

And lose it all to gambling?

College students at risk

Gambling in Oregon has changed dramatically over the past several years. It is more accessible, more accepted and more glamorized than ever before.

Reality TV shows portray gambling as stylish, as an easy way to get rich, and as a harmless activity for anyone with a sense of excitement.

The truth is, gambling can be fun and entertaining for most college students who play for social or recreational reasons. However, for some students gambling can cause problems, and those problems may become serious.

About 1 in every 20 college students develops a gambling problem. Problem gamblers usually start out gambling for fun and with friends. Then they get sucked in, either by believing that they can make money gambling or by using gambling as a way to cope with loneliness, stress or depression. If it goes too far, they find themselves in a financial mess. They miss class. They are stressed out, feel angry, ashamed, and depressed.

Fortunately, many college problem gamblers are able to move beyond their gambling problem and get back on track. Financial or relationship problems resulting from the problem may cause the students to do a reality check.

If you think you might have a gambling problem, or if you are worried about a friend, help is available. Oregon has a toll-free gambling help line: 877-MY-LIMIT (877-695-4684). Counseling is free and confidential. Skilled help can also be found at your campus counseling center or health center.

Sign of a possible gambling problem

Gambling can be risky for those who spend a lot of time gambling and do not stay involved in other activities. The following are some signs of a possible gambling problem:

- Gambling more often.
- Gambling for more money.
- Gambling for longer periods of time.
- Gambling in spite of negative consequences, such as large losses or poor grades.
- Gambling as a means to cope with (escape from) emotional difficulties.

Recognizing gambling problems among your friends

- Unexplained absences/sudden drop in grades.
- Sudden visible changes in behavior/personality.
- Possession of a large amount of money, brags about winning.
- An unusual interest in sports scores or stats.
- An intense interest in conversations about gambling.
- Unexplained financial problems or clues about financial problems (borrowing money).
- Starts screening phone calls in fear of debt collectors.

"Gambling among students on and off campus are at record levels because of the popularity of Texas Hold'em poker and sports betting on and off the Internet."

-Sol Boxenbaum, Responsible Gambling Expert

"The scholarship I received for school is gone from gambling."

-20-year-old college student Help Line caller

"I'm concerned about my roommate. She pawned her personal belongings for money to gamble."

-College student Help Line caller

"A guy in my fraternity, who gambled a lot, took this semester off to work full-time and pay off his debt."

-College student at gambling lecture

Responsible gambling tips

For most college students, gambling is a social or recreational activity. It can be fun and entertaining and does not necessarily cause problems. For college students who choose to gamble recreationally, the following tips will help prevent gambling problems. If you choose to gamble:

- Set a dollar limit and stick to it.
- Set a time limit and stick to it.
- Expect to lose.
- Don't use your credit card to gamble.
- Create balance in your life.
- Don't increase your betting to make up for money you lost.
- Don't gamble as a way to cope with stress, loneliness, or depression.
- Educate yourself about problem gambling.

Helping a friend with a gambling problem

- Tell the person what he or she has done that has raised your concern and how you feel.
- Tell the person what you'd like to see him or her do, including talking to another trusted person and/or getting professional help.
- Tell the person what you are willing to do. This may include: being available to talk again or assisting in finding help.
- Do not lend money or in any way support continued gambling as a solution.

Help is free and confidential

Counselors at the help line or on campus can offer assistance and help people make changes.

Additional options include telephone counseling, in-person individual counseling, and group counseling. Call the confidential, 24-hour phone number below for information and help: 877-MY-LIMIT (877-695-4648)

If you think you might be gambling too much, or if you are worried about a friend or relative, help is available.

Oregon has a toll-free gambling help line:

877-MY-LIMIT
(877-695-4648)

On-Line recovery resources

Getting Past Gambling

<http://www.gettingpastgambling.com/>

Recovery Places

<http://www.recoveryplaces.com/>

Safe Harbor Compulsive Gambling Hub

<http://www.sfcghub.com/cgsf1.html>

I Stopped Gambling

<http://www.istoppedgambling.com/>

Want To Stop Gambling

<http://www.wanttostopgambling.com/>

Gam Care

<http://www.gamcare.org.uk/forum/index.php?tid=2272>

Other resources

Department of Human Services

Addictions and Mental Health Division

www.oregon.gov/DHS/addiction

Oregon Lottery Problem Gambling Help Site

www.oregonlotteryhelp.com

Gamblers Anonymous

www.gamblersanonymos.org/mtgdirOR.html

Gam-Anon

www.gam-anon.og.meeting.asp

Youth Gambling International

www.youthgambling.com

Get help for a gambling problem

Counseling is free, confidential and it works.

877-MY-LIMIT

(877-695-4648)

DID YOU LEAVE YOUR DEGREE ON THE TABLE?



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