

## What Is *Inside the Numbers*?

*Inside the Numbers* is the newsletter of the KYCCG, The Kentucky Council on Compulsive Gambling. It debuts in January-February 2001, intended to provide an objective report on compulsive and problem gambling issues for KYCCG members, clinicians and others interested in the area of compulsive or problem gambling. It also will be a means for KYCCG to disseminate awareness and educational information as well as its policy recommendations.

After lengthy discussion, the KYCCG Board of Directors accepted the name. In raising awareness about the addictive behavior known as compulsive gambling (defined by the American Psychiatric Association in its *DSM-IV* manual), KYCCG believes the problem is significant, and that the numbers do not have to be overstated. KYCCG emphasizes credible figures and realistic programs.

## Some Key Figures and Indicators

According to the Harvard Medical School, 1 percent of a population that gambles is compulsive. The percentage is higher for problem gamblers, who are those that have not fully developed an addiction. Those figures were replicated by the National Gambling Impact Study Commission and a 2000 Swiss study. In Kentucky, figures provided from gaming-industry surveys indicate about 63 percent of adult Kentuckians gamble during a year. Combining the two figures means that 25,000 compulsive gamblers reside in Kentucky. That represents a city the size of the state capital, Frankfort.

KYCCG sponsors the 1-800-GAMBLER helpline, which is operated by the Crisis Line staff at River Valley Behavioral Health in Owensboro. In 2000, more than 1,500 calls were placed to the helpline, with about one-third requiring some sort of assistance — cool-down conversation, referral to counseling or G.A. (Gamblers Anonymous), or information sent. Since July 2000, about 1.5 calls per day required some assistance. The number of calls to 1-800-GAMBLER has approximately doubled each of the last three years.

Part of the increase in calls to 1-800-GAMBLER is attributable to increased publicity. There is no way to know whether it is attributable to increased gambling, but gambling opportunities continue to increase. In 2000, the sixth Ohio River casino boat opened, which adds to the legal forms of gambling in Kentucky — the lottery, horse racing and charitable gaming.



## Kentucky's Gambling Revenues

Information developed by the Kentucky Legislative Research Commission at the request of Rep. Jack Coleman (D-Burgin), showed that total revenues, receipts or wagers in Fiscal Year or calendar year 2000 from Kentucky's legal gambling were more than \$1.7 billion. Of that, the state received more than \$171 million in tax or transferred revenue. Other than sponsorship of KYCCG educational and awareness conferences by the Division of Substance Abuse in the Department for Mental Health and Mental Retardation Services, no Kentucky government funding goes to support compulsive gambling education, awareness or treatment.

The Kentucky Lottery Corporation grossed \$583 million in Fiscal Year 2000. Of that amount, \$162 million was transferred to the state. Total wagering at Kentucky's horse racing venues was \$630 million in calendar year 1999. Of that amount, \$7 million in taxes were paid to the state. Gross receipts for charitable gaming in Kentucky were \$573 million in Fiscal Year 2000, with \$2 million transferred to the state. In addition, the LRC report notes that more than \$2.8 million in fees and fines resulted from Department of Charitable Gaming efforts.

## Gambling Can Lead to Negative Behaviors

Several research studies report that excessive gambling behavior can lead to negative consequences. Here are some examples:

- In 1999, the University of Chicago National Opinion Research Council concluded that every person who becomes a problem gambler costs society \$3,000 per year in unemployment costs and the cost to business from hiring and training new employees.
- A study by German researchers Gerhard Meyer and Michael A. Strader concluded that pathological gamblers are more likely to have had involvement with the criminal justice system, mostly through fraud, theft and embezzlement.
- Surveys in Illinois, Wisconsin and New Jersey in 1996 by Dr. Henry Lesieur showed compulsive gamblers attempt suicide at a rate of 18 percent.
- Compulsive Gambling counselor Michael Brubaker presented statistics at a KYCCG conference that 11 percent of wives of compulsive gamblers attempt suicide, 11 percent of compulsive gamblers are physically abusive to their children, and 25 percent of the children of compulsive gamblers have behavioral or adjustment problems.

*The KYCCG position is that these statistics represent a public-health concern. Compulsive gambling is a real, identifiable addiction that can be treated. Governments that legalize gambling and receive revenue from it are obligated to address the public-health aftermath, just as they have for alcohol and substance abuse.*

# Pathological Gambling: Addiction Without Substance

**(Editor's Note:** Curtis L. Barrett, Ph.D., ABPP, CCGC, is professor emeritus, University of Louisville School of Medicine and a founder of the Kentucky Council on Compulsive Gambling. He has written and presented extensively on compulsive and problem gambling issues. He currently consults on gambling, substance abuse and other mental-health issues with Churchill Downs, Inc., the Kentucky Lottery Corporation, and others.

As the KYCCG (Kentucky Council on Compulsive Gambling) professional adviser, Dr. Barrett helps guide the organization's programs and responses to compulsive-gambling issues. Each issue of Inside the Numbers will contain a Professional Adviser's Report where Dr. Barrett will share thoughts and insights on compulsive gambling issues.

In this debut issue of Inside the Numbers, Dr. Barrett begins his column with an overview of exactly what is an addiction. The paper, coauthored with Eric Y. Drogin, J.D., Ph.D., will be serialized in this space.)

Although "Pathological Gambling" was formally categorized as a mental disorder by the APA (American Psychiatric Association) some 20 years ago (APA, 1980, p. 291), its characterization as an "addiction without substance" remains controversial. Most scholarly and scientific treatments of addiction are inextricably bound to the pharmacology of alcohol, heroin, cocaine, amphetamines, or similar intoxicants. For this reason, accepting the notion that "addiction" may exist separate from the injection or ingestion of a particular "substance" may be difficult for professionals and layperson alike.

While the involvement of psychoactive chemicals makes it easier to conceptualize addiction as a "brain disease" (Leshner, 2000, p. 20), addictive behavior in the absence of such stimulation

necessitates a different paradigm. Elkes<sup>1</sup> has provided a useful synthesis in this regard, stating simply that the "mind is what the brain does." From this perspective, addiction is a process of mind, not necessarily tied to the effects of a chemical on the brain.

The historical basis for the term "addiction" does not imply involvement of a "substance" of any sort. More generally, it reflects a process through which an individual's behavior becomes controlled by some external force. Under Roman law, to "addict" meant to "speak over" or "sentence." Legal proceedings gave creditors control over debtors who had failed to pay, resulting in the debtors' enslavement. Centuries later, pioneers in descriptive psychiatry observed that some patients lived in virtual bondage to alcohol and morphine, and analogized that it was as if these persons had been "addicted."

The last quarter century of the 20th century witnessed key advances in the conceptualization of "addictions without substance." Glasser (1976, p. 2) coined the terms "Negative Addiction" and "Positive Addiction." While the former category subsumed most substance-based addictions, Glasser postulated that evidence supporting the existence of Positive Addiction lay in a continuation of adaptive behaviors. Carnes (1983, p. 4) formulated "sexual addiction" as similar to (yet distinct from) "a pathological relationship with a mood-altering chemical." Oates, a Pastoral Counselor, noted that he utilized work much as alcoholics used alcohol (1971, p. 3). He coined a word now found in most dictionaries: "workaholic." Later, Oates noted that "luck" as a secular faith could result in diagnosable Pathological Gambling (1995, p. 71). (*To be continued in the March-April issue.*)

<sup>1</sup> Joel Elkes, M.D., Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, University of Louisville, personal communications circa 1981.

## Upcoming Events

April 20, St. Joseph Hospital, Lexington, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., "Assessment and Treatment of Pathological Gambling" presented by Loreen Rugle, 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

- Southland Christian 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

### 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)