

PROBLEM:

COMPULSIVE GAMBLING IN WISCONSIN

SOLUTION:

WISCONSIN COUNCIL ON PROBLEM GAMBLING

There were 14,690 calls for help in 2015. Gambling was no longer just for "fun". Gambling was a problem.



WISCONSIN COUNCIL
ON PROBLEM GAMBLING

1585 Allouez Ave., Green Bay, WI 54311

24 hour Helpline · 1-800-GAMBLE-5 (426-2535)

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Check out our Live Chat on our website!



*Highlights of Compulsive Gambling Public Awareness Campaign September 1, 1998 -

Since September 1998 when the Public Awareness Campaign began, the Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling has been able to provide the following to Wisconsin residents:

- High School Educational Curriculum
- Mini-Grants for Community-Based Activities
- 24-hour Helpline
- Annual Statewide Compulsive Gambling Awareness Conference
- Public Relations Media Awareness Campaign
- Training of Human Service Professionals
- Needs Assessment Survey
- Strategic Plan
- Research

The Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling ended 2015 with another successful public awareness campaign!

- Developed fourteen awareness posters and distributed 150,000 of these throughout the state.
- Provided 4,000-4,300 newspaper, radio and television interviews throughout the state.
- Developed, printed and distributed 165,000 booklets, "Is Gambling Affecting Your Life?"
- Bus signage was developed for the outside of buses for cities throughout Wisconsin including: Milwaukee, Racine, Kenosha, Madison, Green Bay, Eau Claire, Superior, Wausau, Appleton, Stevens Point, Janesville, Beloit, La Crosse, Manitowoc and Sheboygan.
- Pump toppers for "Gas Pump" advertising were developed and implemented. Pump toppers were placed in locations throughout the state where bus signage was not available.
- Took part in Wisconsin Public Television's "Teen Connection" program on two different occasions.
- Two 30-second public service announcements were distributed to television stations throughout the state.
- Yearly news conferences in the five main media markets in the state.
- Developed and made accessible a "resource" library.
- Developed and distributed over 190,000 brochures, "What is Compulsive Gambling?"



- Initiated billboard signage at several locations throughout the state.
- Developed and implemented signage in bathroom stalls at eleven casinos and other locations throughout the state.
- Developed and implemented bus shelter signage in Milwaukee.
- Developed and implemented signage in bathrooms in Green Bay and Appleton at restaurants and bars.
- Distributed magnets, tokens, computer dusters, fortune cookies, magnifiers, magnetic picture frames, letter openers, pens/highlighters, oven sticks, mirrors, post-it-notes, note clips, whistle key-chains, pencils and sharpeners, piggy banks, backscratchers, calendars, and index cards, etc. as public awareness "tools".

- Distributed an informational letter to all the judges and district attorneys throughout the state on Problem Gambling.
- Developed and maintained relationships throughout the state with various groups including Aging Groups, School Personnel, Corrections Officers, District Attorneys, Public Defenders, Social Workers, Counselors, Hmong Population, Employee Assistance Programs, Tribes and Casinos.
- Provided two radio spots during Green Bay Packers pre-season games.
- Formed and continued a partnership with the State Lottery to provide additional access to our 800 number. The lottery provided radio ads and newspapers ads in 2008 to 2015.
- Published and distributed annual public awareness informational booklet.
- Provided Public Awareness to approximately 150,000 people through speaking engagements and exhibits (2002-2015).
- Article and ads published in Teaching Today and senior newspapers throughout the state.
- In-kind ads were placed in Aging and Disability Resource Center's newsletter, Senior Scene, and Rock County Council on Aging, Senior Review.

The WCPG made a follow up call to a Marinette County woman. Since she called the Helpline she has been gamble free. She had a death in her family and had just lost her house and car insurance due to a fire. The caller had a very strong urge to go gambling, but she did not. She read the information that the WCPG sent her instead of going out to gamble.

A male caller from Brown County lost an inheritance from his father in the amount of \$500,000. His credit cards are maxed out and he's lost his job due to his gambling.

"I haven't gambled since," says an Eau Claire woman who we made a follow up call to. "The packet was very helpful. I have been going to GA meetings."

A Sawyer county woman had just had a stroke and her family found out that she was \$100,000 in debt due to her gambling.

A woman from Milwaukee county usually limits herself to \$10-\$20 but spent her whole paycheck last time she went gambling. "My gambling is getting out of control"

14,690 called for Help in 2015.

We Listened.

Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling offers a 24 hour Helpline to assist problem and compulsive gamblers. **REAL CALLS.**

REAL PROBLEMS.

Approximately 333,000 Wisconsin residents have a gambling problem. Average debt in 2015 was \$39,033.



Caller's brother had just lost his job due to gambling, which resulted in losing his home. Caller wanted to know if there was a homeless shelter his brother could go to in Dane County.

A woman from Sauk County called the Helpline about her boyfriend who had attempted suicide when she found out about his gambling addiction. Now he's in jail for theft. He claims to black out when he's in a casino and doesn't remember being there.

*Calls come from every county in the state. *Please Note: Examples are similar to calls received on the WCPG Helpline. The Helpline is confidential and all calls have been modified to ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of callers.

IT'S JUST FOR THE FUN OF IT!



No big deal!

Older Adult Problem

Gambling is a big deal!

**Ask their adult children calling
our Helpline.**

Many older adults are unaware of the problems excessive gambling may cause and the potential for addiction. Many adults begin gambling more frequently later in life. It is important to know the difference between social and problem gambling. **It becomes a problem when it has a negative effect on your life and the lives of people close to you.** Not all gambling is problem gambling.

It may be merely an occasional social activity. However, this can lead to problem gambling. Gambling may also be used as a coping mechanism. Older adults are often widowed and frequently suffer losses of lifelong friends; may be geographically separated from loved ones; or may be simply bored or unhappy with retirement. Seniors sometimes see gambling as a way to supplement a limited income. Problem gambling affects all ages, male and female. **It is a hidden illness and can be difficult to address, especially with older adults.**

Did you know problem gamblers:

- May lie about their gambling?
- May hide their losses?
- May chase losses?
- May gamble in spite of the consequences?
- May borrow money to gamble?
- May deplete savings and insurance?



ADOLESCENTS = High Risk Population

MYTH: Kids are too young to have a gambling problem

FACT: Almost 20% (ages 12-19) have a gambling problem

Did you know adolescent problem gamblers...

May have lower self-esteem compared with other adolescents?

May have higher rates of depression and report higher suicidal tendencies and attempts?

May be truant from school to go gambling and as a result have poor grades in school?

**So when you think
adolescent problem
gambling is no big deal...
How much
you wanna' bet?**



Problem gambling behavior exists in 6-20% of adolescents ages 12-19.

Adolescents are two to four times more likely than adults to have this problem. Social gambling can quickly move to problem gambling.

Wagering is thought of as a grown-up privilege; therefore, adolescents are more susceptible to developing this behavior.

Even your kids!

**Can adolescents become
problem gamblers?**

Yes.

**Approximately 60-80%
of adolescents gamble.**

Did You Know?...

Gambling Can Affect Everyone.

- Approximately 333,000 WI residents have a gambling problem.
- Compulsive gamblers are more likely not to buy homes.
- Compulsive gamblers are more likely not to take vacations.
- Compulsive gamblers are more likely not to pay their taxes.
- 14,690 people called the WCPG Helpline in 2015.
- \$39,033 was the average debt in 2015.
- Female gamblers calling WCPG 24-hour Helpline have increased 33% since 1996.
- Calls to WCPG 24-hour Helpline have increased 328% since 1996.

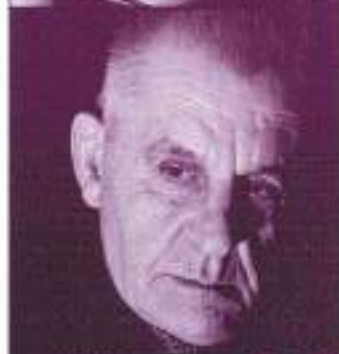
Many compulsive gamblers are homeless, hundreds of thousands of dollars in debt, may have filed bankruptcy, committed illegal acts or attempted suicide. They are not the only ones affected by their addiction. It affects families, friends and employers.

The Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling

- Provides education and awareness on the issues of problem and compulsive gambling.
- Provides training for treatment providers.
- Offers a 24-hour Helpline.
- Maintains neutrality on the topic of legalized gambling.
- Is a model for other states in the country.
- Is one of 34 affiliates of the National Council on Problem Gambling in Washington, D.C.
- Is the only organization in Wisconsin dedicated to assisting thousands of problem and compulsive gamblers.

According to the National Council on Problem Gambling

- Suicide rates are 20 times higher among pathological gamblers.
- 65% of compulsive gamblers commit crimes to finance their gambling.
- Six to twenty percent of adolescents develop gambling problems.
- People who have other addictions are at a higher risk of becoming addicted to gambling.
- Seniors and adolescents are at high risk to become addicted to gambling.



Public Awareness and Education Programs

December 31, 2015



HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL CURRICULUM:

- Updated and printed 500 educational curriculums targeted at middle and high school students.
- Sent 2,000 informational letters/emails to all middle and high school principals and superintendents in the state.
- Sent 500+ curriculums to schools at their request.
- Assisted schools with presentations when requested.
- Developed and sent a follow-up survey to assist in continued distribution of the curriculum.
- The outreach program reached 3,200 students and 900 adults in 2015.

Adolescents are TWICE as likely as adults to become addicted to gambling!

RESEARCH:

Conducted initial meetings/reviewed information for potential research projects.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY:

WCPG conducted a statewide needs assessment on the addiction of compulsive gambling. The purpose of this survey was to assess what areas of research are most needed in Wisconsin regarding compulsive gambling.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

Plan started in 2008 and was developed and finalized by 2009 to give the WCPG direction. The plan continued to be implemented throughout 2015.

24-HOUR HELPLINE:

- Answered 183,848 calls to the 24-hour Helpline from 9/1/98 to 12/31/15.
- Continued to increase Helpline services; calls increase yearly.
- Increased telephone directory listings from 15 to 125+.
- Developed and implemented WCPG website; received 50,939 hits.
- 28,056 referrals since 9/1/98.
- As a result of the Public Awareness Campaign, we have been able to send 9,654 packets of information to compulsive gamblers, their families and friends.

ADDICTION is a "Place To Go Hide".

ANNUAL STATEWIDE CONFERENCE:

- 17th Annual State Conference scheduled.
- Increased attendance from 77 at the 1999 Conference to 122 at the 2015 Conference. Over 2,042 people have attended the Annual Conference from 1999 through 2015.
- The Annual State Conference is a wonderful opportunity to bring together a great variety of people who have contact with problem gamblers in Wisconsin.



**WISCONSIN COUNCIL
ON PROBLEM GAMBLING**



TRAINING OF HUMAN SERVICE PROFESSIONALS:

- Developed and implemented a training program for therapists, counseling agencies, and others, including basic, advanced and specialized trainings.
- Developed and printed training manual.
- Developed program to “train the trainers” throughout the state.
- Developed and maintain a master list of persons/agencies within the state of Wisconsin who are qualified to provide training, education, treatment or public information, at various levels, for use by such groups as EAP programs, human resource personnel, AODA personnel, school counselors, treatment providers and civic and church groups.
- From September 1, 1998 to December 31, 2015 we provided 2,517 units of training.
- Provided trainings to tribal, gaming, and Department of Correction employees.
- Updating and revising current training manual.

MINI-GRANTS FOR COMMUNITY-BASED ACTIVITIES:

- Provided mini-grants that will enable individuals or agencies to offer specific public awareness, educational, informational, and various activities on compulsive gambling at smaller levels within their communities. This will enhance the Statewide Public Awareness program.
- Continued the grant process, requirements and application.
- Awarded twenty-eight mini-grants to enhance the WCPG Public Awareness Program. These grants were used to inform adolescents and their educators on the issue of compulsive gambling. Ads were published in senior citizen newspapers/newsletters and informational place mats were provided to nutrition sites and other events for senior citizens. Ads and articles ran in the “School News” paper throughout the state. Billboards, radio ads and printed materials were developed through a grant in Northern Wisconsin. Awareness campaign was developed at a local university along with a survey on college age gambling. A mini-grant at a local university allowed students to create awareness videos on problem gambling disorders.

Yearly Call Total Comparison

