

Your health: Information on gambling problems for family and friends



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If you think that your family member or friend might have a gambling problem, this information may help you to give them practical help.

I think my partner or family member has a gambling problem

If you suspect that your partner's or family member's gambling is out of control it is important to encourage them to seek help. Below are a few tips that may help you to communicate your concern.

- Choose a time when everyone is reasonably relaxed and calm
- Speak quietly and calmly. If you feel yourself getting angry or upset, stop and return to the conversation when you are calm again
- Tell the gambler that you care about them. For example, say 'John, you know that I really care for you and I want what is best for you.'
- Validate the gambler's experience and feelings. For example, say 'I know how it feels when things aren't going right. It can be lonely and you can feel that no-one understands.'
- List your concerns specifically. State the actual behaviours that concern you, rather than labelling the gambler an addict or other wise blaming them. For example, say 'I am worried that this is the third week in a row that you have come home without your wages, looking depressed and angry.'
- Offer to assist the gambler to take responsibility for their problems and to find help. For example, say 'I want you to know that if you want to talk about what's going on, I'm here for you. You've said before that gambling is not a problem, but if it is causing problems now, the quicker you get help, the quicker everything will be back to normal'.
- Offer a solution. For example, say 'I know people who can help you if you need it.'

From 'Stop Gambling: A self-help manual for giving up gambling' (2001) by Simon Milton. Used with permission.

You may also consider making an appointment to see a financial counsellor who can offer advice about protecting any joint assets or shared finances

Can I refer a friend or relative to the Gambling Counselling Service?

No. We believe that it is important for the person needing treatment to contact the [Gambling](#)

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- [Printable version](#)
- [Do you have a gambling problem?](#)
- [How does gambling become a problem?](#)
- [Help for gambling problems](#)
- [More fact sheets](#)
- [Gambling Counselling Service](#)
- [Drug, Alcohol & Gambling Service](#)

Counselling Service directly in order to arrange their first appointment. This gives them the opportunity to ask any questions and discuss any concerns that they may have prior to the appointment.

Family members and friends often accompany clients to appointments as support persons, however as a general rule family members and friends do not sit in during treatment sessions.

We have more fact sheets on gambling: "**Do you have a gambling problem?**", "**How does gambling become a problem?**", "**Help for gambling problems**". Or you might like to look at the **Gambling Counselling Service** site, or the **Drug, Alcohol and Gambling Service** information.



Printable version



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