



MEDIA RELEASE

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RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING AWARENESS WEEK 2013

Minister for Hospitality and Racing, George Souris, is encouraging those who wish to gamble to do so responsibly or take advantage of free counselling services if they have or are concerned that they might have a gambling problem.

Mr Souris said Responsible Gambling Awareness Week, from May 20 to 26, will throw a spotlight on problem gambling and the face-to-face, telephone and online help available on 1800 858 858 or www.gamblinghelp.nsw.gov.au

“Last month the NSW Government, through its Responsible Gambling Fund, announced contracts worth more than \$48 million over four years for high quality problem gambling counselling and support services across the State,” Mr Souris said.

“More than 50 face-to-face counselling services have been funded across NSW including Sydney, the Central Coast, Hunter, Illawarra, New England/NorthWest, North Coast, Riverina/Murray, South East and Western NSW regions.

“Statewide services will also be provided to support problem gamblers from non-English speaking backgrounds, to help problem gamblers facing legal difficulties, and to ensure NSW’s problem gambling counsellors get the latest professional training.

“Responsible Gambling Awareness Week is a chance to remind the community about the damaging impacts excessive gambling can have on the lives of gamblers as well as their friends and families and issue a call to action for problem gamblers.

“The good news is that free, effective and confidential help is available in a range of languages so I strongly encourage problem gamblers to take that important first step on the road to recovery by contacting our Gambling Help services.”

Mr Souris said the Government will later this week launch a series of new multicultural problem gambling resources including an online calculator to make gamblers aware of how much their gambling can cost them over the course of a year.

“Multilingual online resources will also be launched for problem gamblers and their families and friends in Arabic, Chinese, Greek, Italian and Vietnamese languages,” Mr Souris said.

“Online personal stories will showcase powerful re-enactments of the real life journeys to recovery of three problem gamblers who battled and overcame their addictions with the support of Gambling Help counselling services.

“Also being launched is a free Chinese language booklet to help families and friends identify if someone they care about has a gambling problem and where to seek help. This booklet will later be translated into other languages including Arabic, Italian, Vietnamese and Greek.”

Problem gamblers and their families can access help 24 hours a day, seven days a week by phoning 1800 858 858 or visiting www.gamblinghelp.nsw.gov.au

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DO YOU HAVE A GAMBLING PROBLEM?

In the last 12 months how often have you:

1. Bet more than you could really afford to lose?
2. Needed to gamble with larger amounts of money to get the same feeling of excitement?
3. Gone back another day to try and win back the money you lost?
4. Borrowed money or sold anything to get money to gamble?
5. Felt that you might have a problem with gambling?
6. Felt that gambling has caused you health problems, including stress and anxiety?
7. People criticised your betting or told you that you have a gambling problem, whether or not you thought it was true?
8. Felt your gambling has caused financial problems for you or your household?
9. Felt guilty about the way you gamble or what happens when you gamble?

Scoring: 0 = Never, 1 = Sometimes, 2 = Most of the time, 3 = Almost always.
Scores of 8 or more are deemed to indicate problem gambling.

(Source: Canadian Problem Gambling Index screening test).