



Calls to Problem Gambling Helpline

For Immediate Release

January 29, 2020

SPOKESPERSON: *Available for comment*

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(Green Bay, WI) – During 2019, the Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling received 12,283 calls to its 24 hour Helpline.

WCPG is a statewide organization with a mission is to provide resources, public awareness and education on gambling disorders while maintaining strict neutrality on the issue of legalized gambling.

Blozinski says, “While the total number of calls is important, it really only tells part of the story. There are other significant numbers in our annual Helpline Report that show how devastating a gambling addiction can be.” The calls in 2019 included:

- A man with a gambling problem and who works 60 hours a week is not able to pay his bills. He loses bill money but feels he has to try to win to get out of debt.
- A Marinette County man says, “Both my wife and I gamble and it is becoming too much. We spend all of our disposable income. We want to stop but we need help.”
- An Outagamie County mother calls asking for help for her daughter. “She lost her home and now she is in danger of being evicted from her apartment.”
- A woman from Sheboygan County contacts our Chat line. She was wondering what are the steps she can take to prevent her gambling problem.
- “Our son has a gambling problem. He will be attending college in WI. Do you have resources for him,” asked a concerned father.
- Caller says, “I am losing my house and husband.”

- A family member is concerned about their cousin. Their cousin had an alcohol addiction but has quit and now gambles. The gambler is selling their possessions to finance their gambling. The gambler is a veteran.

Because of confidentiality, the Helpline report statistics are based on callers who are willing to share such information. Monthly calls to the Helpline in 2019 ranged from a low of 817 in May to a high of 1,150 in April and December. Among the other numbers in the Helpline report:

- 15 callers reported thoughts of suicide or suicide attempts
- 30 callers reported having to file for bankruptcy as a result of their gambling problems

With the Super Bowl coming up on Sunday, Blozinski says, “If you plan to bet, don’t bet more than you can afford to lose. Looking ahead, we expect to see a continued increase in usage of our chat and text lines.”

If you or someone you know has a gambling problem, call the Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling Helpline at 1-800-GAMBLE-5, Text at 1-850-888-Hope or Live Chat through the WCPG website at www.wi-problemgamblers.org.

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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 1-850-888-HOPE Textline, and Chat available on www.wi-problemgamblers.org, 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 the [Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling](http://www.wisconsin-council-on-problem-gambling.org) website, visit us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/WisconsinCouncilonProblemGambling or follow us on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/wcpgambling>