

Louisiana Association on Compulsive Gambling



NEWS RELEASE

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Governor Bobby Jindal Proclaims Problem Gambling Awareness Week

The week of March 6 – 12, 2011 is Problem Gambling Awareness Week across the nation and in Louisiana. The campaign presents information about responsible gaming and problem gambling. In Louisiana, resources are available to residents who may have difficulties from gambling.

The annual awareness week precedes the beginning of the National Collegiate Athletic Association Basketball Championships, known as “March Madness.” Only Nevada has legal betting on NCAA games in the United States.

Fast Facts

What are the odds...

- Of a college player becoming a pro football player: 3,000 to 1
- Getting struck by lightning: 576,000 to 1
- Winning the Powerball: 140,000,000 to 1

According to ESPN and National Council on Problem Gambling surveys...

- About 118 million Americans gambled on sports in 2008
- About 67% of college students bet on sports
- Betting on sports outcomes is the most popular form of gambling for youth
- Some 80% of high school students report having gambled for money

Nagging MYTHS

Problem Gambling is easy to recognize. Nope. It's called the “hidden addiction” because it is easy to hide and has few obvious symptoms. Often it is only known after devastating events.

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The important thing to do with a gambler who has a huge debt is to help him/her get out of the financial problem. On the surface this seems to be the first and best action. However, bailing the gambler out of debt may actually make matters worse. There is no “quick fix” to compulsive gambling.

Financial problems are the main reasons that problem gambler’s relationships break down. Well, certainly that’s a factor. However, it is the lies and deceit leading to a lack of trust that is the greatest factor.

Gaming is a wonderful recreation for many Louisiana residents. What’s the difference between responsible gaming and problem gambling? The following are characteristic of recreational gaming:

- It’s entertainment
- Money lost is considered the “cost” of entertainment
- Money won is a bonus
- A certain amount of discretionary income is used
- Like any recreational activity, it has a planned beginning and ending time
- Understand the odds – accept loss as part of the game

Some of the indicators of problem gambling are:

- Feeling remorse after gambling
- Gambling to get money to pay debts
- Borrowing to finance gambling
- Considering an illegal act to get money to gamble
- Racing back to gambling after losing to “make up the loss”
- Thinking about suicide (a high percentage of problem gamblers do)

“Most adults who choose to gamble do so responsibly. For those who can no longer control their gambling, there is help available in Louisiana,” notes Louisiana Association on Compulsive Gambling Executive Director Reece Middleton. “One call to our Problem Gambling Helpline can connect a distressed person with people and resources here in Louisiana to help them get off the bet. This is something for all Louisianians to be proud – the state is leading the nation in recognizing and treating compulsive gambling.”

More information about the Louisiana Association on Compulsive Gambling and services is on the website www.helpforgambling.org. More information about the Problem Gambling Awareness Week can be found at www.npgaw.org.

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