



WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT GAMBLING

As Resident Assistants, the campus community looks to you as its first line of defense in understanding information and resources available to aid a diverse student population in maintaining balance in all aspects of their college life. We recognize that this is a demanding task but we know you're up to the challenge.

Gambling among college students has become more and more popular, largely due to televised poker tournaments, increased advertising, and the accessibility of Internet gambling.

More money is spent legally betting on March Madness than any other sporting event, including the Super Bowl®. (Of course, sports betting is only legal in Las Vegas.)

Florida research demonstrates that 1 in 5 students are at risk for experiencing problems associated with gambling. As a matter of fact, the number of college students classified as problem or

pathological gamblers is 5.2%, which is four times the rate reported for Florida Adults.

Gambling can create short and long term financial difficulties, threatens emotional and physical health, and can derail educational and vocational pursuits.

This issue will provide you with insight into problem and compulsive gambling and ways you can find help for yourself, your residents or a loved one. It will also provide you with ideas for raising the issue of problem and pathological gambling with students living in residence halls.

The Orange County Coalition has partnered with the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling (FCCG) on this issue of *College FOCUS, For RA's Only*.

If you have questions about this kit or how to use the information contact the FCCG at 888-ADMIT-IT, or www.gamblinghelp.org.

These are the Signs of a Gambling Problem

- Arguing with family and friends.
- Financial or credit card problems.
- Borrowing or stealing money.
- Missing class or getting behind in course work.
- Lying about the amount of time or money spent gambling.
- "Chasing" losses in an effort to win back money already lost.

Don't gamble away your future. The truth is, gambling can cause the same problems as alcohol and other drug abuse.



Gambling Problem? Yours? A friend's? A family member's?

Call the FCCG 24-hour HelpLine
888-ADMIT-IT (888-236-4848)

WHAT IS GAMBLING?

Gambling does not always have to involve money or a tangible possession. As long as there is some type of payoff, the activity can be defined as gambling. Typically, casino gambling, horse and dog racing, sports betting and poker are all identified as types of gambling. However, it is important to remember that betting on lottery games, sports (school, professional or fantasy), charitable games (bingo), raffles, playing the stock market, street racing, friendly wagers among friends, or taking dares are also types of gambling. There is no

shortage of the types of activities college students can and do gamble on. All gambling requires is one person to present a challenge for some type of payoff (even pride or prestige) and for someone to accept.

Gambling is anytime a person bets money or places something of value at risk on an event of uncertain outcome.

Most students who gamble do so for fun. However, when gambling becomes a problem, disruptions in major life areas can occur.

In Your Packet:

The March Madness theme for this issue focuses attention on college students and problem gambling.

Use the information here and on the enclosed CD to hold formal and informal discussions with your residents. It is very helpful to ask students who might be having financial issues about gambling. Most students perceive gambling as a recreational activity and do not realize that gambling can become addictive. Therefore, knowing the signs to watch for is essential. Students receiving this information from you should be able to answer or understand the following:

- How can I recognize when gambling is becoming a problem?
- Where can I refer residents for help with a gambling problem?
- What harm is associated with problem or compulsive gambling?
- What are some legal versus illegal forms of gambling?
- What is gambling?



The *COLLEGE Poster* is designed to raise awareness of the issue of problem gambling among college students. The poster also highlights the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine. The HelpLine is a 24 hour, confidential source of

information and referral for callers.

The included computer disk contains *DIRE Stakes*, a jeopardy style game on problem gambling formatted in power point for use with residents. The disk also contains a *Guide for Resident Assistants*, which provides details on how

to play the *Dire Stakes* game, a copy of the *College Gambling and Problem Gambling Prevalence* study and other information.



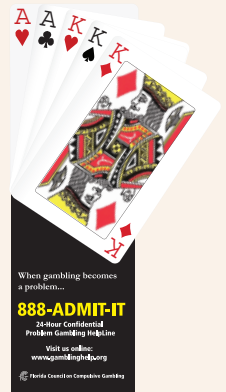
The *Don't Bet On It Brochure* underscores the warning signs and issues that college students face when gambling becomes a problem.

This brochure will identify ways to get help and features the Florida Council's 24-hour Helpline.

The *College Bookmark* features the HelpLine number and is perfect for every day use, for your bulletin board, or information to hand to a resident you are concerned about.

Things you can do:

- Create a bulletin board: putting up the posters, brochure, and bookmark so that students can review the information.
- Play DIRE Stakes with students sharing information on problem gambling from the included notes pages.
- Have students share stories and issues around gambling and gambling addiction.
- Talk about this information in house meetings or one-on-one with residents.
- Don't hold raffles, Texas Hold 'Em Poker nights or other types of gambling activities on the floor, without talking to residents about the risks and without posting the 24-hour HelpLine number (888-ADMIT-IT).



Problem Gambling and Substance Abuse

Gambling can become addictive, just like alcohol and other drugs. However, unlike those addicted to alcohol and other drugs, compulsive gambling is often hidden. There are no visible signs, such as intoxication or dilated pupils to indicate that someone is a gambler.

Similar to other addictions, problem and compulsive gambling leads to:

- ✓ Preoccupation with gambling.
- ✓ Denial of the gambling problem. (I have had a run of bad luck—it is a losing problem.)
- ✓ Lack of control. (Stay longer and spend more time or money gambling than was anticipated.)

- ✓ Lying about gambling, or wins and losses.
- ✓ Damaged relationships due to neglect, failure to pay back money owed or other reason.
- ✓ Criminal activity.

Yet, problem and compulsive gamblers appear 'normal.' There is no drug or urine test to check for a gambling problem, and most problem gamblers are more functional at work or in class in the early stages. Overdose does not occur with gambling as it does with alcohol and other drugs. As long as a gambler has access to money or credit, he or she can gamble.

Students who develop a problem with gambling are also at risk for developing difficulties with alcohol and other drugs, and other addictive behaviors. Brain chemistry studies document that dopamine and serotonin levels among compulsive gamblers affect the same pleasure center of the brain as those chemically addicted. Simply, compulsive gamblers experience the same 'high' when gambling as does someone using alcohol or other drugs.

Studies also show that about 30% of people being treated for substance abuse have a history of problem gambling and 30-50% of those being treated for pathological gambling have difficulties with alcohol or other drugs.



Internet Gambling

Despite being illegal in all states, Internet gambling is escalating. The National Gambling Impact Study Commission reported that, in 1997, online gambling facilities brought in \$300 million from 6.9 million Internet gamblers. By 1998, the number of gamblers rose to 14.5 million and revenues increased to \$651 million. This was just at the brink of the proliferation of popularity of social networking sites, virtual gaming, and instant messaging that is so popular among students.

Researchers speculate that the Internet might be reinforcing or even increasing problem and pathological behaviors. There are three major factors that may cause people with compulsive addictions to turn to the Internet:

1. Accessibility
2. Affordability
3. Anonymity

Internet gambling is of particular concern because it:

- Enables access any time of day via a computer.

- Encourages continuous play and action – not allowing for a slowing of the game or breaks in play for food, sleep, school, work, or other activities.
- Doesn't provide the benefit of a visual turning over of money, as bets are placed to a credit card or against a line of credit.
- Disconnects the user from the value of money or the amount of debt owned since the use of gambling on credit can make losses seem unreal.
- Fails to provide consumer protections since it is illegal in the U.S. and hosting companies are located outside the country.
- Allows companies to track user preferences, provides links to other gaming options, and fosters continuous play.
- Uses special offers, and early wins to attract users.
- Provides access to minors and offers inadequate oversight. Cannot check ID or Age of players.

Texas Hold'em Poker - Still a Gamble

POKER IS NOT A SPORT

Even though ESPN covers the World Series of Poker and there is a World Poker Tour, playing poker is not a sport but rather, a form of gambling.

While poker may be a game that requires understanding and strategy to play, no matter how much you practice or how skilled you become, the outcome is not predictable.

SOME INTERESTING ODDS

For instance in Texas Hold'em Poker, there is only a 1 in 425 chance of getting three of a kind on the flop. On the turn, you have a 1 in 95 chance of getting two pair (but not a full house), and when playing against 5 other opponents there are more than 9.7 trillion possible hand combinations that can come up and with 9 opponents there are 622 quintillion possibilities!

POKER ON CAMPUS

Poker is gaining popularity among college students and others across the state. Popularity of television shows such as Celebrity Poker, the World Poker Tour and the Work Series of Poker coupled with easy access to internet poker sites and increasing numbers of poker rooms only add to that

surge. Unfortunately along with this growing popularity is the growing number of those with gambling addiction related to card play.

Calls to the 24-hour Gambling HelpLine for card play continue to increase and now represents almost one third of all calls. Some research demonstrates that gambling addiction is one of the fastest growing addictions among young adults.

REDUCING THE RISK OF HARM

Social Games:

- Play for minimal stakes so that it doesn't affect your friendships.
- Set limits about how much people can lose, or for 'buying back in.'
- Don't make this your primary social activity.

At a Casino

- Stay at low limit tables.
- Don't go alone or with someone who gambles more than you do.
- Use cash only, leave credit and debit cards home.

On-line

- It is illegal to gamble on the internet.

- On-line sites don't provide any break in the action, so players often lose track of time and money spent.
- Doing well on free sites does not mean you will do well when playing for money.

For help with a gambling problem, call the FCCG, 24-hour HelpLine:

888-ADMIT-IT

COLLEGE STUDENTS WITH A GAMBLING PROBLEM MAY:

- Spend money they don't have
- Max out credit cards
- Lie to family and friends
- Borrow and steal from others
- Use other people's credit cards without permission
- Argue with family and friends about gambling
- Lose scholarship and job opportunities
- Commit crimes to gamble or pay off losses
- Become depressed and have suicidal thoughts

Used with permission: Is Hold'em Poker Holding You Hostage? Addiction Services of Thames Valley, London, Ontario



Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling, Inc.

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Phone: (407) 865-6200

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HelpLine: 888-ADMIT-IT
888-236-4848

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WHEN GAMBLING BECOMES A PROBLEM

888-ADMIT-IT

 **Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling, Inc.** www.gamblinghelp.org

10 RULES OF RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING

1. **If you choose to gamble, do so for entertainment purposes.** If your gambling is no longer an enjoyable activity then ask yourself, "Why am I still playing?"
 2. **Treat the money you lose as the cost of your entertainment.** Treat any winnings as a bonus.
 3. **Set a dollar limit and stick to it.** Decide before playing what you can "afford" to spend and lose. Do not change your mind after losing.
 4. **Set a time limit and stick to it.** Decide how much time you plan to spend gambling. Leave when you reach the time limit whether you are winning or losing.
 5. **Expect to lose.** The odds are that you will lose. Accept losses as part of the game.
 6. **Make it a private rule not to gamble with other people's money or on credit.** Do not borrow money from others or gamble on credit.
 7. **Create a balance in your life.** Gambling should not interfere with or substitute for family, friends, class or other worthwhile activities.
 8. **Avoid 'chasing' lost money.** Chances are the more you try to recoup your lost money the larger your losses will be.
 9. **Don't gamble as a way to cope with emotional or physical pain.** Gambling for reasons other than entertainment can lead to problems.
 10. **Become educated about the warning signs of problem gambling.** The more you know, the better the choices you can make.
- If you or someone you know cannot adhere to these suggestions gambling may be a problem. Help is available by calling the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling's (FCCG) HelpLine, visiting the Council's website, www.gamblinghelp.org, or participating in the FCCG interactive forum for college students: <http://gamblinghelp.org/forums>
- All services are free.
- (Resource referrals are also available for outside Florida.)*