

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: Working to Prevent Problem Gambling

Every year the New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) launches a Problem Gambling campaign designed to raise awareness of the risks of gambling. The campaign launched in March, National Problem Gambling Awareness Month (#PGAM). The campaign highlights the dangers of gambling in excess or at a young age and directs New Yorkers to help. This year the campaign was enhanced to include young adults.

OASAS maintains Gambling Addiction or Problem Gambling is known as the “hidden addiction” because there are no visible signs. Unlike alcohol or drug addiction, you can’t visibly see the effects of someone’s gambling. For example, if someone has been drinking, you may smell alcohol, or they may be slurring their speech. Because of the lack of visibility, often those suffering from a gambling addiction can hide it longer than someone with an alcohol or drug problem. Usually, gambling addiction is discovered when there is a loss of accessibility to money and/or negative actions occur. Gambling is defined as the act of risking something of value (money, food, clothes, electronics, etc.) on a game of chance (bingo, lottery, dice, slot machine, sports, etc.) for the desired result. Some of the most popular types of gambling are Casinos, Lottery/Scratch-off tickets, Sports Betting, Horse Betting, Bingo, Raffles/Office Pool.

SAFE Social Worker, Francesca Carbone, addressed youth enrolled in the Youth Bureaus After 3 program to discuss the risks and consequences of engaging in gambling activities and steps one can take to prevent youth gambling behaviors such as being involved in positive social activities (clubs), sports and other positive community outlets. Warning signs include Unexplained absences from school and/or work; Lower grades and/or poor work performance; Stealing money from others to gamble; Preoccupation with gambling; Lying, cheating or stealing ; Gambling as a way to escape worries, frustrations or disappointments; Displaying large amounts of cash and other material possessions; Continuing to gamble despite consequences; Attempting to cut down or stop gambling on their own; Intense interest in gambling conversations and using lingo (bookie, point spread, etc.); Spending more and more time on gambling related activities including on the internet, reading newspapers, checking scores, etc.

Ms. Carbone continued the presentation via audio to address the members of the Glen Cove Senior Center. According to OASAS, most adults can gamble responsibly. People with a gambling problem often bet with money that they can't afford to lose. As they spend more and more time gambling, they may start to neglect family, friends, work and social obligations. They may even neglect themselves – not eating or sleeping properly and not caring about their appearance. People with a gambling problem often borrow money to gamble. Credit cards may be maxed out or second mortgages taken out on a home. Despite negative consequences, they may continue to chase after losses while denying they have a problem. People with gambling problems may lie about their gambling and may do things that compromise their own personal values, such as engaging in illegal acts.

Warning signs include Spending more time thinking about gambling; Needing to gamble with more and more; Becoming restless or irritable when trying to stop or cut down on gambling; Gambling to escape problems or feelings of depression or anxiety; Losing money by gambling and returning another day to get even; Using credit cards for cash advances.; Lying to family or others about gambling.

Having a plan before you gamble can help reduce the potential consequences and encourages the following tips: Set the amount of money and time you will spend gambling before you go; Maintain a balance in your recreational activities, gamble for entertainment/fun in addition to other activities; Take frequent breaks when gambling; Limit or exclude drinking alcohol while you are gambling.

For more information, help and referrals to treatment for problem gambling please call the free confidential NYS HOPELINE - 1-877-846-7369 (1-877-8-HOPENY) or text HOPENY (467369).

SAFE is a not for profit alcohol and substance abuse prevention, intervention and education agency located in Glen Cove City Hall. To learn more about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition please follow us on www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition or visit SAFE's website to hear the Prevention Gambling presentation at www.safeglencove.org.