

PROBLEM GAMBLING



FACT SHEET

Minnesota Department of **Human Services**

IS PROBLEM GAMBLING AN ISSUE ON CAMPUS?

For most people, gambling is a form of recreation or entertainment. But for some people, including college students, gambling can become an obsession. Consider these facts:

- College students report that they gamble for fun and social activity, to win money, and to experience excitement. (Minnesota Department of Human Services)
- Students are two to three times more likely to suffer from problem gambling than adults. (National Council on Problem Gambling)
- In a recent Minnesota college student health survey, half of the participants engaged in gambling in the past 12 months and eight percent gambled at least once a month. (University of Minnesota's College Student Health Survey Report)
- In the same study, of the students who have gambled within the past year, nearly five percent reported spending \$100 or more on gambling per month. (University of Minnesota's College Student Health Survey Report)
- Problem gamblers are more likely to have issues with drinking, drugs, smoking and depression. (National Council on Problem Gambling)

Problem gambling affects people of all cultures, ethnicities, ages, genders and socioeconomic categories. In addition, it causes negative psychological, physical, social or vocational consequences. If not addressed, problem gambling can lead to pathological or compulsive gambling, which is a diagnosable mental health disorder. This is a progressive addiction characterized by increasing preoccupation with gambling, a need to bet more money more frequently, restlessness or irritability when attempting to stop gambling, "chasing" losses, and an inability to stop gambling despite serious negative consequences.

WARNING SIGNS

Family members and friends of problem gamblers may notice the following signs:

- Increased frequency of gambling
- Preoccupation with gambling, at the exclusion of all other activities
- Gambling alone frequently
- Chasing losses with more gambling
- Gambling with money that's meant for tuition, textbooks and living expenses
- Borrowing money or maxing out credit cards to keep gambling
- Continuation of gambling despite negative consequences such as financial problems, poor grades and/or damaged relationships

RESOURCES

For more information about problem gambling and where to get help, visit www.beatthebet.com or call the free, confidential, 24-hour helpline (800)333-HOPE.

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FAST FACTS

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- Five to nine percent of male and one to two percent of female college students are probable pathological gamblers.¹
- Six percent of students say they have borrowed money to gamble.²
- Four percent of students say they have used student financial aid funds to gamble.²
- Eighty-seven percent of students believe problem gambling is an addiction.²
- Sixty-eight percent say controlling problem gambling is mostly a matter of willpower.²
- Only two in five students say they would know where to go for information on problem gambling treatment.²
- Half of college men say they gamble on cards at least once a month. About 15 percent of them play at least once a week, up from only two percent in 2002.^{3,4}
- About 30 percent of students will gamble on sports this year.^{3,4}
- Since 2002, the number of students betting weekly online has increased five-fold.^{3,4}
- Fifteen percent of students said that all or most of their friends gamble.²
- Only 22 percent of colleges and universities have policies regarding gambling.⁵
- A major depressive disorder is likely to occur in 76 percent of pathological gamblers.⁶
- In 2006, 1,150 individuals received state-funded treatment from problem gambling treatment providers.²
- Eight in 10 Minnesotans do not know of a financial resource available to those who need problem gambling treatment but cannot afford to pay for it. However, the State of Minnesota will provide treatment if insurance does not cover it.⁷
- Family members and/or significant others affected by negative consequences of the problem gambler can access treatment and funding even if the gambler is unwilling to participate in treatment.
- Minnesota has a toll-free, 24-7, confidential helpline providing information and referrals for problem gamblers and other concerned individuals: **(800)333-HOPE**.

¹ Stinchfield, Hanson, Olson, 2006

² Minnesota Department of Human Services

³ Annenberg Public Policy Center, 2005

⁴ National Council on Problem Gambling

⁵ Epidemiology of College Alcohol and Gambling Policies, Harvard Medical School, 2005

⁶ Unwin, B.K.; Davis, M.K.; & Leeuw, J.B. "Pathological Gambling," American Family Physician, February 2000

⁷ Minnesota Department of Human Services Consumer Study, 2002