



National Gambling Awareness Week

March 1, 2009 through March 7, 2009 is National Problem Gambling Awareness Week. This is a National grassroots campaign run through the National Council on Problem Gambling. 36 State Affiliate Councils are part of the National Council. The goal of the week is to increase awareness about problem gambling among individuals, communities and health care professionals.

The Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey, Inc. is an active participant in Gambling Awareness Week. Jeffrey M. Beck, LPC, CCGC, JD, ABD, the Managerial Assistant of the New Jersey Council is Chairman of the National Problem Gambling Awareness Week Committee. Gambling treatment professionals in New Jersey will be offering free gambling assessment and distributing literature throughout the state. The Council is planning presentations at The College of New Jersey, and New Jersey City University and will be engaged in other activities to help promote the week.

The theme of the 2009 campaign is Real Addiction/ Real Recovery. It is estimated that 2-3% of the US population will have a gambling problem in any given year. The Council believes 350,000 New Jersey residents are pathological, problem

or problem gamblers. Insofar as gambling does not have the telltale signs of alcoholism or drug addiction it is important that awareness of gambling problems be brought into the forefront, this week represents an extended effort to do so.

The NPGAW Campaign is an attempt to bring the addiction to light. Studies show that only

9.1% of compulsive gamblers have sought help through therapy or self help groups. Shame and stigma are seen as predominant barriers to treatment. For a long time gambling was perceived as a sin or moral weakness. Pathological gambling is classified in DSM IV as an impulse control disorder. It is important that people understand that treatment works,

a Certified Compulsive Gambling Counselor can help and, combined with Gambler's Anonymous, has been successful for many people.

The Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey, Inc. operates a 24 hour confidential helpline. Any individual with a gambling problem or a family member needing assistance can call 1-800GAMBLER for help and referral.



Compulsive Gambling: The Hidden Epidemic

The Compulsive Gambler is...

One of a handful of men and women you may see at a racetrack, card game, casino, bingo hall, OTB office. Or he or she may be sitting right next to you in your own living room, watching a football or baseball game on TV. Unlike others, the compulsive gambler is rooting for one team or horse over another because he has had to bet with money he probably cannot afford to lose. The compulsive gambler is driven to gamble in the same way that an alcoholic needs a periodic drink or a drug addict needs a "fix."

The average compulsive gambler is a person sixteen years old or over, is from a good home and a stable family, and often holds a steady job. He or she is likely to be clean, well-dressed and is probably at least a high school graduate. The average compulsive gambler then is well camouflaged. Unlike the alcoholic or the drug addict, he/she does not reveal the signs of addiction on his/her breath nor by tracks on his/her arm. He/she appears to be no different from the average responsible citizen. But the compulsive gambler suffers from a serious disease and, because of the nature of that disease, it is likely that the sickness will not be discovered until it is in its advanced stages.

Compulsive Gambling is...

A progressive behavior disorder in which an individual has a psychologically uncontrollable preoccupation and urge to gamble. This results in excessive gambling, the out come of which is the loss of productive time and money. Unless treated, the gambling will reach the point where it compromises, disrupts and then destroys the gambler's personal life,

family relationships and vocational pursuits. These problems in turn further intensify the gambling behavior.

To the compulsive, gambling seems to offer an easy solution to some of life's most pressing problems: insufficient money, little prestige or self-esteem, feelings of boredom or failure, hopelessness and defeat. But at the center of the disease is the certainty that the gambler must lose; and with continued losses, there is an increase of those very problems which led him to gamble in the beginning - thus escalating the pressures (and the stakes) to gamble more heavily and more frequently. To the compulsive gambler, the need to bet is no longer a little "action" or the illusion of a quick and easy profit: it has become a matter of life and death.

The Costs of the Disease Are...

- Family disruption, neglected or abused children, divorce, impoverishment, mental breakdown.
- Billions of dollars worth of productivity lost by business and industry through absenteeism, wasted time, poor work performance. theft of materials and accident.
- Criminal acts committed to raise money in order to continue gambling after heavy losses and mounting debts. The longer the disease continues untreated, the greater the probability of arrest and imprisonment.
- The unabated misery of being in the grips of an uncontrollable disease, without even knowing it, thus permitting the disease to wreck family, career and even life which, in many cases, ends in suicide.

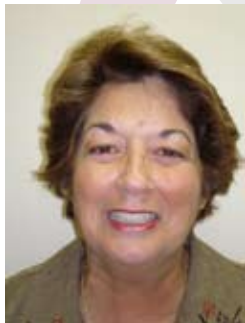
Help Can Come...

Only if the observant parent, husband or wife, relative or employer recognizes that a

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Introducing Our Staff - Vivian Andersch LPN, CD, LCADC, CCS, CJC, CCGC

Mrs. Vivian Andersch obtained her Practical Nurses License from Middlesex County Vocational School of Nursing in 1979. She obtained a Certified Chemical Dependency Certification from The Consortium of Behavioral Health Nurse Associates. She is a License Clinical Alcohol and Drug Counselor, Certified Clinical Supervisor, Criminal Justice Counselor and a Certified Compulsive Gambling Counselor.



Mrs. Andersch has been working in the field of addictions for over a decade. She began her career as a surgical medical nurse and joining the addictions program as a detoxification nurse in an acute medical detox unit. She obtained her certifications moving

into the field as an Addictions Counselor in an Outpatient Setting specializing in treatment of the Spanish population, IDRC and counseling with compulsive gamblers.

She was the Sr. Clinical Counselor at RBMC/ Methadone Maintenance Program prior coming to us at SFSNJ on June 5, 2006. Mrs. Andersch is currently the Clinical Supervisor in our Toms River Program.

In 1989 she received a Project Care Award from the Middlesex County Probation Department and the Administrative Office of the Courts. In 1993 she received the Jack Langley Counselor of the year Award from the Middlesex County Addictions Association for outstanding services in the field of addictions. She has been a member of the New Jersey Association of alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselor, CBHNA Membership and a current member of the New Jersey Department of Human Services Driving Under the Influence Task Force.

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Joanne Theresa Arnold-Velcheck MSW, LSW, LCADC, CTTS

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Introducing Our Staff - Joanne Theresa Arnold- Velcheck MSW, LSW, LCADC, CTTS

Mrs. Arnold-Velcheck currently works as the Senior Administrative Counselor at Seashore Family Services of New Jersey. Prior to joining SFSNJ, she was the Program Coordinator for the Township of Brick Municipal Alliance Committee.

Mrs. Arnold-Velcheck holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology from Georgian Court College. She holds a Masters in Social Work Degree from Monmouth University, with a concentration in Families and Children. She is a New Jersey Licensed Social Worker and a New Jersey Licensed Clinical Alcohol and Drug Counselor.



She holds a Certified Tobacco Dependence Treatment Specialist, by the Addiction Professionals Certification Board of New Jersey. She is also certified by the American Cancer Society to facilitate FRESHSTART Smoking Cessation Classes.

She is a Certified New Jersey School Social Worker. She is a Certified Parent Educator, from Rutgers University, School of Social Work, and Continuing Education Certificate Program. She also has a Certificate of Competency in Compulsive Gambling, from The New Jersey Division of Addiction Services and the Addiction Professionals Certification Board of New Jersey.

Mrs. Arnold-Velcheck's areas of counseling are in Tobacco Dependence, Compulsive Gambling, and Co-Occurring Disorders.

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loved and valued person is suffering from a disease for which he is no more responsible than one who is congenitally blind. Indeed, the very nature of the disease is a kind of blindness which prevents the gambler from seeing his actions as pathological symptoms. For this reason, few compulsive gamblers can re cover without the help of others. The gambler must be motivated in every way possible to realize the seriousness of the disease in order to seek help. There is no doubt that compulsive gambling can be treated.

Thousands of sick compulsive gamblers still languish in prisons and mental hospitals. And millions of compulsive or potential compulsives are on the street, in the office, at the racetrack, in the church or synagogue- sponsored bingo or poker game, disrupting families, creating social havoc.

They suffer from an illness that is still largely unrecognized, untreated and hence, reaching the proportions of an epidemic.

Yet, thousands of compulsives have stopped gambling and have rebuilt their once-catastrophic and tragic lives. Often, the recovered gambler will discover a deeper meaning to his or her life and to the renewed relation ships with family, colleagues and friends.

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Message from the Director



MARCH 1-7 IS NATIONAL GAMBLING AWARENESS WEEK

Welcome to our spring 2009 edition of *Seashore Breeze*.

I hope that your plans for this new year are in motion and that you are on your way to attaining your goals.

2009 should be an interesting year. The economical situation in our country, and the bad news that permeates the media daily prompt social and counseling agencies like ours to be prepared to deal with potential crises that members of our communities might face. In these times, prevention activities and information dissemination is key to assisting our community.

One of my major concerns is the possibility of individuals seeking

a quick fix or escape from their problems through substance abuse, physical abuse of loved ones, suicide attempt and/or compulsive gambling among other potentially problematic behaviors.

The first major sporting event of the year, the Super Bowl, generated billions of dollars in bets placed by people seeking a quick fix to their financial situations. If you win, you become instantaneously euphoric; if you lose, despair and feelings of remorse sink in. The denial of these emotions can lead to gambling related problems.

Compulsive gambling is a progressive behavior disorder characterized by the uncontrollable preoccupation to gamble. This behavior reaches the point whereby it disrupts the gambler's personal, professional and family life leaving people in financial and psychological ruin. As with any other social and behavioral disorder, compulsive gambling is an "equal opportunity" condition that can strike anyone at anytime. The disorder does not discriminate by age, gender or financial status. It is progressive and in contrast with substance abuse, it is not evident until it seriously affects the financial situation of the gambler and his/her family. More seriously, it can lead to suicide and criminal behaviors.

March 1st through March 7th is National Gambling Awareness Week. I urge you to learn more about this disorder that afflicts millions of Americans: men, women, adolescents, rich and poor.

For more information and help with a gambling problem, please visit: www.800gambler.org and www.sfsnj.org.

**Roberto Flecha, MBA, LCADC, CCS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**