

FOR COMPULSIVE GAMBLERS, HELP STARTS HERE

# ADMIT IT!



888-ADMIT-IT

FLORIDA COUNCIL ON COMPULSIVE GAMBLING  
[www.gamblinghelp.org](http://www.gamblinghelp.org)

## Warning Signs of Senior Problem Gambling

- Preoccupation with gambling
- Withdrawal from family and friends
- Neglecting personal needs or health
- Mood swings based upon winnings and losses
- Depression or withdrawal anxiety resulting from gambling excursions
- Sudden need for money or loans
- Secrecy, avoidance or lying when questioned about gambling habits
- Unaccounted for blocks of time
- Missing possessions or assets, including pawning or sale of personal items
- Using retirement funds or cashing in an insurance policy to fund gambling
- Needing to gamble larger and larger amounts of money to experience the thrill
- Gambling to calm nerves, forget worries or reduce depression



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Compulsive Gambling, Inc.  
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Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling, Inc.

# FOCUS

Concerning People with Gambling Problems

Summer 2003

## Up Close & Personal



## A Profile of Devastation

"Mom, won't you please come home? It's late." Liz, not her real name, hated being interrupted at the casino by calls from her daughter. The slot machine in front of her was definitely about to pay off and she had no time for lengthy explanations. "Not now," Liz shouted over the noise around her, "this machine is hot!" Inwardly she grumbled that a woman in her sixties shouldn't have to report in to anybody.

Like an ever-growing percentage of Florida's senior citizens, Liz at that time was locked into a full-blown addiction to gambling. It had begun innocently enough after the death of her husband, nothing more than a reasonable diversion from grief, loneliness and despair. Then everything started to change.

Very quickly, the slots shifted from being an anesthetic to being her drug-of-choice. Now she couldn't do without them even at lunchtime. Every day at noon, she would leave her job, rush to the casino, gamble for fifteen minutes, and rush back to work. Then, soon after quitting time, she was back in front of her favorite machines until the wee hours of the morning or until the ATM wouldn't let her exceed the standard daily limit.

At times, exhaustion took over and Liz fell into a dead sleep sitting upright or slumped against one of her mechanical companions. So absolute was her compulsion that even when she won a \$12,000 jackpot, she didn't realize it until someone told her. "I just lost complete control of my thinking," Liz would say years later,

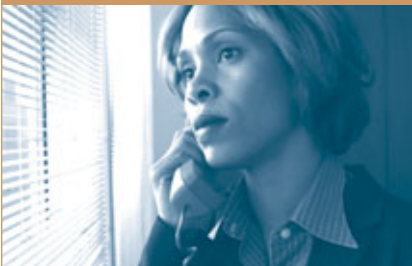
looking back in horror on what she had been through.

Predictably, winning streaks didn't help. Eventually, even all of her retirement savings were depleted. Then with most of her husband's pension and her own Social Security income also being poured into the slots, Liz turned to credit cards and mortgages. Soon, there was no credit left and the bill collectors started calling at work. In the end, she lost the family home that had at one time been the center of her world.

Luckily, Liz called the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling's (FCCG) HelpLine and she is now on a solid path of recovery from her addiction. But throughout the state of Florida, one in twenty of our senior citizens are still trapped in the agony of compulsive gambling. As was Liz, they are in deep trouble, in danger of losing everything, and they simply don't have enough years left to rectify the financial devastation.

*"I just lost complete control of my thinking."*

But, there is definitely hope. The FCCG is taking an ever-increasing stand on this issue. Want to know more? Read the article on page 5 by Pat Fowler, FCCG Executive Director. Want to help? Learn the *Warning Signs of Senior Problem Gambling* listed on page 8 and call the FCCG HelpLine at 888-ADMIT-IT if you think you know someone like Liz. Precious lives are going down the drain even as you read these words, and it is time to take action.



Gambling Problems?  
Yours? A friend's?  
A family member's?  
Call the FCCG 24-hour  
HelpLine  
888-ADMIT-IT

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## Want to help? Join FCCG.

(Contributions are tax deductible)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Bus. Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Categories

Full	\$35
Sponsor	\$75
Benefactor	\$150
Patron	\$500
Institution / Corporate	\$1,000
Silver Corporate	\$5,000
Special Gold Corporate	\$10,000
Donation	\$ _____

### Care to volunteer?

If so, select your area(s) of interest:

- Medical  Education  Public Relations
- Public Info.  Fundraising  Research
- Legal  Community Services  Rehabilitation
- Labor / Management  Communications

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to the **Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling.**

## Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling, Inc.

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### Our Mission:

The Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling, Inc. (FCCG), established in 1988, is a not-for-profit 501 c (3) educational and advocacy corporation under contract with the Government of the State of Florida. FCCG's primary mission is to help persons adversely affected by difficulties due to problem and compulsive gambling. The FCCG maintains a neutral stance on the issue of legalized gambling while seeking to assist citizens in need of support. Governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, the FCCG is an affiliate of the National Council on Problem Gambling.

### FCCG Officers

President: Paul R. Ashe, J.D.  
Former President of the National Council on Problem Gambling  
Vice President: Thomas Talley  
Counselor at Windoor Healthcare of Clearwater  
Secretary: Mary Cuadrado, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor of Criminology  
University of South Florida, Sarasota

### Board of Directors

(In addition to the officers)  
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Executive Director  
Tampa Area National Conference  
On Community and Justice

Bob Minnix  
Associate Athletic Director  
Florida State University

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Sheila Rozzo  
Educator

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Project Administrator: Pam Stiles

HelpLine Coordinator: Regan O'Rourke

Administrative Assistant: Connie Hayden

Bookkeeper / Secretary: Ana Amrhein

Receptionist: Eve Geliga

Newsletter Editor: Doug Dillon

## What's New



**Terri Orsino-Rebosio**  
FCCG Trainer,  
NCPG/Clinical Supervisor,  
LMHC, CAP

## Training for Clinicians

Gambling addictions treatment education is alive and well in the state of Florida. By partnering with the Bridgeway Center, Inc. of Fort Walton Beach, the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling (FCCG) recently completed its first 60-hour training program for clinicians. FCCG would like to thank Patty Partin, Bridgeway Center's training coordinator, for providing assistance in promoting this event and scheduling the meeting room for each of the eight sessions.

Terri Orsino-Rebosio, FCCG trainer, served as the facilitator for the Fort Walton Beach event. Not only did Terri share her wealth of clinical experience in this field but she also used FCCG videos, role plays, case studies and guest speakers from Gamblers Anonymous / Gam-Anon in order to give participants a heavy dose of the devastation caused by problem and pathological

gambling. Reaction to this training was very positive and in the words of one participant, "Terri is an enthusiastic, knowledgeable instructor. Thank you!" As a clinical supervisor for the National Council on Problem Gambling, Terri will continue working with those clinicians who wish to go on and obtain national certification.

*"Terri is an enthusiastic, knowledgeable instructor. Thank you!"*

Two other clinician trainings will be completed by the end of the year. All of these educational opportunities are subsidized by FCCG, making them very affordable for anyone who wishes to participate. For further information, see the Training Calendar below.

## FCCG Training Calendar

**Satellite Beach, FL:** Aug. 15th; Sept. 19th; Oct. 17th; Nov. 21st.  
**Seminole, FL:** Sept. 12th; Oct. 10; Nov. 14th; Dec. 12th.

NOTE: All trainings are on Fridays from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM and cost \$30 per session, including materials. Call Palm Stiles at (407) 865-6200 for more details and registration.

## Youth at Risk!

Young people in trouble with the law and living in one of Florida's Department of Juvenile Justice's (DJJ) residential facilities are, almost by definition, risk takers. That's why they are automatically exposed to drug and alcohol prevention and intervention efforts while they are residents at DJJ.

But, are they at high risk for problem and pathological gambling as well? And if so, is implementing a gambling prevention program at all their facilities called for? After a recent study sponsored by the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling (FCCG) and with permission from DJJ, the answer to both questions came back a resounding, "Yes!"

Conducted by Dr. Louis Lieberman, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, C.U.N.Y., and Dr. Mary Cuadrado, Department of Criminology, University of South Florida, Sarasota, the study showed that 75% of the DJJ residents had gambled in the 12 months previous to their placement. Of that group:

- 84% had at least 1 negative consequence that came from gambling.
- 17% directly connected their DJJ placement to gambling.
- 9% said that they had been detained or arrested because of gambling.
- 46% scored 4 or more on the SOGS-RA gambling screen which would classify them as "problem" or "pathological" gamblers.

Not only did the study prove the need for a gambling education and prevention program at DJJ facilities, it also explicitly said that, "Considering the large numbers of residents who already appear to have a serious gambling problem, specialized counseling or treatment in addition to education and prevention is apparently needed."

*"...75% of the DJJ residents had gambled in the 12 months previous to their placement."*



## From Our President

by Paul Ashe



Photo by Greg Dillon

### Paul Ashe

- Was the cofounder of both the Florida and the South Carolina Councils on Compulsive Gambling.
- Is a member of the National Council on Compulsive Gambling's Board of Directors.
- Served as the President and Chief Executive Officer for the National Council on Compulsive Gambling from 1993-1999.
- Serves as an expert witness and lecturer on problem and compulsive gambling throughout the United States as well as in Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia.

The FCCG is continuing to work in cooperation with the Florida Lawyers Assistance, Inc., and the Florida Bar Association in order to implement an Impaired Professionals Program. Concerted efforts have been made to aid professionals suffering from personal gambling problems. It is important to note that very often these compulsive gamblers are uneasy utilizing established self-help or other therapeutic forums, fearful of losing their jobs or anonymity. It is not uncommon for legal, financial, criminal justice, law enforcement and medical authorities to experience such difficulties. Complicating matters is that frequently judges and persons working with impaired professionals do not know how to provide help for those with a gambling problem. We are on the right path and feel it is just a matter of time until our program to help professionals sees fruition.

Recent research, supported by the National Gambling Impact study Commission and Henry Lesieur, has shown that professionals, such as lawyers, judges and doctors are among those most likely to be at-risk for developing a gambling problem. Other professionals, including but not limited to athletes, firefighters, engineers, accountants, counselors, police officers, stockbrokers, and educators, as well as persons practicing in hundreds of additional fields, also experience gambling problems.

Since many professionals find it extremely challenging and potentially detrimental to their careers to participate in traditional self-help (e.g. Gamblers Anonymous) and professional treatment programs, the FCCG provides confidential resources and referrals from a wide range of trained experts. To further ensure such protections, the Council is working closely with professional organizations, such as the Florida

Bar Association, Florida Lawyers Assistance, Inc. and the Florida Medical Association. Continued efforts are being made to establish collaborative relationships with judges and others within the court system as a means of aiding persons falling subject to crime in order to "cope" with the increased pressures of a gambling habit. The Council will continue its work to encourage the court system to develop and institute "Gambling Courts" in Florida, as is done in New York, Louisiana and some other states, similar in theory to Drug Courts. In the long run these efforts should effectively reduce the cost of judicial administration of nonviolent, white-collar crimes, and put into place programs that will assist those in recovery.

*“Recent research...has shown that professionals, such as lawyers, judges and doctors are among those most likely to be at-risk for developing a gambling problem.”*

The FCCG encourages anyone who has input into any of these areas to come forward and offer their assistance. These programs can only be successful with the full cooperation of the judges, law enforcement, and community treatment providers. As long as our society continues to expand gambling venues, it behooves us to implement those programs that can assist the families and individuals who are adversely affected by problem and compulsive gambling. Since our state already offers such assistance to those addicted to alcohol and drugs, it is the least that we can do for those adversely affected by Florida's \$4 billion gaming industry.

## Executive Director's Update

by Pat Fowler



Photo by Greg Dillon

### Pat Fowler

- Was instrumental in forming the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling.
- Serves as a national trainer and educator in the field of problem and compulsive gambling.
- Is a member of National Council on Compulsive Gambling's Board of Directors.
- Chaired the Helpline Committee for the National Council on Compulsive Gambling.
- State, National and International guest lecturer on Senior Citizen Gambling.

Little did I know, back in 1992, where FCCG's newly established HelpLine was going to lead. But now, looking over our many accomplishments since then, I am amazed at how quickly our HelpLine records identified that out-of-control gambling was causing devastation among a high percentage of Florida's senior citizen population.

Very soon after talking to so many older adults who were struggling with problem and pathological gambling, I began speaking to audiences large and small about this issue. It seemed to me that everyone should be alerted to what was going on and that a concerted effort should be made to deal with what was obviously a major problem.

*“...problem and pathological gambling in older adults makes them highly vulnerable to consequences significantly different from younger gamblers.”*

Well, guess what? Not everybody agreed with my perception. Researchers and gaming industry members challenged the HelpLine information as merely anecdotal. To them, what our records said wasn't hard, scientific data. But they weren't the ones talking to distraught seniors, their families and friends.

It took a while until people finally started taking notice, but today there is significant interest in this problem both nationally and internationally. As a result, the FCCG has become a leader in the field of dealing with problem gambling among seniors. Not only do we now have the hard, scientific data

that proves this problem exists, we are also providing awareness and prevention programs to combat the problem. To be more specific, the FCCG:

- Conducted the first statewide senior specific prevalence study.
- Instituted the first “National Think Tank on Seniors and Gambling.”
- Developed and now disseminate senior specific literature, videos and PSAs.
- Established strong collaborative links with other organizations that serve seniors.
- Hosted conferences and trainings for professionals who deal with seniors.
- Compiled long term statistical data from the FCCG HelpLine since 1992.

Without a doubt, problem and pathological gambling in older adults makes them highly vulnerable to consequences significantly different from younger gamblers.

The loss of financial security in the later stages of life alone leaves these gamblers in desperate straits. And although we at FCCG are proud of our efforts in dealing with this issue, much yet remains to be done. Therefore, we invite you to join us in this very worthwhile endeavor. **For more information on seniors and gambling, please contact us at (407) 865-6200.**

## Special Focus

### Students Speak Out

During the recent 2002-2003 school year, high school seniors from across the state of Florida joined the battle against underage and addictive gambling. Responding to a call from the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling (FCCG), these concerned young people created posters, wrote essays and designed web sites for the express purpose of educating their peers about gambling related problems.

Once their efforts had been adequately made public in their respective schools, those student artists, authors and designers submitted their work to the FCCG Scholarship Program Committee for review. After careful deliberation, the committee selected three winners in each category. Then at the FCCG Annual Conference in Orlando on February 22, 2003, all nine students were presented with their scholarships: \$1,500 for first place winners; \$1,000 for second place winners; and \$500 for third place winners.

The FCCG applauds all high school seniors who participated in this program and is delighted to now list the names of the winners and their awards in this newsletter:



<b>Posters</b>	
1st Place	Geansli Joseph, Lake Worth
2nd Place	Dustin Schaad, Bradenton
3rd Place	Fahad Islam, Margate
<b>Essays</b>	
1st Place	Diangelo Frazer, South Bay
2nd Place	Tiffany Brannon, Homestead
3rd Place	Sarah Hall, Plant City
<b>Web sites</b>	
1st Place	Story Karlosky, Ocala
2nd Place	Jami Parsons, Lake Panosoffkee
3rd Place	Tara Wadkins, Groveland



## Grants Spark Youth Prevention Programs

Congratulations to the Boys and girls Clubs of Central Florida, Brothers Keeper of Sanford and Human Services Associates of Orlando. Now that these three organizations have instituted gambling prevention programs into their regular program offerings, they have become leaders in this particular educational arena among Florida's youth service providers. With the age group of 25 or less being at very high risk of developing gambling problems, the young people under the care of these three fine institutions are lucky indeed.

In the fall of 2002 a Request For Proposals went out from the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling

(FCCG) to 501 c (3) nonprofit organizations and public schools. Up to \$5,000 then became available to those groups who could successfully put together programs for youth and minority populations in these areas:

- Increase awareness of problem and pathological gambling information.
- Expand knowledge of the economic, social and health risks associated with gambling.
- Enhance skills in making informed, healthy decisions.
- Highlight the sources available to assist persons adversely affected by problem gambling

- Integrate problem gambling prevention with existing prevention initiatives for youth.
- Create a program that could serve as a model for other Florida communities.

The Boys and Girls Clubs, Brothers Keeper and Human Services Associates more than met these qualifications and by early this summer, the implementation of their programs had been completed. FCCG is now planning for an expansion of similar prevention efforts outside of the central Florida region in the near future. **For a more in-depth look at one of these programs, please refer to the article on page 7.**

## In the Limelight

### FCCG helps Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Florida teach kids: DON'T BET ON IT!



**At the recent Teen Summit**  
From left to right, Pam Stiles, Project Administrator, FCCG, Sandra Brown, BGCCF Area Director in charge of *Don't Bet On It*, and Dr. Peola Dews, motivational speaker.

A \$5,000 grant awarded by the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling this past winter gave more than 140 at-risk children from Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Florida (BGCCF) the opportunity to increase their awareness of gambling, along with the risks and problems associated with compulsive gambling.

Through this grant, BGCCF created the Don't Bet on It program, a gambling-focused module taught in 10 Clubs throughout Orange and Seminole Counties. Don't Bet On It then became an additional component of SMART Moves, Boys & Girls Clubs

*Each child took home a T-shirt emblazoned with the gambling message, "Don't Bet On It"*

of America's nationally acclaimed primary prevention program that teaches young people the skills and knowledge necessary in order to resist alcohol, drugs, tobacco, and premature sexual activity. By adding an additional hour of instruction devoted to the issue of compulsive gambling each week, participants were able to understand how pervasive gambling is within their lives. Most of these children didn't realize that something as simple as the casually expressed sentiment, "I'll bet you that..." is a form of gambling. By using

simple first hand experiences like bingo games, these youngsters were shown over a 12-week period, how the excitement of gambling can quickly turn into devastation. Most important of all, they came to understand that the dangers of gambling are more than simply losing money; they explored how gambling can cost a person their dignity and sometimes, even their life.

As a natural extension of this learning experience, participants were asked to develop, script, produce, and act in a skit they created to let other teens and pre-teens know about the dangers of gambling. These skits were presented at BGCCF's Teen Summit 2003, sponsored by the FCCG grant and held in the Orlando Salvation Army gymnasium on Saturday, April 12, 2003. More than 140 children, along with staff from both agencies, attended an exciting program that included renowned motivational speaker Dr. Peola Dews. Club presentations, discussions, and debates, all meant to encourage an exchange of ideas that would lead to reinforcement of positive lifestyle choices. Children used their imaginations to show what they had learned about compulsive gambling and its associated risks and dangers through dance, drama, mime, poetry, and the visual arts. Each child took home a T-shirt emblazoned with the gambling message, "Don't Bet On It," which they had learned along with a strong sense that there was only one smart move they should make when it came to gambling.

## "The Many Faces of Compulsive Gambling"

The 10th Annual Conference of the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling (FCCG) was held in Orlando earlier this year during the month of February. Focusing mainly on carefully selected populations of problem and pathological gamblers, participants in this two-day event were treated to a vast array of in-depth workshops and presentations such as:

- The multi-cultural issues of gambling.
- Designing start-up prevention programs for teens at the community level.
- Developing and testing of a senior specific gambling screen.

Expert speakers representing universities, compulsive gambling prevention groups, criminal justice programs, and a variety of other supporting organizations, allowed those in attendance to come away with a wealth of valuable information. The highlight of these two days, however, was the presentation of scholarship awards to high school seniors who created winning posters, essays and web sites that educate young people regarding the hazards of gambling. (See page 6 "Students Speak Out" for details)