



Tips for Loved Ones

Are You Affected By Someone's Gambling Problem?

In celebration of the month of love, let's discuss the reality of problem gambling in the household. Discovering that a loved one has a gambling addiction is a shock, and the ramifications can spread beyond emotional. You are not alone in this struggle. For every problem gambler, 8-10 other people are negatively impacted, including loved ones. This month we hope to share some of the signs to look out for, the steps that you can take to protect yourself, and the help and hope available for yourself and a loved one who may be suffering from gambling addiction.

Recognizing the situation is key! Too often we find ourselves in denial about unpleasant facts until they are unavoidable, and this holds true for our relationships. If you find yourself sweeping things under the rug (such as missing money or checkbooks) and making excuses for tardiness on financial obligations, then perhaps it's time that you stop looking away and recognize the situation.

Compulsive gambling is classified as an addiction, and there is hope for recovery! This recovery is unable to start if the problem is not recognized and directly addressed for what it is. The first step to recovery is acceptance, and that's true whether you are the gambler or a concerned loved one.

Protecting your assets also protects their future! You don't want to imagine that your loved one would use your protected finances to fuel their habit, but it's important to check. Contact your bank and see if a second mortgage has been taken out, or check your credit history to see if things have changed. By removing their name off of all accounts, you can limit the amount of damage that they do to you, and to themselves. It is important to keep in mind that the problem gambler in your life is not intentionally hurting you. Compulsive gambling is a progressive disorder and becomes an uncontrollable impulse in which, the gambler truly believes that they will win back any money they "borrow."

Like with any addiction, the problem gambler doesn't consider how their actions impact their loved ones. Your struggle as a love one of a problem gambler, and the stress and anger that you may feel, is only human. The FCCG provides resources, help, and hope for the loved ones of problem gambler, as well as the gambler themselves. If you or someone you know may be suffering from gambling addiction, call [Florida's 24/7, Confidential, and Multilingual Problem Gambling HelpLine: 888-ADMIT-IT](tel:888-ADMIT-IT). You are not alone, and gambling addiction is treatable.

National Caregivers Day

In 2015, the Providers Association for Home Health & Hospice Agencies (PAHHHA) declared the third Friday of February National Caregivers Day.¹ Since then, this day has been dedicated to recognizing the individuals that spend their time providing care and compassion for our aging loved ones. Many of these caregivers are paid professionals, however family members and friends often serve as unpaid caregivers, giving their time and money to supported the people we cherish. Whether paid or unpaid, caregivers provided essential services and personal care to Florida's senior community. It seems fitting that we recognize the hard work of these people during the "month of love" and honor the vital role they play in the lives of those we hold most dear.



As we spend this time recognizing the people who support the health and well-being of the seniors in our lives, it is important to take note that seniors are among one of the fastest-growing groups of gamblers and are often at risk of developing problem gambling behaviors. While most can enjoy gambling as a harmless recreational activity, many seniors use gambling to cope with major life changes and losses, which can lead to dangerous gambling habits.

The FCCG provides a wide range of support, including resources specific to Florida's senior population and for caregivers. If you or a loved one may have a gambling problem, call [Florida's 24-7, Confidential, and Multilingual Problem Gambling HelpLine at 888-ADMIT-IT \(236-4848\)](tel:888-ADMIT-IT).



References

¹“NATIONAL CAREGIVERS DAY - THIRD FRIDAY IN FEBRUARY.” National Day Calendar, nationaldaycalendar.com/national-caregivers-day-third-friday-in-february/.