

1-800-GAMBLER

WV'S PROBLEM GAMBLING HELP NETWORK

The helpline coordinator very well might have saved my life tonight and took every step short of coming to my house to make sure I was safe! I am very grateful! She took almost 1.5 hours to calm me down and explain the options you all offer...I am grateful for all of you, and I hope this works!

-FY 2024 Helpline Satisfaction Survey

STATE FISCAL YEAR **2024**

Annual Report

Talk to someone who understands

1-800-GAMBLER

WV'S PROBLEM GAMBLING HELP NETWORK

Financial counseling



Apps that block gambling sites



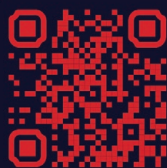
Support from people in recovery



**Professional counseling
in-person or telehealth**



1800GAMBLER.net



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In FY 2024, West Virginia's Problem Gambling Help Network (WVPGHN) received twice as many contacts and requests for help with gambling disorder as the previous year. There were 2,768 individuals who contacted West Virginia's 1-800-GAMBLER helpline, and 1,191 requested help with a gambling disorder.

In FY 2024, WVPGHN generated 54 earned media stories, presented at 43 conferences and seminars, exhibited information on problem gambling at 159 events, and awarded 11 new prevention subgrants.

WVPGHN provided training on gambling disorder treatment to 108 professionals. It maintains accreditation to provide certified training through the International Gambling Counselor Certification Board (IGCCB) for licensed professional counselors and licensed social workers.

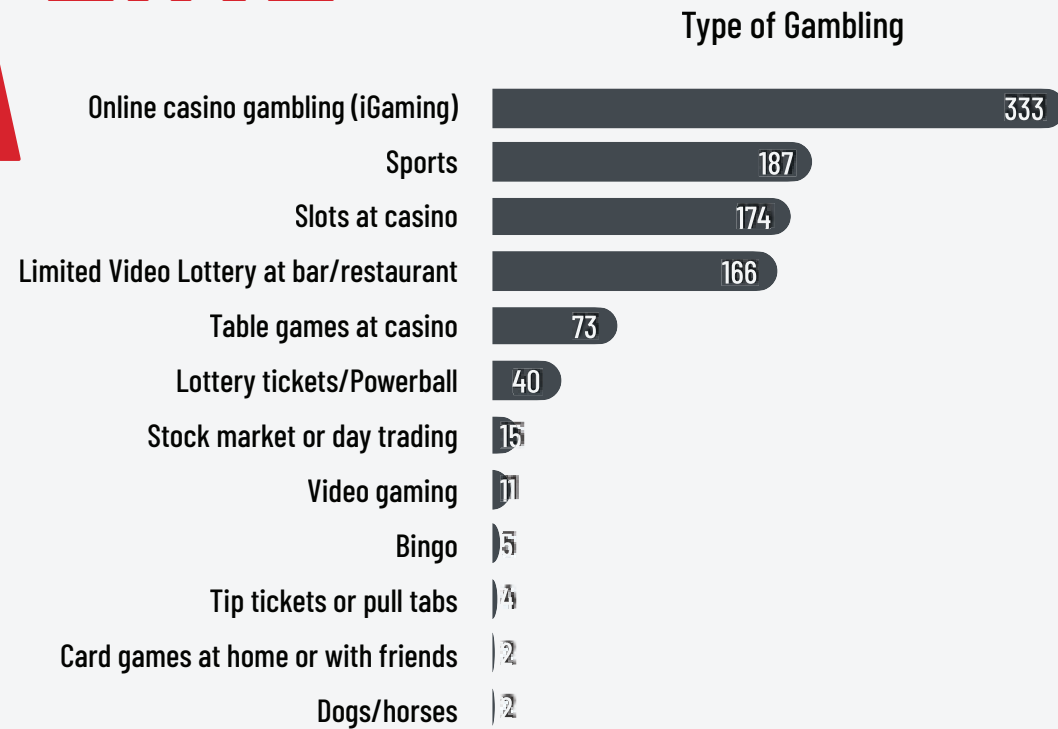
WVPGHN continued to partner with Gamban, which provides bet-blocking software at no cost to help seekers. In FY 2024, 26 help seekers activated the program.

WVPGHN began a partnership with GamFin, which provides helpline callers with financial counseling at no cost to them. In FY 2024, 71 help seekers accepted referrals for this service.

WVPGHN recruited and began training a network of peers (people in long-term recovery from gambling disorder) who will assist help seekers in the recovery process.

The partnership between WVPGHN and First Choice Services (FCS), the organization entrusted with the operation of 1-800-GAMBLER, has been instrumental in fostering substantial growth opportunities. FCS is the sole West Virginia entity credentialed by the International Council on Helplines. Operating 15 helplines and programs, FCS boasts a team of over 200 staff members and manages an annual volume exceeding 200,000 calls, texts, and chats. These programs primarily serve West Virginians, offering support across a spectrum of services such as mental health counseling, substance use disorder treatment, suicidal ideation, crisis counseling, social services, Affordable Care Act health insurance enrollment, employment barriers, and more. WVPGHN staff members work in close coordination with their counterparts at FCS, providing vital information on accessing assistance for callers experiencing problem gambling. This collaborative approach ensures a seamless and comprehensive support system for individuals seeking help through any FCS helplines.

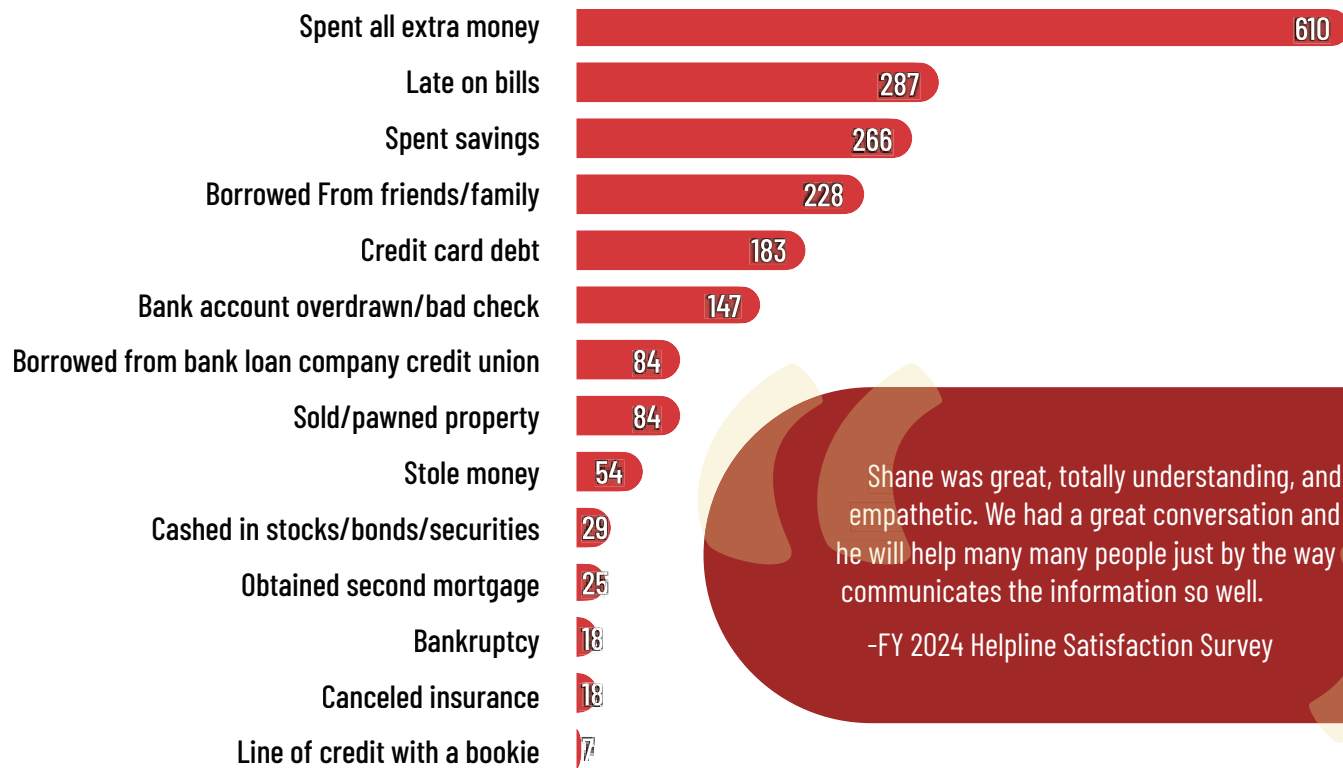
HELPLINE DATA



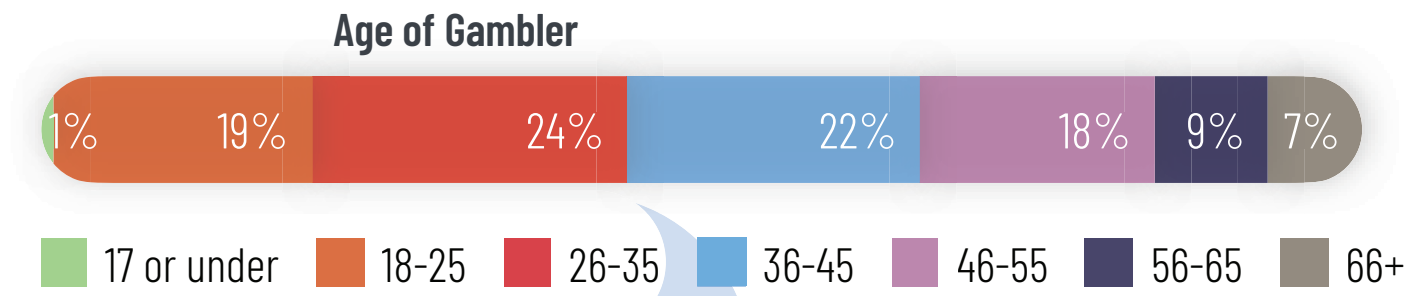
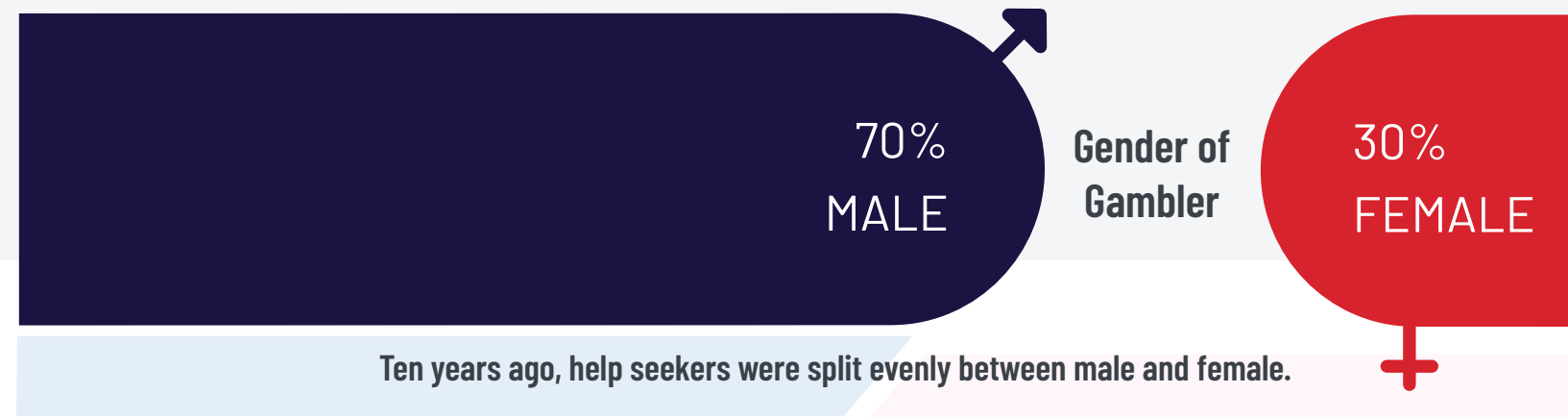
Most Reported Symptoms of a Gambling Disorder



Financial Problems Caused by Gambling



Shane was great, totally understanding, and empathetic. We had a great conversation and I know he will help many many people just by the way he communicates the information so well.
-FY 2024 Helpline Satisfaction Survey



In the last ten years, the percentage of help-seekers under age 35 has risen 144%.

Kriston was very compassionate and caring. I felt supported and she was able to answer all of my questions and provide services that I did not know existed.
-FY 2024 Helpline Satisfaction Survey

RESOURCES GIVEN TO HELPLINE VISITORS

All help seekers experiencing a gambling problem or who are concerned about the gambling of a loved one are offered a free consultation with a WVPGHN network clinician. Network clinicians are professionally licensed and have a minimum of 35 hours of training in treating gambling addiction.

In FY 2024, 171 people attended an initial consultation. Those unable to pay for additional sessions were offered funds to attend up to 20 therapy sessions. WVPGHN paid for 110 people to have additional individual therapy sessions.

West Virginia does not have an inpatient facility for problem gambling. Several out-of-state treatment facilities exist, though cost can be a barrier. In FY 2024, 17 people requested referrals to these facilities.

WVPGHN partners with the Virginia Council on Problem Gambling and the Virginia Partnership for Gaming & Health to offer a bimonthly online Wellness Call for anyone who wishes to stop gambling or who is in recovery. The Wellness Call combines a support group and a therapy process group. Dr. Heather Chapman, the Louis Stokes Cleveland Veterans Administration Medical Center Gambling Addiction Treatment Program Director, and WVPGHN staff lead the call. There were 119 participants this year. Examples of topics addressed include financial recovery, reflections shared in a letter, cross-addiction, relapse, and accountability.

He was easy to talk with I was very comfortable opening up to him. Now I truly believe that I am not alone in this.

-FY 2024 Helpline Satisfaction Survey

WVPGHN partners with GamFin to provide financial counseling to help seekers. In FY 2024, 71 people accepted a referral for financial counseling.

WVPGHN partners with Gamban to provide help seekers free access to software that blocks gambling sites from their computers or mobile devices. The platform also provides resources for those in recovery from gambling disorder. In FY 2024, 26 people accessed this service.

WVPGHN offers a weekly in-person therapy group in Morgantown, Clarksburg, and South Charleston. In FY 2024, 146 people attended these groups. There are also currently three in-person Gamblers Anonymous groups in the state that are not affiliated with WVPGHN. WVPGHN provides each caller information on these meetings, online and telephone Gamblers Anonymous meetings, and inclusive addiction support groups, such as Celebrate Recovery and Smart Recovery.

Help seekers are offered many other free resources, including:

- Self-help workbooks
- Book/podcast recommendations
- Information on self-exclusion
- Credit counseling and debt relief referrals
- Retreatment Weekends
- Online forums and other helpful websites
- Referrals for psychiatric treatment or social service resources

RETREATMENT WEEKEND

WVPGHN held a Retreatment Weekend event in April 2024, which had 56 participants. The event included 15 sessions covering topics such as spirituality, wellness, relaxation techniques, how peers contribute to the treatment continuum, and how gambling affects relationships. Individual counseling and support groups were also offered to all participants.



Staff and presenters posed at the Retreatment Weekend.

She was very concerned for me and considerate and helped me with my questions.
-FY 2024 Helpline Satisfaction Survey

retreatment weekend
Cacapon Resort
April 19th-21st
1-800-GAMBLER
WV'S PROBLEM GAMBLING HELP NETWORK
NO COST!

Pre- and post-Retreatment Weekend assessments show that participants reported significant improvement in areas of well-being, family relationships, friendships, connectedness, mastering their addiction, looking forward to the future, and participating in valuable non-gambling activities.



The Peer Panel at the Retreatment Weekend provided great insights.

The best part of retreatment weekend was...

This truly has been a life changing experience for me. I would like to personally thank each and everyone that made this life changing event a reality.

Horseback riding, counseling and bonfire where I made my first s'mores for the first time and meeting new people.

Being here with my husband and being in recovery together.

Meeting all of you! I learned so much about myself and others. Learning so much of how my actions have caused so many issues and problems but however I learned that it is very fixable.

The educational sessions, and learning about resources that are available.

I was here in support for my wife who I truly love. Information and help was great that I have received. The teachers were great! I hope when I leave that I can use every thing, and get our life back to normal with our marriage.

Getting to know participants & the workshops. Much learning very enjoyable. Thank you!

Being able to share it with my husband. Hear others speak. Know I'm not alone.

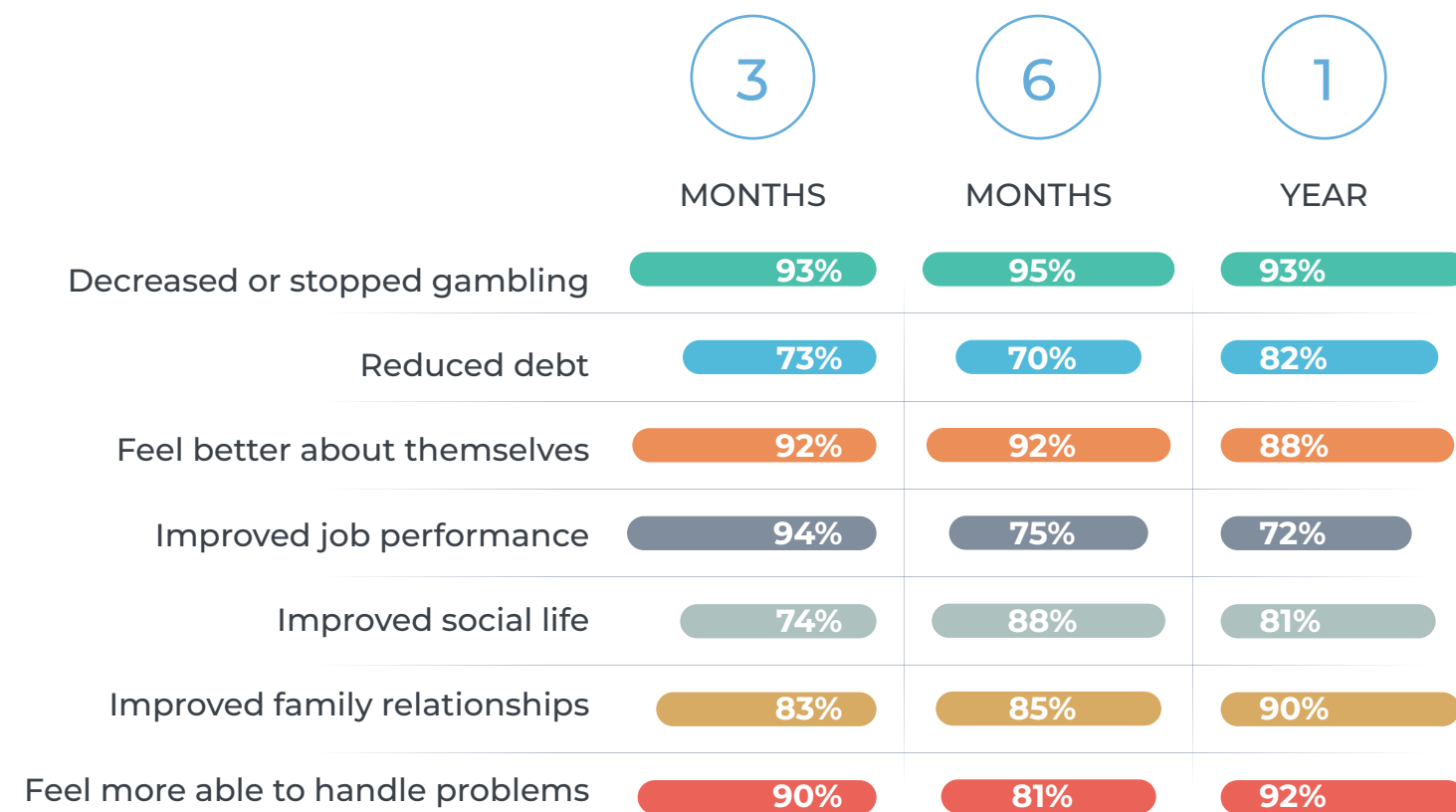
Catching up with old friends and making new ones. Watching the blessings transform is always the best.

I enjoyed how much everyone connected and cared about each other.

OUTCOMES

WVPGHN offers follow-up services to all consenting help seekers. Those who do not attend an appointment but request self-help resources receive a call one week after their initial call.

Those who attend an appointment get a reminder call before the appointment and a follow-up call after their appointment. All callers can receive follow-up calls at three months, six months, and one year from their initial call. The responses measure behavior changes from previous follow-up(s) and initial contact. The following represents 258 follow-up calls.



MARKETING

Billboards are one of the most common ways callers say they learned about the WVPGHN services. In FY 2024, a statewide campaign had this message.



WVPGHN aired commercials on network, cable, and streaming services. In FY 2024, WVPGHN created an ad aimed at iGaming players, which explains the services the program offers.

WVPGHN launched a digital ad campaign strategically targeting individuals interested in gambling. The campaign spanned streaming services, YouTube, and Facebook, tailoring content for those frequenting gambling websites, engaging with gambling-related content on Facebook, and visiting limited video lottery establishments. The outreach generated nearly one million impressions and attracted over 11,000 visits to the 1800GAMBLER.net website from individuals in West Virginia.

The person I spoke with is definitely a wonderful human being and this caller is grateful for her knowledge and help in conquering this awful addiction.

-FY 2024 Helpline Satisfaction Survey

OUTREACH & MEDIA

Community outreach plays a crucial role in the program's outreach efforts. WVPGHN and FCS staff engaged with and presented information on problem gambling to 43 groups, encompassing professional conferences, civic clubs, county and local government, and social services organizations. In addition, they distributed informative materials at 159 community events, conferences, health fairs, schools, and various medical and social service facilities. Promotional materials were distributed to several individuals and organizations, including Bingo halls and recovery homes.



Helpline Lead Heather Downey-Payne and Program Director Maricel Bernardo attended the WV Amusement & Limited Video Lottery Conference.



Program Coordinator Nick Andrick and Program Director Maricel Bernardo attended Prevention Day at the West Virginia Capitol.



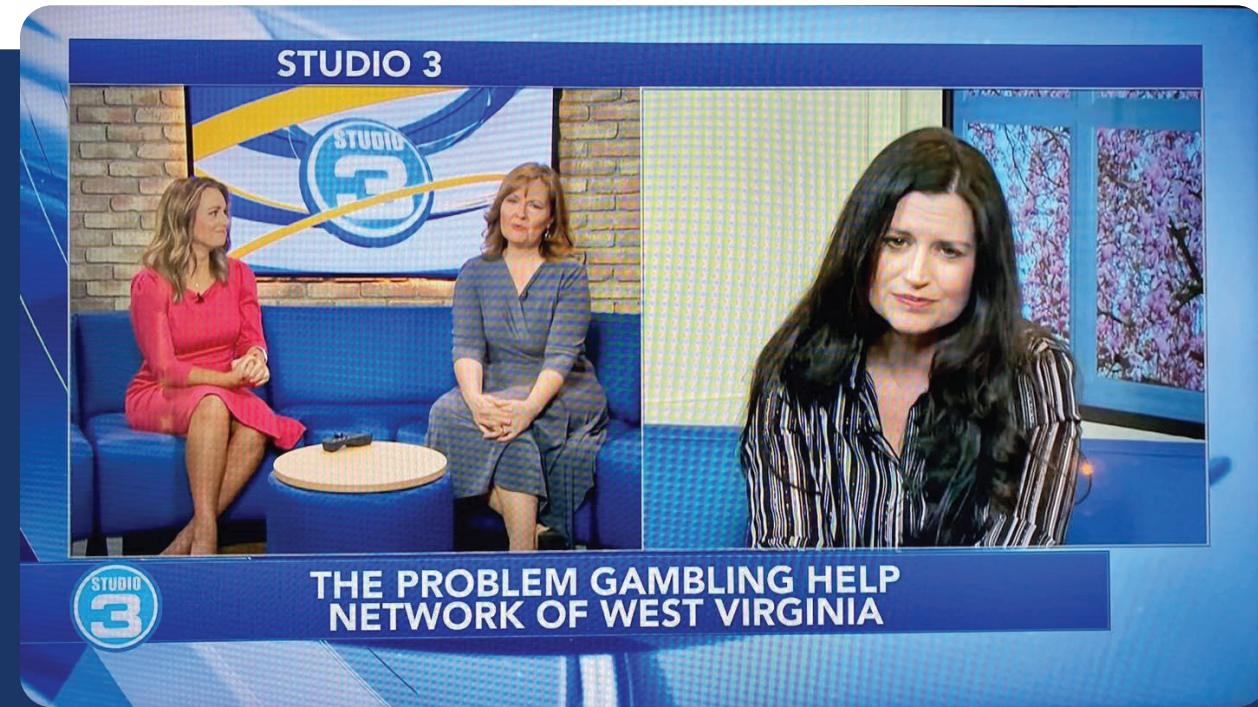
Network counselor Virginia Loew-Selhammer provided outreach in Wheeling.

NATIONAL PROBLEM GAMBLING AWARENESS MONTH



Each year, WVPGHN participates in National Problem Gambling Awareness Month in March. This month is an opportunity to bring attention to an often under-recognized and stigmatized disorder that affects millions of people.

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 WV'S PROBLEM GAMBLING HELP NETWORK



WVPGHN works to secure local media coverage of problem gambling, highlighting the program as a path to recovery. This year, WVPGHN generated 54 newspaper, radio, and television stories on gambling addiction in West Virginia.

She was very helpful and I could tell she really cared about helping me. Easy to talk to and not judgmental of my addiction. She let me speak and was very professional at her job. Thank you Jade and all of the people who help people like me.

-FY 2024 Helpline Satisfaction Survey



WVPGHN staff received a proclamation of National Problem Gambling Awareness Month from Charleston Mayor Amy Goodwin.



WVPGHN staff set up a display during National Problem Gambling Awareness Month to educate the 200+ employees who take helpline calls at First Choice Services.

WEBSITE

She was wonderful and I now have the full realization that I do have a problem...and support.

-FY 2024 Helpline Satisfaction Survey

The WVPGHN website, 1800GAMBLER.net, is a gateway for treatment resources. The website recorded 110,000 unique visitors this year, representing a 42% increase compared to the previous year. Website visitors have 24/7 access to online chat support. Additionally, they can explore treatment resources in their area, take advantage of opportunities to enroll in training programs, access information on symptoms of problem gambling, learn about safer gambling practices, and dispel common gambling myths.

SOCIAL MEDIA



A noteworthy feature of the website is a nine-question interactive Gambling Disorder questionnaire. Of the 3,190 individuals who participated in this quiz, nearly all reported experiencing at least one symptom, underscoring the importance of the platform in fostering self-awareness and understanding of gambling-related concerns.



PREVENTION

WVPGHN collaborates with prevention organizations to educate and spread awareness about problem

gambling. WVPGHN partners with the Southern West Virginia Collegiate Peer Recovery Network to share prevention and treatment information with the campus community. According to NCPG, about 75% of college students gamble yearly, and approximately 6% have serious gambling problems. WVPGHN also works to educate younger students about the risks of gaming and gambling addiction.



Representatives from WVPGHN grantee organizations attended their annual training on gambling addiction prevention.



WVPGHN provided training on problem gambling prevention to the Boys and Girls Club of the Eastern Panhandle.

Tell us about YOU!

Scan the QR code below to take an anonymous survey about gambling and gaming

it just takes a minute!

WVPGHN prevention grantees use this tabletop banner to survey youth about their gambling activity.



Each year WVPGHN participates in the NCPG's "Gift Responsibly" program to discourage gambling-themed gifts for youth.

WVPGHN prevention activities reached OVER 20,000 students and families through the following activities:

- Distribution of information and giveaways for outreach at sporting/school events, community meetings, local and state fairs, health fairs, malls, open-air markets, and various community holiday events
- Distribution of information and giveaways at local food pantries and food drives throughout the year
- Placement of information at libraries, courthouses, health departments, and public locations
- Workshops and presentations to middle, high school, and college students
- Youth surveys on gambling activities
- Teaching Stacked Deck evidence-based curriculum
- Weekly intercom announcements for one high school
- Poster and door contests
- Active youth participation in creating PSAs
- Messages on social media, radio, newspapers, and neighborhood message boards
- Youth participation in coalition meetings
- LEGO competitions, movie nights, and escape room activities as alternative interests to video gaming
- Community activity events for youth in partnership with local businesses
- Window displays at Family Resource Networks
- Community discussion of problem gambling throughout the year, especially during Red Ribbon Week, National Prevention Week, Problem Gambling Awareness Month, Mental Health Awareness Month, Prom Promise, and back-to-school events

Doug was part of the reason I have been a success thus far.
-FY 2024 Helpline Satisfaction Survey

Yes, this was really helpful and my son is calling to make an appointment and hopefully start a recovery!!!

-FY 2024 Helpline Satisfaction Survey

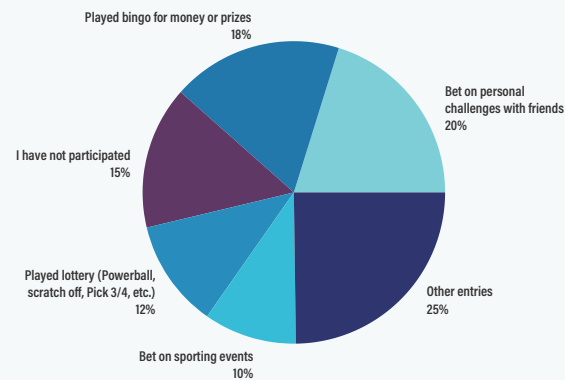
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WV'S PROBLEM GAMBLING HELP NETWORK

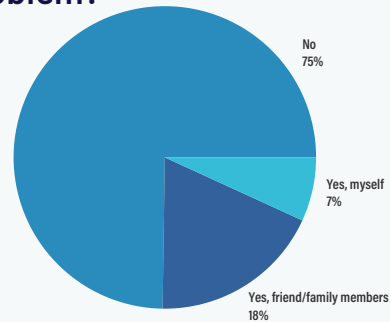
Youth Gambling Prevention

Gambling among youth is an increasing problem. Many teens lack financial literacy, especially as it relates to the odds of gambling. Our prevention grantees work in communities to provide evidence-based education on gambling, survey youth on their gambling activity, and provide outreach about problem gambling. Last year, they surveyed 400+ West Virginia teens:

Have you participated in any of these types of gambling?



Have you been concerned that a friend, family member, or yourself had a gambling problem?



Results

26 admitted they hid their gambling from others
 33 gambled to relax
 47 said they gambled more than a few times each month
 58 said they would like to stop gambling but did not know how

73 gambled to relieve boredom
 84 gambled to be with friends
 128 gambled to make money
 184 gambled for fun

2023-2024 Prevention Grantees

Brooke Hancock Family Resource Network (FRN)
 Community Connections, Inc
 Clay County FRN
 Mason County FRN
 Pleasants County Committee on Family Issues/FRN
 Taylor County FRN

Wetzel County FRN
 RESET, Inc.
 Clay County Health Department/Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD)
 Boys and Girls Club of the Eastern Panhandle
 Putnam SADD

TRAINING

In FY 2024, WVPGHN held a training for new network counselors, a two-day advanced counselor training, and a hosted the "Mountain State Summit on Gambling Addiction," which was open to the public. There were 32 attendees.

As the lines between gaming and gambling have blurred and the comorbidity between these disorders has increased, clinicians must have current treatment knowledge and employ best practice techniques most closely suited to their client's experience.



This group of staff and clinicians have been part of WVPGHN for 15+ years.



These are some of the attendees at the advanced counselor training.

Beginning of journey but she was very helpful and encouraging.

-FY 2024 Helpline Satisfaction Survey

FINANCIAL REPORT

Jade was very compassionate and helpful. She made me feel very comfortable about moving forward with my next steps into my recovery.

-FY 2024 Helpline Satisfaction Survey



Program Director Maricel Bernardo and Director of Marketing Sheila Moran presented information on the Retreatment Weekend at the National Conference on Problem Gambling.

Eleven network clinicians and staff are certified as Internationally Certified Gambling Counselors (ICGC). Dr. Heather Chapman, Director of the Louis Stokes Cleveland Veterans Administration Medical Center Gambling Addiction Treatment program, continues to act as WVPGHN clinical consultant.

WVPGHN offered Continuing Education Units (CEUs) to psychologists, social workers, counselors, and addiction professionals. In FY 2024, WVPGHN offered training on problem gambling to 108 professionals.

INCOME:

PGHNWV Contract	1,481,543.26
Other Income	15,000.00
Total Income:	1,496,543.26

EXPENSE:

Payroll	500,965.71
Marketing/Media/Outreach	169,445.07
Direct Program Expense	65,643.61
Treatment Services - Direct	184,411.91
Treatment Services - Admin	2,107.27
Communication	10,811.01
Equipment	7,981.81
Contracting Expense	3,174.15
Supplies	3,069.36
Travel	6,857.73
Rent	8,892.63
Training	50,743.26
Administrative Costs	151,366.51
Total Expense:	1,165,470.03
Net Income:	331,073.23

WVPGHN staff and counselors attended the National Conference on Problem Gambling in Washington, D.C.



STAFF

- Lata Menon, CEO
- David Sheppard, CFO
- Sheila Moran, Director of Marketing and Communication
- Adam Sypolt, Media Coordinator
- Maricel Bernardo, Program Director
- Nick Andrick, Program Coordinator
- Heather Downey-Payne, Helpline Lead
- Gina Lancianese, Helpline Coordinator
- Kriston Vanhorn, Helpline Coordinator
- Doug Squire, Helpline Coordinator
- Aaron Floyd, Helpline Coordinator
- Jade Wise, Helpline Coordinator
- Kristina Radich, Helpline Coordinator
- Cameron Asbury, Helpline Coordinator
- Shane Gatrell, Helpline Coordinator

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