

## Ideas to help control gambling

- Find other enjoyable activities and avoid places where there is gambling.
- Limit access to money - leave ATM cards at home and only take with you money you have allocated.
- Don't borrow money from other people to gamble.
- Set an amount on when you cash in credits and stick to it.
- Do not gamble when angry or upset.
- Do not gamble alone.
- Do not mix drinking alcohol and gambling.
- Try and gamble only on specific days and set a time limit.

## What can you do about problem gambling?

One of the biggest hurdles for a person who is a problem gambler is admitting that it is a problem. Often the person is in denial about their problem and cannot see the hurt or harm being caused to themselves or those around them. Problem gambling can be overcome. It is often wise to seek assistance from qualified gambling counsellors who can provide specialised help.

## More information

- Talk to a GP.
- Call Lifeline on 131 114.
- Call Kids Help Line on 1800 55 1800.
- Call your local Community Health Centre (look under Health Services in the information pages at the front of the white pages).
- Call G-Line on 1800 633 635.
- [www.gline.org.au](http://www.gline.org.au)
- [www.dgr.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dgr.nsw.gov.au)
- [www.reachout.asn.au](http://www.reachout.asn.au)
- [www.thesource.gov.au](http://www.thesource.gov.au)
- [www.makeanoise.ysp.org.au](http://www.makeanoise.ysp.org.au)

If these services can't help you they can usually give you the contact details of a service in your area that can.

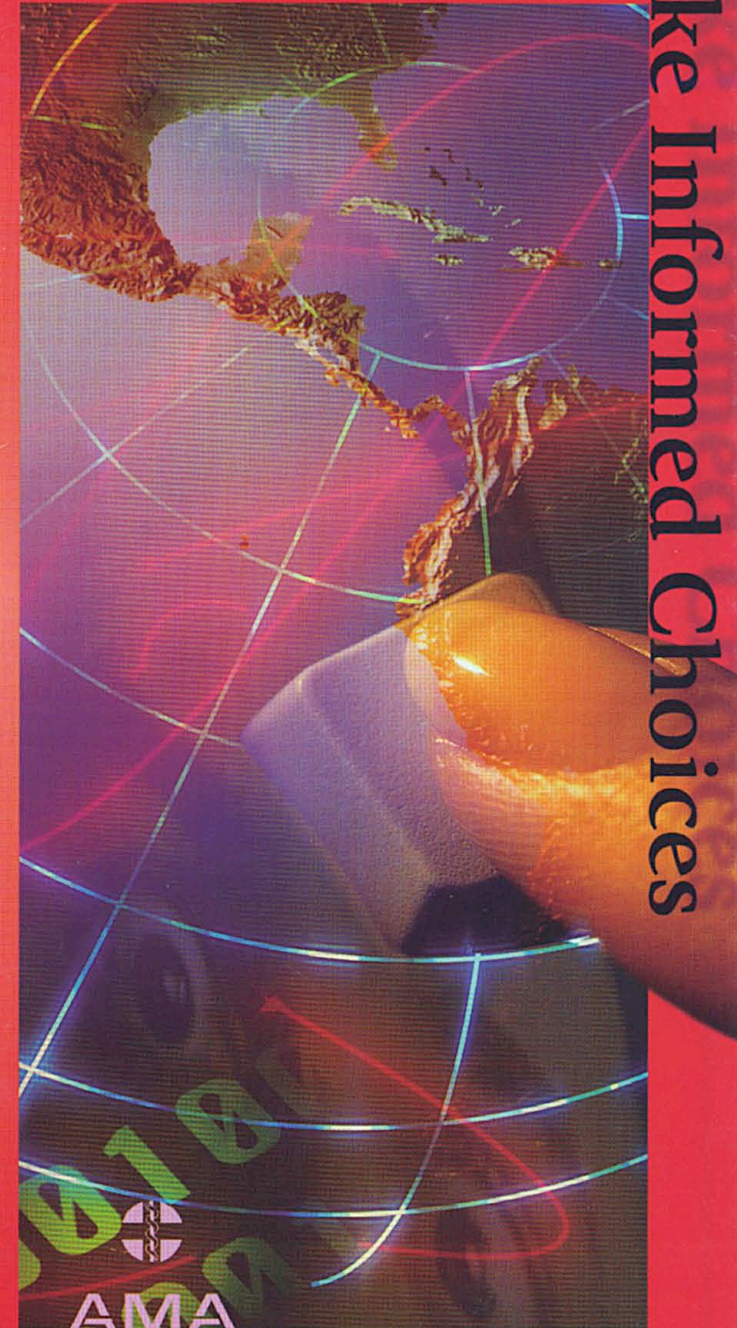
We acknowledge the assistance of  
Lifeline Canberra Gambling and Financial  
Counselling Service Ph: (02) 6247 0655



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# GAMBLING

and your health



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## Problem Gambling

It is illegal for anyone under the age of 18 to gamble in Australia. However, gambling is very common among young people. It is socially acceptable to have a flutter on the Melbourne Cup or put a few dollars through the pokies. For some people, gambling can get out of control and can take over their lives. More often than not, gamblers try to hide what they are doing and will take even bigger risks to get out of trouble.

## Effects of problem gambling

- Loss of control, resulting in guilt and desperation, which can lead to thoughts of self-harm
- Stress and worry that affects sleep, mood and health
- Loss of friends who have lent the gambler money
- Relationship conflicts including divorce
- Failed exams
- Job loss
- Isolation from family, friends and workmates

## Who does it affect?

Anyone who gambles can develop a problem. The vast majority of 'problem gamblers' start gambling before the age of 20 years, some as early as 8 to 12 years of age. Problem gambling does not just affect the gambler; it also affects family members, friends and others around them. On average, it is estimated that one problem gambler affects 8 other people.

## Look for the signs

- Continuing to gamble to win back losses
- Using gambling to escape from or cope with other problems in life
- Lying to friends and family to hide gambling problem
- Borrowing money to gamble or pay back gambling debts
- Gambling a lot of income on payday
- Gambler feels stressed during and after gambling and is irritable if they try to cut down or stop gambling
- Gambler experiences increased financial problems – selling the mobile phone, car or other items to get money
- Possible legal problems from financial related crime (stealing, forgery or fraud)

## What are your chances?

- There is a 1 in 54,979,155 chance of winning Powerball.
- There is a 1 in 7,059,052 chance of winning Lotto.
- The chance of winning the top prize in a \$2 scratchie is 1 in 960,000.
- Choosing your own numbers (e.g. in Lotto) will not give you the edge over an auto-pick entry. There is no skill involved in games of pure chance where winning numbers are selected at random by computer.
- A poker machine that hasn't paid out for a while is no more likely to pay out than one that just hit the jackpot.
- Sitting on the one poker machine all night will not improve your chances of winning.
- For poker machines, the minimum payout is 85%. So on average, for every \$10 that gamblers spend they will lose about \$1.50. (NSW Department of Gaming and Racing)