

# Responsible Gaming Education Week – Aug. 3-7, 2009

A joint project of Kentucky's Gaming Industry; the Kentucky Department of Charitable Gaming; the Kentucky Department of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Addiction Services; Kentucky's Certified Compulsive Gambler Counselors; and the Kentucky Council on Problem Gambling (KYCPG).

P.O. Box 4595, Frankfort, KY 40604-4595; 502/223-1823; 502/227-8082 (fax); [kmstone@mis.net](mailto:kmstone@mis.net)

**2009 Chair:** Nichelle Anthony, KYCPG Board of Directors, c/o KYCPG, P.O. Box 4595, Frankfort, KY 40604-4595; 502-223-1823; [nichelleanthony@bellsouth.net](mailto:nichelleanthony@bellsouth.net).

**Participating Organizations:** The Kentucky Lottery Corp.; Churchill Downs, Inc.; Keeneland Race Course; Turfway Park; The Kentucky Department of Charitable Gaming; The Kentucky Department of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Addiction Services; Casino Aztar; Belterra Casino Resort; Grand Victoria Casino and Resort, Harrah's Metropolis Casino; Hollywood Casino and Hotel; Horseshoe Casino of Southern Indiana; and the Kentucky Council on Problem Gambling (KYCPG).

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## FACT SHEET

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### *Reality Check -- Know Your Limit; Keep Play Fun*

**For more information, please contact:** KYCPG Executive Director Michael R. Stone  
P.O. Box 4595, Frankfort, KY 40604-4595; 502/223-1823; [kmstone@mis.net](mailto:kmstone@mis.net); KYCPG website: [www.kycpg.org](http://www.kycpg.org)

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**COMPULSIVE OR PATHOLOGICAL GAMBLING** is a psychological disorder first classified in 1980 by the American Psychiatric Association in its publication, *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*. According to the National Council on Problem Gambling, Problem Gambling is gambling behavior that 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.

**COMPULSIVE GAMBLING** is treatable. If recognized and acknowledged by the compulsive gambler, professional counseling and self-help through Gamblers Anonymous provide avenues toward recovery. In Kentucky, referral to counseling and self-help are available by calling the **1-800-GAMBLER (1-800-426-2537)** helpline.

**RESPONSIBLE GAMING** is characterized by the following nine behaviors presented by the Responsible Gambling Council (Ontario):

- Gamble for entertainment, not as a way to make money.
- Balance gambling with other leisure activities.
- Only use discretionary income, not money for everyday expenses.
- Set a budget and stick to it.
- Don't borrow money to gamble.
- Set a time limit.
- Do not use cash machines to get more money for gambling.
- Take frequent breaks when gambling.
- Be aware – risk increases at times of loss or depression.

**REALITY CHECK -- KNOW YOUR LIMIT; KEEP PLAY FUN** conveys the essential message of responsible gambling. A full-color poster and rack card display the theme and include the lie-bet questions to help individuals check whether their gambling activity may be causing harm to themselves or others. Answering "yes" to either question indicates a possible gambling problem.

1. *Have you ever felt the need to bet more and more money?*
2. *Have you ever had to lie to people important to you about how much you gambled?*

If you or someone you know believes there may be a gambling problem, please call **1-800-GAMBLER (1-800-426-2537)** for referral to a certified compulsive gambler counselor, Gamblers Anonymous or the nearest Kentucky Comprehensive Mental Health Center. Please contact the Kentucky Council on Problem Gambling (KYCPG) for additional information or to receive a copy of the poster and rack card, 502/223-1823, [kmstone@mis.net](mailto:kmstone@mis.net).

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**LEGAL GAMBLING** revenue in the United States was more than \$80 billion last year, and that does not include illegal bookmaking and sports betting, office pools, private poker games, and backroom electronic and slot machines. Researchers Eugene M. Christiansen and Sebastian Sinclair noted the amount gambled annually is more than Americans spend combined on movie tickets, recorded music, theme parks, spectator sports, and video games. Some form of gambling is legal in 48 of the 50 states, plus the District of Columbia.

**CURTIS L. BARRETT, Ph.D.**, Kentucky's first compulsive gambler counselor and current professional adviser to the Kentucky Council on Problem Gambling, wrote in the May-June 2002 issue of *Inside the Numbers*, the newsletter of the Kentucky Council on Problem Gambling: "Gambling Law expert Nelson Rose says the United States is now in its 'third wave' of its experience with legalized gambling. That is, after a period of years when gambling was generally banned, more forms of gambling, in more venues, now are being legalized, established or expanded. Re-establishing pari-mutuel (racetrack) gambling and legalized gambling in Nevada led the way. A virtual explosion of state-sponsored gambling, in the form of lotteries and state-encouraged gambling riverboats and land-based casinos, followed legalizing casino gambling in New Jersey's Atlantic City. Native American gambling developed separately as another form of government-sponsored gambling, although 'government' in this case refers to tribal government."

**GAMBLING EXISTED** in prehistoric times. Archeologists discovered, at ancient sites, bones used as a form of dice. Dice were discovered at Pompeii, some of which were "loaded" for cheating. In America, a lottery helped fund George Washington's Revolutionary War campaign against the British, and another lottery helped raise the money used to start Harvard University. The lore of the American West is filled with tales of the riverboat gambler and itinerant card shark.

**KENTUCKY'S LEGAL GAMBLING** amounts to about \$2 billion per year. Kentucky Lottery sales set a record in 2008-2009 at more than \$800 million. Participation at charitable games featuring bingo and pull tabs recorded more than \$500 million in spending, and wagers at pari-mutuel horse racing also topped \$500 million. A 2002 Kentucky General Assembly report indicated Kentucky residents spent an additional \$352 million at Ohio River casinos. The Commonwealth of Kentucky receives approximately \$200 million each year in contributions, fees and tax receipts from the legal gambling sanctioned by the state.

**ABOUT TWO-THIRDS** of Kentucky's adult population gambles in a given year according to gaming-industry surveys. Casino company Harrah's reported in 2001 476,000 Kentucky residents gambled at out-of-state casinos. Nationally, more than 80 percent of the population gambles at least once each year, according to the National Council on Problem Gambling. A 2008 survey commissioned by the Kentucky Council on Problem Gambling indicated almost 1.7 million Kentucky adults have gambled in their lifetime. Analysis of the survey data results in estimates of 9,000 compulsive gamblers, 50,000 problem gamblers, and 190,000 at-risk gamblers in Kentucky.

**A 2003 KENTUCKY LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH COMMISSION** Report, #316, *Compulsive Gambling in Kentucky*, reported a "past year" estimate of 15,000 compulsive gamblers and 20,000 problem gamblers. It noted a lack of services available to serve these populations. It did not account for problem or compulsive gamblers then in recovery or treatment who abstain from gambling.

**COMPULSIVE GAMBLERS** amount to 1 percent of the population according to a metastudy conducted by the Harvard University School of Medicine Division on Addictions. In the United States, that means more than 3 million compulsive gamblers. Applying the figure to Kentucky's population, there are possibly 40,000 compulsive gamblers. Problem gamblers represent 2-3 percent of the population. The Harvard metastudy estimates of compulsive and problem gambling were replicated by the 1999 National Opinion Research Center study for the National Gaming Impact Study Commission.

**ADOLESCENT GAMBLING** is "one of the most troubling aspects of problem and pathological gambling" the National Gambling Impact Study Commission reported. Surveys indicate the rate of compulsive gambling among adolescents is three times the 1 percent rate for the general population. A 2008 survey of Kentucky public school students revealed 7 percent of all sixth graders, 15 percent of all eighth graders, 17 percent of all sophomores, and 17 percent of all seniors gambled for money or possessions within the 30 days of the survey question. Students were asked whether the money or time spent on gambling led to financial problems or problems with their family, work, school or personal life, and 2.5 percent of sixth graders, 2.8 percent of eighth graders, 2.7 percent of sophomores, and 2.3 percent of seniors answered "yes." That translates to more than 2,000 students.

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**THE ECONOMIC IMPACT** of compulsive gambling in Kentucky was detailed in a paper authored by researcher Mary Trip Reed in the Spring 2001 issue of the Murray State University College of Business and Public Affairs' *Journal of Business and Public Affairs*. She cited seven national and state-specific studies of various costs linked to compulsive gambling behavior, including crime, bankruptcy and social services, concluding that the average compulsive gambler costs society \$13,585 annually. Extrapolating the figure to the 9,000 compulsive gamblers in Kentucky identified in the 2008 survey commissioned by KYCPG means the aggregate cost to society in Kentucky is more than \$122 million each year.

**SUBSTANCE ABUSE** disorders, depression and anti-social personality disorder are significantly more likely among compulsive gamblers, the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration reported. It also indicated there is a strong association between suicide and compulsive gambling. Multiple nationally recognized researchers identified domestic abuse of the spouse and children as significantly higher among compulsive gamblers, as well as incidences of depression and other addictions.

**THE IMPACT OF COMPULSIVE GAMBLING IN THE WORKPLACE** includes lost productivity/absenteeism, fraud, embezzlement and theft.

**AN EQUAL-OPPORTUNITY ADDICTION WITHOUT A SUBSTANCE** describes compulsive gambling. There are none of the outward signs of addiction typical of someone abusing alcohol or drugs. In fact, because compulsive gamblers become adept at hiding their behavior, they continue to hold jobs and interact with family and friends while gambling. It can affect anyone. Compulsive gamblers are men and women, young or old, rich or poor, and of all demographic groups.

**KENTUCKY CALLERS** to the 1-800-GAMBLER helpline are about equally divided between men and women. About one-third come from the Louisville area, 20 percent identified Western Kentucky or Central Kentucky as their home areas, and all areas of the state are represented. They report gambling problems with casino gaming (25 percent of all calls), lottery, horse racing and card playing (15 percent each), charitable gaming (10 percent), and the gamut of potential gambling activities, including sports betting, dog racing, internet games, stock market speculation, cockfighting, sweepstakes participation, etc. Total calls average more than 150 per month, and about 50 calls per month, on average, are provided some measurable service (referral to counseling or Gamblers Anonymous or sent information). On average, three-five calls per month are from persons under 21 years of age.

**NO PUBLIC FUNDING** is dedicated to provide pathological and problem gambling education, awareness or treatment in Kentucky in spite of the evidence pathological/compulsive gambling is a serious addiction, nor in spite of the Commonwealth of Kentucky sanctioning gambling that returns more than \$200 million each year in revenue to the state. Most state governments that sanction gambling provide funding for pathological and problem gambling education, awareness and treatment programs, including six of Kentucky's border states: Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, Ohio, Tennessee and West Virginia.

**EVIDENCE-BASED TREATMENT** programs for compulsive gamblers have proven successful in promoting individual recovery from pathological gambling. The most successful programs spend approximately \$1 per citizen on the programs. In Kentucky, that would be slightly more than \$4 million, or about 2 percent of the money the state receives each year from sanctioned gambling.

**THE U.S. CONGRESS** currently is considering passage of a Comprehensive Problem Gambling Act, which will authorized more than \$14 million annually to support pathological and problem gambling prevention, education, awareness or treatment services. The funds would be directed toward the state authority responsible for administering the services. Kentucky state government has not officially, through legislation or regulation, established or designated an agency to oversee or manage pathological and problem gambling prevention, education, awareness and treatment services.

**CERTIFIED COMPULSIVE GAMBLING COUNSELORS** number 10 in Kentucky. Additional counselors and counseling sites are seeking certification through the American Compulsive Gambling Counseling Certification Board. There are 28 active Gamblers Anonymous meetings available each week to Kentucky residents (including meetings in the greater Cincinnati area and Evansville, Ind., coordinated by Kentucky residents). There are nine Gam-Anon meetings each week that are open to those family members affected by a gambler. The number of GA meetings has almost tripled in the last 10 years, and GA reports attendance has increased at the meetings.

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**SIGNIFICANT DATES:**

- Gamblers Anonymous was founded in 1949; the current organization was founded in 1957.
- Gam-Anon, for those affected by a compulsive gambler, was founded in 1960.
- The National Council on Problem Gambling was founded in 1972, and that year the first treatment program for compulsive gamblers was started at the Brecksville, Ohio, Veterans Administration Hospital by Robert Custer, M.D.
- The first state-funded treatment program was established in Maryland in 1979.
- In 1980, criteria for pathological gambling were added to the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*.
- The first National Institute of Mental Health grant to study problem gambling was issued in 1988.
- In 1994, the American Medical Association adopted a resolution encouraging physicians to advise patients of the addictive potential of gambling, further advocating states set aside a portion of gambling revenue for education, prevention and treatment.
- The Final Report of the National Gambling Impact Study Commission was released in 1999, containing 76 recommendations, of which 36 address problem or compulsive gambling.
- In 2009, HR2906, the Comprehensive Problem Gambling Act of 2009, was introduced in the U.S. Congress. It is the first legislative attempt to address problem and pathological gambling as a national concern.

**DR. CHARLES CALDWELL**, at Transylvania University, in 1834 advocated against gambling, presenting the first medical model for compulsive gambling. He held compulsive gambling was a brain disorder, recommending hospitalization treatment.

**GAMBLING SCREENS** are instruments to help counselors identify gambling problems or individuals recognize whether they have a gambling problem. Some, such as the Gamblers Anonymous 20 questions, are a self-test. Others, such as the South Oaks Gambling Screen, are administered by counselors. One, the Lie/Bet Screen, consists of just two questions. Answering yes to one or both questions indicates the respondent should seek help for compulsive gambling:

1. *Have you ever felt the need to bet more and more money?*
2. *Have you ever had to lie to people important to you about how much you gambled?*

**WARNING SIGNS** indicating whether your spouse, partner or significant other may have a gambling problem include:

- Do you find yourself constantly dealing with bill collectors?
- Is your partner often away from home for long periods of time with no explanation?
- Does your partner ever lose time from work because of gambling?
- Do you feel your partner cannot be trusted with money?
- Does your partner faithfully promise to stop gambling, begging you for another chance, and then continue gambling?
- Does your partner gamble longer than he or she intended, until the last dollar is gone?
- Does your partner ever return immediately to gambling to recoup losses or to win some more?
- Does your partner gamble in an effort to win money to solve financial difficulties? Alternatively, does the person have unrealistic expectations gambling will provide the family with material comfort and wealth?
- Does your partner borrow money to gamble or to pay gambling debts?

**INTERNET GAMBLING** was banned by federal legislation; however, there is a current legislative effort to repeal the ban. There currently are more than 2,500 internet gambling sites according to the National Council on Problem Gambling. Total 2005 internet gaming revenue was about \$12 billion; about \$6 billion was wagered by U.S. residents. Internet gambling sites are unregulated, raising questions of whether games are operated legitimately. Neither is there any consistent problem gambling awareness message presented.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**, call 1-800-GAMBLER (1-800-426-2537) or contact KYCPG Executive Director Michael R. Stone, 502/223-1823, [kmstone@mis.net](mailto:kmstone@mis.net). The KYCPG website is [www.kycpg.org](http://www.kycpg.org).