



Need help?

The EAP has several resources available. Contact an EAP representative in your area today.

National Office
Denis Yelle
 (888) 992-1010

Atlantic Region
Jeff Mc Aulay
 (902) 223-7911

Montreal
Gilles Filion
 (514) 972-4095

Toronto
Ron Rawding
 (416) 882-6997

Winnipeg
Elvira Tonelete
 (204) 471-5307

Calgary
Art Gorham
 (403) 880-2589

Vancouver
Brian Bethell
 (604) 992-4491

EAP Column

When gambling stops being a game



Gambling is part of everyday life for many individuals. We attend bingos sponsored by community groups as well as charity casinos. Some of us participate in sports pools or bet at the racetracks. Many others play the lotteries each week.

These activities are fun for most people. But a small percentage – experts say four per cent – develop problems with gambling that escalate to affect the family finances, employment and/or self esteem.

Obsessive gambling can create behavioral patterns which can lead to severe financial problems, legal implications and workplace-related issues.

The choices you make about gambling potentially affect you and everyone around you – family, friends and co-workers. Most individuals don't realize they have a gambling problem until it's too late.

There may be a gambling problem if you:

- lose time from work as a result.

- feel annoyed if others criticize you for it.
- get bored easily when you're not gambling.
- feel guilty about it.
- honestly believe you can beat the odds and make that "big win".
- borrow money and gamble with it.
- gamble to pay debt or solve financial difficulties.
- lie about gambling.
- gamble until all your money is gone.

How to talk about problem gambling

You can't make someone stop gambling, but showing concern and support are important steps in helping a problem gambler receive professional help.

Tell the person you care about them and you're concerned about their behavior. Be positive. Let the person know they are a valued employee or co-worker.

Tell the person how their actions are affecting others.

Avoid being or sounding judg-

mental – remember it's the behaviour that's the problem, not the person. Remember that people in this situation are vulnerable.

Offer your assistance but don't try to counsel them. Help them to seek assistance from a professional counselor through the Problem Gambling Help Line (toll-free number is shown on this page) or through Employee Assistance Program resources.

Problem gambling is treatable and help is available.

Some strategies to reduce gambling when it becomes a problem :

- ◆ Get more involved in social activities.
- ◆ Set acceptable loss limits and stick with them.
- ◆ Keep a record of gambling activities.
- ◆ Don't borrow money to gamble. Instead, plan and spend money on something special for you and your family.
- ◆ Utilize other and more effective strategies to relieve stress, loneliness or boredom.

Problem Gambling Help Line 1-888-795-6111