

## It's important to know

Changing problem gambling behaviour is similar to changing problematic alcohol or drug use. It takes time, effort, support and persistence to reach your goals.

Research shows people do very well with treatment and support to regain control of their gambling.

## Where to get help

The first place to get help is the service you got this flyer from. Ask a worker for help or see the service contact details on the back page for more information.

A worker will spend time with you talking about gambling issues. Often having a talk about it is the first step in starting to do something about it. If you and your worker think you would benefit from specialist gambling counselling, they will refer you to a Gambling Help service that suits you and will support you to connect with them.

You may want to deal with your gambling issue directly. Services that can help include:

- Gambler's Help (free, confidential, 24/7) – FREECALL **1800 858 858**
- Lifeline – **13 11 14**

## Service Contact Details



ODYSSEY HOUSE  
VICTORIA



SANDAS  
South Australian  
Network of Drug & Alcohol Services



NCETA  
Australia's National Research Centre  
on AOD Workforce Development

Produced in collaboration with Odyssey House Victoria, the National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction, Flinders University and the South Australian Network of Alcohol and other Drug Services (SANDAS) with funding from the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation.

Copies can be downloaded from:

[www.odyssey.org.au](http://www.odyssey.org.au)

or [www.sandas.org.au](http://www.sandas.org.au)

or [www.nceta.edu.au](http://www.nceta.edu.au)

# When gambling is also a problem

Many people with alcohol and other drug problems also have a gambling problem...



## ...we can help!

### Ask here for more information

Or go to [www.gamblershelp.com.au](http://www.gamblershelp.com.au)

## What is problem gambling?

When gambling negatively affects your life it is “problem gambling”. It is not just about losing money. There are many other consequences.

Problem gambling can lead to:

- Serious financial problems
- Serious relationship issues
- Reduced self esteem
- Anxiety, depression, suicide
- Reduced physical health
- Impaired ability to work or study.

## People with alcohol/drug problems often gamble

Substance use and gambling often occur together.

Drinking or using drugs changes the way we think. When we use alcohol and drugs, people may:

- Take more risks
- Be less concerned about what might happen in the short or long-term
- Gamble (and lose) more.

## What to watch out for

Life events that can sometimes trigger problem gambling include:

- Some traumatic events (like the death of a loved one or separation)
- Increased financial pressure (e.g. loss of job, sudden expenses).

Other factors may include:

- Feeling lonely, stressed or bored
- Believing luck or skill will help you win
- Easy access to gambling.

## Recognising when gambling might be a problem

It's important to recognise that gambling might be a problem for you or someone you care about. Here are some common signs. They may:

- Lie or mislead themselves or others about how much they gamble
- Chase their losses
- Not pay their rent, mortgage or bills
- Take money needed by the family and spend it on gambling
- Borrow money and fail to pay it back
- Drink or use drugs to deal with the shame and stress of gambling, leading to more gambling.

## Think smart about gambling

Many people believe that gambling is about luck or skill. It is not.

Gambling is a form of paid entertainment. Every time you gamble it is likely to cost you money.

Gambling generates large profits for gambling companies. In the end ‘the house always wins’.

## Ways to control gambling

- **Don't drink or use** – drinking or using drugs whilst gambling is likely to result in heavier losses
- **Tell others** about your gambling
- **Ask for help** – counsellors can provide confidential help and support
- **Set limits** on how much money and time you spend on gambling
- **Leave your cash** and credit cards at home
- **Record your losses** – often people assume they are winning more than they really are
- **Take regular breaks** – get up and walk away
- **Replace gambling** with other activities.