



Before betting on the big game, know the signs of problem gambling
Packers' involvement could lead to more calls to Problem Gambling Helpline

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(Green Bay, WI) – Super Bowl Sunday is a special day for football fans each year. And this year, with the Green Bay Packers in the championship game, it's particularly big for fans across Wisconsin.

The Super Bowl is also **THE** biggest wagering day in the U.S. with millions of dollars in bets placed legally and billions wagered illegally. For many problem gamblers, the Super Bowl is another day of compulsive thoughts on betting and fantasies of hitting it big.

“For those addicted to gambling, the hype around the championship game can be very tense,” said Rose Gruber, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling. “Many problem gamblers see the Super Bowl as a final chance to turn around a season of losses. But in the end, most will only have greater losses. We typically see a spike in calls following Super Bowl Sunday and with the Packers involved, the calls could increase.”

Last year, February was the busiest month for Wisconsin's Problem Gambling Helpline (1-800-GAMBLE-5) with 1,583 calls. Total calls to the Helpline in 2010 were 14,380, just short of 2009's record 14,604.

Gruber notes that a simple bet on the big football game is not a problem for most people, but it can be for approximately five to seven percent of Wisconsin's population. She urges people to watch for signs of problem or compulsive gambling, including:

- Using your income or savings to gamble while letting bills go unpaid
- Repeated, unsuccessful attempts to stop gambling
- Arguing about your gambling behavior with people you care about
- Feeling depressed or suicidal because of your gambling losses

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Gruber says any gambler who feels they may have a problem, should call the Problem Gambling Helpline. The 24-hour, statewide Helpline offers problem and compulsive gamblers a place to turn for assistance and referrals. The Helpline is staffed by trained volunteers and professional staff who work with a statewide database of qualified treatment providers, Gamblers Anonymous and GamAnon (for family members) chapters to which callers can be referred.

If you or someone you know has a gambling problem, call the Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling Helpline at 1-800-GAMBLE-5 for confidential help.

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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.”*

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