



Problem Gambling

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Amber Bunch
Executive Director
Problem Gambling Coalition of Colorado
(303) 662-0772

Lois Rice
Executive Director
Colorado Gaming Association
(303) 237-5480

Colorado Problem Gambling Helpline (800) 522-4700

Gambling Helpline Aids Hundreds in Colorado

DENVER – For problem gamblers living in Colorado, help is just a phone call away. The Colorado Problem Gambling Helpline provides guidance and resources seven days a week, 24 hours a day. Last year, 345 Coloradans reached out for help by calling the helpline.

While the majority of calls made last year were from individuals seeking help for themselves, the Helpline also handled calls from friends and family members of problem gamblers. Staffed by trained mental health professionals, the Helpline can present a variety of possible solutions – from suggesting treatment centers to offering information on Gamblers Anonymous meetings.

“The Helpline is an essential resource for people struggling with a gambling problem,” said Amber Bunch, executive director of the Problem Gambling Coalition of Colorado (PGCC). “Picking up the phone is really the first step forward in dealing with the addiction.”

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Although it's estimated that as many as six million Americans have a gambling problem, according to the National Council on Problem Gambling, only a small percentage seek help. The Helpline actually received 139 fewer calls in 2008. The Coalition hopes to garner more exposure for the issue during National Problem Gambling Awareness Week, March 1-7, 2009. Informing the public about the Helpline is a key part of the Coalition's outreach campaign.

Below is a list of the calls received by county in 2008.

Client County:

UNKNOWN	67
Adams	30
Alamosa	2
Arapahoe	32
Boulder	15
Broomfield	2
Delta	1
Denver	73
Douglas	11
El Paso	26
Fremont	1
Garfield	3
Gilpin	1
Jefferson	46
La Plata	3
Larimer	7
Las Animas	1
Mesa	2
Otero	1
Park	1
Pueblo	3
Sedgwick	1
Teller	4
Weld	12

Total: 345

To help identify problem gamblers, the PGCC has provided 10 questions about gambling behavior.

- Have you often gambled longer than you had planned?
- Have you often gambled until your last dollar was gone?
- Have thoughts of gambling have caused you to lose sleep?

- Have you used your income or savings to gamble while letting bills go unpaid?
- Have you made repeated, unsuccessful attempts to stop gambling?

- Have you broken the law or considered breaking the law to finance your gambling?
- Have you borrowed money to finance your gambling?
- Have you felt depressed or suicidal because of your gambling losses?
- Have you been remorseful after gambling?
- Have you gambled to get money to meet your financial obligations?

If you or someone you know answers “yes” to any of these questions, the PGCC encourages you to call the Colorado Problem Gambling Helpline at (800) 522-4700.

In addition, individuals in Denver who would like more information on problem gambling and available treatment can call the University of Denver’s Problem Gambling Treatment and Research Center at (303) 871-3230 or visit the Problem Gambling Coalition of Colorado’s Web site at www.problemgamblingcolorado.org.

The mission of the Problem Gambling Coalition of Colorado is to increase awareness, advocate treatment and promote research and education on problem gambling. Members include organizations such as the Colorado Lottery, the Colorado Division of Gaming, the Colorado Gaming Association, University of Denver and industry professionals.

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Problem Gambling Coalition of Colorado
11757 West Ken Caryl Ave. #F-181, Littleton, CO 80127