



Problem Gambling: Education & Treatment In A Residential Setting

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What is this program?

- Collaboration between Georgianwood Concurrent Disorders Program & CAMH's Problem Gambling Project
- Problem gambling education and early treatment program for clients who are in a residential mental health and/or substance abuse setting
- To help clinicians inform mental health and/or substance use clients about the potential risks associated with gambling and to provide some preliminary interventions for those clients already engaging in problematic gambling behaviour.

Why is it important to talk about gambling with mental health and substance use clients?

- Research shows a correlation between mental health problems, particularly depression and anxiety, and problem gambling (E.g., Petry, Stinson, & Grant, 2005; El-Guebaly et al, 2006; Scherrer et al., 2005).
- Research also shows a correlation between substance use disorders and problem gambling (E.g., Petry, Stinson, & Grant, 2005; Grant, Kushner & Kim, 2002; Feigelman, Wallisch, & Lesieur, 1998).
- Gambling can be a potential trigger for substance use and/or mental health relapse.
- People tend to be unaware of the risks associated with gambling.

How is the program delivered?

- 4 sessions delivered by clinicians in a group setting.
- Includes a Facilitator's Guide, PowerPoint presentations and Participant Handouts, all available free for download at www.ProblemGambling.ca.
- Depending on the number of participants and the amount of group discussion, each session will take between 60-90 minutes.

How is the program delivered? (continued)

- Sessions 1 & 2 take a prevention and education approach towards gambling and are intended for all clients. They provide information about gambling that is suitable for everyone, no matter what their involvement in gambling is.

Session 1

Session 1 focuses on introductory information including:

- how gambling and problem gambling are defined;
- what activities are considered to be gambling;
- prevalence rates of gambling and problem gambling;
- the risk factors for developing a gambling problem;
- the impact of problem gambling;
- how gambling and substance use are connected;
- how gambling and mental health are connected; and
- a comparison of problematic vs. non-problematic gambling.

Session 2

Session 2 focuses on:

- how games of chance work;
- explanations of randomness, independent outcomes, odds, and the “house edge”
- false beliefs and superstitions associated with gambling; and
- strategies for reducing the risk of developing a gambling problem.

The Slot Machine: What Every Player Needs to Know



The Coin Toss:

Activity 1



The Coin Toss: Activity 2

Heads or Tails?

1. H H H T H H H T T T

2. T T T T T H H H H H

3. T T T T T T T T T T

What Are Your Chances?

Say that my brother lived somewhere in Ontario but I did not know his phone number. If I were to randomly dial any Ontario residential phone number, what do you think the chances are that I would reach him?



Reducing The Risk

- Set a limit on time and money.
- Think of gambling as entertainment and not as a way to make money.
- Understand the odds. The “house” always has the edge.
- Recognize risk factors.
- It should be part of a balanced lifestyle.
- Listen to the concerns of others.

Helpful Resources

- Ontario Problem Gambling Helpline
888-230-3505
www.opgh.on.ca
- www.ProblemGambling.ca
- www.KnowYourLimit.ca

Preventing Problem Gambling

Take-Home Messages

- People with a history of substance abuse are at higher risk of developing a gambling problem.
- People with a mental illness are at higher risk of developing a gambling problem.
- People who have problems with gambling are at higher risk of suicide.

Take-Home Messages (continued)

- The house edge ensures that over time, you will likely lose more money than you win.
- Gambling games are mostly based on randomness & independent outcomes and your chances of winning are smaller than your chances of losing.
- Luck is really just a cognitive distortion and many people get into trouble because of a lack of understanding about how games of chance work.

Take-Home Messages (continued)

- The casinos and lottery corporations are billion-dollar industries.
- Gambling is a problem when it damages your finances, work, health, relationships or reputation.
- You can reduce your risk of developing a problem by setting limits on time & money and viewing gambling as entertainment and not as a way of making money.

Pre/Post Test

- A pre/post test was developed in order to assess whether clients increase their understanding of the risks of problem gambling. Of the 32 people we have pre-post test data for:
 - pre-test mean was 12.97 out of 21 (62%)
 - post-test mean was 16 out of 21 (76%)
- The pre/post test is available in this package.

Screening for Problem Gambling

Canadian Problem Gambling Index (CPGI)

- Simple and easy to use
- Only 9 questions
- Looks at gambling behaviour over the past 12 months
- Gives a range (no problem, at risk, moderate problem and severe problem)

Canadian Problem Gambling Index

Thinking about the last 12 months...

- Have you bet more than you could really afford to lose?
0 Never 1 Sometimes 2 Most of the time 3 Almost always
- Still thinking about the last 12 months, have you needed to gamble with larger amounts of money to get the same feeling of excitement?
0 Never 1 Sometimes 2 Most of the time 3 Almost always
- When you gambled, did you go back another day to try to win back the money you lost?
0 Never 1 Sometimes 2 Most of the time 3 Almost always
- Have you borrowed money or sold anything to get money to gamble?
0 Never 1 Sometimes 2 Most of the time 3 Almost always
- Have you felt that you might have a problem with gambling?
0 Never 1 Sometimes 2 Most of the time 3 Almost always

Canadian Problem Gambling Index (continued)

- Has gambling caused you any health problems, including stress or anxiety?
0 Never **1** Sometimes **2** Most of the time **3** Almost always
- Have people criticized your betting or told you that you had a gambling problem, regardless of whether or not you thought it was true?
0 Never **1** Sometimes **2** Most of the time **3** Almost always
- Has your gambling caused any financial problems for you or your household?
0 Never **1** Sometimes **2** Most of the time **3** Almost always
- Have you felt guilty about the way you gamble or what happens when you gamble?
0 Never **1** Sometimes **2** Most of the time **3** Almost always

Scoring:

0: Non-problem gambling.

1 or 2: Low level of problems with few or no identified negative consequences.

3 to 7: Moderate level of problems leading to some negative consequences.

8 or more: Problem gambling with negative consequences and a possible loss of control.

How is the program delivered? (continued)

- Sessions 3 & 4 are intended for clients who are concerned about their gambling, or who have been identified as having problems related to their gambling.
- These sessions allow clients to develop more insight and awareness into their gambling difficulties, and help them to identify their personal triggers as well as learn new skills to deal with these triggers.

Session 3

Session 3 focuses on:

- how to set realistic gambling goals; and
- identifying personal gambling triggers.

Gambling Goals

- Abstinence or reduced gambling?
- How to choose your gambling goal?
- “My Goal Statement”
- Self-Monitoring Gambling or Urges to Gamble

Identifying Triggers

- Triggers:
 - Situations (people, places and things)
 - Thoughts
 - Moods (positive and negative)
- How are these connected?

Inventory of Gambling Situations

- Negative Emotions
- Conflict With Others
- Need For Excitement
- Testing Personal Control
- Pleasant Emotions
- Social Pressure
- Worried About Debts
- Winning And Chasing
- Confidence In a Skill
- Urges and Temptations

Session 4

Session 4 focuses on:

- developing coping strategies to deal with gambling triggers; and
- helpful resources.

Examples of Strategies

- Avoid things/places that trigger the urge to gamble, for example:
 - the corner store where you can buy lottery tickets;
 - the sports pages of the newspaper;
 - Sports or poker tournaments on TV.
- Avoid people who will trigger the urge to gamble, for example:
 - Friends or family you used to gamble with.

Examples of Strategies (continued)

- Avoid drinking or drug use during high risk times.
- Reduce the withdrawal limit on your debit card.
- Reduce the limit on your credit card.
- Carry limited amounts of cash.
- If you go somewhere where gambling will be available, keep your credit and debit cards at home.

Examples of Strategies (continued)

- Tell friends and family that you no longer gamble.
- If you find yourself in a place/situation where you are feeling triggered to gamble, leave.
- Associate yourself with supportive people.
- Attend a support group for people who also struggle with gambling.

Some Recommended Strategies

- Self- Exclusion:
- GamBlock: Blocks access to all online gambling.
- Address Financial Issues by:
 - dealing with debt; and
 - considering temporarily handing over control of your finances.

Gambling Triggers: My Action Plans

Some Helpful Resources

Ontario Problem Gambling Helpline

www.opgh.on.ca

1-888-230-3505

www.ProblemGambling.ca

Ontario Association of Credit Counselling

www.oaccs.com

1-888-204-2221

Program Delivery at Georgianwood

- Georgianwood is a 12-bed, integrated residential program for concurrent disorders at the Mental Health Centre Penetanguishene
- The program was revamped in 2007 to be in line with current best-practice recommendations
- Program includes: CBT for anxiety & depression; *Seeking Safety* for concurrent PTSD; Skills training for clients with MMI; relapse prevention; self-help group facilitation; psychoeducation; employment & leisure education, etc.
- More clients began presenting with gambling issues

Program Delivery at Georgianwood (continued)

- All clients are screened on admission with the CPGI and receive the 2 prevention sessions
- Those who screen positive are flagged to receive all 4 sessions
- Trained our counselling staff in the use of the facilitator's guide and the PowerPoint slides
- Devote one day in each 3-month cycle to gambling prevention
- Those who screen positive get sessions 3 & 4 in a 1:1 session with a counsellor & a referral to a gambling counsellor in the community

For More Information

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