

If you are concerned about your own gambling, or if you are worried about someone you care about, you can get help or just get answers to your questions by calling:



This helpline is a free and confidential service in Ontario, Canada and is available 24/7 with service in 170 languages.

1.866.531.2600

[connexontario.ca](http://connexontario.ca)

For more information on low-risk gambling, visit the Responsible Gambling Council website at: [www.ResponsibleGambling.org](http://www.ResponsibleGambling.org)



**YOU CAN ALSO CONTACT THE FOLLOWING RESOURCES FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

Thanks to D. Boissoneau, Garden River Wellness Centre; M. Drake CGC, Ontario Metis Aboriginal Association; A. Lemay, Sault Area Hospital Addictions Treatment Clinic.

Printed in association with the Responsible Gambling Council.

**Responsible Gambling Council (RGC)**  
All in for Safer Gambling

RGC is an independent non-profit organization dedicated to the prevention of problem gambling in Canada and around the world for over 35 years. We believe that gambling should never come at a human cost. By ensuring the right safeguards are in place, we influence positive change and advance responsible gambling standards.

[www.ResponsibleGambling.org](http://www.ResponsibleGambling.org)



# Gambling & the Indigenous Community



## UNDERSTANDING THE GAME

Gambling has long been an aspect of traditional Indigenous culture.

In the past, gambling has played a role in ceremonies and community celebrations, and has been used to teach various skills.

The traditional use of gambling has changed but the definition remains the same: gambling means risking money or valuables on an activity with an unknown outcome. Gambling activities now include bingo, scratch tickets, pull-tabs, horse racing, casino games, slots, etc. When gambling becomes a problem in Indigenous culture it is not only the individual who is affected but the whole family and entire community.

Low-risk gamblers understand that, while they may win, over the long run they will lose money. They know that the games work that way.

Low-risk gambling is a way of playing with very little chance of losing control. The key to low-risk gambling is to realize that "it's only a game."

**Balance. Wellness. Healthy Living.**

## AVOIDING THE RISKS:

- **Maintain values** of the Seven Grandfather teachings: love, honesty, respect, bravery, humility, truth, and wisdom
- **Don't gamble to escape** from problems - find alternatives to gambling in your community
- **Determine how much you can afford** to gamble and stick to this money limit
- **Never borrow money to gamble**
- **Make sure your children are safe** and well cared for (Protection & Nourishment)
- **Plan family events** that don't involve gambling
- **Don't use gambling as a reward** or as a rite of passage e.g. going to bingo to celebrate an 18th birthday
- **Look for support within your community:**
  - *Speak to elders*
  - *Talk to a spiritual advisor*
  - *Consider attending a talking circle*
  - *Contact your community's Wellness Centre*

## SIGNS OF TROUBLE?

Those experiencing gambling problems lose the sense that it's only a game. They may begin to look at gambling as a way to make money. They often think they have special luck or abilities. When they lose, they tend to "chase their losses", betting even more to win back money that's been lost. The result is a vicious circle of increasing losses and increasing bets.

- Are you leaving your children alone or with community members for long periods of time, in order to gamble?
- Are you gambling family money needed for rent/mortgage, groceries, clothes, or heat?
- Do you feel you have to gamble to spend time with the people you care about?
- Are you ignoring family or community responsibilities to gamble?
- When you are with your family, at work or at social events, are you constantly thinking about your next bet?
- Do you look at gambling as a way to make money?

**If you answered yes to any of the above questions, there is help available - please see next page.**

