Myths & Facts
about Problem Gambling...

10 Rules
of Responsible Gaming...

Signs
of a Problem Gambler...

If you or someone you know has a gambling problem, help is available and it works
Call 1-800-GAMBLER or 1-800-848-1880.

Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board
P.O. Box 69060
Harrisburg, PA 17106

Phone: (717) 346-8300

Fax: (717) 346-8350

www.gamingcontrolboard.pa.gov

Problem Gambling
When the FUN STOPS

Signs

Is someone you know...?

- Preoccupied with gambling (i.e. reliving past gambling experiences, planning the next venture, or thinking of ways to get money with which to gamble).
- Secretive about his/her gambling habits, and defensive when confronted.
- Increasing bet amounts when gambling in order to achieve the desired excitement (“high”).
- Trying unsuccessfully to control, cut back, or stop gambling.
- Restless or irritable when not gambling.
- Gambling to escape problems.
- “Chasing” losses with more gambling.
- Lying to family and others about the extent of gambling.
- Committing crimes to finance gambling.
- Jeopardizing or losing relationships, jobs, education or career opportunities because of gambling.
- Relying on others to bail him or her out to relieve a desperate financial situation caused by gambling.

Help and Hope
1-800-GAMBLER

10 Rules

1. If you choose to gamble, do so for entertainment purposes.
   If your gambling is no longer an enjoyable activity then ask yourself why you are still “playing”
2. Treat the money you lose as the cost of your entertainment.
   Treat any winnings as a bonus.
3. Set a dollar limit and stick to it.
   Decide before you go not only what you can “afford” to lose, but how much you want to spend. Do not change your mind after losing.
4. Set a time limit and stick to it.
   Decide how much of your time you want to allow for gambling. Leave when you reach the time limit whether you are winning or losing.
5. Expect to lose.
   The odds are that you will lose.
6. Make it a private rule not to gamble on credit.
   Do not borrow money to gamble.
7. Create balance in your life.
   Gambling should not interfere with or substitute for friends, family, work or other worthwhile activities.
8. Avoid “chasing” lost money.
   Chances are the more you try to recoup your losses the larger your losses will be.
9. Don’t gamble as a way to cope with emotional or physical pain.
   Gambling for reasons other then entertainment can lead to problems.
10. Become educated about the warning signs of problem gambling.
    The more you know, the better choices you can make.

Myths & Facts

Myth: You have to gamble every day to be a problem gambler.

Fact: A problem gambler may gamble frequently or infrequently. If a person’s gambling is causing psychological, financial, emotional, marital, legal or other difficulties for themselves and the people around them, then they have a gambling problem.

Myth: Problem gamblers gamble at any opportunity on any form of gambling.

Fact: Most problem gamblers have a favorite form of gambling that causes them problems. Some gamblers also engage in secondary forms of gambling, but these are not usually as problematic.

Myth: Problem gamblers are irresponsible people.

Fact: Many problem gamblers hold, or have held, responsible community positions. In addition, even people with a long history of responsible behavior are vulnerable to developing a gambling problem. When a person is having a problem gambling episode, that person is unable to control their gambling and in this compromised state their actions look like irresponsible behavior.

Myth: Children are not affected by problem gambling.

Fact: Surveys show that about 10% to 15% of American and Canadian youth have experienced gambling-related problems and 1% to 6% of these individuals may satisfy diagnostic criteria for pathological gambling. Additionally, children of problem gamblers have been shown to be at a higher risk of developing health-related behaviors. This includes alcohol and drug use, problem gambling, eating disorders, depression and suicide.

Myth: Financial problems are the main reason that problem gamblers’ relationships break down.

Fact: It is true that money problems play an important part in ending relationships, however, many non-gambling partners say that the lies and lack of trust is the biggest cause.

Myth: If a problem gambler builds up a debt, the important thing to do is to help them get out of the financial problem as soon as possible.

Fact: Quick fix solutions are often attractive to everyone involved and may appear to be the right thing to do, however, “bailing” the gambler out of debt may actually make matters worse by enabling gambling problems to continue.

Myth: Problem gambling is easy to recognize.

Fact: Problem gambling has been called the hidden addiction. It is very easy to hide as it has few recognizable symptoms, unlike alcohol and drug use. Many problem gamblers themselves do not recognize they have a gambling problem. Problem gamblers often engage in self-denial.