

# PREVENTION SERVICES NEWSLETTER

March 2025

## MARCH IS PROBLEM GAMBLING AWARENESS MONTH

Colonial Behavioral Health, in partnership with the National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG), is proud to recognize **Problem Gambling Awareness Month**. This year's theme, "Seeking Understanding," focuses on increasing awareness of the problem of gambling as a serious but often misunderstood mental health condition.

### WHAT IS PROBLEM GAMBLING?

Problem gambling (sometimes referred to as "gambling addiction" or "gambling disorder") is gambling behavior that is damaging to a person or their family, often disrupting their daily life and career.

Anyone who gambles can be at risk for developing a gambling problem. Gambling disorder is a recognized mental health diagnosis (NCPG, 2025).

### WHO IS AT RISK?

- **Anyone can be at risk** for problem gambling.
- **79% of VA** residents have gambled in some capacity.
- Statistics from the NCDHHS 'More Than a Game' initiative show:
  - **60-80%** of young adults gamble.
  - Youths aged 12-17 are at the **highest risk** for gambling and gambling-themed online games.
- Factors like genetics, environment, medical history, and age can **increase the risk** of gambling addiction.
- Children and teens are **more at risk** than adults for developing a gambling problem, especially if they start young.

### LOCAL RESOURCES

**Virginia Problem Gambling Helpline:**

1-888-532-3500

**Virginia Council on Problem Gambling:**

[www.vcpg.net](http://www.vcpg.net)

**Virginia Lottery Play Responsibly:**

[www.valottery.com/  
playresponsibly](http://www.valottery.com/playresponsibly)

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## TIPS FOR GAMBLING RESPONSIBLY

Gambling can be fun if you play responsibly. Here are some tips for keeping it fun.

- Play for entertainment, not investment
- Set a budget and keep it
- Use money you can afford to spend
- Know the odds of your game
- Don't gamble when you are upset
- Maintain balance in your life

## COMMON SIGNS OF PROBLEM GAMBLING

- Increased spending on gambling
- Unsuccessful attempts to stop gambling
- Damaging relationships
- Chasing losses
- Irritability and restlessness
- Lying
- Neglecting personal health or needs
- Arrests for crimes related to gambling
- Frequently asking to borrow money

## NATIONAL RESOURCES

**National Problem  
Gambling Helpline:**

**Call:** 1-800-GAMBLER

**Text:** 800GAM

**Chat:** [1800gamblerchat.org](http://1800gamblerchat.org)

**GamTalk:**

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

**Gam-Anon:**

[www.gam-anon.org](http://www.gam-anon.org)

**Gamblers Anonymous:**

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



**NCPG**  
National Council on Problem Gambling



VIRGINIA COUNCIL on PROBLEM GAMBLING



PROBLEM GAMBLING  
AWARENESS MONTH



**play responsibly**

Virginia Problem Gambling Helpline: 1-888-532-3500



**Colonial**  
Behavioral Health  
Wellness, Support & Recovery Services

For more information contact Prevention Services at [prevention@colonialbh.org](mailto:prevention@colonialbh.org)