



Catalyst CT

The Hub

*Region 1 Gambling Awareness Team*

*5 Minute Survey*

# PROBLEM GAMBLING



[Take the Survey Here](#)

## WHAT DOES PROBLEM GAMBLING LOOK LIKE?

Problem gambling can affect teens, young adults, and people of all ages. The **Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Problem Gambling Services (PGS)** needs your help understanding the community's awareness of problem gambling and the available resources. This quick, 5-minute survey is completely anonymous.

# A COMMUNITY CONVERSATION ON GAMBLING

PRESENTED BY  
Dena Miccinello  
Program Manager



Catalyst CT  
The Hub



# WELCOME

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Your Presenter:

Dena Miccinello

Housekeeping:

Please introduce yourself

Group Agreement  
To work cooperatively and respectfully together, throughout this training process

# LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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**BY THE END OF THIS WORKSHOP, WE WILL HAVE:**

- Defined and identified the legal types of gambling in CT.
- Discussed the impact of gambling and identified warning signs and risk factors.
- Learned more about resources to address problem gambling.



# BEFORE WE BEGIN

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This presentation will cover sensitive topics, like suicide, addiction, and other mental health conditions.

If you feel overwhelmed or that you need to step out at any time, you can do so without penalty.

If some things come up for you that you want to speak privately about, meet me after and we can talk!

When?

**AT WHAT AGE DID YOU FIRST  
EXPERIENCE GAMBLING?**

# WHAT IS ADDICTION?

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**Addiction is a complex condition.** It is a brain disease that is manifested by substance misuse despite harmful consequences.



# WHY ARE SOME PEOPLE MORE VULNERABLE TO ADDICTION?

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- **Genetics** account for approximately **half** of an individual's vulnerability
- Social **environment** , including culture, neighborhood, school, family, and peer groups
- Life stages and brain **development** - childhood, adolescence, young adulthood "periods of transition" & brain maturation
- **There is no single path to addiction**



# WHAT IS GAMBLING?

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Risking something of value on an activity that has an uncertain outcome.

# WHAT IS...

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## RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING?

A term that describes the ways in which games of chance are both offered and participated in a socially responsible way that lowers the risk of gambling harms.

## PROBLEM GAMBLING?

A pattern of gambling engagement that is so extreme, it causes an individual to have substantial problems in various aspects of their lives.

## GAMBLING DISORDER?

A clinical term relating to a score assessed by a professional using a recognized set of criteria from the DSM-V.

# LEGALIZED GAMBLING IN CT

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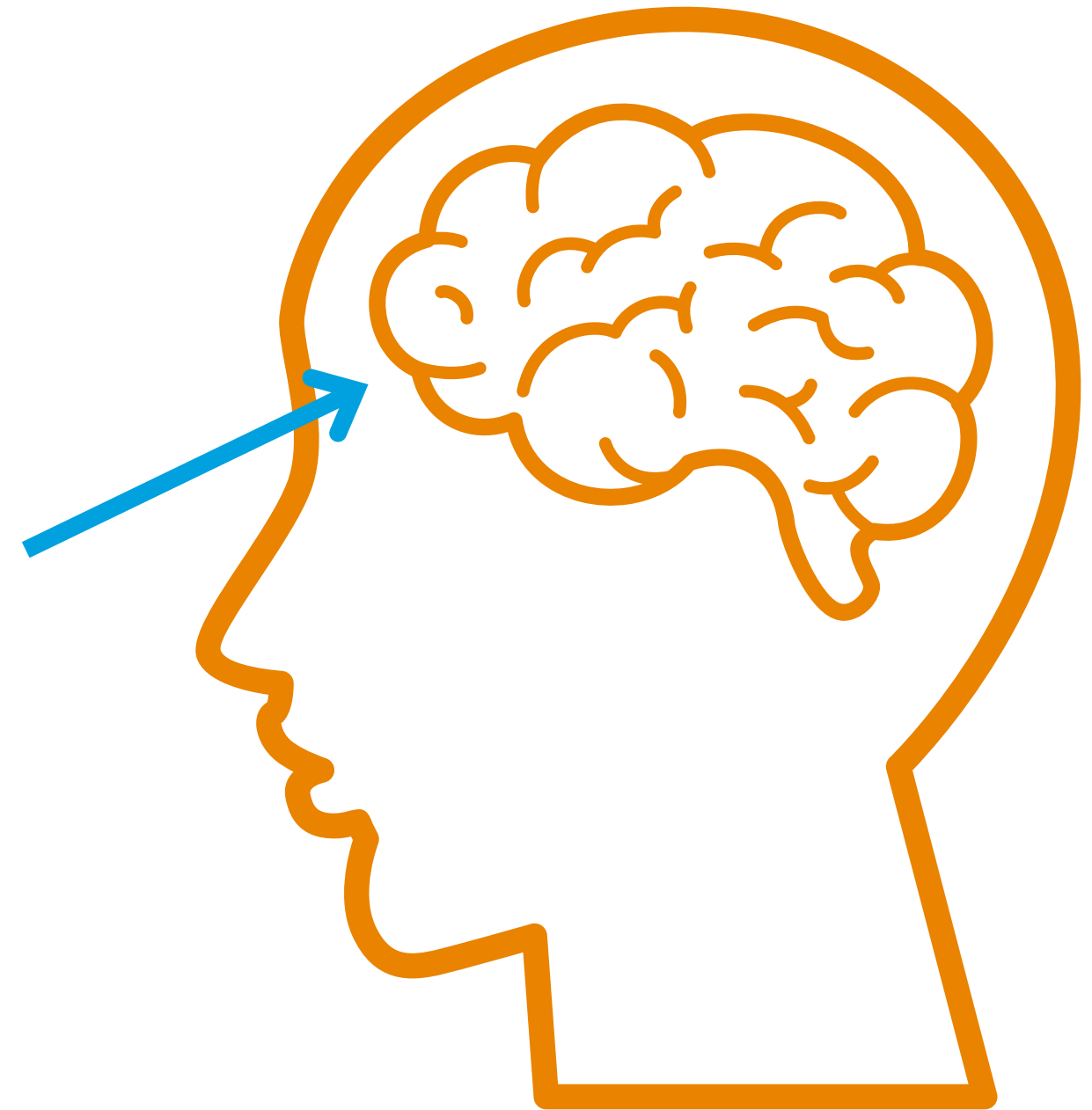
| TYPE OF GAMBLING                        | AGE                                    |
|---|--|
| Lottery (scratch tickets, Keno, etc.)   | 18+                                    |
| Casino                                  | 21+, Except for Bingo                  |
| Off Track Betting (OTB)                 | 18+                                    |
| Sports Betting/Fantasy Sports           | apps are 18+                           |
| Charitable Games (Raffles, Bingo, etc.) | any age, depending on venue            |
| Online Gambling                         | Sites are 21+, eSports open to any age |
| Stock Market & Cryptocurrency           | 18+                                    |
| Skins and Loot Boxes                    | Any Age                                |

# WHY IS AGE IMPORTANT?

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The Prefrontal Cortex develops rapidly during adolescence.

Introducing substances or low effort/high reward activities (e.g., gambling or video gaming) during this period can change the way your brain reacts to certain stimuli/situations.



# IMPACT

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On average, **1** individual working through a gambling addiction impacts an additional **7 to 20 people** in their families and communities.



# KNOW THE ODDS

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|  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| Odds of finding a four-leaf clover       | 1 in 10,000             |
| Odds of being hit by lightning this year | 1 in 400,000            |
| Odds of being attacked by a shark        | 1 in 3,750,000          |
| Odds of winning Powerball                | <b>1 in 292,000,000</b> |

# SPORTS BETTING

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## MONEYLINE

*Betting on who will win.*

## SPREADS

*Betting on who will win the game by a specific number of points.*

## TOTAL (OVER/UNDER)

*Betting on whether the score will be over or under the set number.*

## PROP BETS

*Betting on anything within the game.*

## PARLAYS

*Betting on a string of picks - riskiest and lowest likelihood of winning across all bets.*



# STOCK MARKET

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INVESTING IN THE STOCK MARKET IS NOT ALWAYS GAMBLING, HOWEVER:

**Day Trading** is riskier - not a way to "get rich quick."

**Investing** in the market without experience and knowledge is considered gambling.

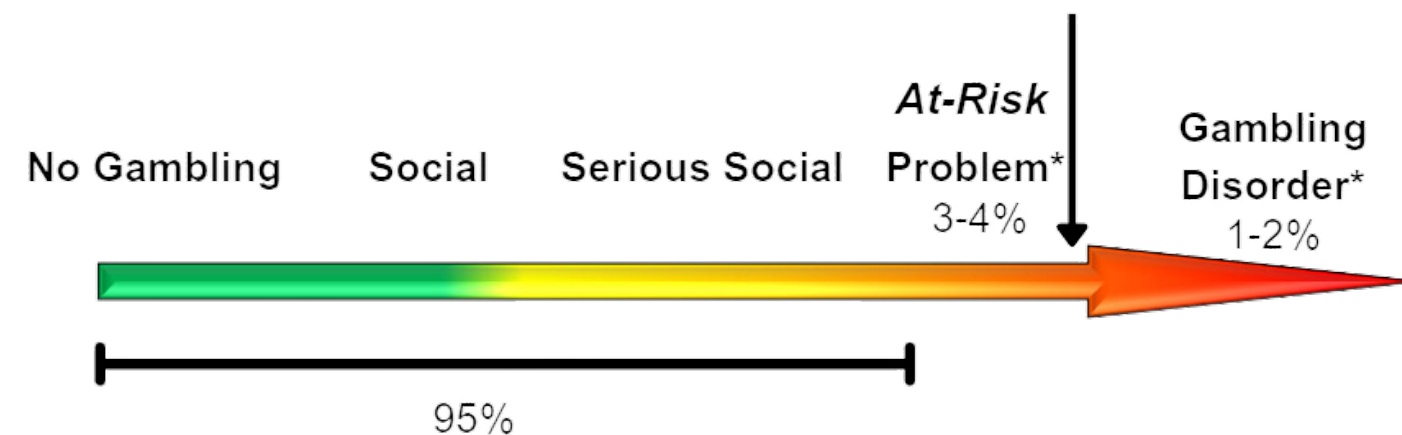




# PREVALENCE IN CONNECTICUT

- **1.8% of the population** of CT meet the criteria for a gambling disorder.
- That is approximately **53,863 individuals**. Enough to fill Yankee Stadium **1x** with a few people left standing or Fenway Park **1.5x**.
- Youth face **2x** the risk, and athletes face **4x** the risk of developing a gambling disorder.

## The Gambling Continuum



# IMPACTS

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- On average, 1 individual working through a gambling addiction impacts an additional 7 to 20 people in their families and communities.



# WARNING SIGNS

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- Spending more time & money
- Making social occasions to gamble
- Increasing intensity of interest
- Withdrawal from family and friends
- Boasting about winning and evasive about losing
- Frequent absences from school, work & home
- “Chasing” losses with more gambling
- Decreasing desire to engage in other activities & interests
- Diversion of funds earmarked for other purposes
- Gambling to escape problems
- Exaggerated display of money & possessions

# BRAIN CONNECTIONS



# YOUR BRAIN ON DRUGS VS YOUR BRAIN ON GAMBLING

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## BRAIN ON DRUGS

- Affects mid-brain
- Activates reward system
- Releases dopamine
- Tolerance builds; Withdrawal
- Hijacked reward system
- Weakened pre-frontal cortex
- **Needs larger/stronger doses**
- Loss of control
- Preoccupied with activity
- Personal life/relationships suffer
- Pursues rewarding experiences despite negative consequences repeatedly

## BRAIN ON GAMBLING

- Affects mid-brain
- Activates reward system
- Releases dopamine
- Tolerance builds; Withdrawal
- Hijacked reward system
- Pre-frontal cortex weakens
- **Increase bets**
- Loss of control
- Preoccupied with activity
- Personal life/relationships suffer
- Pursues rewarding experiences despite negative consequences repeatedly

# WHY IS GAMBLING DISORDER KNOWN AS THE “HIDDEN ADDICTION”?

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Can be difficult to diagnose

No biological test

Appears to be a money problem

Not self-limiting

The problem can also be the solution

Intermittent reward schedules

Lack of awareness

Greater stigma - increase shame & guilt

# TEENS WHO GAMBLE ARE MORE LIKELY TO...

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- Have depression and anxiety issues
- Attempt suicide
- Have low self-esteem
- Struggle with behavioral issues
- Have negative relationships
- Drink & use illegal drugs
- Get lower grades
- Get into fights
- Smoke cigarettes



# THE INTERSECTION OF GAMING through technology

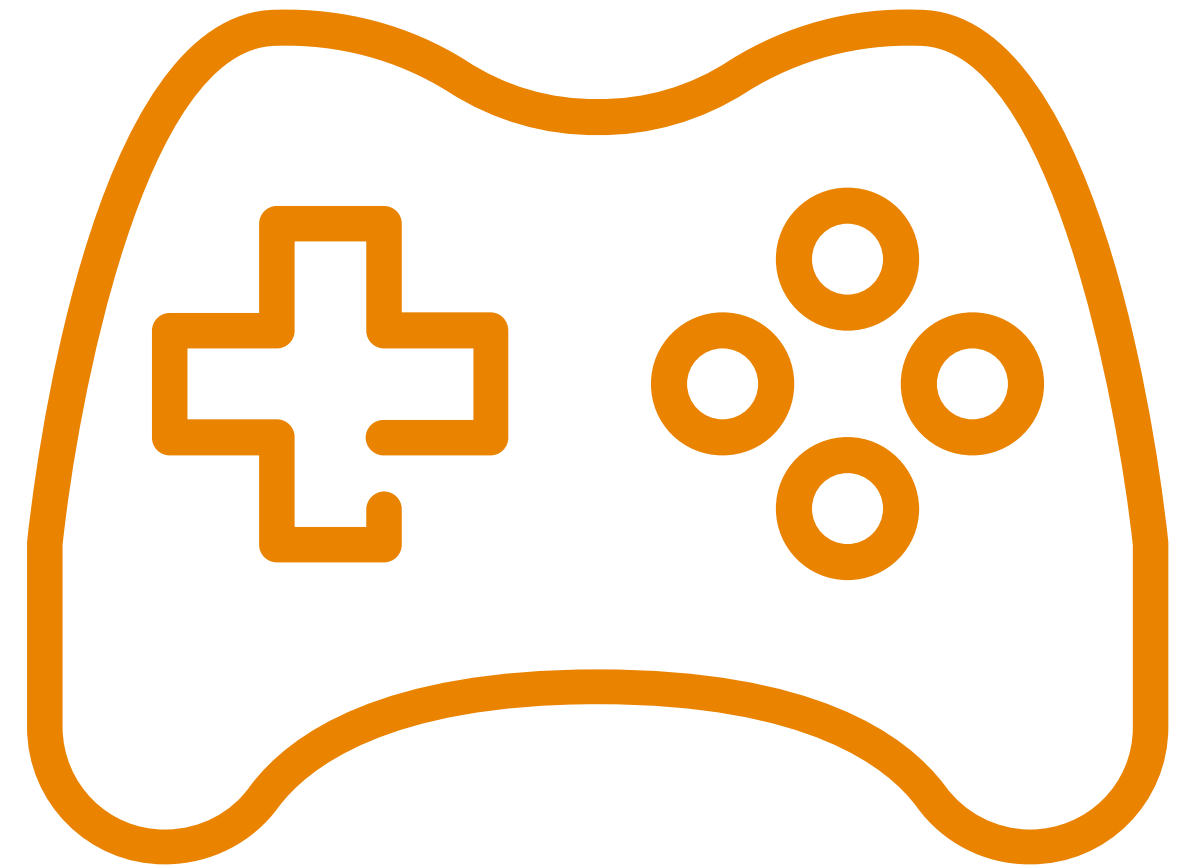
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## EGAMING (ELECTRONIC GAMES)

A generic term for any amusement or recreation using a stand-alone video game, desktop computer, or the Internet with one or more players.

## ESPORTS

Also known as electronic sports, esports, eSports, or competitive/professional [video] gaming is a form of competition using video games.





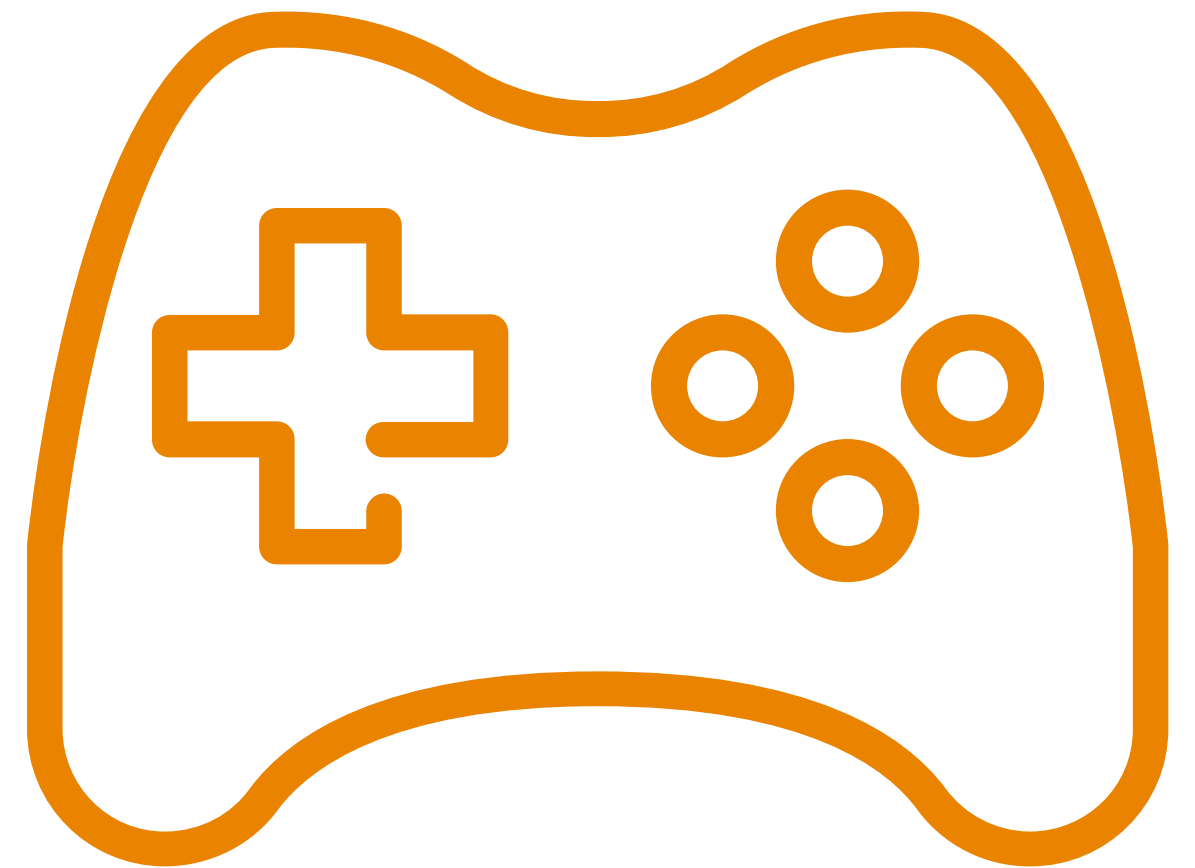
# VIDEO GAMES AND GAMBLING

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One study, which surveyed over 16,000 people, found that **those who said they play video games weekly were 4.3 times more likely to say they bet** than those who play less.

Problem Gambling has been found to have a statistically significant association with loot box spending.

In addition to loot boxes, betting on Esports and token wagering are other forms of video game-related gambling.



# GAMBLING: A LEADING RISK FACTOR FOR SUICIDE

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- Problem gambling has the highest suicide rate of any addictive disorder.
- Problem gambling and suicide have very similar risk factors and warning signs.
- It is important to screen for both suicide and problem gambling.

IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW IS IN CRISIS OR EXPERIENCING GAMBLING

**CAL 988** FOR THE SUICIDE AND CRISIS OR FELINE

**1-888-789-7777** CCPG GAMBLING HELPLINE

# SUICIDE AND INDIVIDUALS WITH GAMBLING DISORDERS

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- 31% of suicide ideations
  - Associated with having:
    - Any financial debt
    - Chronic physical illnesses
    - Experiencing depression
    - Mood disorders
    - Alcohol use disorder
- 16% of suicide attempts
  - Associated with being:
    - Older and having a history of sexual abuse
    - Experiencing depression
    - Mood disorders
    - Alcohol use disorders

# IMPACTS OF PROBLEM GAMBLING ON MENTAL HEALTH

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Of those with a gambling disorder

50% have experienced a mood disorder

41% report an anxiety disorder

60.8% report a personality disorder

# PROBLEM GAMBLING & CO-OCCURRING USE DISORDERS

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Of those with a gambling disorder:

73% report a co-occurring alcohol use disorder

38% report another substance use disorder

Substance use is 10x higher in those who gamble

60% report nicotine dependence



**988**  
SUICIDES & CRISIS  
LIFELINE

*There is hope*



*Talk with us.* If you or someone you know needs support now, call or text 988 or chat 988lifeline.org





SEP22-08-03-004

Be a Lifeline



**Do you know someone in crisis?**  
You can be a lifeline and help support them!

**Here are five steps you can take that are known to help:**

- 1. ASK:**  
Are you thinking about suicide? How do you hurt? How can I help?
- 2. BE THERE:**  
In person or on the phone. Show support. Listen. Keep promises to connect.
- 3. HELP KEEP THEM SAFE:**  
If the person in crisis is suicidal, details matter: Do they have a plan, or ideas about timing or method? You can call 988 to support their crisis care.
- 4. HELP THEM CONNECT:**  
When someone is in crisis, connecting them with ongoing supports can help establish a safety net. Remind them they can call, text or chat 988 to connect with a trained crisis counselor 24/7.
- 5. FOLLOW UP:**  
After the immediate crisis is over, check in. That text or call afterwards makes a real difference.



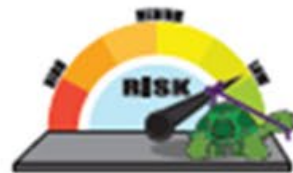


# RISK RANKING ACTIVITY

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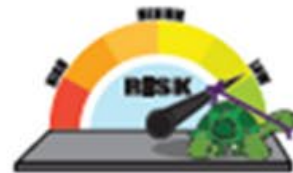
CAN YOU RANK THE RISKS?

Living  
40 Miles  
From A  
Casino



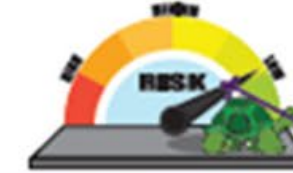
CAN YOU RANK THE RISKS?

Downloading  
Sports  
Betting Apps  
On Your  
Mobile  
Devices



CAN YOU RANK THE RISKS?

A 10yr Old  
Winning \$50  
On The First  
Scratch  
Ticket  
Ever Given  
To Them



# RISK RANKING ACTIVITY

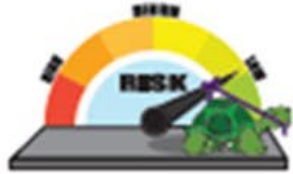
CAN YOU RANK THE RISKS?

High School Football Player Who Participates In 2 Fantasy Football Leagues

A semi-circular risk scale with a needle pointing to the 'LOW' end. The scale is divided into four colored segments: red (LOW), yellow, orange, and green (HIGH). The needle is positioned in the red segment.

CAN YOU RANK THE RISKS?

Buying A Lottery Ticket Every Time You Pump Gas

A semi-circular risk scale with a needle pointing to the 'LOW' end. The scale is divided into four colored segments: red (LOW), yellow, orange, and green (HIGH). The needle is positioned in the red segment.

CAN YOU RANK THE RISKS?

Placing Multiple Live (In-play) Bets During A Sporting Event

A semi-circular risk scale with a needle pointing to the 'LOW' end. The scale is divided into four colored segments: red (LOW), yellow, orange, and green (HIGH). The needle is positioned in the red segment.



# WHO IS AT RISK FOR DEVELOPING A GAMBLING PROBLEM?

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## PEOPLE WHO...

- have an early big win.
- have early access to their preferred form of gambling
- hold mistaken beliefs about the odds of winning.
- do not take steps to monitor gambling wins and losses.
- have had a recent loss or change, such as a divorce, job loss, retirement, or death of a loved one.
- often feel bored or lonely, or have a history of risk-taking or impulsive behavior.
- have financial problems.
- have few interests or hobbies or feel their lives lack direction.
- have a history of mental health problems, particularly depression and anxiety.
- have been abused or traumatized.
- have a parent who also has (or has had) problems with gambling.
- have (or have had) problems with alcohol or other drugs, gambling, or overspending.
- tie their self-esteem to gambling wins or losses.

**THE MORE FACTORS THAT APPLY, THE MORE LIKELY A PERSON IS TO DEVELOP A G**

# WHAT ARE SOME HEALTHY WAYS TO COPE?

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- Disconnecting from phone, tv, and computer screens
- Deep breaths, stretch, or meditate
- Eat healthy, well-balanced meals
- Exercise (Physical activity can make you feel better, function better, and sleep better)
- Avoid excessive alcohol, tobacco, and substance use
- Continue with routine health screenings and appointments
- Make time for activities you enjoy
- Talk to people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling
- Connect with your community or faith-based organizations
- Recognize when you need more help
- If problems continue or you are thinking about suicide, talk to a psychologist, social worker, or professional counselor

# MYTHS AND FACTS

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## MYTH

If people gamble long enough, they will learn the game and come out on top.

## EXPLANATION

Everyone loses over time. Casinos and other gambling venues are built on people losing.

## FACT

People can become addicted to gambling even if they don't gamble every day.

## EXPLANATION

A person can build resistance to risky behavior, feel withdrawal, and lose control.

# THE CT COUNCIL ON PROBLEM GAMBLING

The [Connecticut Council on Problem Gambling \(CCPG\)](#) does not advocate for or against gambling but is committed to working with all stakeholders to help individuals and families impacted by gambling related harms.

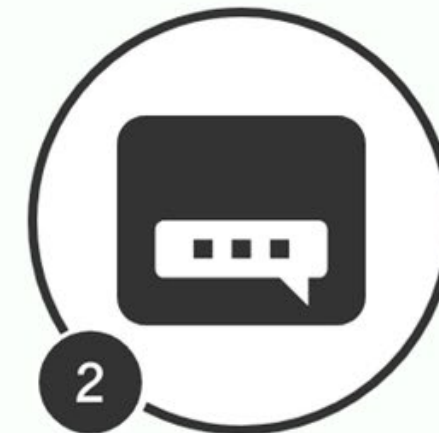
CCPG provides Connecticut's only 24-hour Problem Gambling Helpline, offering phone, chat, and text support. CCPG also implements advocacy, prevention, outreach, and education programs serving students, veterans, and other at-risk populations.

## Struggling with Problem Gambling? Help Is Available.



Call **1.888.789.7777**

If you or someone you care about has a gambling problem and you are seeking resources and help, call our free, confidential helpline 24-hours a day, 7 days a week at **1-888-789-7777**



Text **CTGAMB** to 53342

Don't want to call us? Text CTGAMB to 53342. Professional counselors respond directly to text messages 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, including holidays and weekends



Live Chat - [ccpg.org/chat](https://ccpg.org/chat)

Our Live Chat is an alternative for those who are more comfortable chatting online. Live Chat provides support and referrals for the problem gambler and others impacted (family, friends, co-workers, employers)

# RESOURCES

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CT COMMUNITY FOR ADDICTION RECOVERY (CCAR)

<https://ccar.us/>

GAMBLER'S ANONYMOUS

<https://gam-anon.org>

CONNECTICUT COUNCIL ON PROBLEM GAMBLER'S ANONYMOUS

<https://ccpg.org>

<https://ctwmaga.org>

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON PROBLEM GAMBLING & GAMBLING

<https://www.ncpgambling.org>

<https://ctgamblingandgaming.org/>

DMHAS PROBLEM GAMBLING SERVICES (RESP) RESPONSIBLE PLAY THE CT WAY

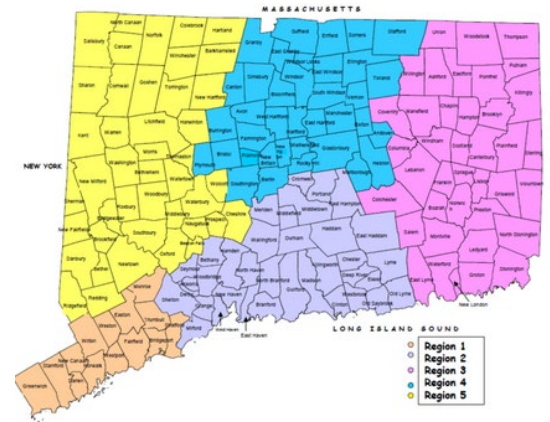
[www.ct.gov/dmhas/pgs](http://www.ct.gov/dmhas/pgs)

[www.responsibleplayct.org](http://www.responsibleplayct.org)

*Book the van!!*



# BETTOR CHOICE TREATMENT PROGRAMS



CONNECTICUT RENAISSANCE  
4 Byington Place, Norwalk, CT 06852  
203-866-2541, ext. 3005 (All referrals)

*Services are also available in Bridgeport, CT*

Gambling-specific treatment programs funded by the State of Connecticut

- Services are offered at more than **16 locations** in Connecticut through community agencies
- Programs provide a variety of outpatient services for both problem gamblers and those affected, including Individual, Group, and Peer Recovery Support; Medication Budget/financial counseling
- Services are provided at little to no cost; more information at [ct.gov/dmhas/pgs](https://ct.gov/dmhas/pgs)

# RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING CAMPAIGN

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**Responsible  
Play** THE CT WAY

**Gambling Problem? Help is available.  
Call 888.789.7777 or visit [ccpg.org](http://ccpg.org)**

## WHAT IS RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING?

Gambling responsibly means taking steps to reduce risks or harms to yourself that can occur when gambling.

There are those that can get themselves into trouble financially, for others their gambling can cause issues with friends and family, or some may drink too much and/or use other substances while they play. It's important to remember that all gambling activities have risks, and to enjoy a safer playing experience, you must be aware of the risks and how you can minimize them. Using strategies when you gamble, like setting a budget before you leave your house, taking breaks, and educating yourself on how the games work, are just a few tips on being the safest and smartest player that you can be.



# RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING TIPS

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## SET A BUDGET AND STICK TO IT

Avoid gambling on credit or borrowing money to gamble.



## MONITER THE TIME PLAYING AND TAKE BREAKS

Set time limits and stick to them.



## GAMBLE FOR ENTERTAINMENT

Balance gambling with other activities and stop if its no longer fun.



## KNOW HOW THE GAMES WORK

Understand the odds of the game.



## IT'S OKAY TO ASK FOR HELP

If gambling is causing problems, help is available.



# WHAT IS responsible Gambling?

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Gambling responsibly means taking steps to reduce risks or harms to yourself that can occur when gambling.

To learn more and to book the van, visit [ResponsiblePlayCT.org](https://ResponsiblePlayCT.org).



# VOLUNTARY SELF EXCLUSION

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## WHAT IS VOLUNTARY SELF EXCLUSION?

Self-exclusion allows a person to request to be excluded from legalized gaming activities in Connecticut. Individuals who enroll in self-exclusion are prohibited from collecting any winnings, recovering any losses, or accepting complimentary gifts or services or any other thing of value from a licensee or operator. Operators may choose to exclude participants in the Connecticut Self-Exclusion list from their services in other states or countries.

## HOW CAN VOLUNTARY SELF EXCLUSION BE HELPFUL?

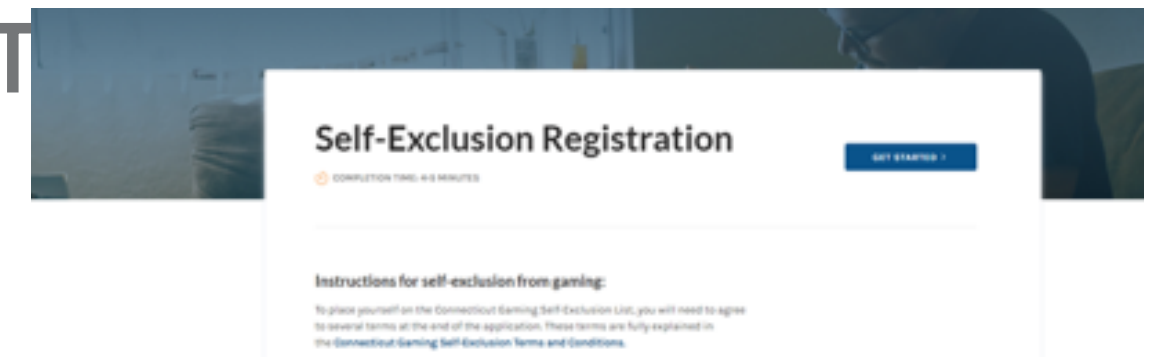
Voluntary self-exclusion can be a beneficial and empowering tool for those who feel they may be developing or have a problem with their gambling. By creating a barrier, it allows those who want to decrease or stop their activity, reduce the harms associated with gambling.

## LINKS TO SELF EXCLUSION REGISTRATION INFORMATION

[https://ccpg.org/get\\_help/voluntary\\_self\\_exclusion/](https://ccpg.org/get_help/voluntary_self_exclusion/)

<https://ct.gov/dmhas/pgs>

[https://gaming\\_exclusion.service.ct.gov/](https://gaming_exclusion.service.ct.gov/)





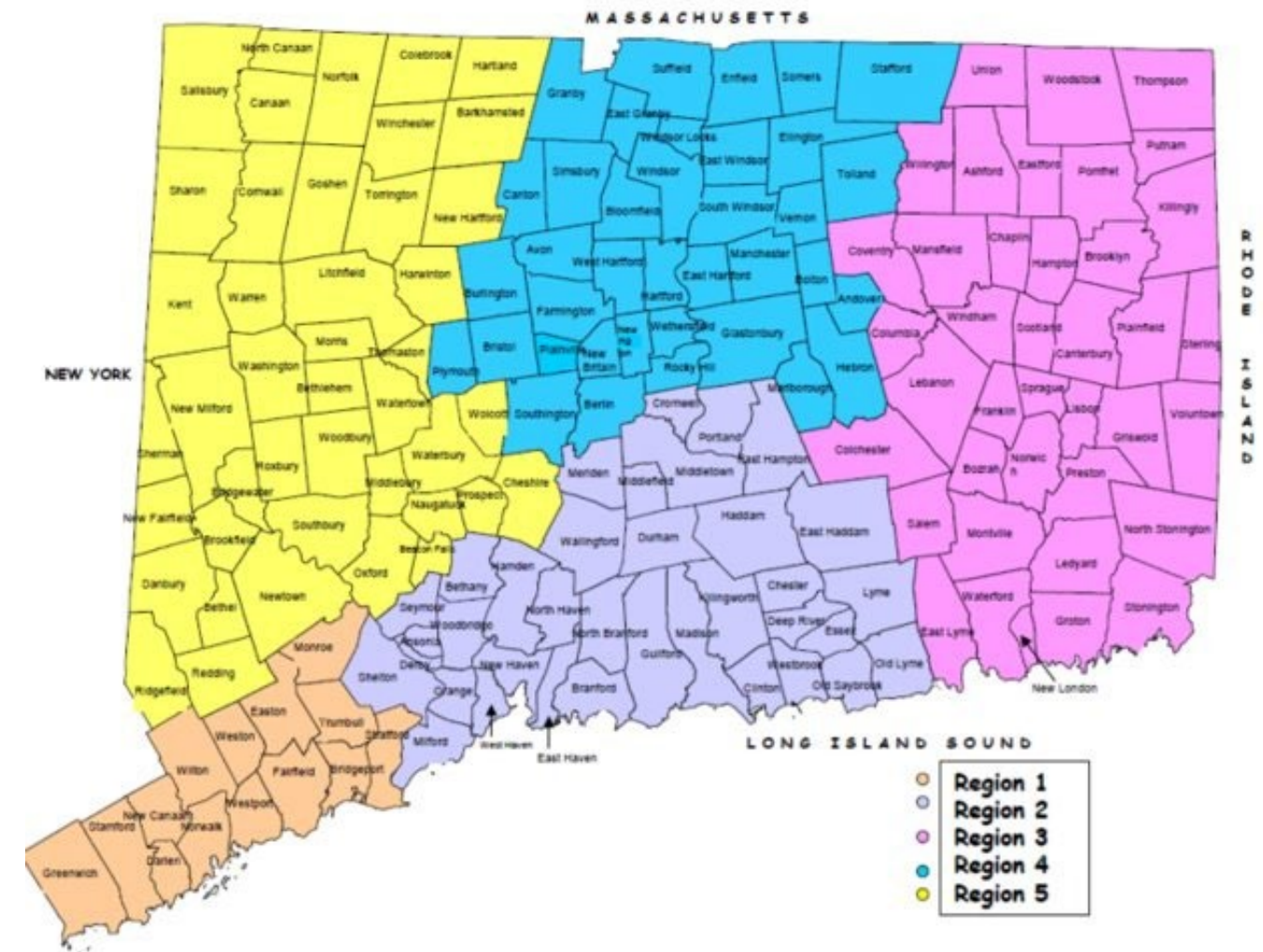
# REGIONAL GAMBLING AWARENESS TEAMS

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Join the team in your region!

[GamblingAwarenessCT.org](http://GamblingAwarenessCT.org)

Email [Dena Miccinello](mailto:dmiccinello@catalystct.org) at [dmiccinello@catalystct.org](mailto:dmiccinello@catalystct.org) for more info and how to join!



# DISCUSSION

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What is something you have learned?

What is something you will share?

What is something you will do differently?

# THANK YOU!

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Please complete the evaluation:

<https://www.research.net/r/GamblingCommConvo>

Dena Miccinello, Program Manager  
Catalyst CT - The Hub

[dmiccinello@catalystct.org](mailto:dmiccinello@catalystct.org)

203-989-5462



# THANK YOU!

*What are your questions?  
What are your comments?*

Have an amazing and safe year!

**If I can be of support in any way, please reach out!**

Dena Miccinello

[dmiccinello@catalystpc.org](mailto:dmiccinello@catalystpc.org) 206.989.5462

