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THE COUNCIL ON COMPULSIVE GAMBLING OF NEW JERSEY

Our services are needed now
more than ever

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2023 Annual Report



Council on Compulsive Gambling of NJ
800-GAMBLER

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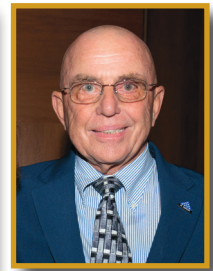
SUPPORT. TREATMENT. HOPE.

2023 Overview

In 2023, The Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey (CCGNJ) marked its 40th year of providing education and awareness about New Jersey's gambling landscape with a balance of virtual platforms and in-person presentations and meetings. Whether working with government agencies, older adults, youth, at-risk populations, veterans or faith-based communities, we were able to highlight problem and disordered gambling issues while offering support, treatment, and hope. The CCGNJ achieved or exceeded all of our objectives while maintaining a neutral position on gambling and encouraging individuals to gamble responsibly.



A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & BOARD PRESIDENT



2023 marked 40 years since the Council's founding. Established in late 1982, The Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey (CCGNJ) was officially incorporated and began full operations in February 1983. The CCGNJ extends its appreciation to the many people who have been part of our history and to the recovery community, for all you have done and continue to do.

Given the dominant gambling culture in our state, with ever-increasing opportunities to gamble, CCGNJ's services are more vital than ever. Online gambling and sports betting allows 24/7 access to gambling, and gambling outlets entice people to bet with a variety of promotions. As a result, the past five years have witnessed a significant rise in problem gambling. Our four decades dedicated to providing information, education and referral services for people affected by a gambling problem make us uniquely qualified to meet this growing challenge. Since our inception, our primary purpose has been to represent the best interest of problem and disordered gamblers and their families, recognizing that problem gambling is a treatable condition.

Gambling addiction affects every age group, from teens to seniors, and the entire socio-economic strata, including the homeless, the incarcerated, firefighters and police officers, business owners, educators, legal and medical professionals, and government officials.

Our 1-800-GAMBLER® helpline was one of the first in the nation; in 2022 the CCGNJ was honored to have 1-800-GAMBLER selected by the National Council on Problem Gambling to serve as a national helpline number.

The CCGNJ oversees a funded statewide treatment network, which includes over 30 providers. Many professionals have benefitted from our virtual 30-hour training program from across the U.S. and as far as Okinawa, Japan. The CCGNJ continues to increase awareness and screening for gambling problems in criminal justice, mental health, and drug/alcohol addiction settings.

As an established authority on gambling issues in the state, the CCGNJ has been a reliable source for the media resulting in dozens of press articles and radio and television interviews. Our interaction with the NJ Legislature has strengthened through monthly email blogs and periodic visits to the Statehouse, including the Governor's policy office. The CCGNJ continues an ongoing dialogue with the NJ Division of Gaming Enforcement, Casino Control Commission and Lottery related to problem gambling and responsible gambling practices.

We are ready to meet the future as we continue to educate the public about gambling addiction, advocate for warning labels on online gambling sites and brick-and-mortar casinos and address excessive gambling advertising. We will also continue to strengthen relationships with schools to administer our new Cognitive Perspective Restructuring Program (CPR) to educate our youth about risky behavior, to build resilience and to help them to make smart choices to ensure a bright future.

In view of today's pro-gambling climate, our services are needed now more than ever; as we forge into the future we are prepared to step up to the challenge to educate the public about gambling addiction and help those who are struggling.

Sincerely,

Felicia Grondin
Executive Director

Fred W. Hogan
Board President

ABOUT THE CCGNJ

The Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey, Inc. (CCGNJ), is a private non-profit organization that provides information, education and referral services for people affected by a gambling problem. The Council's 1-800-GAMBLER® Helpline and website, www.800GAMBLER.org, have been resources for thousands of problem gamblers and those recovering from gambling, as well as their friends and families. The 1-800-GAMBLER® helpline is free and confidential, and is available 24 hours a day throughout much of the U.S. The Council focuses on educating the public, training professionals throughout the State, referring problem and disordered gamblers and their families to treatment, and advocating for treatment services for problem and disordered gamblers and their families.



The CCGNJ neither opposes nor endorses legalized gambling. However, the CCGNJ may take positions on various issues surrounding legalized gambling that are in the best interest of problem and disordered gamblers and their families. The CCGNJ educates the residents of the state of NJ to let them know that gambling is a treatable disease, to provide prevention and treatment awareness, in addition to support, treatment and hope available to the problem gambler and their loved ones.

MILESTONES

Council on Compulsive Gambling of NJ
800-GAMBLER®
SUPPORT. TREATMENT. HOPE.

1983

Established the first live 24-hour gambling helpline for compulsive gamblers and those affected by the compulsive gambler. The Council receives 19,000 – 20,000 calls annually

1989

Helped to initiate the first certification of compulsive gambling counselors, certified by The American Compulsive Gambling Counselor Certification Board

1991

Received first State appropriation (via N.J.S.A. 5:12-145)

1998

Established the first website for compulsive gambling information (www.800gambler.org) which receives 20,000 – 40,000 hits monthly

2001

Funding was obtained for treatment referral services in New Jersey

2002

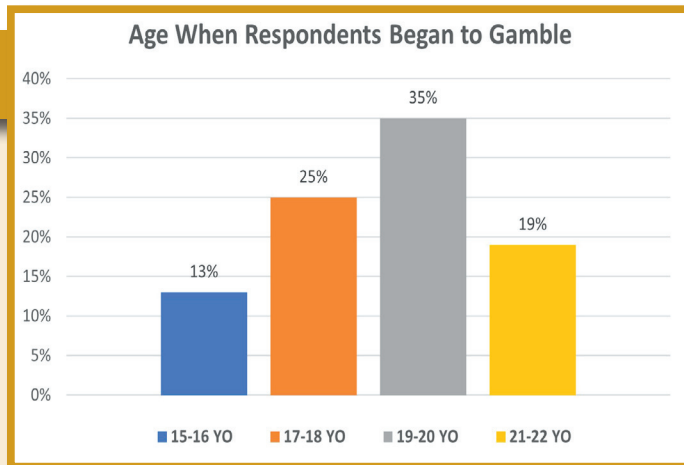
Registration of 1-800-GAMBLER® with US Patent and Trademark Office

2022

800GAMBLER number adopted as national problem gambling helpline

WHY OUR SERVICES ARE NEEDED MORE THAN EVER

In recent years, New Jersey’s gambling culture has become increasingly mainstream with a multitude of betting opportunities via greater access to online gambling platforms. **The Ease of Access, Greater Social Acceptance, and Excessive Advertising** have contributed to increased gambling activity. **A CCGNJ statewide survey identified that nearly 28% believed that easy access to betting apps strongly influenced their betting.** Individuals may be enticed by ads glamorizing gambling and minimizing risk. While many may place an initial wager for entertainment, continued activity can morph into a serious addiction resulting in significant life changes, as well as social and financial costs for the gambler and their loved ones. Disordered gambling not only affects lives; too often it takes lives: **there is a 20% rate of suicide ideation by those struggling** – the highest suicide ideation rate of any addiction.



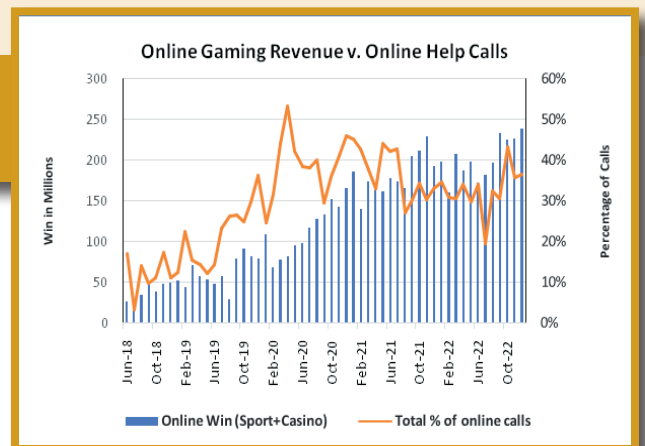
UNDERAGE GAMBLING

Gambling issues are not only present in adults. A 2021 NJ Middle School Risk and Protective Factors Survey identified that 54% of the 7th and 8th grade respondents indicated that they had gambled during the previous year. Teenagers are at an even greater risk of developing a gambling problem than adults, due to the lack of impulse control¹, and likely influenced by gambling’s social acceptance and related advertising.

In the spring 2023, the CCGNJ collaborated with Seton Hall University’s Stillman School of Business to study online gambling activity among 16-25-year-olds. The study’s findings include that of those who gambled, nearly eight in ten (79 percent) began their betting before their 21st birthday, and nearly four in ten of respondents (38 percent) began gambling between the ages of 15 and 18 (see graph).

MORE NJ RESIDENTS ARE GAMBLING & NEED HELP

In 2023 Online/Sports Gaming Revenue* totaled over \$2.9B, an increase of over 2276%² since the legalization of online gambling (2013), followed by Sports Book in 2018. The more money wagered via online platforms and sports, the more calls to 800GAMBLER indicating that more and more people need help. No doubt, our services are needed now more than ever.



¹ New Jersey Middle School Risk and Protective Factors Survey – 2021 Statewide Report.

² The New Jersey Division of Gaming Enforcement.

* Gaming Revenue = monies collected after wagers are paid, but before expenses & taxes are paid.

AN EXPLOSION OF GAMBLING TELEVISION ADS

*In 2020 gambling television ads totaled \$292M. In 2021, the amount totaled \$725M; Nearly 2 ½ times more than the prior year*³. These messages increase the likelihood of state residents potentially developing a gambling problem and can be an accelerator for individuals to relapse and break their gambling sobriety⁴.

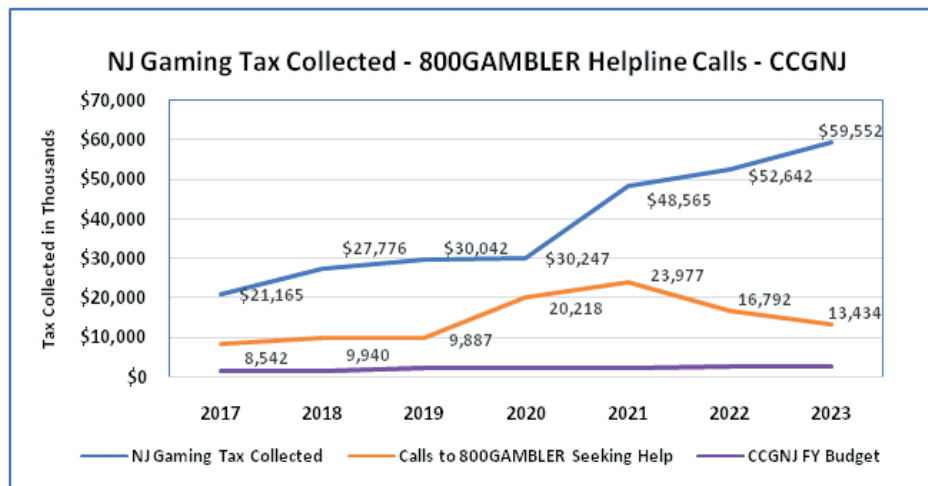
The CCGNJ advocates for the following remedies to address excessive advertising:

- **Develop a state-sponsored Public Service Announcement** focusing on the dark side of gambling.
- **Set advertising limits & parameters** – like those for drug & alcohol commercials; A CCGNJ statewide survey identified that 59% believe gambling advertising should be subject to federal and/or state regulation.
- **Require warning labels re: potential addictive behavior** on online gambling sites, at brick-and-mortar casinos and included on gambling advertisements - like those on cigarettes. A CCGNJ statewide survey identified that 70% believe warning labels should appear on all gambling apps, websites, and brick-and-mortar betting locations.

How Does Problem Gambling Funding in New Jersey Compare with Other States?

- New Jersey ranks **number three** in the country for gross gaming revenue but **drops to number 19** of the 42 states that allocate funds to problem gambling treatment and prevention.
- The average per capita allocation of public funds for problem gambling services in **states with publicly funded services was 40 cents**, whereas **New Jersey's per capita public investment was 34 cents**.⁵

NEW JERSEY GAMBLING TAX COLLECTED & CCGNJ BUDGET



In 2023 the State of New Jersey collected over \$595M Tax Revenue from Casinos, Internet & Sports Book, compared to the FY24 CCGNJ Budget of \$2.462M – a mere .041% (less than 1%) of tax revenue collected.

³ Barrons Magazine

⁴ Kindbridge Behavioral Health, United Kingdom

⁵ 2021 Survey of Publicly Funded Problem Gambling Services in the United States, National Association of Administrators for Disordered Gambling Services..

2023 - A YEAR IN REVIEW

In view of the tax revenue generated, additional funds should be allocated to respond to the growing need to help those with a gambling problem. The CCGNJ received funding from brick-and-mortar casinos and online gambling licenses, but the CCGNJ has never received any tax dollars generated by sports books.



Last year the CCGNJ held 634 Meetings with Government, Business, Grass Roots, Professional, Treatment Organizations and Minority/Underserved Agencies and delivered 4,528 presentations to Faith Based, Older Adult, Adolescent/Young Adults and At-Risk populations, while also participating in many health fairs and conferences. The CCGNJ distributed 55,419 pieces of literature and reached 6,284 individuals through such events. Our 800GAMBLER.org website offers a wide range of resources and materials and received 142,291 hits, while our 1-800-GAMBLER® helpline received 13,191 calls.

In 2023 the CCGNJ celebrated its 40th anniversary with a gala at the New Jersey Law Center. The event honored Arnie Wexler, a notable figure in the problem gambling community and featured a keynote speech by radio/podcast host, Craig Carton.

The fiscal year spanning July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023, was tremendously successful and productive. The Council performed hundreds of in-person presentations, while also providing virtual workshops and webinars via the Zoom platform. Presentations included topics around problem and disordered gambling, their impact on the family, and the vulnerability to at-risk populations.

The Council also hosted a series of webinars and, in the Spring, instituted an online pre- and post-test process to contribute to the CCGNJ's evidence-based programming.

Webinars offered included:

- Gambling and Gaming in the Latino Community: Creating Awareness;
- Substance Use Addiction and Disordered Gambling: Similarities and Differences;
- Voices of Recovery;
- Personality: Understanding its Connection to Addiction;
- Reclaiming the Brain;
- History of Gambling in NJ: 1978 – 2023; and
- In Plain Sight Uncovering the Warning Signs of a Hidden Addiction

The CCGNJ continued to offer its virtual 30-hour problem gambling training free to New Jersey residents, resulting in 172 participants. This self-paced training awards participants 30 CEU credits upon completion.



GAMBLING & YOUTH INITIATIVES

In the Spring of 2023, the CCGNJ launched The Cognitive Perspective Restructuring Program (CPR), a program designed to transform youth potential. Two classes consisting of 73 students from two urban school districts completed the CPR Program, which includes education about gambling risks.



The CCGNJ CPR program's first cohort completed the course, offered at no cost to schools, in mid-June. Forty-Three West Orange High School students finished the program, while Sprout University School of the Arts in Trenton graduated a class of 30. Other schools throughout the state expressed interest in having the CCGNJ bring the CPR program to their students. A train-the-trainer program is currently being developed to expand the program's reach. Over the summer, CPR, delivered in ten 90-minute sessions, was being presented at the Boys and Girls Club of Trenton and Lawrence Township.

Mounting concern about youth gambling prompted New Jersey legislators to introduce a measure, A-5308, to require school districts to provide instruction on risks of compulsive gambling as part of implementation of New Jersey Student Learning Standards in Comprehensive Health and Physical Education. CCGNJ testified in support of this measure.

Youth gambling has been increasing largely through online betting platforms. The CCGNJ assessed the extent of youth gambling of 16–25-year-olds, through a project conducted with Seton Hall University's Marketing and Research Center. This study surveyed youth and young adults between the ages of 16 and 25 and found nearly eight in ten (79 percent) of those who gamble began their betting before they reached the online gambling legal age of 21. Adolescents develop a problem with gambling at a higher rate than adults: between 6-8 percent in youth compared to 1-2 percent in adults. The Executive Summary of the youth gambling study is available at: [Seton-Hall-2023-Executive-Summary-FINAL-2.pdf.org](https://www.ccg-nj.org/Portals/0/2023-09-27/Seton-Hall-2023-Executive-Summary-FINAL-2.pdf)

ANNUAL STATEWIDE CONFERENCE

In September 2022, the CCGNJ hosted its annual statewide (in-person) conference with over 120 people in attendance. Sessions included:

- "Understanding Gambling-Motivated Crime"
- "The Nuance of Mindfulness: Gambling Treatment Implications"
- "Getting to Current Thinking on Gambling and Trauma"
- "Problem Gambling: Voices of Recovery"



PROBLEM GAMBLING AWARENESS MONTH

March 2023 was Problem Gambling Awareness Month (PGAM). This year the CCGNJ initiated a “Our Services are Needed Now More than Ever” Campaign for PGAM resulting in a total of nearly 65 presentations during March.

Media Coverage & Public Affairs Initiatives

During FY23, the Council increased communication with the media, contributing to its mission to raise Public Awareness by:

- Participating in three press conferences re: underage gambling;
- Participating in podcasts; and
- Contributing to and was quoted in 38 news programs/articles.

Additional media highlights from this past fiscal year included partnering with Townsquare Media (NJ 101.5), NJ.com, and continuing our partnership with Craig Carton to continue to produce and air a 30-minute radio program and podcast on problem gambling, entitled “Hello My Name is Craig.”

The CCGNJ continued its increased communication with the NJ State Legislature via bi-weekly blogs, ongoing distribution of CCGNJ educational materials, newsletters and testimony before legislative committees.

Responsible Gambling

The CCGNJ continued to host quarterly Responsible Gambling Working Group meetings featuring a variety of presentations from industry representatives and operators. The meetings were attended by representatives of the NJ Lottery, NJ Casino Control Commission, NJ Division of Gaming Enforcement, higher education, casino industry and clinical community.

Recognizing the importance of Responsible Gambling (RG), the CCGNJ added an RG tab to our 800GAMBLER webpage. The CCGNJ continued its participation in monthly Affiliate meetings of National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) and attended its annual conference in Washington, DC.

This past year we continued our partnership with the NJ Lottery for their “Not 18 Yet – No Bet” campaign to kick off the school year and the “Gift Responsibly this Holiday Season” press event in December. These annual initiatives are the result of the New Jersey Lottery joining forces with the National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG), and the International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors at McGill University to build public awareness that lottery products are not an appropriate gift for minors.

The Council held ongoing meetings with the New Jersey Division of Gaming Enforcement and Attorney General’s office regarding a variety of Responsible Gaming initiatives, as well as improving the current self-exclusion process. The Council also met with representatives from the Governor’s office to educate them about the CCGNJ, problem gambling and recommendations to address a variety of related issues.

We look forward to the coming fiscal year to continue the momentum of already existing initiatives while also creating new efforts and opportunities to serve the citizens of New Jersey.



TREATMENT OVERVIEW & DEMAND

During 2023, the CCGNJ's Treatment Provider Network consisted of more than 30 well-trained therapists providing treatment services via teletherapy and in-person offices located throughout the State. Our virtual, self-paced 30-hour training program became increasingly popular, resulting in 172 graduates.

The CCGNJ experienced an increased demand for treatment services that exceeded and exhausted funds in our treatment grant. Given that calls to 800GAMBLER are increasing every year, it is evident that more people need help. It is expected that FY24 funds will also be exhausted and additional funds will be needed to respond to this growing problem.

This past year, the CCGNJ continued to update NJ GEARS Reporting System used to track treatment providers and therapy sessions delivered. Numerous changes were incorporated to make GEARS easier to use and generate more succinct, timely reports. GEARS improvements continue to be an ongoing effort.



CCGNJ BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Jeff Stewart, Vice President
Fred U. Andes, Treasurer

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Andrew Grossman
Rev. William O. Henry, Chaplain

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Robert Kahler
Dana Lugassy
Barry Markman

Art Penn, Parliamentarian & Legal Liaison
David Scanlan
James A. Carey, Jr.
Walter Gramcko

CCGNJ 2023 BY THE NUMBERS



Responded to 13,191 800-GAMBLER Helpline Calls

Education

- 30-Hour Virtual Training Participants: 172
- Conducted 14 Casino Employee Trainings to 252 Individuals



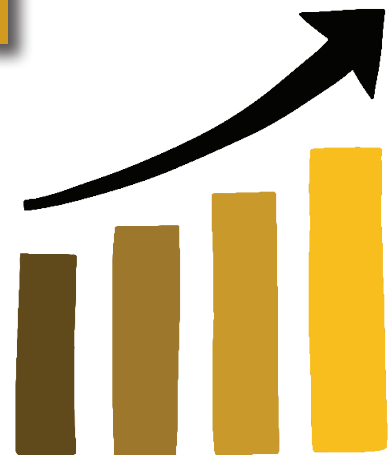
Public Awareness



- Distributed 55,419 Pieces of Literature and Promotional Items
- Over 200 Presentations Delivered to 12,295 Participants
 - Produced 13 Videos Resulting in 15,095,077 Views
 - 533 Meetings Held with 12,535 Professionals

Media/Marketing

- Radio Advertisement Reach: 19,836,900
- Billboard Views: 156,829,226
- 142,291 Hits to 800GAMBLER Website
- 4,775,415 Social Media Impressions



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