

## KYCPG Adopts Strategic Plan

The Kentucky Council on Problem Gambling (KYCPG) adopted a strategic plan at its Board Meeting on Nov. 12, 2002. KYCPG's **vision:** *KYCPG will be the focal point for problem gambling issues in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.* The **mission:** *KYCPG will increase awareness of problem gambling, advocate for the widespread availability of treatment for problem gamblers, and promote research and education on problem gambling.*

**SIX GOALS** will guide KYCPG actions:

1. To provide education and training programs on problem gambling throughout Kentucky.
2. To advocate for the funding of comprehensive services for problem gamblers and their families throughout Kentucky.
3. To identify and contact key stakeholders at local, regional and national levels to promote collaboration.
4. To foster research, prevention and treatment programs in Kentucky.
5. To foster responsible gaming/wagering programs in collaboration with the public and private gambling industry throughout Kentucky.
6. To promote KYCPG as the focal point for addressing problem gambling issues in Kentucky.

## Looking Ahead to 2003

Among the activities on which KYCPG already is focused for 2003 are the convening of the Kentucky General Assembly in January, a new *National Problem Gambling Awareness Week March 10-16*, the *National Conference on Problem Gambling* (which will be held at the Hyatt Regency, Louisville, June 19-21, and include about 18 hours of continuing education units on counseling and treatment techniques, prevention and research.), and Kentucky's second *Responsible Gaming Education Week, Aug. 4-8*. A decision whether to conduct a Fall Conference has not been made, but if a Conference is scheduled it will be held in Northern Kentucky Nov. 6-7.

KYCPG will continue to reach out to communities and organizations to increase awareness and to educate the public about problem gambling. Presentations are scheduled for the Kentucky Women's Coalition, the Statewide Career and Technical Education Conference, and the Mental Health Association of Northern Kentucky. KYCPG hopes to schedule presentations at the Kentucky School on Alcohol and Other Drug Studies, the Mental Health Institute and the Kentucky Counselors Association convention. *KYCPG Board members and Certified Compulsive Gambling Counselors are available for presentations.* Any interested individuals or groups are urged to contact Executive Director Mike Stone (502/223-1823, kmstone@mis.net) to make arrangements.

## KYCPG Legislative Plan

Kentucky's state budget shortfall and the financial troubles facing the Commonwealth's horse-racing and hospitality industries continue to fuel debate over whether the state should expand gambling options. Although KYCPG is required to be neutral in the

debate (Its charter mandates it be neither for or against gambling.), the KYCPG does encourage responsible legislation. For the 2003 Kentucky General Assembly session, a committee chaired by KYCPG Treasurer Dennis Boyd, with Professional Adviser Curtis L. Barrett, Ph.D., CCGC, and Jim Blackerby, developed an advocacy plan. President Caleb Cooley and Executive Director Mike Stone serve as ex-officio members of the Committee.

**GOAL** — to ensure that any legislation passed involving gambling will include authorization of and funding for education/awareness, prevention and treatment of problem gambling.

**OBJECTIVE** — Contact and talk with every person interested or involved in gambling-related legislation to convince them that including authorization of and funding for education/awareness, prevention and treatment is smart business, economically sound and ethically correct.

The Committee is working to establish an identifiable theme and universal elements, including funding, needed in any legislation that will fulfill the goal. KYCPG also will continue to seek passage of legislation to establish a Compulsive Gamblers' Assistance Fund. Rep. Jack Coleman introduced bills in each of the last two legislative sessions, but they died in committee.

**NEW PRODUCT** — To help frame the debate on the need for problem gambling services in gambling-expansion legislation, KYCPG organized a public forum held at the University of Louisville on Oct. 24. Six panelists moderated by KET's Al Smith presented their positions and discussed the issues. KYCPG is producing a one-hour videotape of the forum with an accompanying booklet of the presenters' opening statements. The products will be distributed to legislators and others interested in the issue.

## New Counselors on the Horizon

Twenty-five Kentucky counselors participated in a two-day preparation workshop for the Certified Compulsive Gambling Counselor examination required by the American Compulsive Gambling Counselor Certification Board in Louisville Oct. 24-26, 2002. Twenty-three passed and will continue their efforts to become Certified Compulsive Gambling Counselors. KYCPG paid the exam fees for all participants to encourage more counselors to become certified to treat problem and compulsive gamblers.

Using research estimates and gaming-industry surveys, KYCPG believes there already are at least 25,000 and possibly as many as 40,000 compulsive gamblers in the state. Problem gamblers may number 75,000-120,000. KYCPG President Caleb Cooley said the Council wanted to use its funds to help address the problem now without waiting for state legislation or medical-service providers.

## Notes of News

- The Keeneland Foundation awarded a \$10,000 grant to KYCPG to place awareness advertising in Central Kentucky newspapers. 1-800-GAMBLER helpline statistics will be monitored to assess the impact of this type of awareness outreach.
- KYCPG Board Member Rick Redman, Vice-President, The Kentucky Lottery, received the Powers Award from the North American Association of State and Provincial Lotteries.

**THANK YOU for your support and interest in 2002!**

# Financing Problem Gambling: How Do They Get Money?

by Curtis L. Barrett, Ph.D., ABPP, CCGC  
KYCPG Professional Adviser

Many counselors and "members of the problem" (family members, business associates and law enforcement personnel) are baffled when encountering Problem or Pathological Gamblers. (In this article, the term "Problem Gambler" will be used because their uncontrolled behavior is leading them to serious trouble, including the life-threatening disorder of Pathological Gambling defined by the American Psychiatric Association in the *DSM-IV*.) The lifestyle of the gambler and others in his or her life is simply incomprehensible, mainly the gambler's capacity for obtaining money for gambling when his or her other financial obligations literally "goes a-beggin'!"

In a counseling interview, a young compulsive gambler, when asked how much money he earned per week, said "about \$500." He reported he gambled "about \$5,000" per week. Taken aback, the counselor asked where the gambler obtained such a large amount of money? The reply: "People gave it to me." Stunned, the interviewer asked: "Why would anyone give you so much money week after week?" The gambler replied: "because I asked them."

Problem Gamblers are capable of obtaining large amounts of money to gamble because they are incredibly skilled at finding the emotional key, including personal greed, to persuade people to give them money. There is a progression to this. First, gamblers risk and eventually lose their own money, including that readily obtained by cash advances on credit cards. Next, they obtain money by borrowing from family and friends or by cashing in money that is supposed to be reserved for other purposes like retirement, home equity, etc. Eventually, nearly three quarters of gamblers will commit illegal acts to get gambling money. Amazingly, the Problem Gambler views illegal acts as "borrowing." Problem Gamblers intend to pay back the money and often have elaborate plans that

convince the victim. All the gambler needs is that "big win," and he or she believes all will be forgiven.

Recently, the Iowa Gambling Treatment Program (IGTP) published results of a study under the telling title of "*Riches to Rags*." When admitted to the IGTP, problem gamblers were wagering \$522 per week. Their *gambling* debt was more than \$14,000, and their overall debt was \$34,000. Nearly a fourth of the IGTP patients had declared bankruptcy.

Very clearly, Counselors for Problem Gamblers, as well as other "members of the problem," need to learn new skills. It is necessary to develop financial assessment and planning skills, at least to know how and when to make a proper referral. Nowhere in my training as a psychotherapist was I taught to delve into the details of a depressed or schizophrenic patient's finances. Yet finances are grist for the mill of Problem Gambler Counseling.

Fortunately, Counselors don't have to fly solo. Gamblers Anonymous (GA) offers the "Pressure Relief" procedure. Counselors who wisely make sure that clients are active in GA, and that "members of the problem" are attending Gam-Anon (for those in a relationship with Problem Gamblers), have a strong treatment ally. KYCPG offers *Personal financial strategies for the loved ones of problem gamblers* (booklet), published in 2000 by the National Endowment for Financial Education, Denver, CO. "Members of the problem" other than Counselors must become more sophisticated about the way that Problem Gamblers finance their gambling.

The emphasis on money and finances here should not be taken to mean that Problem Gambling is about winning money. True, most Problem Gamblers believe that they have a money problem not a gambling problem. The fact is that Problem Gamblers seek the emotional "high," or "action," that comes from gambling. No amount of money can satisfy the craving for action. Big Wins simply lead to more gambling and to Big Losses. After all, we are speaking of an addictive process, not a financial deficit. □

## Upcoming Events

- February 7, 2003, Kentucky Women's Coalition meeting in Louisville (site TBD), featuring presentation by RonSonLyn Colston, CCGC, on problem gambling
- June 19-21, 2003, National Conference on Problem Gambling, Hyatt Regency, Louisville
- September 17, 2003, Mental Health Assn. of Northern KY, St. Elizabeth Medical Center, Edgewood, 6:15 p.m., Curtis L. Barrett, Ph.D., on problem gambling

## 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 person, **please call 1-800-GAMBLER.**

### Monday

- Southeast Christian Church, 7 p.m., Louisville (Also separate Gam-Anon meeting at 6 p.m.)
- Lakeside Christian Church, 7:30 p.m., Florence
- 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
- First Baptist Church, 6:30 p.m., Pikeville (Also separate Gam-Anon meeting)
- Florence Christian Church, 8 p.m., Florence
- Lincoln Trail Behavioral Center, 7:30 p.m., Radcliff

### 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, IN (Also separate Gam-Anon meeting)

### Friday

- Generations Center (downtown), 6:30 p.m., Hazard
- Living Stone, 7:30 p.m., Louisville (Also separate Gam-Anon meeting)

### Saturday

- St. Michael's Catholic Church, 8:30 a.m., Louisville
- Token Club III, 6 p.m., Louisville

### Sunday

- Hazelwood United Methodist Church, 1 p.m., Louisville (Open meeting, family welcome)
- KET Building, 4:30 p.m., Lexington (Also separate Gam-Anon meeting)
- Methodist Temple, 5 p.m. Evansville, IN (Also separate Gam-Anon meet.)
- Unity Trinity Methodist Church, 7 p.m., New Albany, IN