



## Problem Gambling Awareness Month & Responsible Gambling

*If you gamble, know your limits*

(MARCH 1, 2018) What color was the energy drink shower dumped on the head of Philadelphia Eagles winning coach Doug Pederson? And, how long was the National Anthem? "Prop bets" on details like these can make a game even more fun to watch. However, for people with gambling disorder the betting becomes an illness characterized by the compulsion to gamble more and more despite negative consequences.

March is National Problem Gambling Awareness Month and the national Association of Problem Gambling Service Administrators (APGSA) wants to take this opportunity to raise awareness of gambling as a public health issue and a potentially dangerous past-time for some. U.S. citizens lose more than \$94 billion gambling each year. Problem gamblers cost the nation approximately \$10,000 per gambler per year. Those losses can be seen in bankruptcies, divorces, lost jobs, crime and suicide.<sup>1</sup>

APGSA President Terri Sue Canale-Dalman commented, "When the economy struggles states often turn to gambling revenues to fill budget gaps. As leaders in behavioral health we want our communities to know that while gambling provides tax dollars for needed services, it can also have a downside. We urge adults to learn how to gamble responsibly to protect themselves and their families from potentially serious consequences."

As March Madness approaches, we realize that gambling is entwined with everyday life, and the next bet is as close as the phone in your hand or the casino just a few minutes away by car. Temptation cannot be avoided, so if someone chooses to gamble it's important to know how to gamble responsibly. Here are some strategies to ensure that gambling remains a fun, recreational activity.

- Set a money limit and stick with it – and do not gamble on credit.
- Pay your bills before placing any bets.
- If you place a bet, look at it as entertainment and NOT a way to make money or win back previous losses.
- Limit drinking when you're gambling – the more you drink the more money you're likely to bet, and lose.
- If you or someone you know struggles with gambling, call the 24-hour, free and confidential National Helpline: **1-800-522-4700**, chat at [www.ncpgambling.org/chat](http://www.ncpgambling.org/chat) or text **4hope to Crisis Text Line at 741741**.

<sup>1</sup>Grinols, Earl L. *The Hidden Social Costs of Gambling*. 2011 Center for Christian Ethics at Baylor University. 19-28.

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### About the APGSA

The Association of Problem Gambling Service Administrators (APGSA) is a national membership organization of state administrators of public funds for problem gambling services. The organization was formed in 2000 to support the development of services that will reduce the impact of problem gambling in the United States. To learn more about APGSA and problem gambling services across the nation, visit [www.apgsa.org](http://www.apgsa.org).

### Contact

APGSA President Terri Sue Canale-Dalman, (916) 324-3020 - [terri.canale@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:terri.canale@cdph.ca.gov)

APGSA Executive Director Kathleen M. Scanlan - (617) 548-8057 - [kmscanlan@apgsa.org](mailto:kmscanlan@apgsa.org)