

FACTSHEET: COMPULSIVE GAMBLING



What is “COMPULSIVE GAMBLING”? – The inability to stop gambling even when an individual *recognizes* their gambling is causing serious financial, family, work and other problems. Compulsive gamblers lose control over their behavior and commonly lie and cheat to continue their gambling. Even worse, they may even resort to fraud or theft (illegal activities) when faced with desperate financial problems.

Who does it affect? – Problem gamblers come from many backgrounds. They can be rich or poor, young or old. Problem gambling can affect people of every race, every religion and every education and income level. It can happen in small towns, rural reservations and big cities. Most importantly, compulsive gambling negatively impacts the family with high rates of divorce and domestic violence.

Signs of “Compulsive Gambling”:

- Preoccupation with gambling
- Feeling guilt or remorse after gambling
- Lying to others to conceal extent of gambling
- *NEEDING* to gamble with increasing amounts of money
- Repeated *unsuccessful* efforts to cut down or stop gambling
- Restless or irritable when attempting to cut down
- Gambling to *escape* problems or relieve negative mood
- “Chasing” lost money; returning to gambling to get even
- Jeopardizing or losing important relationships and/or job due to gambling
- By borrowing money or stealing to gamble

Is there help available for “Compulsive Gamblers”? – It is extremely difficult to overcome the powerful hook of compulsive gambling without professional treatment. Few persons with gambling problems seek gambling treatment on their own. Thus, direct-screening procedures can be helpful for identifying those with problems through an array of services: Social services, medical care, psychiatric treatment and substance abuse treatment.

Statewide Resources – New Mexico

- **NM Council on Problem Gambling** – 1.800.572.1142 – All gambling related issues.
- **Gamblers Anonymous** – www.gamblersanonymous.org – **Albuquerque Hotline 505.260.7272** – **Santa Fe Hotline 505.984.7277** – Lists statewide meetings and other useful information.
- **Responsible Gaming Association of New Mexico** – www.rganm.org – Comprised of 11 tribal casinos that are dedicated to addressing the issues of problem gaming by supporting community awareness on a local, state and national level.
- **Non-Profit Credit Counseling in New Mexico** – 1.866.889.9347 – Statewide agencies in Albuquerque, Farmington, Santa Fe and Las Cruces.
- **State Mental Health Agency** – Behavioral Health Services Division – www.health.state.nm.us - 1.800.362.2013 – *Spanish language assistance available.*