



## *Gambling with Their Future*

**For Immediate Release**

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(Green Bay, WI) – Gambling today is more widespread and more visible than ever before. While most gambling avenues are still off-limits for teens, many young people do gamble, whether playing card games with friends or wagering online.

“It’s estimated that five percent to seven percent of the state’s population face a gambling problem and we know that percentage is significantly higher for young people,” said Rose Gruber, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling. “It’s crucial for young people and their parents to understand that gambling can be a problem just like addictions to drugs or alcohol.”

Some of the warning signs of a gambling problem include:

- Always thinking or talking about gambling
- Frequent gambling (cards, dice, sports, Internet)
- Trouble concentrating on homework
- Borrowing or stealing money to gamble
- Lying to family or friends about gambling or gambling losses
- Missing school or work

“Parents have long been encouraged to talk to their kids about alcohol and drug use. We would certainly like to add gambling to that list,” Gruber said. “We know those are not easy conversations to have with children, but it’s important for parents to realize the influence they have on their children and the importance of having those tough talks.”

Gruber and the WCPG are also carrying their message directly to school children throughout Wisconsin. Last year alone, Gruber gave presentations on problem gambling at more than 30 schools, reaching more than 1,200 students.

“Kids today have grown up with legal gambling all around them,” Gruber said. “They are inundated with gambling messages from Texas Hold ’Em tournaments on TV and cable to lottery tickets at convenience stores and the ever-present Internet. We need to be sure they are also hearing about the impact that gambling can have if it becomes a problem.”

For more information about problem, visit the Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling website at [www.wi-problemgamblers.org](http://www.wi-problemgamblers.org).

*The **Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling** is funded by a public awareness grant from the State of Wisconsin and additional funding from donors, including Wisconsin Native American Tribes. The Council operates a 24-hour Helpline at 1-800-GAMBLE-5, distributes informational brochures, organizes an annual statewide conference, makes presentations on problem gambling and conducts training sessions for treatment providers interested in the special requirements for working with compulsive gamblers and their families.*

*For more information, visit [www.wi-problemgamblers.org](http://www.wi-problemgamblers.org). WCPG is now on Facebook. Log on to Facebook, search for “Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling” and then click “like.”*

***The Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling is proud to host the 26<sup>th</sup> National Conference on Problem Gambling, July 13-14, 2012, at the Hyatt Regency Milwaukee.***

**Media Contact:**

Scott Stein

Leonard & Finco Public Relations

(920) 965-7750

[sstein@LFpublicrelations.com](mailto:sstein@LFpublicrelations.com)