

Awareness of Addiction Growing

As awareness of compulsive gambling as a treatable addiction spreads across the Commonwealth of Kentucky, more individuals are seeking information and help. Several public-awareness activities may be spurring this increase:

- Both *Ann Landers* and *Dear Abby* reported the helpline phone number in columns within the last three months.
- The largest number of KYCCG-sponsored billboards advertising the 1-800-GAMBLER helpline were placed in January and February.
- The new KYCCG-produced brochure, *When It's More Than A Game . . .*, was available in waiting rooms at the state's network of comprehensive care centers and other medical/counseling facilities.
- KYCCG media advisories were issued monthly and printed in several publications and used on broadcast news reports. KYCCG Board members participated in live and taped television and radio programs.
- National media reported on compulsive gambling issues, especially in relation to the Super Bowl and the promotion of Las Vegas as a family destination.

Regardless of how Kentucky's citizens are learning that compulsive gambling is a real and treatable addiction, their actions indicate more people are reaching out for help. In February 2001, a record 61 assistance calls were received at Kentucky's 1-800-GAMBLER helpline, which is operated by the Crisis Line staff at River Valley Behavioral Health in Owensboro.

Murray State Study

Another indication of the seriousness of compulsive gambling in the Commonwealth was presented at the KYCCG's Fifth Annual Educational and Awareness Conference in Lexington Feb. 22-23, 2001. Murray State University is publishing *Gambling: Research Summary and Implications for State and Local Policy*, which presents a series of papers that examine gambling and gambling behavior in Western Kentucky. James P. McCoy, Ph.D., and Martin I. Milkman, Ph.D., directed the project that was completed in November 2000. The study's executive summary was reviewed at the conference.

Looking specifically at Marshall County, KY, researcher Mary Tripp Reed used the accepted prevalence rate (1 percent of a population that gambles is compulsive gamblers) and an estimate based on seven previous studies that the average social cost of a pathological gambler is \$13,585, to project that the annual social cost in the country resulting from the activities of compulsive gamblers is more than \$4 million.

The magnitude of the seriousness of compulsive gambling in Kentucky becomes clear if the Murray State study's projection of the social cost in the rural, small-population Marshall County is extrapolated across the rest of the state's 119 counties. Compulsive gambling is a serious public-health concern that affects everyone.

Membership Funds KYCCG

KYCCG's efforts to raise awareness about compulsive gambling as a treatable addiction, to provide education for counselors and medial professionals, and to refer those who need help to appropriate counseling or to Gamblers Anonymous depends on receipt of membership dues and grants. Even if the Commonwealth of Kentucky creates a Compulsive Gambling Awareness, Education and Treatment Program, KYCCG only would receive funding if it were a successful bidder for a grant or contract.

KYCCG members supply the bulk of the organization's revenue. A small percentage comes from conference fees and sponsorships, and another small percentage comes from grants. Of the organization's \$63,000 in 2000 income, more than 75 percent came from its corporate members, who represent the horse racing, lottery and casino gaming activities available to the state's residents.

If KYCCG is to enhance its efforts in awareness, education and referral — including legislative advocacy for treatment funding — it must increase its income base. While the organization is seeking appropriate grants and offering training programs as revenue sources, it still asks medical and counseling professionals, institutions and all parties with an interest in this area to join.

KYCCG Membership Benefits

The primary benefit of KYCCG membership is access to the latest information on counseling and treatment of compulsive gambling. This is available through the KYCCG-sponsored annual and fall conferences. KYCCG members pay a reduced registration fee at any KYCCG-sponsored event. If a KYCCG member wants customized training, that fee also is reduced significantly for member organizations, institutions or companies. At present, KYCCG members also receive awareness publications at no charge.

Inside the Numbers, a periodic source of the latest information, is included at all membership levels. It reports on developments in the state and nation and examines professional issues. It is a reference source. (Please see reverse side for the Professional Adviser's Report, Kentucky Gamblers Anonymous meetings, and a calendar of upcoming training/education events.)

Both the debut issue in January-February and this issue of Inside the Numbers were mailed to about 800 persons and institutions in the Commonwealth and nearby states. Future issues of Inside the Numbers will be mailed only to paid members. To ensure you continue to receive the latest information about compulsive gambling issues, please join KYCCG. Send your business card and appropriate dues amount to KYCCG, P.O. Box 4595, Frankfort, KY 40604-4595. If you have a question, call or e-mail Executive Director Mike Stone at 502/223-1823 or kmstone@mis.net.

The membership dues levels for KYCCG are:

\$25 Full (individual, which includes <i>Inside the Numbers</i>)	
\$50 Sponsor	\$1,000 Institution or Corporate
\$100 Benefactor	\$5,000 Special Institution
\$500 Patron	or Corporate

Pathological Gambling: Addiction Without Substance

(Editor's Note: This is Part 2 of a paper coauthored by KYCCG Professional Adviser Curtis L. Barrett, Ph.D., ABPP, CCGC, with Eric Y. Drogin, J.D., Ph.D. The serialization will continue in this space.)

Prior to recognition of "Pathological Gambling" as a diagnosable mental disorder, the term "compulsive gambling" had been used in both 12-Step groups and professional circles. There are many historical antecedents to the "compulsive gambling" label, most notably Fyodor Dostoyevsky's largely autobiographical novel *The Gambler* (1972, original 1866).

In *The Gambler*, the protagonist is in the grips of a compulsion and repeatedly gambles even though he has experienced severe consequences and has promised his wife that he would not gamble again. Gamblers Anonymous, at its founding in 1957, adopted the term "compulsive gambling," and the self-reports of its male founders were similar to the compulsive behavior described by Dostoyevsky. Most influential in the naming of the disorder, however, was the work of psychiatrist Robert Custer. Custer's writing was based in clinical research, dealing primarily with hospitalized male veterans. Answering the question "Compulsive Gambling — What Is It?" he wrote:

"Compulsive gambling is an addictive illness in which the subject is driven by an overwhelming uncontrollable impulse to gamble. The impulse progresses in intensity and urgency, consuming more and more of the individual's time, energy and emotional and material resources. Ultimately, it invades, undermines and often destroys everything that is meaningful in his life (Custer & Milt, 1985, p.22)."

Although Custer utilized the concept of "addictive illness" in the foregoing definition, the term "addiction" was not used for

either gambling problems or the chemically based disorders in the third edition of APA's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-III)*. Rather, APA regarded Pathological Gambling as one of the "Disorders of Impulse Control," along with Kleptomania and Pyromania (APA, 1980, p.291). Disorders associated with chemicals were classified as "Substance Abuse Disorders." In addition to chronic and progressive loss of ability to resist the impulse to gamble, the following were *DSM-III* criteria for Pathological Gambling:

1. arrest for forgery, fraud, embezzlement, or income tax evasion due to attempts to obtain money for gambling
2. default on debts or other financial responsibilities
3. disrupted family or spouse relationship due to gambling
4. borrowing of money from illegal sources (loan sharks)
5. inability to account for loss of money or to produce evidence of winning money, if this is claimed
6. loss of work due to absenteeism in order to pursue gambling activity
7. necessity for another person to provide money to relieve a desperate financial situation. (APA, 1980, p.293)

Assuming that the gambling could not be attributed to Antisocial Personality Disorder, the presence of any three (3) of these behaviors would suffice for making a formal diagnosis.

When *DSM-III* gave way to *DSM-IV* in 1994, the criteria for Pathological Gambling were revised. While Pathological Gambling was still classified among the "Disorders of Impulse Control," there was a shift in clinical focus to differentiating its symptoms from those of a Manic Episode. Under *DSM-IV*, the presence of any five (5) of ten (10) criteria could result in a diagnosis of Pathological Gambling. *(Continued Next Issue)*

Upcoming Events

April 20, St. Joseph Hospital, Lexington, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., "Assessment and Treatment of Pathological Gambling" presented by Loreen Ragle, Ph.D., NGCC. Contact David Susman, Ph.D., 859-257-6853 for details.

July 25, Northern Kentucky University, Kentucky School on Alcohol and Other Drug Studies, "Pathological Gambling Treatment: Integrating Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Spiritual Approaches to Addictions Without Substance."

September 13-14, Louisville, Fourth Annual Fall Educational and Awareness Conference, Kentucky Council on Compulsive Gambling, featuring Robert Ladouceur, Ph.D., University of Laval.

Gamblers Anonymous Meetings

The following is a list of the current G.A. (Gamblers Anonymous) meetings in or serving Kentucky. For exact times, locations and a phone number for contact persons, **please call 1-800-GAMBLER.**

Monday

- Southeast Christian Church, 7 p.m., Louisville (Also separate Gam-Anon meeting)
- United Way Building, 7 p.m., Bowling Green
- St. Paul Lutheran Church, 8 p.m., Huntington, WV
- Steppingstone Counseling, 7 p.m., Evansville, IN

Tuesday

- CARE Center, 9 p.m., Louisville
- First Presbyterian Church, 6:30 p.m., Lexington
- Pikeville Regional Technology Center, 6:30 p.m., Pikeville (Also separate Gam-Anon meeting)
- Florence Christian Church, 8 p.m., Florence

Wednesday

- Pigeon Roost 12-step Club, 7:30 p.m., Louisville

Thursday

- St. Michael's Episcopal Church, 6:30 p.m., Lexington
- Caritas Hospital B Cafeteria, 7:30 p.m., Louisville

- St. Mary's Church, 6 p.m., Evansville (Also separate Gam-Anon meeting)

Friday

- Generations Center, 6 p.m., Hazard
- Southeast Church of Christ, 7:30 p.m., Louisville (Also separate Gam-Anon meeting)

Saturday

- Pigeon Roost 12-step Club, 8:30 a.m., Louisville
- Token Club III, 6 p.m., Louisville

Sunday

- Iroquois Pizza (2nd&4th), 1 p.m., Louisville (Open Meeting, family welcome)
- KET Building, 4:30 p.m., Lexington (Also separate Gam-Anon meeting)