



March 7-13, 2010 is National Problem Gambling Awareness Week, a grassroots public awareness and outreach campaign coordinated annually by the National Council on Problem Gambling.

Visit www.npgaw.org for more information.

The goal of this campaign is to educate the general public and health care professionals about the warning signs of problem gambling and raise awareness about the help that is available both locally and nationally.

NCPG is the national advocate for programs and services to assist problem gamblers and their families. Our research finds that 2%-3% of the US population will have a gambling problem in any given year. That's 6 million to 9 million Americans yet only a small fraction seeks out services, such as treatment and self-help recovery programs.



Washington State Problem Gambling Awareness Week Activities Coordinated by the Evergreen Council on Problem Gambling

- Special proclamation by the Governor announcing Problem Gambling Awareness Week in Washington State.
- Posters distributed to cardrooms.
- Media Kits and Press Releases distributed to Washington media by JayRay Communications.
- Article in *Western Gambling Journal*, March issue
- On-air interviews – radio and TV
 - o Real-life “Zander” available for interviews March 8-12
- MARCH 11: University of Washington-Tacoma Panel Discussions, 12:30 and 6:30, MAT #104
- MARCH 13: Washington Journalism Education Association Conference at Mountlake Terrace High School to high school journalists and their advisors
- Announcement of the 2010 Youth Problem Gambling Awareness and The Arts Grant Recipients (2010 sponsor: ECPG; 9 applicants this year)
- Special Edition of ECPG Newsletter – *Insights*

The State of Washington



Proclamation

WHEREAS, March 7-13, 2010, is National Problem Gambling Awareness Week; and

WHEREAS, research indicates that nationally a minimum of 5 million individuals are either problem or pathological gamblers; and

WHEREAS, thousands of adults and adolescents in Washington State have experienced severe gambling problems during their lives; and

WHEREAS, public awareness and treatment availability have been proven to limit the rate of problem gambling in Washington and other states; and

WHEREAS, the Evergreen Council on Problem Gambling is a nonprofit organization working to increase public awareness of problem gambling, train treatment providers and gambling industry personnel to address it, and enhance the availability of treatment services for problem gamblers; and

WHEREAS, it is important that the gambling industry and the treatment and recovery communities join together to increase public awareness of problem gambling and to take measures to address this addiction;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Christine O. Gregoire, Governor of the state of Washington, do hereby proclaim March 7-13, 2010, as

Problem Gambling Awareness Week

in Washington State, and I urge all citizens to join me in this special observance.



Signed this 26th day of February, 2010

Chris Gregoire

Governor Christine O. Gregoire



EVERGREEN
Council on Problem Gambling

Treatment. Training. Awareness.

WESTERN GAMBLING JOURNAL

Contact: Rhonda Stone
Community Education Coordinator
360.352.6133
rstone@evergreencpg.org

THE BALANCING ACT

Self-Control and Keeping It Fun Help Prevent Problem Gambling

NOTE: National Problem Gambling Awareness Week is March 7-13, 2010. For State information on Problem Gambling, visit www.evergreencpg.org. For National information and news resources, visit www.npgaw.org.

Entertainment, relaxation, and fun—important qualities in a balanced life.

Most people who gamble never develop a gambling problem. For a small percentage, however, gambling can become a heavy weight that tips the scale off balance and into debt, stress, broken relationships, and more.

The Evergreen Council on Problem Gambling is working hard to share that message throughout Washington State. The goal is not to encourage or discourage gambling as a form of recreation. The Council remains steadfastly neutral on the topic. Instead, the goal is to inform residents of all ages that gambling has the potential to be addictive. It requires limits and self-control in order to preserve its purpose as a form of individual recreation or group social activity.

Standing before a class of junior high students recently, Rhonda Stone, the Council's Community Education Coordinator, admonished teens that gambling and gambling addiction are two completely different things. Gambling, she told the students, is a form of legal recreation in Washington State, while gambling addiction is a serious health concern. When asked if any of their parents or immediate family members work in the gambling industry, four of the 12 students raised their hands.

"The gaming industry is now an important part of state and family economics," Stone notes. In Washington State alone, it has grown from an \$863 million industry in the Year 2000 to a \$2.14 billion industry in 2008. Associated tax revenues to local governments help support a variety of services in local communities.

"The jobs support our communities, too," adds Dolores Chiechi, executive director of the Recreational Gaming Association (RGA) and a member of the Evergreen Council's Board of Directors. In a time when the number of available jobs is declining rather than growing, the gaming industry's above-minimum-wage jobs are an important source of personal and community revenue.

With gambling's ties to state and family economics, it is essential for all gamblers to remain vitally aware that gambling can cross the line from enjoyable recreation to unhealthy obsession or addiction, Stone says.

Chiechi concurs. "It's often been said that problem gambling is the Achilles heel of the industry," Chiechi notes. "It could make or break us. If we're not mindful of this, then it could come back to bite us."

Stone offers three practical tips to help insure that gambling remains entertaining and fun:

- 1) Before you gamble, set a budget and stick to it.
- 2) Monitor how much you win and lose and make sure that losses do not exceed your budget.
- 3) Seek assistance if you cannot stick to limits or you find yourself feeling guilty, depressed, or troubled in any way by finances or your gambling activity.

Just as beer, wine, or hard liquor require limits and careful use so that addiction does not result, gambling requires limits and careful use, too.

Assistance is available in Washington State for issues related to problem gambling. Many people have been helped with outpatient treatment (call the 24/7 Helpline at 800.547.6133 for information) and support through Gamblers Anonymous (visit www.evergreencpg.org for a list of Washington's GA meetings, also accessible through GA's national Website). Brand new inpatient treatment is available on a limited basis for individuals meeting the appropriate criteria.

Several key prevention and awareness initiatives are under way in Washington State to help minimize the impact of problem gambling. Initiatives include public presentations available to groups throughout the state; Responsible Gaming Programs for Tribal Casinos; proposed Therapeutic Justice for Problem Gamblers (Gambling Court, similar to Drug Court); Youth Problem Gambling Awareness and the Arts Projects; New Directions Youth Music and Arts Academies; and more.

For more information, contact Rhonda Stone, Community Education Coordinator, Evergreen Council on Problem Gambling, at 360.352.6133 or rstone@evergreencpg.org.



The Evergreen Council on Problem Gambling is dedicated to increasing public awareness of problem gambling, expanding the availability of services for problem gamblers and their families, and encouraging research and programs for prevention and education. Established in 1991 as a private, nonprofit organization, the Council provides statewide confidential support through its 24-hour Problem Gambling Helpline (800.547.6133) and public awareness, education, prevention, training, and resource development services. Visit our website at www.evergreencpg.org.

February 25, 2010
GENERAL NEWS

Contact: Rhonda Stone
Community Education Coordinator
360.352.6133
rstone@evergreencpg.org

“Zander” Shares His Story of Dealing with Gambling Addiction

Zander and others share inspiring stories March 11 at UW-Tacoma for Problem Gambling Awareness Week

TACOMA, Wash. – “Zander” could be anyone, including a teen in your own home or next door. Zander’s issue—problem gambling—often goes unrecognized and misunderstood. The Evergreen Council on Problem Gambling (ECPG) is giving an identity to “Zander” the underage gambler during National Problem Gambling Awareness Week, March 7-13, 2010. The public is invited to hear “Zander” and two other college students whose lives were adversely affected by problem gambling. The panel discussion will take place at the University of Washington–Tacoma campus, March 11 (two times: 12:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.; room: MAT 104).

Joining “Zander” will be a young woman who, as a child and teen, watched her family lose everything, including their home to problem gambling and a college student whose boyfriend ruined her excellent credit by “borrowing” from her credit accounts. Other panelists include Dr. Charles “Chuck” Maurer, President of the National Council on Problem Gambling and Seattle psychologist.

“We are grateful to these young adults for sharing their stories with the community in order to reach out to others who have been affected by gambling addiction,” said Rhonda Stone, ECPG community education coordinator.

Serving as a pseudonym, the name “Zander” was used in a collaborative campaign launched by the Washington State Gambling Commission and ECPG last fall (visit www.notazander.org). The campaign aims to prevent underage gambling by informing teens and their parents about new fines approved by the Washington State Legislature. Teens can now be fined and required to fulfill community service hours for sneaking into card rooms and casinos.

Individuals who start gambling by age 12 are four times more likely to develop a gambling problem, which often surfaces in the young adult/college years. To learn more, visit ECPG’s new Website for teens, www.addictionisagamble.com, or its site for the general public, www.evergreencpg.org.

About ECPG: The Evergreen Council on Problem Gambling is dedicated to increasing public awareness of problem gambling, expanding the availability of services for problem gamblers and their families, and encouraging research and programs for prevention and education. Established in 1991 as a private, nonprofit organization, the council provides statewide confidential support through its 24-hour Problem Gambling Helpline (800.547.6133) and public awareness, education, prevention, training and resource development and services. www.evergreencpg.org

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POSSIBLE STORY IDEAS

About Problem Gambling in Washington State

- Has embezzlement in your area been linked to a gambling problem? Check newspaper archives for the past 12 months and/or with area prosecutors or law enforcement.
- Talk to your local card room or casino. Many have done a great deal to address the problem of underage gamblers sneaking into their establishments.
- Talk to Susan Arland from the Washington State Gambling Commission about new penalties for teens that sneak into card rooms and casinos. Phone number: 360-486-3466; Email: SusanA@wsgc.wa.gov .
- Talk to Maureen Greeley (mlgreeley@evergreencpg.org), Executive Director of the Evergreen Council on Problem Gambling, or Rhonda Stone (rstone@evergreencpg.org), Community Education Coordinator for ECPG to find out the latest on problem gambling (who it affects, serious consequences, and more). They can be reached at 360-352-6133.
- Do a story on efforts to reach teens with information about gambling addiction. Get started by visiting www.addictionisagamble.com, ECPG's new Website for teens. The site includes student-created videos by youth from the Seattle School District, Thurston County schools, Shelton School District, Chehalis School District, and more. Call Rhonda Stone at 360-352-6133 for more information.

QUICK FACTS

About Problem Gambling

- Most people who gamble never develop a gambling problem. Although the percentage is small (2% to 4%), problem gambling still effects at least 80,000 people in Washington State each year.
- Twice as many teens and young adults are at risk for developing gambling problems: (1) the physiological ability to control impulses is not fully developed until age 25; (2) the teen and young adult years are typically a time for risk-taking and risk-taking is associated with dopamine release; and (3) dopamine—the brain's own "feel good" chemical, artificially released with drug and alcohol use—is also released with gambling activity.

- Problem gambling is treatable—but often requires specialized assistance. A confidential, statewide Problem Gambling Helpline is available 24/7 to assist Washington residents. The number: **1-800-547-6133**.
- Problem gambling treatment is available at low-cost and no-cost in Washington State (on a limited basis). Visit www.evergreencpg.org for a list of treatment providers.