

## National Problem Gambling Awareness Week

2008-03-05

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The National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) and the Council on Compulsive Gambling of Pennsylvania to proclaim March 9-15, 2008, National Problem Gambling Awareness Week and to announce local initiatives in support of the effort to increase public awareness of the availability and benefits of problem gambling treatment.

This effort will help educate the public and health care providers about problem gambling warning signs, and where to call for help.

During the week of March 9-15, communities nationwide are working to raise awareness of the consequences of problem gambling and the resources available for individuals whose gambling is causing disruption in their lives. Treatment for problem gambling is not only available, but is also effective in improving the lives of problem gamblers and their families. This initiative is also a celebration of the men and women who are overcoming problems associated with their gambling behavior.

The efforts of this week are geared toward creating a society where those affected by problem gambling are able to identify the problem and access professional services that help minimize the consequences of problem gambling. It envisions an environment in which treatment of gambling problems is recognized as a specialized field of expertise and professionals trained to assist problem gamblers are recognized for their unique knowledge, skills and abilities.

"In order to make a positive impact in the community, we need to be sure that the individuals and families that are in need of our Helpline services know they are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week," said Jim Pappas, Executive Director of the Council on Compulsive Gambling of Pennsylvania. Pappas shared, "We are pleased to welcome to our team Heather Hundt who will manage data for the helpline and web pages of the Council."

Awareness efforts will be taking place in Harrisburg on Tuesday, March 11 at Strawberry Square and Thursday, March 13 in the Capital Building, sponsored by the Office of Compulsive and Problem Gambling of the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board.

Clinical training programs are continuing around the state sponsored by the Council on Compulsive Gambling of Pennsylvania with support from our corporate partners. "Our series in Bethlehem is continuing for a third time, free of charge to participants thanks to the SANDS BETHWORKS Casino. With their support we have had over 200 counselors complete 30 hours of gambling specific training in the Lehigh Valley area," said Joanna Franklin, Director of Education, Training and the Problem Gambling Helpline Service.

The Council would also like to acknowledge some of our other corporate partners, who have also sponsored our 30 hour gambling specific training, those being: Mohegan Sun at Pocono Downs, Presque Isle Downs, Harrah's Casino & Racetrack at Chester Downs, Sugarhouse Casino, and Foxwoods Casino. Their willingness to support us in these trainings helps spread the word in their local areas that help is available for any citizen of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania affected by problem gambling related behavior.

Updates on training opportunities and services for gamblers and their families can be found at the Council web page [www.pacouncil.com](http://www.pacouncil.com) or by e-mail at [ccgofpa@aol.com](mailto:ccgofpa@aol.com)

The Council with generous support from the Pennsylvania Lottery operates the Problem Gambling Helpline from 1-800-848-1880, as well as 1-800-GAMBLER, and the National gambling helpline number, 1-800-522-4700. Reports on Helpline data are available through the web page or from our new Helpline data manager Heather Hundt at: [heatherhundt@comcast.net](mailto:heatherhundt@comcast.net).

Source: Council on Compulsive Gambling of Pennsylvania and National Council on Problem Gambling

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