



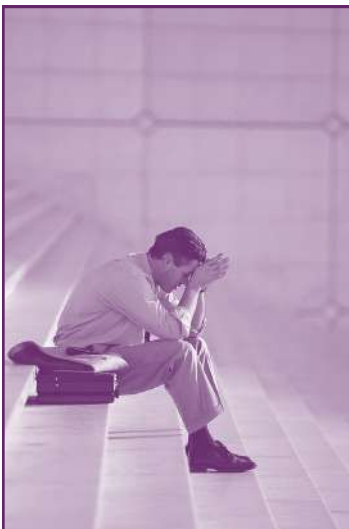
There were 13,081 calls for help in 2016.

Gambling was no longer just for “fun”.

Gambling was a problem.

**PROBLEM:** GAMBLING DISORDER IN WISCONSIN

**SOLUTION:** WISCONSIN COUNCIL ON PROBLEM GAMBLING



1585 Allouez Ave., Green Bay, WI 54311  
24 hour Helpline · 1-800-GAMBLE-5 (426-2535)  
Chat Online · Text 920-888-HELP (4957)  
[www.wi-problemgamblers.org](http://www.wi-problemgamblers.org) · [wcp@wi-problemgamblers.org](mailto:wcp@wi-problemgamblers.org)



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# Highlights of Compulsive Gambling Public Awareness and Education Programs

September 1, 1998 - December 31, 2016

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 2016 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 sign-



- age 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 2016.
- Published and distributed annual public awareness informational booklet.
- Provided Public Awareness to approximately 176,000 people through speaking engagements and exhibits (2002-2016).
- 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.
- Increased its Social Media presence through Facebook, LinkedIn, Pinterest, and Twitter.

# Highlights of Compulsive Gambling Public Awareness and Education Programs

September 1, 1998 - December 31, 2016

## ANNUAL STATEWIDE CONFERENCE:

- 18th Annual State Conference scheduled.
- Increased attendance from 77 at the 1999 Conference to 135 at the 2016 Conference. Over 2,177 people have attended the Annual Conference from 1999 through 2016.
- The Annual State Conference is a wonderful opportunity to bring together a great variety of people who have contact with problem gamblers in Wisconsin.



## 24-HOUR HELPLINE:

- Answered 196,929 calls to the 24-hour Helpline from 9/1/98 to 12/31/16.
- Continued to increase Helpline services; calls increase yearly.
- Increased telephone directory listings from 15 to 125+.
- Developed and implemented WCPG website; received 59,560 hits.
- 29,014 referrals since 9/1/98.
- As a result of the Public Awareness Campaign, we have been able to send 9,751 packets of information to compulsive gamblers, their families and friends.

## 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 2016.

## RESEARCH:

Conducted initial meetings/reviewed information for potential research projects.



## ADDICTION is a "Place To Go Hide"

## We Listened.

WCPG offers a 24 hour Helpline to assist problem and compulsive gamblers.

## REAL CALLS. REAL PROBLEMS.

- A woman from Dane County called looking for resources to help her stop gambling. She started gambling after her husband and daughter passed away. She is in debt and is in trouble with the I.R.S.
- A male caller from Ashland County divorced his wife due to her gambling problem. After the divorce he started gambling to be around other people because he was bored and lonely. It has now turned into a gambling problem.
- The caller says that she used to live in another state and was banned from casinos in that state. Now she moved to WI and she started banning herself from all the WI casinos. Caller says that sometimes she will drive to a casino she is not banned from and gamble there. "When I am desperate, I will gamble online." She is afraid of losing her husband and kids.
- "I crave it", says a Brown County caller. "I don't like the feeling".
- A La Crosse County male says that he has been in recovery for alcohol and drugs for over 20 years. "I swapped them for gambling". Gambling has been a problem for him now for 20 years. Caller is \$50,000 in debt plus 7 credit cards maxed due to his gambling. Follow up call was made to caller 2 weeks later. Caller says that his last gamble was 2 weeks ago.
- A Calumet County bartender says "I lost last night at work, now I keep thinking about winning it back today".
- A 27 year old Vilas County woman has recently been disabled. She can no longer work or enjoy her old hobbies. Caller was given a difficult medical diagnosis and gambling is the only time she isn't consumed with the pain and longing for her old life back. Caller has a 2 year old daughter.

\*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.

# ADOLESCENTS = High Risk Population

**MYTH: Kids are too young to have a gambling problem**

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



**Adolescents are**

**TWICE  
as likely**

**as adults to become  
addicted to gambling!**



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.



**WISCONSIN COUNCIL  
ON PROBLEM GAMBLING**

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 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?**

## 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.
- 13,081 people called the WCPG Helpline in 2016.
- \$38,090 was the average debt in 2016.
- The average age of female gamblers calling the Helpline is 64 years. Male caller's average age is 42 in 2016.
- Calls to WCPG 24-hour Helpline have increased 281% since 1996.

# 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?



### 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.

### 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 WI dedicated to assisting thousands of problem and compulsive gamblers.

### 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 5,725 students and 436 adults in 2016.

### 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, 2016 we provided 2,641 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

