

**The Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey, Inc., provides:**

**Public Education**

Including seminars, continuing education in-services, and conferences for New Jersey corporations, governmental agencies, mental health professionals, educators, and employee assistance personnel.

**Professional Training**

Knowledge and advanced skill training in the areas of assessment, diagnosis, treatment objectives, dual addictions, legal implications and aftercare.

**Prevention Programming**

With emphasis on adolescents and senior citizens.

**Information Clearing House**

Statewide: 1-800-GAMBLER© Helpline

Website: [www.800gambler.org](http://www.800gambler.org)

**Treatment Programming**

Facilitate development of and provide information and referral to compulsive gamblers and their families.

**Legislative and Public Policy**

**Consultation**

Maintain coordination and liaison with state officials, professional associations and educational institutions, providing them with current information in the field of gambling treatment, and to periodically review, modify, update and improve current standards of competence, skills and knowledge.

**The Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey, Inc.** is a statewide, private nonprofit 501(c)3 corporation.

**HELP IS AVAILABLE! CALL:**

The Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey, Inc. at (609) 588-5515 ext. 10.

**Do You Have A Gambling Problem?**

Here are (10) questions that can help you identify a teenage compulsive gambling problem:

1. Do you lose time from school due to gambling?
2. Have your grades dropped because of gambling?
3. Do you display intense interest in sports related literature or sporting events on TV?
4. Do you make a few calls a week to sports phone or New Jersey Lottery?
5. Has gambling language or references increased in your conversation?
6. Do you flash large amounts of money or show an exaggerated display of clothes or jewelry?
7. Did you ever gamble to escape worry or trouble?
8. Have your family or friends noticed a change in your behavior or personality (e.g., irritable, impatient or sarcastic)?
9. Do arguments, disappointments or frustrations create within you an urge to gamble?
10. Did you ever do anything illegal to finance your gambling?

If, after answering these questions, you think you need help.....

**Take the First Step Toward Recovery**

**CALL THE HELPLINE**

**1-800-GAMBLER©**

**or visit our website**

**[www.800gambler.org](http://www.800gambler.org)**



**ADOLESCENT  
(YOUTH & TEENAGE)**

**COMPULSIVE  
GAMBLING**

**A  
SERIOUS  
ISSUE**



## THE PROBLEM

It is no coincidence that adolescent gambling has surged in New Jersey and other states that have legalized glamorized various forms of wagering from state lotteries, playing the horses, to casino gambling.

Today, abstinence from gambling is rare among teenagers. In New Jersey our finding in 1981 through on-site visits to 60 high schools disclosed that of the 5,000 students questioned, over 90% had gambled at least once that year and that over 30% gamble at least once a week.

During the school year ending 1992, police investigated gambling activities in 19 United States High Schools - 14 of which were in New Jersey.

A survey from the University of Minnesota, by Dr. Ken Winters, indicates that youth are four times the risk of adults for developing pathological (compulsive) gambling.

In 1999, Atlantic City casinos refused entry to approximately 53,400 underage gamblers. However, over 39,000 had to be removed from the casino floor.

According to Dr. Durand Jacobs, a psychologist and Vice President of the National Council on Problem Gambling, "Little will change until society begins to view teenage gambling with the same alarm directed at drugs and alcohol. Gambling is the addiction of the 90's."

## THE TEEN GAMBLER

**Tim**, 17, was caught at an Atlantic City blackjack table. At 18, he owed a loan shark \$6,000. "You don't do it for the money" he says, "you do it for the action. You sometimes lose to punish yourself."

**Mary**, 16 gambles everyday. "I'm worried about my friend. I think she has a problem and I don't know where she gets the money" says her friend, age 15.

**Dave**, 17, made book at his North Jersey high school. He was caught when another boy tried to sell his mother's ring to pay a debt to Dave while on school property. According to both police and school officials, "Both youths face serious charges."

## THE ILLNESS

In 1980, the American Psychiatric Association accepted pathological (compulsive) gambling as a "disorder of impulse control." Teenage compulsive gamblers are driven to gamble in the same way that an alcoholic needs a periodic drink or a drug addict needs a "fix."

### THE PROGRESSION OF THE ILLNESS

According to Robert L. Custer, M.D., compulsive gambling has three phases: the winning phase, the losing phase and the desperation phase.

#### THE SEARCH FOR ACTION OR WINNING PHASE

The gambling wins enhance the youth's self-image and ego. Losses are rationalized as bad luck. Youths may daydream about gambling to escape reality and think that gambling is their most exciting activity. Free time, lunch break or recess is often spent involved in gambling activities.

#### THE CHASE OR LOSING PHASE

As losses increase and self-esteem is jeopardized, the young gambler will borrow money to get even and continue to bet. Lies to family, girl or boyfriends, and family disputes escalate. Selling of prized possessions such as stereos, CD collection, sporting equipment, or musical instruments occurs to cover increasing bets. Other common danger signals include missing school, work or other important events due to gambling

#### THE DESPERATION PHASE OR ROCK BOTTOM

Desperation occurs as the teen gambler becomes obsessed with getting even to cover money lost through gambling. The young gambler can experience severe mood swings, fail in school, and commit crimes such as selling drugs, shoplifting, stealing from parents or embezzling from their employer to get money to gamble.. Panic sets in at the thought that the gambling action will cease and at this point, nothing or no one comes before a bet. Suicidal thoughts may be considered as a way out.

## HOPE FOR RECOVERY

The place to learn more about this problem is the Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey, Inc.

Working with parents, teachers, and community resources, teens can learn that gambling has its downside; and like drugs or alcohol, gambling can lead down the road to addiction. However, just like other addictions, compulsive gambling is diagnosable and treatable.

### THE COUNCIL ON COMPULSIVE GAMBLING OF NEW JERSEY, INC.'S ADOLESCENT GAMBLING PREVENTION PROGRAM

One of the missions of the Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey is to protect the particularly vulnerable groups (children and senior citizens) in our state from exploitation by unscrupulous promoters of gambling enterprises.

Working with the Governor, the New Jersey Legislature, the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services, the New Jersey Department of Education, other concerned officials and citizens, the Council provides adolescent compulsive gambling identification, prevention or treatment information.

One of our objectives is to have in each New Jersey school district an employed staff member who would be an available resource on the identification, prevention and treatment of adolescent compulsive gambling.

The CCGNJ as part of its outreach efforts, will provide the following direct support to interested schools, parent-teacher associations, general public:

- ◆ Certified Prevention Specialist with on site presentations
- ◆ Videos and printed media
- ◆ Radio and Television Public Service Announcements

The message to young people is that, as with other potentially addictive behaviors, gambling also holds choices and consequences.