

# Not Just a Game of Chance

## Problem Gambling

### What is Problem Gambling?

People with a gambling problem often bet with money that they can't afford to lose. As they spend more and more time gambling, they may start to neglect family, friends, work and social obligations. They may even neglect themselves – not eating or sleeping properly and not caring about their appearance.

People with a gambling problem often borrow money to gamble. Their credit cards may be maxed out or second mortgages taken out on their home.

Despite negative consequences, they may continue to gamble to chase after losses, while denying that they have a problem.

### Who is affected by Problem Gambling?

Problem Gambling does not discriminate. It can affect anyone regardless of race, sex, socioeconomic background or faith.

### Facts

According to a recent OASAS study, five percent of New York adults, ages 18 and over, experienced a gambling problem in the past year. That's over 600,000 New Yorkers. Among these adults:

- 42 percent purchased lottery tickets at least once a week
- 14 percent bet on sports at least once a week
- 12 percent played cards for money at least once a week



*For most people, gambling is a fun, recreational activity. But for some adults, gambling behaviors will become a problem that negatively affects many areas of their life.*

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# Problem Gambling

## Facts *Continued*

- Five percent gambled at a casino on a weekly basis.
- Males are three times as likely as females to have a gambling problem.
- Twenty-eight percent also experienced a substance abuse problem in the past year.

## Warning Signs

- Spending more time thinking about gambling.
- Needing to gamble with more and more money.
- Becoming restless or irritable when trying to stop or cut down on gambling.
- Gambling to escape problems or feelings of depression or anxiousness.
- After losing money gambling, returns another day to get even.
- Lies to family or others about gambling activities.
- Repeated unsuccessful attempts to control gambling by cutting back or stopping.
- Commits illegal acts to finance gambling or pay gambling debts.
- Risks or loses a significant relationship, job, education or career opportunity because of gambling.
- Seeks financial bailouts or help from others to relieve a desperate financial situation.



*It is important to note that an individual with gambling problems may not necessarily exhibit all of these behaviors.*

## New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services

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