



Holiday Stress Can Be Too Much for Problem Gamblers

For Immediate Release

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(Green Bay, WI) – The holidays are rapidly approaching. It’s a wonderful time of year to celebrate with family and friends. But it’s also a stressful time of year. For many problem and compulsive gamblers, spending additional time with the family can be a trigger that leads to more gambling. The Internet, sports betting, casinos, card games and other forms of gambling can become a way to escape holiday pressures.

“People often turn to gambling because they’re lonely, bored or stressed, moods that are even more common during the holidays,” said Rose Gruber, Executive Director of the [Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling](#) (WCPG). “The added financial pressure of the holiday season may also be seen as a reason to gamble more.”

Gruber notes that the vast majority of people can enjoy gambling as a form of entertainment. “But for those who are addicted, gambling provides a sense of control and escape,” she says. “Those problem gamblers often find it harder and harder to return to the real world and easier to spend more and more time and money gambling. When they’ve gone too far, the impact usually goes far beyond the gambler to his or her family, friends, co-workers and others.”

Anyone planning to gamble during the holidays, or any other time of year, should follow these important guidelines:

- Set specific spending and time limits and stick to them
- Don’t look at gambling as a way to make money
- Don’t borrow money to gamble
- Don’t gamble alone...make it a social activity
- Don’t reinvest your winnings
- If you are gambling to escape holiday stress, find an alternative

Those who feel the pressure of problem or compulsive gambling should contact the WCPG statewide Helpline at 1-800-GAMBLE-5 (1-800-426-2535). “Our Helpline offers problem gamblers a place to turn for assistance and referrals,” Gruber said. “It’s also an important information and referral source for family members or friends who feel that someone close to them may be addicted to gambling.”

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*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. 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 26th National Conference on Problem Gambling, July 13-14, 2012, at the Hyatt Regency Milwaukee.

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