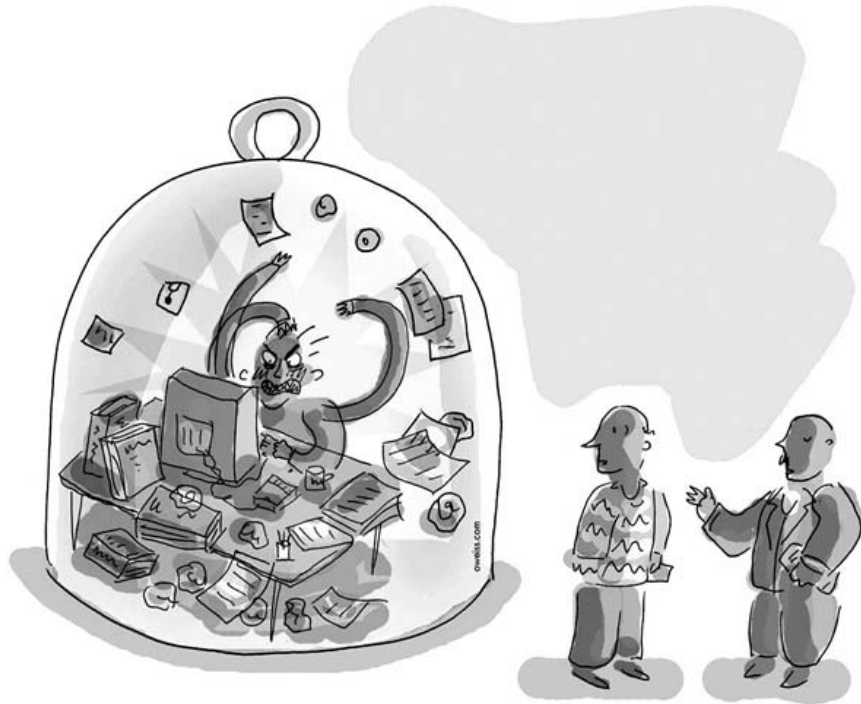
" I didn't realize how the invisible fence made you feel until I got my ankle bracelet. "

Command and Control



Mr. Larson's tendency to micromanage
was getting on Brad's nerves.

Isolating the Problem vs. Treating It



We found this to be the most effective way for us to deal with his temper.

MentalHealthHumor.com **CARTOON-A-THON** By: Chato B. Stewart



Stress Management

Research Findings



- **Key Motivating Factors for Change**
 - Relationship difficulties
 - Financial problems
 - Changes in environment or lifestyle
 - Evaluation of the pros and cons of gambling
 - Desire to regain control
- **Demographics of Self-Excluders**
 - Slightly younger
 - Slightly more likely to be male
 - More likely to be minority

Research Findings



- **Higher Numbers of Self-Excluders Located Near Gaming Facilities**
 - Public Health Model – Adaption
- **Self-Exclusion Results in High Levels of Abstinence**
- **Ineffectiveness of Command and Control**
- **Self-Exclusion Leads to Higher Levels of Treatment**
- **More Satisfaction with Self-Exclusion than Therapy**
- **Positive Outcomes**
 - Relationships
 - Self-Image
 - Emotional Health
- **The Act of Self-Exclusion Itself Appears to Have Positive Outcome.**



More Research Findings



- **Urge to gamble is reduced.**
- **Perception of control is increased.**
- **Intensity of negative consequences is significantly decreased.**
 - Daily activities
 - Relationships & Social Life
 - Work & Finances
 - Mood
- **People who stay in the program for longer periods of time have stronger belief and better results.**
- **Final meetings with counselors have high satisfaction and success rates.**



Critical Design Elements



- **Attention to detail during the application process is critical**
 - Highly trained personnel
 - Clearly communicated expectations and responsibilities
 - Explanation of treatment options
 - Initial meeting with counselor
- **Protections for the gambler**
- **Consequences**
- **Forms and Record Keeping**
 - Liability Control
 - Interpreters
- **Re-Entry Programs and Follow-Up**



Developing a Communications Network



- **Regulatory Agency**
- **State Health Agencies**
- **Community Advocacy Groups**
- **State Gambling Providers**
- **Commercial Gambling Operators (Tribes)**
- **Local Governments**
- **Department of Corrections**





THANK YOU

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