WAGERING ON WELL-BEING

CHALLENGE your Service members and yourself to adopt at least one of the recommended resources to maintain overall well-being by avoiding or providing help for problem gambling.

FACTS & FIGURES: DID YOU KNOW?

- Anyone who gambles can develop a gambling problem.
- Factors such as age, gender, environment, and medical history may put some people at higher risk.
- A study of current and former National Guard members from a mid-west State found that problem gambling was associated with negative psychological and behavioral outcomes, like depression.[1]

PROBLEM GAMBLING COMPROMISES READINESS

Problem gambling is an urge to bet despite harmful consequences that impact well-being and impede mission readiness. Potential consequences include:

- Mental Health Challenges
- Physical Health Problems
- Relationship Troubles
- Suicidal Behaviors
- Legal Issues
- Financial Difficulties
- Career Complications
- Alcohol & Substance Misuse

CONTACT US

For more information on problem gambling or other wellness topics, email us at: ng.ncr.ngb.mbx.integrated-prevention-branch@army.mil

BE RESPONSIBLE

Gambling is more readily available than ever. It is legal in the 54 States, Territories, and District of Columbia (except Hawaii and Utah) and accessible via phone or tablet. For some, it is a fun form of entertainment, for others it is an unhealthy means of escape. If you decide to gamble, consider these tips:[2]

- Make a plan. Put limits on time and money.
- Set a timer to track playing time.
- Partner with a battle buddy or wingman to help you stick to the plan.
- Know how the game works and understand the odds. Over time the house always wins.
- Never chase your losses.
- Treat gambling as entertainment and not a means to make money or escape reality.
- Never borrow money to gamble.
- Know and respect your tolerance for risk.
- Take a break when it is no longer fun.
- Balance gambling with other fun activities.

SEEK SUPPORT

Problem gambling is a progressive condition that can lead to addiction. Like alcohol and drug addiction, gambling disorder is a recognized mental health condition that alters the brain's chemistry.[3] It differs, in that people with gambling disorder may appear to live normal lives. There are no obvious outward signs, like slurred speech or impaired walking. For this reason, gambling disorder is referred to as a hidden addiction. The problem can often go undetected until a harmful consequence, like divorce or bankruptcy, reveals the underlying truth. The best way to prevent a negative outcome is to seek support early. Take the 10-question Gambling Assessment, to learn more: https://www.ncpgambling.org/help-treatment/problem-gambling-self-assessment/

UNDERSTAND & PREVENT PROBLEM GAMBLING

What does it mean?
- Problem gambling is an uncontrolled urge to wager on an outcome despite the negative toll it takes on life. There are many types of gambling, like casinos, racetracks, sports betting, lotteries, etc.

Why does it matter?
- For Service members, problem gambling impacts well-being and reduces readiness by minimizing peak performance and jeopardizing security clearances.

What can you do?
- Follow the tips for gambling responsibly, regardless of how often you wager or how much you bet.
- Take the Gambling Assessment to identify harmful behaviors early before they become life-altering problems.
- Reach out to the National Problem Gambling Helpline or Gamblers Anonymous and talk to people who understand what you are going though.
- Recommend GAM-ANON to friends and family members seeking support.
- Connect with Military Family Readiness staff or Military OneSource for help in dealing with the harmful consequences of problem gambling.
- Protect yourself and others by safely storing firearms in the home to make access to lethal means more difficult in the event of a crisis.

NATIONAL PROBLEM GAMBLING HELPLINE

Call: 1-800-GAMBLER (426-2537)
Text: 800-GAM
Chat: 1800GAMBLERchat.org

RED RIBBON AWARDS

Harmful behaviors, like problem gambling and drug use, have shared risk factors. Prevention efforts in one area can help mitigate multiple forms of harm.

The National Guard is seeking nominations for the Red Ribbon Awards to acknowledge successful Drug Demand Reduction Programs.

Nominations are due MAY 31.
ng.ncr.ngb-arng.mesg.resiliency-branch@army.mil

RESOURCES TO RECOMMEND

National Council on Problem Gambling is a one-stop shop for information and support. www.ncpgambling.org
- Gambling Assessment – 10 questions to help identify problem gambling.
- National Problem Gambling Helpline – call, text, chat, or find local resources.
- Operation Responsible Gambling – support for Service members and veterans.
- Problem Gambling Awareness Month – promotional materials.

Gamblers Anonymous is a fellowship of people who meet to share their experience with each other and recover from a gambling problem. www.gamblersanonymous.org

GAM-ANON offers support and comfort to family members and friends who are impacted by a loved one's gambling problem. www.gam-anon.org

National Guard's Military Family Readiness staff are available to connect Service members with Personal Financial Counselors and other family support resources. ng.ncr.ngb-arng.list.j1-m-division@army.mil

Military OneSource provides free, confidential support via phone, online chat, or video. Service members can get help with financial difficulties, legal issues, relationship problems, and more. http://www.militaryonesource.mil

SPOTLIGHT: PROBLEM GAMBLING AWARENSS MONTH

- March is Problem Gambling Awareness Month, which focuses on prevention, treatment, and recovery.
- The 2024 theme, "Every Story Matters" seeks to break down stigmas related to problem gambling.
- Learn more or access the promotional toolkit at: https://www.ncpgambling.org/problem-gambling/pgam

PROBLEM GAMBLING AWARENESS MONTH

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2. Operation Responsible Gambling. https://operationresponsiblegambling.org
3. Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Health Disorders, 5th Edition. https://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/practice/dsm