

## FINDING HELP

THE WISCONSIN COUNCIL ON PROBLEM GAMBLING HAS A 24-HOUR HELPLINE THAT PROVIDES INFORMATION AND REFERRALS FOR GAMBLERS, FAMILY MEMBERS AND CONCERNED FRIENDS OR EMPLOYERS OF GAMBLERS WHO HAVE FINANCIAL, LEGAL OR OTHER DIFFICULTIES BECAUSE OF THEIR GAMBLING.



HELP IS JUST A CALL  
AWAY AT  
1-800-GAMBLE-5

### **Mission Statement:**

*The Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling provides resources, public awareness and education on problem and pathological gambling disorders while maintaining strict neutrality on the issue of legalized gambling.*



The Council's public awareness campaign is funded by the State of Wisconsin, Department of Health Services, Division of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services, Bureau of Prevention Treatment and Recovery.



WISCONSIN COUNCIL ON  
PROBLEM GAMBLING  
1423 KELLOGG STREET  
GREEN BAY, WI 54303

Phone: 920-437-8888  
Fax: 920-437-8995  
E-mail: [WCPGAMBLE5@NEW.RR.COM](mailto:WCPGAMBLE5@NEW.RR.COM)  
[www.wi-problemgamblers.org](http://www.wi-problemgamblers.org)

Talking to Children



Wisconsin  
Council on  
Problem  
Gambling



1-800-GAMBLE-5

## ▶ Talking to Children

Parents who are experiencing gambling-related problems are often unable to provide their children with adequate attention and nurturing be-



'children need to be aware of the problem'

cause of the amount of time they spend gambling. When this happens, children can feel physically and emotionally abandoned, become angry or depressed and blame themselves for problems in the home. All of this can cause them to withdraw or act out their confusion in inappropriate ways. To deal with this situation, children need to be made aware of the problem by hearing certain key messages with age-appropriate information.

### Key messages children need to hear include:

- There is a problem, but the adults are addressing it.
- It's not their fault that there's a problem and they're not responsible for fixing it.
- They can feel better by talking about their emotions.
- Treatment for their parent is available and effective.
- Depending on the children's age, it may also be appropriate to discuss any lifestyle changes that will affect them; however, the message that they don't need to worry about financial concerns must be reinforced.
- Children often get confused about their feelings for a parent who has a gambling problem. That's why it's important that they understand that gambling is only one part of their parent's overall behavior and that it's okay to love someone even though certain things they do are upsetting.

Parents can also help by spending more time with their children. Children need to feel safe and secure and by establishing daily routines and weekly activities, children will feel a healthy sense of structure and consistency in their lives. Making sure that children have "safe" people to talk to can also help them feel better about what is going on at home. Research shows that children who grow up in a household where there's problem gambling have a higher risk of facing the problem themselves later on. Having the love and support of a caring adult will improve their chances of growing up healthy and problem-free.



*Information from: Responsible Gambling Council.*