



# HELPLINE REPORT 2004

**CONNECTICUT COUNCIL on  
PROBLEM  
GAMBLING**

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## **2004 PROBLEM GAMBLING HELPLINE REPORT- FOREWORD**

The Connecticut Council on Problem Gambling (CCPG) operates a 24-hour Helpline service for callers seeking help with a gambling problem for themselves or someone they care about. Callers seeking more general information about problem gambling are referred to the CCPG's office.

Annually, a report is compiled that reflects calls received by the Helpline in the prior year. Information in the 2004 report was gathered on 794 calls received between January 1, 2004 and December 31, 2004 that were specific requests for help with a gambling problem. Of the 794 callers, 545 callers were either calling from Connecticut or were calling about someone residing in Connecticut. In order to provide a more accurate picture of the impact on problem gambling in the state of Connecticut, only Connecticut information is included in this report beyond Table 1. Of the 545 Connecticut callers, 404 were problem gamblers who resided in the state, and 141 were callers representing the significant others of problem gamblers.

In order to understand the similarities and differences of the impact of problem gambling on the gambler and significant other, this report is presented in two parts, data collected from the Problem Gambler and data from the Significant Other. At the end of the report, conclusions and recommendations are provided for both groups.

Helpline data provide a valuable picture of the demographic characteristics, behavior patterns and gambling experiences of problem gamblers and their families across Connecticut. However, it is necessary to enlarge the scope of knowledge of the extent of problem gambling in Connecticut through state sponsored studies every five years which have representative samples of youth and adults and include samples of patrons at Connecticut gambling sites. It is critical to monitor the impact of legalized gambling on social costs.

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## HELPLINE CALLERS<sup>1</sup>

### State of residence of all callers (n = 794):

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Connecticut	73%	78%	79%
Massachusetts	11%	12%	11%
Rhode Island	4%	4%	5%
New York	1%	2%	0%
Elsewhere	1%	1%	1%

### Top 5 cities of residence of all Connecticut callers (n = 545):<sup>2</sup>

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Waterbury	7%	7%	7%
New Haven	5%	3%	6%
Stamford	4%	5%	4%
Hartford	4%	4%	3%
Meriden	3%	4%	1%

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1. Numerical information in tables prepared by Yale University, Department of Psychiatry. Summaries and interpretations of data were written by CCPG. As no tests of statistical significance were conducted, all comparisons between categories in this report represent apparent trends.
  2. Caution should be exercised in comparing percentages of Helpline problem gamblers across cities due to large differences in size of population across cities.

## PROBLEM GAMBLERS

The following tables represent information gathered specifically regarding the caller's gambling problem.

### 1. Callers to the Helpline:

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Called about own problem	71%	62%	38%
Significant Others	29%	38%	62%

- More than 2 out of 3 callers were the gamblers.
- Almost 2 out of 3 gamblers were male and almost 2 out of 3 significant others were female.

### 2. Age of problem gamblers:

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
10-19	3%	4%	1%
20-29	16%	21%	9%
30-39	24%	22%	29%
40-49	27%	27%	27%
50-59	21%	17%	27%
60-69	5%	6%	5%
70-79	2%	3%	2%
80-89	1%	1%	0%
Mean Age	41.9 years	40.7	44.0

- Male problem gamblers were younger than female problem gamblers: 47% of males and 39% of females were under 40 years old.
- The gender difference was most evident in two age ranges:  
Age 20-29: 21% males vs. 9% females  
Age 50-59: 17% males vs. 27% females

### 3. Top four ethnic/racial groups of problem gamblers:

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Caucasian	76%	80%	70%
African-American	11%	9%	16%
Latino/Hispanic	4%	4%	4%
Asian/Pacific Islander	3%	3%	4%
Other	1%	2%	1%

**4. Religious affiliations of problem gamblers:**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Catholic	51%	55%	44%
Protestant	25%	21%	32%
Jewish	3%	4%	2%
Muslim	1%	1%	0%
Other	3%	5%	2%
None	11%	10%	12%

- Among Catholics, there were more male (55%) than female (44%) problem gamblers. The reverse was true among Protestants: males (21%) and females (32%).

**5. Marital status of problem gamblers:**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Married	38%	39%	37%
Single	38%	39%	38%
Divorced	17%	17%	17%

The remaining 6% were: cohabiting (2%), separated (2%) or widowed (2%).

**6. Percent of gamblers who have children under the age of 18 living with them:**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
	30%	30%	31%

**7. Educational level of problem gamblers:**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Less than high school	8%	10%	4%
High school	36%	35%	37%
Some college	29%	29%	29%
Associates degree	5%	4%	6%
Bachelor's degree	14%	13%	16%
Master's Degree or Higher	4%	5%	3%

**8.a. Occupations of problem gamblers:**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Clerical	14%	15%	13%
Skilled-Manual	13%	15%	10%
Semi-skilled	13%	12%	15%
Unskilled	11%	12%	10%
Administrator	9%	10%	9%
Business Manager	6%	5%	9%
Retired	5%	5%	4%
High Executive	1%	1%	2%
Student	2%	3%	0%
Unemployed	13%	12%	16%

- Problem gamblers reported high rates of unemployment (13%).

**8.b. Supplemental income sources**

<u>Earning type</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Social Security	9%	10%	8%
Workers Compensation	2%	3%	2%
Unemployment Benefits	2%	2%	3%

**9. Income of problem gamblers:**

<u>Earnings</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Less than \$25,000:	31%	28%	35%
\$25,000 - \$34,999:	18%	18%	18%
\$35,000 - \$44,999:	14%	15%	14%
\$45,000 - \$59,999:	18%	19%	17%
\$60,000 - \$89,999:	14%	15%	13%
\$90,000 and more:	5%	6%	4%

- Three out of ten (31%) problem gamblers earned less than \$25,000 a year and almost five out of ten (49%) earned less than \$35,000.
- At the lowest income level (below \$25,000) there were more female (35%) than male (28%) problem gamblers.
- For income levels of \$45,000 and above, there are more male (40%) than female (34%) problem gamblers.

**10.a. Areas of gambling in which problems were identified**

A number of respondents selected more than one type of gambling. Percentages below may be affected by the extent of differences in availability of the Helpline number across the various sites at which gambling takes place.

**Non-Casino Gambling**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>
Lottery – Scratch Off	33%	39%	24%
Lottery - Daily	14%	15%	12%
Sports Betting	9%	13%	3%
Lottery – Powerball	9%	12%	6%
Internet	11%	15%	4%
Lottery – Lotto	13%	15%	9%
Horse Racing	9%	13%	2%
Cards	7%	9%	3%
Bingo	2%	2%	3%
Raffles	4%	5%	4%
Stock/Financial Markets	1%	1%	1%
Dog Racing	4%	7%	1%
Dice	3%	4%	2%
Sweepstakes	1%	1%	0%
Las Vegas Nights	1%	2%	0%
Business Speculation	0%	1%	0%

**Casino Gambling**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>
Slots	53%	39%	77%
Blackjack	29%	36%	18%
Poker	12%	16%	6%
Craps/Dice	10%	15%	1%
Roulette	7%	10%	3%
Video Poker	8%	9%	7%
Bingo	1%	0%	3%
Horse Racing	4%	6%	2%
Keno	1%	2%	1%
Baccarat	2%	2%	1%



- Females far more often than males reported having a problem with slot machines (77% vs. 39%).
- Males far more often than females reported having a problem with blackjack (36% vs.18%), sports betting (13% vs. 3%), poker (16% vs. 6%) craps (15% vs. 1%) and horse racing (6% vs. 2%).

**10.b. Top five rankings of all forms of gambling:**

<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
1. 53% Slots	1. 39% Slots	1. 77% Slots
2. 33% Lottery-scratch off	39% Lottery-scratch off	2. 24% Lottery -scratch off
3. 29% Blackjack	2. 36% Blackjack	3. 18% Blackjack
4. 14% Lottery-Daily	3. 16% Poker	4. 12% Lottery-daily
5. 14% Lottery- Lotto	4. 15% Craps/Dice	5. 9% Lottery-Lotto
	15% Lottery - Daily	
	15% Internet	
	5.13% Horseracing	

- The forms of gambling with which Connecticut problem gambling Helpline callers have the most difficulty are casino slots and blackjack and lottery (mainly scratch tickets).

**11. Number of different areas of gambling in which problems were identified.**

<u>Number of areas</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
1	46%	40%	57%
2	24%	26%	22%
3	8%	8%	7%
4	6%	7%	5%
5	4%	7%	0%
6	2%	3%	2%
7	1%	1%	2%
8	2%	2%	3%

- Overall, problem gamblers had an average of 2.5 areas of gambling in which they had a problem. More males (59%) than females (43%) had a problem in two or more areas.

**12. The following problems are reported to have resulted from gambling:**

<u>Emotional:</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Anxious/worried	81%	77%	88%
Depression	75%	74%	75%
Thoughts of suicide	15%	15%	14%
Suicide attempts	3%	3%	3%

<u>Interpersonal:</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Family or spouse conflict	51%	54%	48%
Family neglect	46%	47%	44%
Family violence	8%	8%	7%

<u>Financial:</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Used savings	78%	76%	80%
Problems paying bills	72%	70%	75%
Borrowed from credit cards	55%	50%	65%
Borrowed from family	30%	31%	30%
Borrowed from friends	22%	24%	18%
Bankruptcy (previous or pending)	15%	12%	21%
Eviction	5%	4%	6%
Debt owed to bookies	4%	7%	1%

<u>Substance Abuse:</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Excessive use of alcohol	11%	13%	8%
Use of illegal drugs (Rx or non-Rx)	3%	3%	4%

<u>Legal:</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Arrested	11%	12%	11%
Jail or prison	4%	6%	1%

Serious consequences of problematic gambling are evident for both genders in all categories: depression, anxiety and suicidality; family conflict and neglect; debts and bankruptcy.

Males and females had an overall similar profile of negative consequences of problem gambling, with the following differences:

- Males had greater family issues, alcohol abuse, debt owed to friends and bookies and incarceration.
- Females reported more anxiety/worry and greater credit card debt and bankruptcy than did males.

**13. The following were reported by the gambler at the time of the initial Helpline call:**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Danger of harming someone	.3%	1%	0%
Danger of being harmed	2%	2%	2%
Danger of harming self	1%	2%	1%

**14. In the family in which the problem gambler grew up, there was a history of the following problem behaviors:**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Alcohol abuse	36%	36%	36%
Gambling problem	35%	40%	26%
Abusive behavior	21%	20%	22%
Drug abuse	14%	16%	11%

- High rates of substance abuse (especially alcohol), problem gambling and abusive behavior were reported in the families in which problem gamblers grew up.
- Males more than females reported a family history of problem gambling (40% vs. 26%).

**15. Average age began gambling/average age when problem began/average number of years before called Helpline:**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Age began gambling	29 yrs	26 yrs	36 yrs
Age gambling began to be a problem	36 yrs	33 yrs	40 yrs
Years of problem gambling before calling Helpline	6 yrs	8 yrs	4 yrs

- Females began gambling 10 years later than males.
- After starting gambling, females developed a problem an average of three years sooner than males (4 years vs. 7 years).
- After a problem developed, females called the Helpline an average of four years sooner than males (4 years vs. 8 years).

**16. Average financial losses of problem gamblers:**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Money lost last 12 months	\$20,772	\$ 20,926	\$20,507
Money lost during lifetime	\$148,428	\$188,290	\$80,095
Current gambling debt	\$19,412	\$21,206	\$17,209

- Gambling losses within the past 12 months and current debt (each approximately \$20,000) is extremely high relative to the income of problem gamblers [4 out of 10 callers earned less than \$41,000 -see # 8 above].
- Male and female losses within the past year (\$20,926 vs. \$20,507) and current debt (\$21, 206 vs. \$17, 209) are similar. [The fact that males\* had more than two times greater lifetime loss than females (\$188, 290 vs. \$80, 095) is due to the greater number of years gambling and the longer period of time that gambling was a problem- see #14 above].

\*Not included in these figures for lifetime losses are six male callers who reported losses between one and seven million dollars, with an average loss of \$2.4 million.

**17. Persons or institutions to which gambling debts are owed:**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Owed to credit cards	55%	49%	65%
Owed to family	30%	31%	30%
Owed to friends	22%	24%	18%
Owed to banks	7%	6%	10%
Owed to co-workers	3%	5%	2%
Owed to casinos – credit line	3%	2%	5%
Owed to bookies	4%	7%	1%

- Females more than males owed credit card gambling debt (65% vs. 49%)
- Males more than females owed gambling debts to friends (24% vs. 18%) and bookies (7% vs. 1%).

**18. Reported other excessive behaviors of problem gamblers:**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Tobacco	50%	46%	56%
Work	27%	29%	25%
Food	15%	12%	21%
Spending/Shopping	13%	9%	20%
Alcohol	11%	13%	8%
Drugs	1%	2%	1%
Sex	5%	8%	1%

- Problem gamblers had an average of 2.2 areas of excessive behavior (including problem gambling), with males averaging 2.2 and females averaging 2.3 areas.
- Very high rates of excessive behaviors were reported for tobacco (50%) and work (27%), and high rates for food (15%) and spending/shopping (13%) and alcohol (11%).

**Gender Differences:**

- Excessive behaviors related to tobacco, food and spending/shopping were reported more frequently for females, while males more frequently reported excessive alcohol use.

**19. Ever received help for a gambling, substance or other mental health problem:**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Ever attended Gamblers Anonymous	16%	17%	14%
Ever received professional gambling treatment	7%	9%	5%
Ever attended a 12-step group for alcohol or drugs	10%	12%	7%
Ever received treatment for mental health problems	16%	18%	14%

**20. The top four sources where the Helpline number was found:**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Telephone book	26%	27%	25%
Foxwoods Resort Casino	15%	12%	20%
Lottery point of purchase	19%	23%	14%
Mohegan Sun	13%	9%	18%

- In addition to the above, three percent (3%) of problem gamblers found the Helpline number via the Internet (4% males and 3% females).

**21. The top four resources suggested to callers by the Helpline:**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Gamblers Anonymous (GA)	94%	95%	93%
State Sponsored Treatment Programs	97%	96%	97%
Gam-Anon for a family member	38%	37%	39%
Literature	69%	67%	73%

## **SIGNIFICANT OTHERS (SO)**

The following tables represent information gathered from a concerned or significant other regarding the effects of another person's gambling problem upon the caller.

### **1. Callers to the Helpline:**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Called about someone else's problem	29%	29%	71%

- Three out of every 10 people who called the Helpline about a gambling problem called with concern about someone else's problem.
- More than twice as many females than males called with concerns resulting from another person's gambling problem (71% vs. 29%).

### **2. Relationship to problem gambler:**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Spouses of the problem gambler	26%	23%	27%
Adult children of gambler	20%	18%	21%
Parents of the gambler	12%	8%	14%
Friends of the gambler	17%	21%	16%
Sibling of gambler	12%	8%	13%
Other relatives of the gambler	8%	8%	8%
Child of gambler under 18	2%	5%	1%
Employer of gambler	1%	5%	0%
Other relationship to gambler	1%	8%	2%

- More females than males called specifically about a family member's problem (84% vs. 70%) and more males called about a friend's problem gambling than did females (21% vs. 16%).

### **3. Callers were asked for which person(s) they were seeking assistance\*:**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Person calling	54%	41%	59%
Spouse	29%	23%	31%
Parent	26%	23%	28%
Friend	16%	21%	15%
Sibling	14%	5%	18%
Adult child	13%	13%	13%
Relative	7%	13%	5%
Child under 18 years of age	4%	3%	5%
Employee	2%	5%	1%
Co-worker	1%	0%	2%
Employer	1%	0%	1%

- One out of two (54%) of the SO's called for help for themselves as well as the problem gambler. Overall, females (59%) sought help for themselves more frequently than did males (41%).
- When asked if the caller wanted help to deal with the effects of the problem gambling whether or not the gambler seeks help, almost three out of four (73%) callers said yes.
- Only one out of twenty-five (4%) of callers sought help for someone under the age of 18.
- Average number of people for whom SO's were seeking assistance:

<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
1.7	1.5	1.8

\* Some callers desired assistance for more than one person.

#### 4. Gambler awareness that SO was calling for assistance:

- Sixty-four (64%) percent of SO's stated the problem gambler did not know a call to the Helpline was being placed and only less than half (44%) planned on telling the gambler about the call.

#### 5. Significant others who are reported to be negatively affected by the gambling:

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Spouse of gambler	43%	44%	43%
Adult child of gambler	36%	39%	34%
Friend of gambler	24%	23%	25%
Relative of gambler	21%	21%	22%
Parent of gambler	16%	8%	19%
Child (under 18) of gambler	15%	5%	19%
Sibling of gambler	14%	13%	14%
Employer of gambler	9%	8%	9%
Co-worker of gambler	2%	0%	3%

#### 6. Length of time significant others have known about the gambling problem

<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
6.5 years	7 years	6 years

#### 7. Age of the significant others:

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
10-19	3%	5%	2%
20-29	11%	10%	12%
30-39	26%	23%	28%
40-49	28%	26%	28%
50-59	19%	23%	18%
60-69	6%	5%	7%
70-79	2%	0%	3%
80-89	1%	0%	1%

Mean Age	42.5	41.9	42.8
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**8. Top four ethnic/racial groups of significant others:**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Caucasian	69%	67%	70%
Asian/Pacific Islander	6%	8%	5%
African-American	4%	0%	6%
Latino/Hispanic	2%	3%	3%
Other	3%	3%	3%

**9. Religious affiliations of significant others:**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Catholic	51%	55%	44%
Protestant	25%	21%	32%
Jewish	3%	4%	2%
Muslim	1%	1%	0%
Other	3%	5%	2%
None	11%	10%	12%

**10. Marital status of significant others:**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Married	67%	64%	69%
Single	19%	28%	16%
Divorced	6%	6%	6%

The remaining 7% were: cohabiting (4%), separated (1%) or widowed (2%).

**11. Significant others report of children living with significant other and signs of child distress:**

- Thirty-nine percent (39%) reported children under the age of 18 living at home with the significant other.

<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
39%	31%	42%

- Eight percent (8%) stated that children under 18 in the household were showing signs of stress or distress due to the gambling.
- Almost fifty percent (49%) reported that the children under 18 were not receiving outside assistance for this stress/distress caused by the gambling.



**12. Educational level of significant others:**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Less than high school	6%	3%	8%
High school	38%	39%	37%
Some college	18%	26%	16%
Associates degree	5%	8%	4%
Bachelor's degree	10%	3%	13%
Master's Degree or Higher	3%	3%	3%

**13. Occupations of significant others:**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Clerical	10%	10%	10%
Skilled-Manual	26%	26%	26%
Semi-skilled	13%	12%	15%
Unskilled	11%	12%	10%
Administrator	9%	10%	9%
Business Manager	6%	5%	9%
Retired	5%	5%	4%
High Executive	1%	1%	2%
Student	2%	3%	0%
Unemployed	13%	12%	16%

**14. Supplemental income sources**

<u>Earning type</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Social Security	12%	13%	12%
Workers Compensation	1%	0%	1%
TANF(Welfare)	2%	0%	1%

**15. Income of significant others:**

<u>Earnings</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
less than \$25,000:	40%	43%	39%
\$25,000 - \$34,999:	15%	4%	19%
\$35,000 - \$44,999:	12%	8%	14%
\$45,000 - \$59,999:	17%	29%	12%
\$60,000 - \$89,999:	14%	13%	14%
\$90,000 and more:	2%	4%	2%

- Two out of every five (40%) significant others earned less than \$25,000 a year and more than one out of two (55%) earned less than \$35,000.
- A higher percent of females than males earned less than \$45,000 (41% vs. 34%) and a higher percent of males than females earned \$45,000 or more (26% vs. 16%).

**16. The following problems of significant others are reported to have resulted from the gambling:**

<u>Emotional:</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Anxious/worried	77%	69%	79%
Depression	53%	46%	56%
Thoughts of suicide	4%	0%	5%
Suicide attempts	0%	0%	0%

<u>Interpersonal:</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Family or spouse conflict	61%	54%	64%
Family neglect	37%	28%	40%
Family violence	8%	3%	10%

<u>Financial:</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Used savings	60%	56%	62%
Problems paying bills	55%	54%	55%
Borrowed money	37%	26%	41%
Bankruptcy (previous or pending)	11%	3%	15%
Eviction	2%	0%	3%

<u>Substance Abuse/ Problem Gambling:</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Alcohol and other drug abuse	2%	0%	3%
Problem gambling	4%	5%	4%

**17. The following were reported by the significant other at the time of the initial Helpline call:**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Caller in danger of being harmed by gambler	1%	0%	1%
Caller in danger of being harmed by someone to whom a debt is owed	1%	0%	1%
Caller in danger of being harmed by self	0%	0%	0%
Gambler in danger of being harmed by self	1%	1%	1%
Gambler in danger of being harmed by someone to whom a debt is owed	1%	1%	1%
Gambler in danger of being harmed by caller	0%	0%	0%
Danger of gambler harming someone to whom a debt is owed	1%	0%	1%

**18. Significant others that have ever received help for the effects of the gambling problem:**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Ever attended a 12-step program	3%	5%	2%
Ever received professional gambling treatment	3%	0%	4%

**19. The top four sources where the Helpline number was found:**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Telephone book	37%	28%	40%
Lottery point of purchase	13%	13%	13%
Internet	12%	18%	10%
Other	11%	10%	12%

- A higher percentage of female than male callers found the Helpline number in telephone books (40% vs. 28%) while more male callers found the Helpline number via the internet (18% vs. 10%).

**20. The top four resources suggested to significant others:**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
State Sponsored Treatment Programs	91%	82%	94%
Gam-Anon	79%	69%	82%
Call Helpline again	77%	74%	78%
Gamblers Anonymous for Gambler	70%	69%	71%

- Of the 914% referred to the State Sponsored Treatment Programs, seventy-nine (79%) percent of callers agreed to a follow-up call from program.
- A higher percentage of female than male significant others were referred to the above forms of help.

## 2004 Helpline Report Conclusions and Recommendations

### 1. Previously Unserved

#### Conclusion:

The Helpline is successful in reaching unserved problem gamblers and their families. Most identified problem gamblers had not previously received help for a gambling problem: 84% of problem gamblers had not attended Gamblers Anonymous, and 93% had not received professional treatment for a gambling problem. 97% of significant others had never attended Gam-Anon, and 97% had never received professional treatment for a gambling problem.

#### Recommendation:

Continue efforts to publicize the Helpline number in the media and provide problem gambling information to various segments of the community in order to reach unserved problem gamblers, their families, and those at risk for developing gambling problems.

### 2. Low-Income

#### Conclusion:

People with low income are at special risk for gambling problems. One quarter (26%) of the problem gamblers earned less than \$25,000, and 41% earned less than \$35,000 a year.

#### Recommendation:

Since families with low-income are most seriously economically impacted when a family member has a gambling problem, substantial resources are needed to reach low-income families and the organizations that serve them.

### 3. Gender

#### Conclusion:

Since 38% of the identified problem gamblers are female and the negative consequences for female problem gamblers are as serious for females as males, female problem gamblers should be equally targeted as males. Additionally, 71% of significant others were female.

#### Recommendation:

Educational efforts directed towards females should focus on the communication media that target females and the human service providers that primarily serve females, especially those of low-income. Gender-specific messages should be created to reach both female gamblers and women impacted by the gambling problem.

#### **4. Under Age 20**

##### **Conclusion:**

- a) There was an under-representation of problem gamblers under the age of 20 (3%) compared to the percentage of this group in the general population. National and local research shows that youth problem gambling rates are 2-3 times higher than adult rates.
- b) Youth under 20 also represented 3% of the significant others who called the Helpline out of concern for a family member or friend.

##### **Recommendation:**

- a) Since youth are vulnerable to developing a gambling problem and are not known to reach out for help, target schools and agencies that serve young adults and younger age groups with information on gambling and problem gambling and how to access help.
- b) Youth who have families in which problem gambling occurs are emotionally, behaviorally and socially adversely affected and are at higher risk for developing gambling and other problems if they engage in the behavior themselves. Prevention education, awareness messages, and treatment should address the issues and special needs of children who are negatively impacted by the gambling problem of a parent, other family member or close friend.

#### **5. Gambling Type**

##### **Conclusion:**

The areas of gambling in which problem gamblers were reported to have the most difficulty were slot machines, lottery games and blackjack. There are gender differences in the type of gambling that male and female gamblers engage in and where they develop problems.

##### **Recommendation:**

Continue to target casino and lottery gamblers at the gambling sites and through the media. Prevention and education messages should be framed in a gender appropriate manner.

#### **6. Financial Consequences**

##### **Conclusion:**

Serious negative financial consequences (e.g. gambling related difficulty paying bills and debts) resulted from major gambling losses (i.e., the average gambling loss in the last 12 months was over \$20,772).

##### **Recommendation:**

Provide problem gambling information to financial lending institutions, company credit unions, financial consultants/counselors and accountants.

## **7. Co-occurring Disorders**

### **Conclusion:**

High rates of emotional distress and other addictions were found for gamblers and the significant others of gamblers.

### **Recommendation:**

- a) Public awareness information should emphasize the relationship between problem gambling and other disorders, especially addictions, and should also address the impact of these disorders upon gamblers and their families, friends, and the workplace.
- b) Agencies which provide services for addictive and other disorders should be alerted that problem gambling may co-exist with the disorder being treated. If the gambling problem is not identified and treated, it is likely that the out of control gambling problem will prevent a positive outcome for the disorder being treated (e.g., alcohol dependence).

## **8. Family of Origin Addictions/Abuse**

### **Conclusion:**

High rates of alcohol and gambling problems and abusive behavior were reported to have been present in the homes in which problem gamblers grew up.

### **Recommendation:**

- a) Provide public awareness information with family themes; provide more information to family counseling, medical family practice and other agencies serving families.
- b) School curricula that address substance abuse and verbal and physical abuse should include gambling and problem gambling education components.

## **9. Workplace Consequences**

### **Conclusion:**

Problem gambling has a negative impact on the workplace. Sixty-seven percent (67%) of the problem gamblers were employed in various levels of the workforce, 27% were reported to be addicted to work and 3% owed gambling related debt to co-workers.

### **Recommendation:**

Target workplace settings and Employee Assistance Programs to provide problem gambling information and prevention programs.

## Public Policy Implications

### **1. The legislature and the Governor should reverse the irresponsible repeated postponement of an evaluation of the effects of legalized gambling on the citizens of Connecticut.**

The last state sponsored study was conducted in 1996 and two more studies were to have been completed by 2006. Instead, under current legislation, there will be no study until 2009. In view of the enormous increase of both legal (i.e., casino expansion) and illegal gambling (i.e., Internet gambling) since 1996, a current assessment of the extent of problem gambling in Connecticut is urgently needed for both adults and youth. The state of Connecticut has never conducted a study of youth problem gambling.

Repeated postponement of the state study of the effects of legalized gambling is clearly not a fiscal issue as the state's share of gambling revenue increases annually. In July, 2005, the casinos alone contributed \$40 million plus to the general fund. In fact, the state has not spent one penny on problem gambling of the **\$3.4 billion** casino revenue it has received since casino gambling began in 1992. From the inception of state funded problem gambling treatment in 1982 until the present, the state has only allocated about \$14 million to address problem gambling despite the fact that during this same period **\$9.3 billion** has been transferred to the general fund from all sources of legalized gambling.

### **2. The state of Connecticut should increase funding for problem gambling prevention, treatment and research.**

#### **a) Helpline problem gamblers report huge gambling losses and debt.**

In the absence of a state-sponsored study, the best source of information about the negative impact of problem gambling in Connecticut is the CCPG's annual Helpline Report. This is the most comprehensive report of helpline data in the nation. The current report details an enormous negative impact on individuals, families and the community. The amount of money lost to gambling by these callers is over \$74 million over their lifetimes and, of this amount, over \$8 million was lost in the last year of gambling and there was almost \$8 million gambling related debt. Since the actual number of problem gamblers across the state of Connecticut is many times that of the 404 Connecticut problem gamblers who called the Helpline in 2004, the actual losses and debt statewide from problem gambling is a staggering amount. If there were only 20,000 addicted gamblers in Connecticut in 2004, their gambling losses would have been \$400,000,000 and their gambling debt \$400,000,000.

**b) The losses of problem gamblers account for a disproportionate amount of gambling revenue.**

Studies in the United States and Canada have shown that between 15% and 30% of gambling revenue is derived from the losses of problem gamblers. Given that the state of Connecticut's foremost mandate is the welfare of its citizens, it is unacceptable for the state to continue to take a high percentage of gambling revenue from the victims of problem gambling while spending only a minimum of gambling revenue on problem and underage gambling.



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

In 1994, the CCPG established Connecticut's first and only 24-hour Problem Gambling Helpline. The Helpline serves problem gamblers and their concerned significant others in Connecticut as well as Massachusetts and Rhode Island. An annual Helpline Report has been issued each year since 1994.

### **Many thanks to CCPG's dedicated frontline Helpline staff who respond to callers in need:**

Norm B.  
Donna Z.  
John R.  
Ron F.

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For more information about the Helpline and to learn more about problem and pathological gambling, or to become involved with CCPG's activities, please visit our website at: [www.ccp.org](http://www.ccp.org), or contact our offices at (203) 453-0138.

## **HELPLINE AD CAMPAIGNS**

*Telephone books~Newspapers~  
Radio~Television~ Public Service Announcements*

### ***Broke and Gambling?***

*Help is available for gamblers and their families*

*Call the Problem Gambling Helpline:*



**1-800- 346- 6238 or 1-800-34-NO BET**

*24 hours, toll free, confidential*

CONNECTICUT COUNCIL on  
**PROBLEM**  
GAMBLING

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*Llame la linea de ayuda para el Juego Compulsivo ahora*



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Free • Confidential • 24 Hrs

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If You Think You're Too Young  
to Have a Gambling Problem...

**Don't Bet on It**

Call  
**THE HELPLINE**  
**1-800-34 NO BET**  
Free • Confidential • 24 Hrs

 CONNECTICUT COUNCIL ON PROBLEM GAMBLING

**HELPLINE AD CAMPAIGNS**

*Movie Theaters~ CT Department of Motor Vehicles*

**Problem Gambling Can Affect Anyone**  
Call **THE HELPLINE 1-800-34NOBET**

Free • Confidential • 24 Hrs

**CONNECTICUT COUNCIL ON PROBLEM GAMBLING**

The advertisement features a black background with white and yellow text. At the top, it reads "Problem Gambling Can Affect Anyone" in white, followed by "Call THE HELPLINE 1-800-34NOBET" in yellow. Below the text is a row of four photographs of diverse individuals (two women and two men) looking thoughtful or concerned. At the bottom left is the CCPCG logo, and at the bottom right is the text "Free • Confidential • 24 Hrs" and "CONNECTICUT COUNCIL ON PROBLEM GAMBLING" in white.



***CCPG***  
***PROGRAMS AND SERVICES***

- **PROBLEM GAMBLING HELPLINE:** confidential, toll-free Helpline available 24 hours per day for problem gamblers and their families in Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island. **800-346-6238**
- **PUBLIC AWARENESS AND PREVENTION EDUCATION:** information provided to all media outlets; lectures and seminars available for a variety of community groups.
- **INFORMATION CLEARINGHOUSE:** education and research materials for family members, at-risk groups and professionals.
- **PROFESSIONAL TRAINING:** training for human service providers on prevention, intervention, and treatment of compulsive gambling.
- **LEGISLATIVE AND PUBLIC POLICY ADVOCACY:** coordination and liaison with state officials, professional associations, and educational institutions to develop policies and expand funding.
- **RESEARCH:** research studies conducted on critical issues and with high-risk populations, e.g., adolescents, senior citizens, women and substance abusers.
- **CORPORATE SERVICES:** educational and programmatic services for the public and private gambling industry and for a variety of for-profit and not-for-profit corporations.