

Gambling and Domestic Violence

Support. Treatment. Hope.

The explosion of gambling activities in the United States and especially in New Jersey has mental health, medical professionals and gambling experts concerned about the increased risk of physical violence towards partners and children as problem gamblers frequently become irritable and violent when they attempt to quit or are confronted by the consequences of their action.

- Domestic Violence takes many forms: physical violence, sexual abuse, psychological and emotional abuse, social abuse, financial abuse, harassment and stalking.
- Violence is a noted risk factor for problem gambling.¹ Gambling in any capacity including casual gambling is related to a significant increased risk of violence.³
- 20 – 64% of spouses of compulsive gamblers have been abused²
- 23 – 41% of compulsive gamblers have reported perpetrating intimate partner violence²
- Problem gambling is associated with increased odds of the perpetration of dating violence⁴
- Over 90% of women are escape gamblers; avoiding difficult situations such as the domestic violence at home³
- Disordered gambling is associated with increased severe child abuse victimization⁴

Be Aware of the Signs

- Conversations about gambling leading to verbal or physical attacks
- The gambler seems emotionally distant and preoccupied and you wonder what he or she is thinking
- Creditors constantly call your home
- Bills are not being paid on time or at all because the money is being used to gamble
- You are hiding money, checks, bank accounts and credit cards from the gambler in the family

Help is Available

- Call for help 24 hours per day, 7 days per week – 800-GAMBLER and speak with a gambling helpline staff member (All calls are confidential)
- Text ‘800GAMBLER’ to 800GAMBLER
- Visit www.800gambler.org for information, resources, or live chat
- Attend a Gamblers Anonymous (GA) or Gam-Anon meeting in your area; meeting locations, times, and dates can be found by calling 800-GAMBLER or by visiting our

website at www.800gambler.org

¹ Dowling et al., “Early Risk and Protective Factors for Problem Gambling: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Longitudinal Studies.”

² Dowling et al., “Problem Gambling and Family Violence: Prevalence and Patterns in Treatment-Seekers.”

³ Amanda Roberts, Jeremy Coid, Robert King, Raegan Murphy, John Turner, Henrietta Bowden-Jones, Katie Palmer Du Preez, Jason Landon. Gambling and violence in a nationally representative sample of UK men. *Addiction*, 2016; DOI: 10.1111/add.13522

⁴ Afifi et al., “The Relationship of Gambling to Intimate Partner Violence and Child Maltreatment in a Nationally Representative Sample.”

⁵ Bortz, “Gambling Addiction Affects More Men and Women, Seduced by Growing Casino Accessibility.”