



RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING PROGRAM PREVENTION STRATEGY

Purpose

The purpose of this strategy is to guide the development and delivery of focussed problem gambling prevention services and initiatives in British Columbia.

Problem gambling is defined as all gambling behaviour patterns that can compromise, disrupt or damage personal, family or vocational pursuits. It can affect both the person who gambles to excess as well as others (such as family members, co-workers, employers or community members).

Prevention is anticipatory action taken to prevent an undesirable outcome. It addresses the needs of people who may be *at risk* of developing a gambling problem.

Prevention - A Partnership Approach

A comprehensive approach consists of interrelated strategies to achieve prevention goals. Through the Responsible Gambling Strategy, a multi-level partnership is being forged with BC Lottery Corporation, municipalities, gaming providers and other key stakeholders. This partnership will be formalized with a signed Partnership Agreement by fall of 2006.

Goals of the Prevention Strategy

- To reduce the incidence of problem gambling
- To reduce the risks and harm related to problem gambling
- To increase public awareness and promote healthy choices

Basic Assumptions

- Participation in gambling involves the risk of adopting behaviours that result in harmful consequences (legal issues, financial problems)
- Prevention target populations are:
 - “low risk” for developing a gambling problem (i.e., they currently do not gamble or do so without risk of harmful consequences)
 - “at risk” for developing a gambling problem (i.e., they have adopted some risk behaviour that may lead to harmful consequences)
- Prevention strategies focus on the avoidance of harmful risk behaviours and on the reduction of risk for a gambling related problem

- Effective prevention addresses factors that:
 - motivate a person to gamble or not
 - encourage or discourage a person from continuing a risk behaviour
 - facilitate participation in, or avoidance of, gambling
- Effective prevention strategies address the identified needs with simultaneous strategies for :
 - changing attitudes and behaviours (public awareness and education)
 - reducing the risk of harm through skill development (competencies) and choices of healthier alternatives
 - establishing guidelines for and supporting low risk gambling

Principles and Values

- Adults have the right to make their own choice with respect to gambling, and are able to assume responsibility for their choices
- Prevention messages respond to the interest, issues and communication needs of a range of targets (by age, gender, culture, workplace etc.)
- Effective prevention programs, policies and initiatives are meaningful to the target populations for which they are designated
- Prevention is continually enforced through all life stages
- Prevention and treatment strategies are mutually enhancing

Prevention Components

Public awareness and media campaigns

Provide accurate, balanced information on gambling, the harmful consequences of problem gambling and promote healthier alternatives by:

- Promoting the awareness of problem gambling issues and services in BC
- Developing an overall prevention theme – Key messages that dispel myths
- Proactive use of media to promote prevention messages and theme
- Providing low risk guidelines that enable adults to self regulate and monitor gambling behaviour.

Community Involvement

Support the development of municipal policies and prevention initiatives that foster a community environment where responsible gambling is the norm by:

- Inviting municipalities to partner in addressing issues related to problem gambling and responsible gambling – Partnership forum
- Distributing information about the incidence and prevalence of problem gambling
- Prevention providers working with schools and community groups

Resources

Support the development and implementation of effective prevention programs, policies and initiatives by:

- Partnering to develop and implement new initiatives such as the Richmond Educational Resource; RG Information Centres in Casinos; coordinated media campaigns
- Directing prevention providers to foster collaborative planning and delivery of prevention initiatives at the community level
- Gathering and disseminating current dependable prevention resources and information on gambling

Professional Education and Skills Training

Develop and deliver ongoing training that is evidence based and reflects best practices in delivery of prevention programs

- Develop accredited curriculum for delivery by Justice Institute
- Develop and deliver curriculum to train allied professionals and collateral service providers
- Develop and deliver training to increase skills of gaming providers – ART training
- Support the development of problem gambling prevention components for university and college curricula

Target Populations

Enhance programs to target the needs of populations identified to be at risk for developing problems

- Youth (13-19)
- Young Adults (19-30)
- Pre-retirement seniors (55 to 64)
- Seniors (65+)
- Aboriginal Peoples

Research and Evaluation

Participate in research producing findings on the underlying factors that contribute to problem gambling such as:

- Conducting research on the nature, extent and consequences of problem gambling in BC – i.e., Lower Mainland Social and Economic Impact Study
- Replicating the prevalence study in 2007
- Participating in inter-provincial collaboration on research projects

Standards and Policies

Develop public interest standards and policies to decrease risks such as:

- Advertising Standards,
- Responsible Gambling Standards,

- Security and Surveillance Standards
- Policies for the delivery of prevention services throughout BC
- Plan, implement and evaluate prevention services, policies and initiatives

Outcomes

Prevention outcomes will be specific, with quantifiable measures wherever possible. Progress towards achievement of all desired outcomes will be monitored

Sampling of Initiatives Underway for 2006/07

STRATEGY	INITIATIVES	METHOD OF DELIVERY	TARGET	OUTCOME MEASURE
Public Awareness	Problem Gambling media campaign targeted to young adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web sites • Transit • Campus newspapers • Key theme focussed on risks and myths of “luck” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote services • Promote website • Address myths related to gambling • Reduce risk behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased visits to website • Increased calls to toll free Help Line • Positive response to Ad Tracker • Increased awareness of services
Community Education	Municipalities join BC Partnership	Forum to formalize partnerships Fall 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate to reduce risks • Support healthy communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership agreements signed • Communities embrace Responsible Gambling philosophy
Education: Resource Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School based education resource • Responsible Gambling Information Centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot and evaluate a school based resource in Richmond SD • Pilot and evaluate RG info centre concept in two casinos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade 6 & 7 students educated in risks related to gambling • Customers in gaming venues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the pilot, 80% of participating students recognize the myths and risks related to gambling • Customers informed as to how games work and odds of winning
Education - Skills Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention training and education • Appropriate Response Training (ART) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual professional development • Training for new industry employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention service providers • Various level of Gaming venue staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All prevention service providers will participate in annual skills training • All gaming industry staff will receive ART as condition of employment
Education: Targeted Programs	Resource materials and presentations	Awareness materials specific to high risk groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth • Seniors • First Nations 	<p>High risk groups will gain knowledge and skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand vulnerability factors • How to avoid risks