



March is National Problem Gambling Month

- **What is Problem Gambling Awareness month?**

Problem Gambling Month is March. This is a time where we raise awareness about the importance of responsible gambling, educate others about the risks of gambling, and direct people to resources that can help with problem gambling.

- **What changes have recently taken place in Ohio regarding gambling?**

On January 1st, 2023, live sports betting became legal in the state of Ohio. Sports betting can be done in places like casinos, at bars, or on a phone or computer. Sportsbooks are regulated by the Ohio Casino Control Commission.

- **How does one know if they or a loved one has a gambling problem?**

There are warning signs to look for to see if someone has a gambling problem, this includes spending more money than intended on gambling, gambling for longer periods of time than intended, and lying to cover up gambling losses. One might also use gambling to escape their personal problems or distressing feelings and may experience serious financial trouble due to their gambling.

- **How is gambling similar or different from substance addiction?**

There are many similarities and differences between gambling addiction and substance addiction. Both addictions create major consequences that not only affect the person with the addiction, but also their family and friends. Gambling addiction is seen as a more behaviorally based and cognitively based disorder than substances. The treatment of these disorders also looks very different, especially considering physical withdraw symptoms from substances.

- **Is there an impact on mental health for those who regularly gamble?**

There are significant links between compulsive gambling and depression and compulsive gambling and anxiety. Gambling activates the brain's reward system much like a drug does. Over time, the person gambling develops a tolerance to gambling and it becomes less rewarding, therefore affecting mood.

- **What should one do if they or a loved one develop a gambling problem?**

If someone or a loved one develops a gambling problem, I encourage them to seek help sooner rather than later. Mental health and addictions can cause major problems in a person's life, and it is okay to seek help from peers and professionals. Participating in treatment can increase a person's success at recovery.

- **What resources are available in Erie County for those who have a problem?**

Bayshore Counseling Services has a trained professional counselor, Melissa Fowler, M.Ed., LPCC-S, for problem gambling and can be reached at 419-626-9156.



Website <http://www.gamblinghelpohio.org/>
Ohio Problem Gambling Helpline 1-800-589-9966