

**24-HOUR PROBLEM GAMBLING HELPLINE  
FINAL MONTH AND ANNUAL REPORT  
(July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006)**

WHEN GAMBLING BECOMES A PROBLEM

**888-ADMIT-IT**



Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling

[www.gamblinghelp.org](http://www.gamblinghelp.org)

July 2006

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This final month and annual report by the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling (FCCG) is the last contract deliverable to the Florida Lottery for fiscal year 2005-2006 (i.e. July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006). The purpose of this summary is to furnish information for the last month of the contract period (June 2006), as well as for the entire fiscal period (July 2005 - June 2006) regarding the state-funded 24-hour Problem Gambling HelpLine (888-ADMIT-IT); a service staffed and operated by the FCCG. The HelpLine provides 24-hour supportive intervention, information, self-help and professional treatment resources, as well as financial and legal referrals for problem and compulsive gamblers, their families and friends. Expert supports and guidance are also available to employee assistance practitioners, law enforcement authorities, educators, social workers, health care professionals, government officials and others in need of information pertaining to self-help meetings, treatment, training, research or special services.

The primary objective of the HelpLine service is to aid persons in need of help for a gambling problem. A secondary goal is to compile demographic, background and gambling specific information from Florida callers. This data provides valuable knowledge and insight, and enables the organization to track and report trends, and to identify areas in need of attention.

## **OFFICE LOCATION, HELPLINE COVERAGE AND ACCESS**

In October, 2005, the FCCG moved its office location from Maitland, Florida to Altamonte Springs (901 Douglas Avenue) to better accommodate agency needs and organizational growth. Both the HelpLine phone system and principal support staff are housed at the Altamonte Springs office and agency personnel handle all calls received during official office hours; 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. HelpLine specialists and the remainder of the agency workforce, comprised of seven individuals in total, are classified as "paraprofessionals," as are after hour personnel. All provide supportive intervention, information, guidance and referrals based upon caller circumstances.

After hour and weekend coverage continues to be subcontracted to a Florida based professional treatment provider that has been furnishing ongoing services for several years. However, HelpLine callers are unaware of the professional treatment status of after hour personnel since all contacts are handled consistently on a 24-hour basis, in that services supplied are performed as "paraprofessionals".

The FCCG HelpLine can be accessed via two toll-free telephone numbers (888-ADMIT-IT and 800-426-7711), the agency's office number (407-865-6200) or by email (fccg@gamblinghelp.org). The telephone system is designed with multiple phone lines to ensure that incoming calls are rolled over to an open line as needed. The availability to access HelpLine assistance via email became an option for the first time this fiscal year in recognition that use of a computer and communication via the Internet has grown exponentially among persons of all ages. To address this development, the agency expanded its web site (www.gamblinghelp.org) to include additional information and access points, as well as links from other homepages as further outreach tools. As such, the FCCG web site now serves as an extension of the agency's HelpLine service and allows visitors to initiate contact by forwarding inquiries or requests by email. However, it is important to note that while persons seeking assistance via the computer are encouraged to contact the HelpLine directly, especially in crisis situations, it provides a point of access to individuals who otherwise would not seek such help.

## **STAFF TRAINING**

The FCCG HelpLine is staffed by specialists around the clock who are professionally trained regarding issues relating to problem and compulsive gambling, including the scope and severity of difficulties experienced by individuals, families and others. More specifically, all HelpLine personnel are required to undergo extensive training to ensure:

- ⇒ An in-depth understanding of gambling addiction impacts and associated issues
- ⇒ Knowledge of resource options
- ⇒ Call handling in adherence to agency protocols and policies
- ⇒ Ability to provide crisis intervention and suicide prevention strategies
- ⇒ Familiarity with HelpLine database functions
- ⇒ Staff readiness of diverse call type

New organizational hires are required to undergo a minimum of 25 hours of training prior to the actual handling of HelpLine calls.

## **HELPLINE MANUAL**

The FCCG updated its HelpLine Manual for purposes of ensuring that all pertinent information is housed in one publication for easy access and reference by agency and after hour personnel. In fact, the Manual now includes all known resources in Florida, in contiguous states, and to a more limited extent, throughout the United States, which in the past were compiled in a separate publication (i.e. Directory of Gambling Treatment and Recovery Resources). Furthermore, the Manual serves as backup when emergency situations arise from the loss of electrical power, computer difficulty or other failures.

## **COMPUTERIZED DATABASE**

In addition to the HelpLine Manual, agency staff is supported by a computerized database which is a provision required to ensure state funding and to demonstrate service effectiveness. The HelpLine database is the only location where all information relating to these calls may be found. All reports generated from the database, totaling in excess of 100, are based upon information housed within the system. Such reports are used to compile caller demographics and related information, to identify areas of need, and as a basis for comparison between past, present and future trends and statistics.

The Manual and database enables personnel to quickly find resource referrals to accommodate caller needs. It houses resources in each of Florida's 67 counties and includes information for community resource lines, crisis and mental health centers, medical facilities for veterans, and legal aid organizations. While certain types of resources are still not readily accessible in every county, all available information is provided for locations in the following categories:

- ⇒ Self-help for problem gamblers and others (i.e. Gamblers Anonymous and Gam-Anon)
- ⇒ Outpatient and residential gambling-specific professional treatment providers
- ⇒ Non gambling-specific hotlines (e.g. alcohol addiction, domestic abuse, suicide prevention, etc.).

All resource referrals are confirmed on an ongoing basis and a system for re-verification is in place.

Finally, a newly designed database has been prepared for implementation during the upcoming fiscal year, which will allow the FCCG to conduct additional analysis and correlations of call data and trends, to distinguish between telephone and email contacts, as well as provide computerized access by after hour personnel. The format of this database is near identical to the current system so transition to the new should be uneventful.

## **HELPLINE DATA ENTRY AND ANALYSIS**

The accuracy of this system is largely dependent upon the information furnished by specialists handling the call, as well as by users inputting data for after hour contacts. To assure consistency of ongoing reporting, regardless of the person handling or inputting the call information, the agency completed a thorough review of each call entered, and when appropriate, made necessary adjustments. This cleaning of the data was officially completed upon the closing of the fiscal year and as such, the information outlined within this report may reflect a variance from monthly report submissions to the Lottery. Equally important, the agency has implemented a protocol for use in fiscal year 2006-2007, which will ensure that all calls are monitored on a daily basis for purposes of confirming accuracy and consistency.

## **CALL TYPE CLASSIFICATIONS**

During fiscal year 2005-2006, the agency classified its calls into five main categories, including Help Only, Information, Quick Referrals, Office Calls and Erroneous Contacts. Specifics follow:

- 1) *Help Only* - Calls for Help involving someone experiencing difficulties due to gambling (including crisis contacts). Information about the gambler and his/her problem is obtained. This call may be received from the gambler him or herself, or any family member, friend, employer or other concerned person.

- 2) *Information* - Inquiries from callers requesting research statistics, program and service offerings, literature, resources, etc.
- 3) *Quick Referrals* - Persons seeking information for times and locations of Gamblers Anonymous and Gam-Anon meetings or for contact numbers for treatment or other service providers. (Note: The classification of "Quick Referrals" is being eliminated in fiscal year 2006-2007 to more accurately reflect that these forms of contact are actually more informational in nature.
- 4) *Office Calls* - Individuals making contact with the FCCG for routine, day-to-day business operations (e.g. vendors, contractors, advertising sales people, etc.).
- 5) *Erroneous Contacts* - Persons looking for the winning lottery numbers, hotel reservations at gaming facilities or for information on matters involving non-FCCG business. These callers use the HelpLine because the telephone number appears on information in their possession (e.g. lottery ticket, gaming facility brochure, etc.) and while it identifies the hotline purpose (i.e. for persons with a gambling problem), it is not always acknowledged. Erroneous contacts also include prank calls, wrong numbers and hang ups.

Official HelpLine contacts are limited to Help Only, Information and Quick Referral calls and all data outlined in this report reflect these categories, unless otherwise specified.

## **HELPLINE REPORTING**

Under state contract, the FCCG is required to provide a report of information collected during HelpLine calls on a monthly basis and to submit a detailed analysis of all calls at the end of the fiscal period. Therefore, data is compiled for every call handled. This includes all demographic information for the gambler, issues affecting gamblers and those they impact (e.g. family members, friends and others), and services requested by diverse populations (e.g. health care professionals, educators, government agencies, law enforcement authorities, etc.).

## **CALL ANALYSIS**<sup>1</sup>

Since this summary is a combination of the final monthly report and the agency's annual submission, it is intended to relay comprehensive information for the complete 12-month period and select points of interest for findings relative to June 2006.

### **Total Calls:**

- During the month of June, the FCCG received a total of 770 calls, in which 278 were HelpLine specific (172 Help Only, 89 Information and 17 Quick Referral), 206 were office related and 295 were erroneous contacts.
- Per HelpLine database information, for FY 2005-2006 there were a total of 7,279 contacts prior to the cleaning of the data. At year end, there were 3,002 Help (H), Information (I) and Quick Referral (QR) calls. For purposes of this data analysis, calls were reviewed and cleaned. Call records without sufficient data were eliminated from this review. Therefore, this report reflects a summary of the 2,692 HelpLine specific calls which contained appropriate data for inclusion.

Of the 2,692 calls being analyzed, 1,259 were from persons seeking help, 1,059 were in search of information and 374 were looking for quick referrals. The remaining 310 HelpLine calls did not contain sufficient data as information was either unrecorded or not appropriately saved.

- Of the 7,279 calls, 4,277 were either office or erroneous contacts (1,245 and 3,032 respectively).

(See Table 1 on next page)

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<sup>1</sup> For purposes of this report, all detailed analysis is limited to Florida only calls.

**Table 1  
Total Calls**

Period	Help	Info	Quick Referral	HIQR Calls	Office Calls	Erroneous Calls	TOTAL CALLS
6/06	172	89	17	278	206	295	770
7/05-6/06	1,259	1,059	374	2,692	1,245	3,032	7,279

**Call Origin by Region and County**

- For both June and the annual periods, the largest number of HelpLine calls originated from persons located in the areas of South Florida and South Central Florida. Overall, Broward and Dade county residents placed the highest volume of calls. Excluding Broward and Dade contacts for the 12 month period, residents of Hillsborough, Orange, Palm Beach and Pinellas counties accounted for a larger number of calls than persons living elsewhere in the state.
- In comparison to last year, calls increased in all regions of the state, with the exception of South Florida, which experienced a slight decrease. Again, the 2005-2006 report data excludes the 310 calls deleted from the analysis, which if included, would have reflected an 8% increase between the two periods. Regional specifics follow:

**Table 2  
County Origin of Call Grouped by Region**

Florida Regions	2005-2006	2004-2005
North Central Florida	452 (17%)	340 (12%)
Northeast Florida	188 (7%)	140 (5%)
Northwest Florida	211 (8%)	112 (4%)
South Central Florida	545 (20%)	461 (17%)
South Florida	980 (36%)	1059 (38%)
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>2,376 (88%)</b>	<b>2,112 (76%)</b>
County Unknown	316 (12%)	656 (24%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,692 (100%)</b>	<b>2,768 (100%)</b>

- Nearly 2,400 callers relayed information as to their county of origin. Specifics follow:

**Table 3  
Total Calls by Type and County  
July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006**

County	Total	County	Total
Alachua	46 (2%)	Lee	39 (1%)
Baker	0 (0%)	Leon	134 (5%)
Bay	17 (1%)	Levy	0 (0%)
Bradford	1 (0%)	Liberty	0 (0%)
Brevard	39 (1%)	Madison	1 (0%)
Broward	389 (14%)	Manatee	10 (0%)
Calhoun	7 (0%)	Marion	22 (1%)
Charlotte	9 (0%)	Martin	2 (0%)
Citrus	8 (0%)	Monroe	7 (0%)
Clay	7 (0%)	Nassau	2 (0%)
Collier	15 (1%)	Okaloosa	14 (1%)
Columbia	2 (0%)	Okeechobee	8 (0%)
Dade	306 (11%)	Orange	250 (9%)
Desoto	0 (0%)	Osceola	18 (1%)
Dixie	1 (0%)	Palm Beach	209 (8%)
Duval	104 (4%)	Pasco	37 (1%)
Escambia	22 (1%)	Pinellas	170 (6%)
Flagler	1 (0%)	Polk	74 (3%)
Franklin	0 (0%)	Putnam	6 (0%)
Gadsden	1 (0%)	Santa Rosa	10 (0%)
Gilchrist	1 (0%)	Sarasota	40 (1%)
Glades	2 (0%)	Seminole	72 (3%)
Gulf	1 (0%)	St Johns	13 (0%)
Hamilton	1 (0%)	St Lucie	13 (0%)
Hardee	4 (0%)	Sumter	1 (0%)
Hendry	2 (0%)	Suwanee	2 (0%)

County	Total	County	Total
Hernando	11 (0%)	Taylor	0 (0%)
Highlands	5 (0%)	Union	0 (0%)
Hillsborough	160 (6%)	Volusia	39 (1%)
Holmes	0 (0%)	Wakulla	0 (0%)
Indian River	4 (0%)	Walton	1 (0%)
Jackson	3 (0%)	Washington	1 (0%)
Jefferson	0 (0%)	Didn't Know	4 (0%)
Lafayette	0 (0%)	Not Recorded	312 (12%)
Lake	12 (0%)	Refused	0 (0%)
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,692</b>
		<b>% Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Monthly Totals

- Since the onset of the New Year, monthly call volume has remained consistent above 200 total contacts, with a high of 356 during March. Further, within the past two month period alone, calls neared 300. For explanation of call fluctuations, see "How Heard" section on pages 21-22.

**Table 4**  
**Calls by Month**

Period	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	TOTAL
05-06	196	231	138	97	211	159	215	261	356	253	297	278	<b>2,692</b>

### Repeat Callers

- Fourteen percent (14%) of all callers were unable or did not wish to report whether they had contacted the HelpLine on more than one occasion. Of the 2,318 callers responding to the question, the majority of contacts were from persons calling for the first time (60%). The remaining persons (40%) indicated they had called at least one time prior.

This was also true for calls received in June, in that 42% of persons advised they were repeat callers. This is an important finding as it confirms that HelpLine specialists are building a rapport with callers and aiding them in feeling comfortable in making contact at subsequent points in time. Considering that FCCG protocol precludes individuals from requesting a particular specialist by name or gender, this finding further demonstrates that recipients of the HelpLine service are placing repeat calls to the crisis line regardless of who handles the contact.

### CALLER DEMOGRAPHICS

#### Gender of Caller

- As only slightly more than 50% of all calls in June and during FY 2005-2006 were made by females, overall it appears the FCCG HelpLine service is utilized by both genders.

**Table 5**  
**Gender of Caller**

Gender	June 06	July 05-June 06
Female	149 (55%)	1,316 (53%)
Male	122 (45%)	1,180 (47%)
Didn't Know	1	2
Refused	0	1
Not Recorded	6	193
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>278 (100%)</b>	<b>2,692 (100%)</b>

#### Gender of Caller by Relationship of Caller to Gambler

- The primary contacts received throughout the year (43%) continue to be from gamblers, calling on their own behalf. This was also the case during the month of June (48%). For the 12-month period, family members accounted for 15% of contacts, in which spouses, parents and adult children most often called. Friends, as well as treatment providers also utilized the service (3% and 11% respectively), with the remaining identifying a problem in the workplace (i.e. co-worker, employee or employer) or with someone that had a different relationship than outlined.

- When examining the relationship of the caller to the gambler by gender, additional insight is provided. For example, for the fiscal year, though gamblers calling on their own behalf are male, spouses and parents calling the HelpLine for assistance are more likely to be female. This synopsis was also consistent at the closing of the year in June 2006.
- Of 2,692 total calls, 2,463 (91%) provided specifics in both categories (Caller's Gender and Relationship of Caller to Gambler). The numbers below show the breakdown of these calls. The remaining 229 did not contain a response for one or both of the categories:

**Table 6**  
**Gender of Caller by Relationship of Caller to Gambler**  
**July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006**

Relationship of Caller to Gambler	Female	Male	TOTAL
Self	394 (16%)	663 (27%)	1,057 (43%)
Adult Child	42 (2%)	29 (1%)	71 (3%)
Child Non-Adult	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Coworker	0 (0%)	1 (0%)	1 (0%)
Employee	0 (0%)	2 (0%)	2 (0%)
Employer	5 (0%)	4 (0%)	9 (0%)
Friend	39 (2%)	32 (1%)	71(3%)
Parent	69 (3%)	16 (1%)	85 (3%)
Relative	14 (1%)	9 (0%)	23 (1%)
Sibling	23 (1%)	17 (1%)	40 (2%)
Significant Other/Partner	24 (1%)	1 (0%)	25 (1%)
Spouse	119 (5%)	22 (1%)	141 (6%)
Treatment Provider	162 (7%)	104 (4%)	266 (11%)
Other	402 (16%)	270 (11%)	672 (27%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,293 (52%)</b>	<b>1,170 (47%)</b>	<b>2,462 (100%)</b>

### Professional Contacts

- When examining the preceding table, as a point of information, the "Other" category typically represents non-treatment professional contacts, such as those in the health care, law enforcement, employee assistance, and education fields. In June, there were 69 total calls received by all types of professionals, bringing the yearly total to 770.

### Caller's Age

- The age of the caller is essential information since it serves as another data point providing meaningful insight relating to persons using the hotline. However, based upon the agency's years of experience operating the service, it has determined it does not prove beneficial or appropriate to question all callers regarding their age. In fact, doing so among treatment professionals, government officials, media representatives and others could result in the termination of the contact or discomfort in using the service again. Equally important, it is not appropriate or relevant to the contact. Another important consideration is that some callers refuse to provide the information or simply do not know.
- Of the 2,692 total calls, less than half furnished personal age information. Of these, 50% of all HelpLine contacts were from persons between the ages of 31-54 years. In fact, the top three age ranges most often identified by callers were 31-39, 40-49 and 50-54 both for June and overall. It should also be noted that almost 20% of the calls were from seniors and approximately 30% from young adults 25 years of age or younger, demonstrating that both ends of the spectrum are using the service.

(See Table 7 on next page)

**Table 7  
Callers Age**

<b>Age</b>	<b>June 06</b>	<b>July 05 - June 06</b>
Under 18	0 (0%)	5 (0%)
18 - 20	1 (1%)	27 (3%)
21 - 25	11 (9%)	78 (8%)
26 - 30	14 (11%)	94 (9%)
31 - 39	27 (21%)	251 (25%)
40 - 49	31 (24%)	253 (25%)
50 - 54	18 (14%)	115 (11%)
55 - 60	14 (11%)	90 (9%)
61 - 64	3 (2%)	34 (3%)
65+	10 (8%)	65 (6%)
Didn't Know	1	5
Refused	4	15
Not Recorded	144	1,660
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>278 (100%)</b>	<b>2,692 (100%)</b>

**Age Range of Caller by Gender of Caller**

- When comparing the age of the caller to gender, it appears that males under age 40 are more likely to call than females. This is consistent with the fact that male gamblers utilized the service more than females. (See Table 6)

**Precipitating Event**

- Callers are asked to outline the primary reason for the call. Based upon a total of 2,480 (92%) responses for the year, the top three precipitating events prompting callers to utilize the service included overextended debt, relationship difficulties and substantial loss. Interestingly, while these same three categories were the ones most often cited by all callers, as well as among both males and females, the reporting of legal problems during the month of June reflected an all time year high, ranking third alongside substantial loss. Specifics follow:

**Table 8  
Precipitating Event \***

<b>Precipitating Event Leading to Call</b>	<b>June 06 Total</b>	<b>July 05-June 06 Total</b>
Committed Illegal Act	0 (0%)	20 (1%)
Concerned Person	1 (0%)	95 (4%)
Lawyer Advised	0 (0%)	3 (0%)
Legal Problems	23 (9%)	69 (3%)
Overextended Debt	38 (14%)	358 (14%)
Relationship Difficulties	40 (15%)	282 (11%)
School/Work Relationship Problems	0 (0%)	17 (1%)
Substantial Loss	23 (9%)	187 (8%)
Suicidal	0 (0%)	4 (0%)
Threatened	0 (0%)	1 (0%)
Verbal/Physical Abuse	0 (0%)	1 (0%)
Other	145 (54%)	1,443 (58%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>270 (100%)</b>	<b>2,480 (100%)</b>

\*Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding

- Another worthy point is that while a significant number of callers seeking HelpLine supports may do so at a time in their lives when they are experiencing suicidal or self-destructive thoughts, very often it seems that specialists are recording the primary reason that prompted these feelings, vs. the most pressing factor resulting in the actual call, which is the suicidal ideation. Additional training is being provided to rectify the underreporting of such cases.
- Finally, the purpose of the "Other" category, as outlined in Table 8, is to capture and reflect isolated responses that may not fall within the 11 designated categories frequently associated with problem gambling. The FCCG encourages specialists to allow callers the opportunity to furnish thorough responses to questions, since it generally will offer essential insight. At the same time, specialists are being advised to promote the narrowing of a response, only insofar as it

relates to answering the question. Simply, while many different factors contribute to a person calling the HelpLine, often it is a single event or moment that necessitates contact and this is the one independent variable that specialists will be better seeking to obtain.

**GAMBLER DEMOGRAPHICS**

It is important to keep in mind when examining the following data that of the 2,692 calls, 1,259 (47%) individuals were calling for help, whereas 1,433 (53%) were seeking information and/or quick referrals. As such, depending upon the caller’s relationship to the gambler or more importantly, the primary reason for the contact, specifics relating to a gambler may not be applicable. For example, a law enforcement authority calling to obtain information regarding training will not supply any information relating to a gambler. As such, there tend to be fewer responses within these categories.

**Gambler’s Gender and Age**

- For the year, in more than 1,500 instances, callers provided information regarding the gambler’s gender and 1,203 furnished the age as well. The gambler’s gender was more likely male for the annual period, as well as for the month of June (65% and 61% respectively). As for the gambler’s age, like the caller, 50% fell within the range of 31-49 years for the fiscal period and June was 51%. Additionally, 3% were under age 21 (0% for June), 8% were ages 21-25 (8% for June), 9% were 26-30 years (10% for June) and the remaining 31% were 50 or older (30% for June). In fact, 20% (19% for June) were identified as elder gamblers.
- When reviewing the gender of the gambler in relation to age, it remains relatively the same as with the caller, in that those under age 50 are primarily male, whereas those 50 and older are essentially even split by gender. Based only on caller information, it also seems that women between the ages of 40-49 are more likely to experience gambling problems than females falling within the other categories. Among men, while those over age 40 and younger than 50 are likely to suffer from gambling problems, the category most likely to experience difficulties are those ages 31-39. Specifics follow for the near 1,200 callers with information relating to both variables:

**Table 9  
Gambler’s Age by Gambler’s Gender  
July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Under 18	1 (0%)	6 (1%)	7 (1%)
18 - 20	2 (0%)	24 (2%)	26 (2%)
21 - 25	9 (1%)	82 (7%)	91 (8%)
26 - 30	21 (2%)	85 (7%)	106 (9%)
31 - 39	70 (6%)	208 (18%)	278 (23%)
40 - 49	135 (11%)	176 (15%)	311 (26%)
50 - 54	58 (5%)	76 (6%)	134 (11%)
55 - 60	49 (4%)	46 (4%)	95 (8%)
61 - 64	29 (2%)	29 (2%)	58 (5%)
65+	36 (3%)	46 (4%)	82 (7%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>410 (35%)</b>	<b>778 (65%)</b>	<b>1,188 (100%)</b>

**Gambler’s Ethnicity**

- Less than 1,000 callers revealed information relating to the ethnicity of the gambler for the fiscal year period, in which nearly 70% were Caucasian, with prominent usage among African Americans (15%) and Latino-Hispanics (14%). In June 2006, there was a rise in calls received from Asian/Pacific Islanders and Native Americans (5% and 2% respectively).
- The FCCG is finding that an increasing number of minority residents are calling the HelpLine, in response to outreach and advertising efforts initiated by the agency.

(See Table 10 on next page)

**Table 10  
Ethnicity of Gambler**

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>June 06 Total</b>	<b>July 05-June06 Total</b>
African American	20 (16%)	147 (15%)
Asian/Pacific Islander	6 (5%)	13 (1%)
Caucasian	81 (64%)	640 (67%)
Latino-Hispanic	15 (12%)	138 (14%)
Native American	2 (2%)	4 (0%)
Other	3 (2%)	17 (2%)
Didn't Know	0	2
Refused	3	6
Not Recorded	148	1,725
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>278 (100%)</b>	<b>2,692 (100%)</b>

### Gambler's Religion

- As previously addressed by the FCCG, both in prevalence studies, as well as in HelpLine outcome evaluation reports, problem gamblers very often do not align themselves with a particular religion, noting "None" when asked. This continues to be a very interesting observation because it appears to impact on some gamblers ability to seek help in certain forums.
- Based upon a limited number of responses for the annual period (884), 298 (34%) callers advised the gambler did not affiliate with any religion, 32% specified Protestant, 22% Catholic, 5% Jewish, 1% Muslim and 7% reported other. Data relating to calls received in June solidifies more of the same, with 25% of respondents apprising that gamblers do not associate themselves with a certain religion. At the same time, an increasing number responded Protestant.

**Table 11  
Religion of Gambler**

<b>Religion</b>	<b>June 06</b>	<b>July 05-June 06</b>
Catholic	24 (18%)	194 (22%)
Jewish	9 (7%)	45 (5%)
Muslim	2 (2%)	6 (1%)
Protestant	52 (40%)	283 (32%)
Other	10 (8%)	58 (7%)
None	33 (25%)	298 (34%)
Didn't Know	2	19
Refused	6	26
Not Recorded	140	1,763
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>278 (100%)</b>	<b>2,692 (100%)</b>

### Relationship Status of Gambler

- A significant number of callers (19%) overall disclosed that gamblers were either divorced (15%) or separated (4%). Understanding the difficulties that a gambling addiction presents in the lives of individuals and their families, this is not a surprising finding. The annual data also reveals that almost 50% of gamblers are married, 7% are cohabitating, 22% have remained single and 3% are widowed.

**Table 12  
Relationship Status of Gambler  
July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006**

<b>Relationship Status</b>	<b>Total</b>
Cohabitating	114 (8%)
Divorced	205 (14%)
Married	698 (49%)
Never Married	309 (22%)
Separated	45 (3%)
Widowed	52 (4%)
Didn't Know	2
Refused	49
Not Recorded	1,451
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,692 (100%)</b>

## Children of Minor Age Living at Home with Gambler

- Over 30% of callers for both June and the yearly period responded that the gambler had one or more children under age 18 living at home. The FCCG inquires about this information to determine whether special services may be necessary and to distinguish if a child may be potentially subject to neglect or placed in an at risk situation.

**Table 13**  
**Children Under 18 Living at Home with Gambling**

Response	June 06	July 05-June 06
Yes	57 (37%)	346 (31%)
No	96 (63%)	782 (69%)
Didn't Know	0	2
Refused	3	10
Not Recorded	122	1,552
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>278 (100%)</b>	<b>2,692 (100%)</b>

## Age of Gambling Onset and When it Became a Problem

- Among males, gambling often begins at an early age, whereas among females it typically can start at a later point in life. Across gender, for the 906 callers providing information in the course of the 12 months, 46% advised the gambler started betting for money at age 25 or younger. In fact, 25% began under age 20 and 13% started while still of minor age (i.e. under 18). A fair percentage (11%) began gambling when age 26-30 and 33% had their introduction between the ages of 31-49. Further, 12% said they started later in life, at age 50 or more, with 8% reporting they started when reaching elder age. Statistics for June do not look vastly different.
- Another point of interest when examining when a gambler started betting for money is to explore whether the variable of gender sheds any additional light on the subject. Based on Helpline data compiled for FY 2005-2006, it seems that females have their onset between the ages of 31-49, whereas males are introduced at a much earlier age and when still a minor.

**Table 14**  
**Gambler's Age and Age Gambler Started Gambling**  
**July 1, 2005 – June 30, 2006**

Age	Female	Male	Refused	Didn't Know	Not Recorded	Total
Under 18	8 (0%)	100 (17%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	6	114 (4%)
18 - 20	22 (7%)	83 (14%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0	105 (4%)
21 - 25	33 (11%)	151 (26%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4	188 (7%)
26 - 30	36 (12%)	66 (11%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0	102 (4%)
31 - 39	60 (19%)	74 (13%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1	135 (5%)
40 - 49	86 (28%)	71 (12%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0	157 (6%)
50 - 54	26 (8%)	10 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0	36 (1%)
55 - 60	26 (8%)	10 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0	36 (1%)
61 - 64	8 (3%)	9 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0	17 (1%)
65+	7 (2%)	8 (1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1	16 (1%)
Didn't Know	19	44	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2	65 (2%)
Refused	4	4	1	0 (0%)	2	11 (0%)
Not Recorded	201	369	6	0 (0%)	1,134	1,710 (64%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>536 (20%)</b>	<b>999 (37%)</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0 (0%)</b>	<b>1,150</b>	<b>2,692 (100%)</b>

- When examining the age the gambler started gambling, separate and apart from other variables (i.e. gender as in Table 14), 906 callers provided information. Nearly half (46%) of the 906 callers indicated the onset of gambling anywhere from age 25 or younger. Similarly, of the 953 respondents who provided insight as to the age gambling became a problem, 20% fell in the same age categories of 25 years or under.

(See Table 15 on next page)

**Table 15**  
**Age Gambling Started and Became a Problem**  
**July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Started</b>	<b>Problem</b>
Under 18	114 (13%)	26 (3%)
18 - 20	105 (12%)	48 (5%)
21 - 25	188 (21%)	115 (12%)
26 - 30	102 (11%)	121 (13%)
31 - 39	135 (15%)	217 (23%)
40 - 49	157 (17%)	235 (25%)
50 - 54	36 (4%)	66 (7%)
55 - 60	36 (4%)	62 (7%)
61 - 64	17 (2%)	24 (3%)
65+	16 (2%)	39 (4%)
Didn't Know	65	38
Refused	11	9
Not Recorded	1,710	1,692
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,692 (100%)</b>	<b>2,692 (100%)</b>

- Given the preceding table, it is also important to take note of elder citizens who first started gambling at age 55 or older (8%), in comparison to those gamblers who experienced difficulties for the first time late in life (i.e. 14% responded 55 years of age and older). The FCCG reviewed the number of cases where the caller identified that the gambler was widowed. Of the 54 such calls, in 13 instances the gambler began betting at age 65 or older. It is not uncommon for older adults to begin gambling following a sudden change in life brought about by the onset of retirement, boredom, loss or death of someone close, or separation from family and friends.

### **GAMBLER PREFERENCES AND IMPACTS**

When reviewing the following information, all data pertaining to the gambler is based on all HelpLine calls and in the cases where the caller is a concerned loved one, information is therefore limited to their experiences, knowledge and /or understanding of the issues presented. During this reporting period (July 1, 2005-June 30, 2006), as previously highlighted, more than 50% of the calls received by the HelpLine were from persons other than the gambler. Therefore, it is not unusual that information relating to certain variables, particularly those involving a gambler's history, emotional status, as well as financial and legal impacts, will frequently be unknown or subject to projection.

#### **All, Primary and Secondary Gambling Problems**

- Understanding the different forms of gambling and the nature of their play are important when examining problem gambling impacts on individuals. For example, slot machine and Internet play are on the rise simply because they are isolated activities that allow for continuous form and rapid cycles of play. At the same time, it is important to recognize that other venues are not nearly as fast paced, resulting in a progression at a slower rate than rapid play games where persons can lose large sums of money in short periods of time.
- Of 2,692 callers, 1,158 (43%) identified the types of gambling causing the greatest difficulty, The top five venues identified in rank order included slot machines, lottery games, cards, Internet and sports betting. The same ranking also held true for the month of June, in which 148 of the 278 callers provided information (53%). Multiple answers are allowed per caller, so the total number of responses may be greater than the number of callers, and the total percentage may exceed 100%. Specifics follow:

(See Table 16 on next page)

**Table 16  
All Gambling Problems\***

Venue Type	June 06	July 05-June 06
Bingo	3 (2%)	72 (6%)
Cards	40 (27%)	352 (30%)
Charity	0 (0%)	5 (0%)
Dice	0 (0%)	33 (3%)
Dog Racing	6 (4%)	77 (7%)
Games of Skill	0 (0%)	13 (1%)
Horse Racing	15 (10%)	81 (7%)
Internet	27 (18%)	159 (14%)
Jai Alai	0 (0%)	12 (1%)
Lottery	50 (34%)	398 (34%)
Slot Machines	58 (39%)	535 (46%)
Sports Betting	12 (8%)	148 (13%)
Stock Market/Business Risks	1 (1%)	17 (1%)
Sweepstakes	0 (0%)	9 (1%)
Video/Arcade	0 (0%)	5 (0%)
Other	6 (4%)	27 (2%)
Didn't Know	8	39
Refused	0	31
Not Recorded	211	2,066
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>4,079*</b>

\*Multiple responses permitted.

- As for identifying the single primary gambling problem, caller responses were consistent with those outlined for "All Gambling Problems." However, while slot machines, cards, lottery games, Internet and sports betting ranked 1-5 for the fiscal period, in June, horse racing placed 5<sup>th</sup> over sports betting. Highlights follow:

**Table 17  
Primary Gambling Problem**

Venue Type	June 06	July 05-June 06
Bingo	1 (1%)	28 (2%)
Cards	26 (18%)	202 (18%)
Charity	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Dice	0 (0%)	10 (1%)
Dog Racing	3 (2%)	40 (4%)
Games of Skill	0 (0%)	3 (0%)
Horse Racing	9 (6%)	46 (4%)
Internet	19 (13%)	117 (10%)
Jai Alai	0 (0%)	3 (0%)
Lottery	28 (20%)	185 (16%)
Slot Machines	46 (32%)	425 (37%)
Sports Betting	7 (5%)	59 (5%)
Stock Market/Business Risks	1 (1%)	4 (0%)
Sweepstakes	0 (0%)	1 (0%)
Video/Arcade	0 (0%)	1 (0%)
Other	2 (1%)	15 (1%)
Didn't Know	5	18
Refused	0	5
Not Recorded	131	1,530
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>278 (100%)</b>	<b>2,692</b>

- As for the secondary gambling problem, while the top five remained unchanged for the 12-months, their order of ranking varied, with lottery games (#1), cards (#2), slots (#3), sports betting (#4) and Internet (#5).

### Gender of Gambling by Primary Gambling Problem

- There is no question that males and females of all ages have preferences when it comes to gambling game options. For this reason, the FCCG examined the correlation between the two for the annual period. Clear distinctions were found in that males are more heavily engaging in cards, Internet play, sports betting and lottery games, and females are more likely to gamble on slot machines. This simple observation is consistent with research findings documenting that men tend to engage in action oriented gambling games, whereas women are more apt to pursue venues offering some form of escape.

**Table 18**  
**Gender of Gambler by Primary Gambling Problem**  
**July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006**

Primary Gambling Problem	Females	Males	Total
Bingo	20 (2%)	7 (1%)	27 2(27%)
Cards	22 (2%)	179 (16%)	201 (18%)
Charity	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Dice	3 (0%)	7 (1%)	0 (0%)10 (1%)
Dog Racing	4 (0%)	31 (3%)	35 (3%)
Games of Skill	2 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (0%)
Horse Racing	1 (0%)	45 (4%)	46 (4%)
Internet	22 (2%)	94 (8%)	116 (10%)
Jai Alai	0 (0%)	3 (0%)	3 (0%)
Lottery	72 (6%)	109 (10%)	181 (16%)
Slot Machines	240 (21%)	183 (16%)	416 (37%)
Sports Betting	0 (0%)	56 (5%)	56 (5%)
Stock Market/Business Risks	0 (0%)	4 (0%)	4 (0%)
Sweepstakes	1 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (0%)
Video/Arcade	1 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (0%)
Other	2 (0%)	13 (1%)	15 (1%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>390 (35%)</b>	<b>731 (65%)</b>	<b>1,121 (100%)</b>

**Primary Gambling Problems by Region**

- Slot machines, lottery games, cards and Internet were the three most identified primary gambling problems throughout Florida. Yet, some variations were noted by region. More specifically, while slot machines were ranked first in South Central Florida and South Florida, lottery games were identified as the most problematic in North Central, Northwest and Northeast Florida. Specifics follow:

**Table 19**  
**Top Three Gambling Problems by Region**  
**July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006**

Region	Top Three Problems
<b>North Central Florida</b>	Lottery
	Slot Machines
	Internet
<b>Northeast Florida</b>	Lottery
	Cards
	Internet
<b>Northwest Florida</b>	Lottery
	Slot Machines
	Internet
<b>South Central Florida</b>	Slot Machines
	Cards
	Lottery
<b>South Florida</b>	Slot Machines
	Cards
	Lottery
<b>Region Didn't Know</b>	Lottery
	Cards
	Slot machines

**Peak Day by Primary Gambling Problem**

- In reviewing the data for the year, while there were insufficient responses to draw conclusions for most forms of gambling, in the case of cards, Internet, lottery games, slot machines and sports betting, some findings could be ascertained regarding the peak day of the week that calls were placed to the HelpLine. Overall, the peak day of the week for HelpLine calls was Tuesday and were as follows for the primary gambling problems noted by callers:

(See Table 20 on next page)

**Table 20**  
**Peak Day for Primary Gambling Problem**  
**July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006**

Primary Problem	Peak Day of Week
Cards	Wednesday
Internet	Wednesday
Lottery	Wednesday
Slot Machines	Monday
Sports Betting	Wednesday

**Primary Gambling Location**

- Based upon 786 responses to the question as to the primary gaming location, 53% of callers identified land-based casino (for primarily slots, cards and slot machine gambling), 16% noted home (mainly cards and Internet wagering) and 13% responded convenience store (nearly exclusively lottery game purchases).

**Table 21**  
**Primary Gambling Location**  
**July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006**

Location	Total
Bingo Hall	9 (1%)
Convenience Store	101 (13%)
Day/Floating Casinos	33 (4%)
Friend's Home	13 (2%)
Home	123 (16%)
Jai-Alai	3 (0%)
Land-Based Casinos	419 (53%)
Racetrack	60 (8%)
Work	3 (0%)
Other	22 (3%)
Didn't Know	19
Refused	5
Not Recorded	1,882
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,692 (100%)</b>

**Primary gambling problem by age and ethnicity**

- Upon reviewing data relating to the gambler's age and primary gambling problem, it was revealed that minors and those 25 years of age and younger are experiencing the most difficulty with cards. Further, while it seems that all age groups are having some difficulty with cards, they are encountering the hardest time with slot machines, with lottery games also presenting as problematic. (Note: While data is limited, based upon information provided by callers, the top three forms of gambling participated in by persons of varying age are as follows. In instances when only one option was delineated, this is all that will be reflected. Similarly, when more than three are outlined, this is due to a tie in rank for 3<sup>rd</sup> place.)

**Table 22**  
**Age of Gambler by Primary Gambling Problem**  
**July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006**

Age	Primary Problem
Under 18	Cards
18 - 20	Cards, slots, lottery, Internet
21 - 25	Cards, Internet, lottery
26 - 30	Internet, slots, cards
31 - 39	Slots, cards, lottery
40 - 49	Slots, cards, lottery
50 - 54	Slots, lottery, cards
55 - 60	Slots, lottery, cards
61 - 64	Slots, lottery, cards, horse racing
65+	Slots, cards, lottery

- As for the gambler's ethnicity and its relationship to the primary gambling problem, it remains consistent with age and gambler information generally. Simply, across all ethnic populations, slot machines were identified as the primary gambling problem.

### Financial and Employment Status of Gambler

- Obtaining the gambler's financial information and legal history are two areas the gambler knows best. As previously noted, non-gambler callers can only surmise or project outcomes. The FCCG examined the relationship between gambler and non-gambler call responses and will present this information in this section.
- Of 2,692 analyzed calls, 806 respondents revealed the gambler's income. While 16% noted there was no income being generated by the gambler, the vast majority reported earnings between \$15,000-\$59,999 (59%). In addition, 9% identified an income ranging between \$60,000-\$89,999 and 11% disclosed \$90,000 or higher. Similar data was found for June 2006, in which 116 callers provided income specifics.

**Table 23**  
**Income of Gambler**

Income	June 06	July 05-June06
None	23 (20%)	131 (16%)
Up to \$4,999	0 (0%)	4 (0%)
\$5,000 - \$14,999	5 (4%)	35 (4%)
\$15,000 - \$24,999	13 (11%)	128 (16%)
\$25,000 - \$34,999	14 (12%)	139 (17%)
\$35,000 - \$44,999	19 (16%)	117 (15%)
\$45,000 - \$59,999	12 (10%)	90 (11%)
\$60,000 - \$89,999	15 (13%)	74 (9%)
\$90,000 - \$124,999	13 (11%)	47 (6%)
\$125,000 - \$174,999	0 (0%)	16 (2%)
Over \$175,000	2 (2%)	25 (3%)
Didn't Know	15	112
Refused	12	108
Not Recorded	135	108
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>278 (100%)</b>	<b>2,692 (100%)</b>

### Debt Owed Due to Gambling

- Over 900 callers were able to provide insight regarding the gambler's amount of debt and to whom the money was owed. Half of the respondents reported debt below \$5,000 (24%) or advised that no debt was due (26%). Nearly 25% of callers advised of gambling debt ranging between \$5,000-\$24,999, 14% reported amounts of \$25,000-\$59,999, and 10% noted money owed between \$60,000-\$174,999. The remaining 4% owe over \$175,000. In short, 37% of all callers providing information admitted to gambling related debt of \$15,000 or more.

**Table 24**  
**Debt Owed Due to Gambling**  
**July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006**

Debt Owed	Calls by Gamblers	Calls by Non-Gamblers	Total Calls
None	189 (21%)	46 (5%)	235 (26%)
Up to \$4,999	185 (20%)	32 (3%)	217 (24%)
\$5,000 - \$14,999	99 (11%)	37 (4%)	136 (15%)
\$15,000 - \$24,999	53 (6%)	27 (3%)	80 (9%)
\$25,000 - \$34,999	27 (3%)	20 (2%)	47 (5%)
\$35,000 - \$44,999	25 (3%)	8 (1%)	33 (4%)
\$45,000 - \$59,999	30 (3%)	12 (1%)	42 (5%)
\$60,000 - \$89,999	30 (3%)	7 (1%)	37 (4%)
\$90,000 - \$124,999	29 (3%)	7 (1%)	36 (4%)
\$125,000 - \$174,999	9 (1%)	5 (1%)	14 (2%)
Over \$175,000	28 (3%)	10 (1%)	38 (4%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>704 (77%)</b>	<b>211 (23%)</b>	<b>915 (100%)</b>

- Another significant point is that the gamblers who self-reported were far more likely to acknowledge higher debt than the non-gambler callers.

### To Whom the Debt is Owed

- Of the 2,692 calls examined, 749 (28%) respondents specified to whom the debt was owed. More than 50% reported gambling debt to credit cards, 17% advised family member or friend, 16% specified bank, and the remaining 10% acknowledged illegal sources (i.e. bookie (2%) and loan shark (1%) or other (7%).
- When examining caller response differentials, it appears gamblers are more likely than non-gamblers to acknowledge debt to credit cards, banks, and family members or friends. Of the total analyzed calls, 747 (28%) provided specifics in both categories (To Whom Debt is Owed and Relationship of Caller to Gambler). This accounts for the minor difference between the preceding and this bullet (i.e. 749 versus 747 total calls).

**Table 25**  
**To Whom Debt is Owed by Gambler versus Non-Gamblers**  
**July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006**

Debt Owed	Calls by Gamblers	Calls by Non-Gamblers	Total Calls
Bank	88 (12%)	28 (4%)	116 (16%)
Bookie	10 (1%)	7 (1%)	17 (2%)
Credit Card	315 (42%)	107 (14%)	422 (56%)
Employee/Employer	4 (1%)	2 (0%)	6 (1%)
Family/Friend	80 (11%)	51 (7%)	131 (18%)
Loan Shark	2 (0%)	2 (0%)	4 (1%)
Other	43 (6%)	8 (1%)	51 (7%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>542 (73%)</b>	<b>205 (27%)</b>	<b>747 (100%)</b>

### Employment Status of Gambler

- Of 1,138 responses, 67% of gamblers were reported as working at one full-time job, versus 26% not working (11% unemployed, 4% disabled, 7% retired, 2% full-time student and 2% homemaker).

**Table 26**  
**Employment Status**  
**July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006**

Type of Employment	Total
Disabled/Workers-Compensation	43 (4%)
Full-Time at One Job	762 (67%)
Full-Time but at More Than One Job	8 (1%)
Full-Time Plus Time at a 2nd Job	10 (1%)
Homemaker	24 (2%)
Part-Time	38 (3%)
Retired	84 (7%)
Retired Plus Full-Time Job	2 (0%)
Retired Plus Part-Time Job	10 (1%)
Student - Full-Time	18 (2%)
Student - Full-Time, Plus Working	9 (1%)
Student - Part-Time	1 (0%)
Student - Part-time, Plus Working	2 (0%)
Unemployed	120 (11%)
Other	7 (1%)
Didn't Know	2
Refused	12
Not Recorded	1,540
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,692 (100%)</b>

- When a caller identifies the gambler is retired, specialists are trained to ask whether the betting intensified after the onset of retirement. While 81 callers responded to the question, 72 (89%) answered in the affirmative.

## Occupation of Employed Gamblers

- In total, of the callers identifying whether the gambler was employed either part or full-time, 766 respondents provided insight regarding the gambler's occupation. Those working as professionals, in the sales field, as a manager, laborer, or semi or skilled worker appear to reflect the occupations most often identified by HelpLine contacts.

**Table 27**  
**Gambler's Occupation**  
**July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006**

Occupation	Total
Banking/Stock Market	12 (2%)
Farming/Agriculture	3 (0%)
Gaming Industry	2 (0%)
Laborer	66 (9%)
Legal Professional	21 (3%)
Manager/Proprietor	72 (9%)
Medical Professional	34 (4%)
Military	6 (1%)
Retail Services	28 (4%)
Sales	111 (14%)
Semi-skilled	112 (15%)
Skilled	110 (14%)
Other Professional	112 (15%)
Other	77 (10%)
Didn't Know	1
Refused	16
Not Recorded	65
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>848 (100%)</b>

## Bankruptcy

- Often when financial pressures due to debt become too pressing, the gambler may turn to bankruptcy as a means of seeking relief and beginning their pathway to recovery. While bankruptcy is a viable option for some gamblers, at times it is discouraged for persons with betting problems since it can be used to bail the gambler out, resulting in recurrences or relapses at latter points in time.
- Of the nearly 1,000 respondents, 90 (9%) callers advised the gambler had gone through bankruptcy. In fact, 81 of the 90 callers provided details pertaining to the bankruptcy, which revealed that 74% had completed the process once, 11% twice or more and 15% were awaiting closure as the bankruptcy was pending.
- When examining the gamblers employment status as it relates to bankruptcy, 26% of gamblers referenced during the HelpLine contact were not working and of these 2% had filed bankruptcy. The remaining 7% were either working full-time at one job, employed part-time or fell within the "Other" category.

## Illegal Acts, Types and Actions

- As noted earlier, one of the topics callers resist or are reluctant to discuss openly are matters of illegality. As such, FCCG specialists are trained to carefully listen to callers for purposes of determining the right time and approach for addressing the issue.
- Based upon 1,021 responses, 208 (20%) callers disclosed the gambler had committed an illegal act. However, only 195 identified the type of illegal act, in which 74% admitted to fraud, 13% larceny/theft, 9% embezzlement and 4% other.

(See Table 28 on next page)

**Table 28  
Illegal Acts Committed by Gambler**

<b>Illegal Acts</b>	<b>Total</b>
Embezzlement	17 (9%)
Fraud (bad checks, forgery, etc.)	144 (74%)
Larceny/Theft	26 (13%)
Other	8 (4%)
Didn't Know	0
Refused	2
Not Recorded	11
Didn't Know	0
Refused	2
Not Recorded	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>208 (100%)</b>

- Forty-one callers addressed that the gambler had been subject to legal actions due to gambling. However, only 31 callers specified the types of legal actions taken. Given the limited number of responses, this data should be viewed with caution.

**Table 29  
Types of Legal Actions Gamblers has been Subject  
July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006**

<b>Legal Actions</b>	<b>Total</b>
Arrest	5 (16%)
Arrest and Jail/Prison	4 (13%)
Arrest and Probation	4 (13%)
Arrest, Jail/Prison and Probation	2 (6%)
Civil Actions	13 (42%)
Other	3 (10%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>31 (100%)</b>

### **Emotional and Related Difficulties Caused by Gambling**

- Since problems brought about by gambling very often affect individuals and families, HelpLine specialists listen for any clues regarding emotional or related difficulties. Overall, while less than 900 callers responded to these questions, there were notable differences between gamblers and non-gamblers.
- Overall, anxiety (83%), depression (82%), family or spousal conflict (72%), and problems stemming from using equity or savings (77%) rank high on the list of problems for gamblers. Financial problems in general (e.g. difficulty paying bills, credit card debt, etc.), as well as neglect, and issues at work or school also are significant.
- Self-reporting callers were more likely than non-gambler respondents to report problems due to anxiety, depression, school or work, suicidal thoughts, neglect and financial related matters.
- More than 10% of callers advised the gambler was having thoughts of suicide and in 2% of the cases explained that the gambler was actually suicidal at the time of contact.
- Table 30 below highlights the difficulties experienced by gamblers as outlined by self-respondents and non-gamblers. The total number of respondents to each question appears next to the "Difficulty" outlined in the left hand column (i.e. N=#). The "Total Calls" column is the total responding "Yes" to the difficulty by both gamblers and non-gamblers.

(See Table 30 on next page)

**Table 30**  
**Difficulties Caused by Gambling - Gambler vs. Non-Gambler\***  
**July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006**

<b>Difficulties</b>	<b>Total Yes Responses By Gambler</b>	<b>Total Yes Responses By Non-Gambler</b>	<b>Total Calls</b>
Anxiety (N=1,062)	619 (58%)	261 (25%)	880 (83%)
Depression (N= 1,061)	622 (59%)	250 (24%)	872 (82%)
Problem at work/school (N=989)	194 (20%)	106 (11%)	300 (30%)
Suicidal thoughts (N=991)	84 (8%)	38 (4%)	122 (12%)
Suicide attempts (N=997)	8 (1%)	11 (1%)	19 (2%)
Family or spouse conflict (N=1,069)	453 (42%)	312 (29%)	765 (72%)
Family violence (N=1,009)	10 (1%)	17 (2%)	27 (3%)
Family neglect (N=1,024)	246 (24%)	185 (18%)	431 (42%)
Credit card debt (N=970)	379 (39%)	177 (18%)	556 (57%)
Borrowing from friends or family (N=975)	283 (29%)	192 (20%)	475 (49%)
Borrowing from other sources (N=878)	181 (21%)	94 (11%)	275 (31%)
Difficulty paying household bills (N=1,000)	423 (42%)	232 (23%)	645 (66%)
Using equity or savings (N=969)	519 (54%)	225 (23%)	744 (77%)

\*Multiple responses are permitted for this question.

### Gambling, Alcohol and Substance Abuse History and Help Sought

- Nearly 1,200 callers indicated whether the gambler had previously sought help for gambling. In fact, 257 (22%) respondents indicated that such assistance was pursued, ranging from professional and mental health treatment, to self-help and other supports. A point of consideration is that of the 257 respondents, 44% indicated the gambler had sought help for “gambling” previously at an alcohol or substance abuse in or outpatient program. The FCCG has long been aware that drug and alcohol programs, addiction and other medical professionals generally are ill equipped to address the issues and challenges presented by compulsive gamblers unless they have undergone specialized training. For this reason, the FCCG is working to establish a formalized certification program for gambling treatment in the State of Florida. In the interim, the agency is continuing to train health care practitioners to assess and treat gamblers and those they affect, under the certification protocol established by the National Council on Problem Gambling for Compulsive Gambling Counselors.

**Table 31**  
**Type of Gambling Help Sought Previously\***  
**July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006**

<b>Action(s) Recommended</b>	<b>Total</b>
Alcohol/Substance Abuse Inpatient	85 (33%)
Alcohol/ Substance Abuse Outpatient	29 (11%)
Gambling Treatment	64 (25%)
Mental Health Inpatient	32 (13%)
Mental Health Outpatient	59 (23%)
Self-Help	122 (48%)
Other	22 (9%)
Didn't Know	7
Refused	8
Not Recorded	0
<b>TOTAL ACTIONS RECOMMENDED</b>	<b>418</b>

\*Multiple responses permitted.

- Of the 2,692 calls analyzed, 1,117 offered some insight as to the role of alcohol and substance abuse in the gambler’s life. Twenty-five percent (25%) or 276 callers conceded that alcohol and/or substance abuse was a problem for the gambler. Specifically, 191 of the callers explained the gambler sought help mainly through professional treatment, mental health, self-help and other supports.

### Family of Origin

- An important question of persons suffering from various mental health or addictive problems is the genetic factor. Of 943 callers providing information as to the whether the gambler came from a family with a gambling problem, 157 (17%) acknowledged this was the case. Similarly, of the 934

respondents providing insight as to the gambler's family history with alcohol or drug abuse, 197 (21%) also answered in the affirmative.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Of 2,692 calls evaluated, 1,474 (55%) had actions recommended to them. The numbers in Table 32 represent the breakdown of the actions recommended to these callers. As multiple answers are allowed per caller, the total number of responses may be greater than the number of callers, and the total percentage may be higher than 100%.

**Table 32**  
**Actions Recommended to Caller\***  
**July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006**

<b>Action(s) Recommended</b>	<b>Total</b>
Chemical Dependency Treatment	7 (0%)
Crisis Line	13 (1%)
Financial Services	57 (4%)
Follow-up Call to Check on Caller	46 (3%)
GA/Gam-Anon	1,107 (75%)
Gambling Treatment	660 (44%)
Hospital/Emergency Room	6 (0%)
Law Enforcement Authority	2 (0%)
Legal Services	21 (1%)
Mental Health Services	53 (4%)
Other State Council	14 (1%)
Other Support Group	5 (0%)
Out of State Problem Gambling HelpLine	12 (1%)
Send Literature	801 (54%)
Social Services	2 (0%)
Veterans Administration	32 (2%)
Other	31 (2%)
Refused Recommendations	8
Unknown	1,210
<b>TOTAL ACTIONS RECOMMENDED</b>	<b>4,087</b>

\*Multiple responses permitted.

- Upon review of the data it is apparent that self-help, professional treatment and literature proved to be the most appropriate recommendations given caller circumstances presented.

## **LITERATURE REQUESTS**

More than 1,200 callers requested the receipt of literature on a range of topics, including but not limited to, FCCG programs and services, local experts, professional treatment, training, support groups, statistical research and other resources.

As for the type of callers requesting literature, the data reveals that the majority were consumers (i.e. service users without categorical distinction), with interest also from diverse professionals, media, law enforcement and criminal justice authorities, government agencies, educators and others.

## **HOW HEARD**

One of the most meaningful ways the FCCG can monitor its outreach activities is to determine how callers learn about the HelpLine service. Currently, the HelpLine number (888-ADMIT-IT) may be found on signage and literature in gaming establishments, on lottery tickets and collateral materials, on promotional items issued by the FCCG or other agencies, on the Internet, and on advertisements and other means.

Over the course of the 12-month period, 1,480 callers shared how they heard about the HelpLine service. The top three responses included, but were not limited to, the Internet (22%), billboard (16%), and phone book (10%). Other options identified included gambling facility location (9%), lottery point of purchase (6%), school (5%), or health care professional of some type (4%). Highlights follow:

(See Table 33 on next page)

**Table 33**  
**How Callers Learned About the HelpLine**  
**July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006**

How Heard	Total
Billboard	231 (16%)
Clergy	1 (0%)
Community Organization	14 (1%)
Family Member/Friend	79 (5%)
GA/Gam-Anon	53 (4%)
Gambling Facility/Location	131 (9%)
Health Care Provider	8 (1%)
Information Line	42 (3%)
Internet	324 (22%)
Lottery Point of Purchase	87 (6%)
NCPG/Affiliate	11 (1%)
Newspaper/Magazine	14 (1%)
Other Self-Help Group	3 (0%)
Phone Book	154 (10%)
Poster/Brochure/Promotional Items	29 (2%)
Radio	10 (1%)
School	67 (5%)
Television	27 (2%)
Treatment Professional/Social Service Agency	48 (3%)
Other	147 (10%)
Didn't Know	8
Refused	4
Not Recorded	1,200
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,692</b>

It should also be noted that call fluctuations very often reflect agency outreach and advertising activities. For example, calls to the HelpLine were at its peak in March 2006, which was during the State of Florida, as well as the National "Problem Gambling Awareness Week," and the FCCG had increased activity statewide. March launched the beginning of the FCCG's bus shelter campaign, the placement of additional billboards across the state, advertisements in college newspapers and elsewhere, as well as public service announcements (i.e. radio and television) and media (i.e. print, radio and television) interviews, including one aired on *NBC Nightly News*. In March, several activities were targeted toward college and young adults in particular since it was the onset of March Madness (i.e. National Collegiate Athletic Association's Men's Division I Basketball Championship). A culmination of these actions clearly impacted upon calls received, even insofar as the age of the caller. For example, annual HelpLine data revealed that persons ages 18-20 were more apt to call during the month of March than prior to or following this period.

The FCCG has also found that the placement of billboards and their duration significantly impact on the number of HelpLine calls. In fact, the agency has confirmed over time that an increase in billboards in prominent locations increases the number of calls received by the HelpLine. This trend is also observed among the minority community, where following the distribution of mini-billboards in strategic locations, an increase in calls is typically experienced.

The FCCG is aware that the manner in which a caller learned about the HelpLine often is reflected in their identification of the primary gambling problem. More specifically, it is not unusual to find that callers reporting the lottery or slot machine gambling as the primary gambling problem often indicate they were exposed to the HelpLine number on the back of a lottery ticket or on a sign at a Florida based casino. As highlighted in Table 33, 15% of the callers providing information as to how they heard about the service advised it was either by a gaming facility/location or lottery point of purchase.

Finally, the FCCG uses HelpLine data to determine and gauge how outreach activities or advertising campaigns are working. Furthermore, the agency relies upon this information to provide the necessary insight for any adjustments that may need to be made. For example, given the number of persons reporting they learned about the HelpLine via the Internet, prompted the agency to consider options enabling online visitors to make contact via email. To accommodate this special provision, the new database, earmarked for implementation in fiscal year 2006-2007 will feature this distinction.

## **HELPFULNESS OF CALL**

Based upon 1,104 responses as to whether the HelpLine contact was helpful, nearly every caller furnished positive feedback. Overall, 99% of the callers believed the call was helpful and the remaining 1% either did not find it helpful (6 callers) or were uncertain (5 callers).

## **FOLLOW-UP**

The FCCG conducts two types of follow-up calls relating to its HelpLine. One is to HelpLine callers who may have made contact in the midst of crisis. This follow-up call is to inquire about their status and what may have transpired from the initial conversation, which typically takes place within a matter of one to seven days later. The second type of follow-up call is to inquire about the effectiveness of the HelpLine service, which can take place at anytime. In total, 437 callers furnished consent for the FCCG to follow-up at a later point time and supplied appropriate contact information.

## **HELPLINE EVALUATION**

The Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling completed and submitted its HelpLine outcome evaluation study in June 2006, which reflected responses from 208 HelpLine service recipients. The survey concluded that an overwhelming majority of Florida citizens who use the 24-hour HelpLine service believe the hotline is a vital program and feel it has provided significant benefits at a time in their lives when they were feeling desperate and troubled. In nearly all cases, HelpLine callers asserted that specialists are knowledgeable about gambling, are caring, sensitive and supportive in their interactions and provide essential information that is greatly appreciated and utilized. This is true for both gamblers who called for assistance, as well as other concerned persons.

The outcome performance evaluation results are also consistent with the premise that gamblers who reduce or eliminate their gambling activities do so because of the recommendations received from HelpLine specialists. As has been documented in the past, there was a greater likelihood that gamblers were no longer gambling or decreased gambling in instances where recommendations were followed. Respondents also confirmed that information obtained during the call is resulting in short and long term benefits to family members, friends and others, in their ability to cope and manage presenting circumstances.