

1♥800♦GAMBLER

The Problem Gamblers Help Network of West Virginia

Annual Report
State Fiscal Year 2018





First Choice Services (FCS) has operated the statewide prevention and treatment program for problem gambling in West Virginia since 2000. In that time, the program has helped thousands of West Virginians and their family members find recovery from problem gambling. We've also worked throughout the state to educate residents on responsible gambling and the warning signs of addiction.

FCS continues to adapt and grow so that it can identify and serve the needs of West Virginia. Our organization continues to add programs and services and currently runs a number of other social service helplines.

We strive to provide the best training possible to our organization's Helpline Specialists, and continue to provide high quality helpline services to West Virginia and surrounding states.

According to the National Council on Problem Gambling, **1%** of adults **ARE PATHOLOGICAL GAMBLERS**, and another **2-3%** show symptoms of problem gambling.

70% of high school students have gambled. **7%** of them show signs of developing a gambling problem. **5% BECAME ADDICTED.**

As many as **72,000 WEST VIRGINIANS** are dealing with this disorder.

Problem gamblers and their families suffer from several negative consequences. Problem gamblers have consistently been found to have a high rate of psychiatric symptoms and suicide.

The World Health Organization attributes **5%** of suicides to gambling addiction.

As many as **73%** of problem gamblers also are problem drinkers.

38% were found to have a drug abuse disorder. Smoking rates among gamblers are as high as **60%**.

As many as **65%** of marriages involving a problem gambler will end in divorce.

As many as **50%** of problem gamblers commit crimes to support continued gambling.

HEADLINES



Don't bet what you can't afford to lose.

This fiscal year, sports betting became legal in West Virginia. In preparation for and in response to the new legislation, we communicated with the West Virginia Lottery about including our number and information, planned a marketing and education/public outreach campaign, and offered a Sports and Gambling Summit for counselors/social workers and college athletic directors to discuss how to deal with the impact of legalized sports betting. We also did other outreach and prevention trainings. By the end of calendar year 2018, all five WV casinos offered in-person sports betting, and two offered the ability to bet online.

Also this year, the World Health Organization declared "Gaming Disorder" as an official diagnosis in the 11th Revision of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11). Internet gaming disorder (IGD) is also considered a "condition for further study" in section III of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5). The symptoms mentioned in both classifications are nearly identical to those of Gambling Disorder. There has been recent evidence that similar effects are intertwined in many video games. In addition, many people who develop an addiction to video games may be at heightened risk for gambling addiction. Youth are at even more risk when a problem is developed at a younger age. As research in this area continues, we will tailor future outreach efforts to meet the ever-changing landscape.



PREVENTION

This year, we facilitated over 45 local TV, radio, and newspaper stories on problem gambling in WV.

In June, we held a conference in Morgantown where we trained a group on prevention techniques, as well as trained a new group of counselors -16 attendees received up to 19.5 CEUs

Also this year, we awarded mini-grants to Healthways, Monroe County FRN, Clay FRN, FMRS, Winfield Middle School SADD Chapter, St. Leo Catholic Church-Pure Heart Ministries, Youth Services Systems, and Taylor County Collaborative FRN. These groups will focus on educating youth about the risks of problem gambling. Through these partnerships, we anticipate over 20,000 more West Virginians will be screened and/or educated regarding problem gambling risks, symptoms and help available.

Nearly 40 social workers and prevention specialists from around the state attended our 2-day training in Clarksburg. "Youth and Gambling: What's At Stake?" focused on strategies to prevent kids from gambling. 10 Continuing Education Units were awarded to participants.

We attended more than **75 events** to educate the public about problem gambling prevention. These included health fairs, professional conferences, as well as visits to casinos, social services, and mental health agencies.



We also did mini prevention training in the Eastern Panhandle, and professional development training of special educators in Clarksburg.



NATIONAL COUNCIL ON PROBLEM GAMBLING



We continue to work closely with the National Council on Problem Gambling. Program Director Jennifer Davis-Walton is on the National Helpline Committee, the National Prevention Committee, and the Special Populations Subcommittee for Prevention. She is also active with the Association of Problem Gambling Service Administrators (APGSA).

In July 2017, we attended the **National Conference on Problem Gambling** in Portland, Oregon. Our staff received continuing education units that allowed them to keep their status as Nationally Certified Gambling Counselors. We did a presentation on how to reach problem gamblers through targeted digital outreach.



We won the Media Award for our targeted online campaign, and the People's Choice Award for billboard designs.

SERVICES AND OUTCOMES

We offer screening for pathological gambling, education on treatment options available, self-help literature, and coordination of treatment with our network counselors throughout the state.

We also offer counselor-led support groups that offer fellowship, empowerment, coping skills, and training. Additionally, we also maintain active lists of all Gamblers Anonymous and Gam-Anon (for loved ones of gamblers) groups statewide.

Throughout this fiscal year, 778 people called the helpline to receive one of our services. Of those, we actively helped 42% set up treatment and/or provided them with specialized literature on dealing with gambling addiction. Counselors reported 728 attended counselor-led support groups. We also list treatment options and self-help information on our website. Additionally, another 488 people visited 1800Gambler.net and completed our self-help problem gambling screening tool.

By leveraging our other helplines, we were able to screen 1,202 more callers for problem gambling. Those screened positively were referred accordingly based on their most immediate need. Other follow up was also completed.

We do an extensive, conversational initial intake. Then we keep in touch, because follow-ups keep people in recovery.

When a caller uses the helpline, they receive services from masters-level problem gambling experts. Callers in crisis that are dealing with suicidal inclinations or co-occurring disorders can expect high-level consultations. Many calls can last over an hour as our helpline staff helps to counsel them and set up counseling with one of our trained network counselors.

Many of our calls come from the loved ones of problem gamblers. We offer support, guidance, and treatment for them as well.

Using the Problem Gamblers Help Network has proven to make a major difference for those wanting to overcome gambling addiction.

Successful follow-ups with helpline callers show positive outcomes:

AT 3 MONTHS

88% OF CALLERS
HAD STOPPED OR
DECREASED GAMBLING

AT 6 MONTHS

91% OF CALLERS
HAD STOPPED OR
DECREASED GAMBLING

AT 1 YEAR

86% OF CALLERS
HAD STOPPED OR
DECREASED GAMBLING

re^{re}treatment weekend

The Fall Retreat for gamblers and their loved ones was held from November 3rd through the 5th at the Bishop Hodges Pastoral Center. 30 gamblers and loved ones attended, as well as eight staff, presenters, and counselors.

Dr. Heather Chapman, Arnie and Sheila Wexler, and our counselors presented. The weekend is a low cost, intensive treatment weekend. It includes workshops, fellowship, support groups, and counseling sessions. They are offered at no cost to the gambler or their loved one. The Retreatment Weekends are highly anticipated and support intense healing for all who attend. We have shared our Retreatment Weekend model with other states who want to replicate them.

We worked with the lottery to put stickers on slot machines and video lottery terminals throughout the state.

Can't stop?
Need help? | **1-800-GAMBLER.net**
CALL OR CLICK FOR HELP TO STOP GAMBLING

1-800-GAMBLER

**YOUR LUCKY
NUMBER.**

Get free, confidential help for gambling problems.

Outside West Virginia? Call
1-800-522-4700

ON THE WEB

More than **8,800** people visited 1800Gambler.net this year. That's **1,000 more** than last year.

Lie/Bet Screening



Highlighted on our website is an interactive Lie/Bet Questionnaire, which is a two-question screening tool for pathological gambling. The questions were selected from the DSM-5 criteria for pathological gambling because they were identified as the best predictors of pathological gambling. Answering “Yes” to either question indicates a possible problem and need for further assessment. 288 people used the screening tool, 260 answered “Yes” to at least one question.

Additionally, 200 people took our 9-Question Gambling Quiz to evaluate how many symptoms they had.

Social Media



In addition to our website, we also have a very active social media presence that helps to educate and promote the services we provide. We reached 265,904 people on Facebook and another 38,159 were reached through Twitter. We're also on Instagram.

Geofencing



We used targeted mobile marketing to reach those who need us most. Using geofence technology, we sent mobile advertisements to people who visited video gambling establishments. We also provided information on our program to those in the state who were looking for information online about problem gambling, or who were visiting online gambling sites. This campaign was seen 1,464,102 times.

NATIONAL PROBLEM GAMBLING AWARENESS MONTH

Proclamation by Governor Jim Justice

Whereas, problem gambling is a public health issue affecting millions of Americans of all ages, races and ethnic backgrounds in all communities having a significant societal and economic cost; and

Whereas, problem gambling is treatable and treatment is effective in minimizing the harm to both individuals and society as a whole; and

Whereas, numerous individuals, professionals, and organizations have dedicated their efforts to educating the public about problem gambling and increasing the availability and effectiveness of treatment; and

Whereas, the National Council of Problem Gambling and the Problem Gamblers Help Network of West Virginia work to educate the public and health care professionals about the warning signs of problem gambling and raise awareness about the help that is available.

Now, Therefore, Be it Resolved that I, Jim Justice, Governor of the State of West Virginia, do hereby proclaim **March 2018** as:

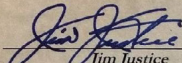
Problem Gambling Awareness Month

in the Mountain State and encourage all citizens to recognize the social and financial effectiveness of services available for problem gambling.

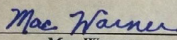
In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of West Virginia to be affixed.

Done at the Capitol, City of Charleston, State of West Virginia, this the Sixth day of March, in the year of our Lord, Two Thousand Eighteen, and in the One Hundred Fifty-Fifth year of the State.




Jim Justice
Governor

By the Governor:


Mac Warner
Secretary of State

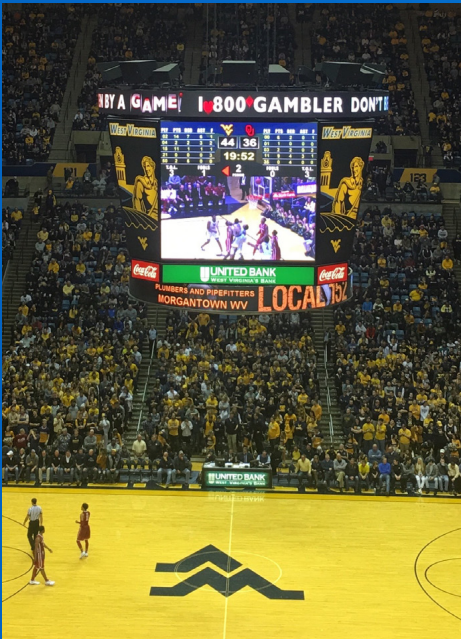
During National Problem Gambling Awareness Month, we increased our outreach activities to reach more people. We held a one-hour online “Gambling Addiction 101” training for helping professionals to teach them how to screen for problem gambling. We visited many of the comprehensive mental health centers in the state to teach them about screening. We were interviewed by several radio and television stations and newspapers. We mailed over 3,000 brochures to medical and mental health centers.

Problem Gamblers Help Network staff and network counselors also did exhibits during March at various venues, including Wheeling Island Casino, a local college, an education conference and several health/wellness fairs. We also participated in a television show, taught a life skills class highlighting problem gambling, and many of our counselors displayed information in their communities.



SPREADING THE WORD

We partnered with West Virginia University's athletic program to reach out to college students and those attending WVU sporting events. Information on our program was printed in the WVU Football and WVU Men's Basketball Fan Guides. Over 45,000 copies were distributed.



We sponsor the WTSQ radio station and speak every week about problem gambling.



This year, we did a billboard campaign statewide that was designed to appeal to problem gamblers AND their loved ones. About 30% of our calls are from loved ones of problem gamblers.

**PROBLEM GAMBLING
IS A HEART BREAKER**

1-800-GAMBLER

**CALL FOR
FREE, LOCAL HELP**



FINANCIALS

Salary/Wages/Taxes/Benefits

\$637,664

Marketing/Education/Training

\$280,594

Treatment

\$119,501

Office Expense

\$183,387

Depreciation

\$26,038

Other Costs

\$120,011

TOTAL EXPENSES

\$1,367,195

Note: Figures listed are unaudited

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