



Talking to Your Kids About the Risk of Gambling

SPOKESPERSON: *Available for comment*

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(Green Bay, WI) – With another school year having recently begun, the Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling (WCPG) is urging parents to take some time and talk to their children about the risk factors of gambling.

“Parents and others should be aware that teens and young adults are among the highest risk groups for developing gambling problems,” said Rose Blozinski, WCPG Executive Director. “It’s important for people to know that gambling can become an addiction. Awareness is an important part of heading off problems before they get too far.” Blozinski says parents should be talking to their middle school and high school age kids, as well as those heading off to college.

“The independence of campus living may be an inducement to gamble for some college students,” Blozinski says. “But the seeds are often sown at a much earlier age. This is really the first generation that has grown up with widespread gambling throughout the United States.”

As families prepared for the start of the school year, the WCPG staff also geared up for another year of reaching out to students across Wisconsin. WCPG has an Outreach Coordinator who will go in to schools/collages to provide an interactive, age appropriate presentation on the topics such as: understanding odds and randomness, definition of gambling, skill vs. chance, signs of problem gambling, and harm reduction strategies. “Our Outreach Coordinator has presented at several schools throughout the state,” Blozinski said. “It’s more important than ever that people of all ages understand that gambling can become a problem and what signs to look for if there are concerns about someone’s gambling.”

Blozinski says there are some key questions to address to determine if gambling has become a problem for a young person or anyone else:

- Is gambling the most exciting activity in your life?
- Are you preoccupied with thoughts of gambling?
- Do you miss school, activities, work or other events due to gambling?
- Do you borrow money to gamble?
- Has your gambling ever caused problems at home?
- Have you stolen from your family, roommate, friends or others to gamble or to pay back a gambling debt?
- Have you sold personal belongings to finance your gambling?

- After losing, do you gamble more to try to win your money back?

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If you or someone you know has a gambling problem, call the Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling Helpline at 1-800-GAMBLE-5, Text at 1-920-888-Help or Live Chat through the WCPG website at www.wi-problemgamblers.org.

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For more information, visit the [Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling](http://www.wisconsin-council-on-problem-gambling.org) website, visit us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/WisconsinCouncilonProblemGambling or follow us on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/wcpgambling>