

Betting on the Big Game isn't the Answer for Problem Gamblers WCPG cautions problem gamblers as the Super Bowl approaches

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(Green Bay, WI) – All eyes will be on New Orleans on February 3rd as people across the U.S. and around the world tune in to see who will go home with the Lombardi Trophy as champions of the National Football League. It's one of the biggest days in sports and ***THE*** biggest wagering day in the United States. Millions of dollars in bets will be placed legally on the Super Bowl and billions more will be wagered illegally.

Rose Gruber, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling, says most people will win or lose a reasonable amount of money on Super Bowl Sunday, but it can be a difficult time for those who are dealing with a gambling addiction.

“The Super Bowl is often very difficult for those who are problem or compulsive gamblers,” Gruber says. “We typically see a spike in calls to our Problem Gambling Helpline this time of year. Some problem gamblers look at the Super Bowl as a last chance to catch up on their debt after a long football season. Most, however, will only have greater losses.”

WCPG is a statewide organization that provides resources, public awareness and education on problem and pathological gambling disorders while maintaining strict neutrality on the issue of legalized gambling. WCPG's Helpline operates 24/7 as a resource for anyone facing a gambling problem.

Gruber also says the losses that accumulate for a problem gambler go well beyond money. “By the time a problem gambler makes the decision to call our Helpline, the monetary losses can be tens of thousands of dollars, not to mention the impact on families, friends and even their workplace,” Gruber said. “All-too-often, family members aren't even aware of the gambling addiction and debt until it's a very serious situation.”

It's estimated that five percent to seven percent of Wisconsin's population are believed to be problem or compulsive gamblers. The WCPG Helpline last year received a near record 14,464 calls, an increase of 6.9 percent over 2011.

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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 or visit us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/WisconsinCouncilonProblemGambling.

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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