



RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING COUNCIL

Have No Regrets If You Choose To Gamble

Responsible Gambling Council Helps Local Citizens Recognize Gambling Risks During Problem Gambling Prevention Week September 26 – October 2

September 14, 2011 (Toronto, ON) -- Unlike popcorn and a movie, spending time at the slots – or the track or even buying lottery tickets – is entertainment with risk. It's fun for many, but trouble for others and the effects can be devastating. In Ontario alone, problem gambling affects one in 10 families and at least 331,000 individuals experience a moderate to severe problem with gambling – in Toronto, that's an estimated 68,200 people. It's a message that the Responsible Gambling Council (RGC) is bringing to Toronto during *Problem Gambling Prevention Week*, September 26 to October 2, 2011.

On average, gamblers without problems spend one and a half per cent of their personal income on gambling according to research done by the RGC's Centre for the Advancement of Best Practices. People with severe gambling problems often spend up to 21 per cent of their personal income, one-fifth of their total income.

"Almost all people who have gambling problems expect they will become a big winner," said Jon Kelly, CEO, Responsible Gambling Council. "But the truth is, most players lose. All of these games, even those involving skill, include a large element of chance and they always favour the house. That's why it's so important to be informed and understand the risks. You want to walk away with no regrets whether you win or lose."

Paula Antoniazzi, Program Director at RGC says, "If you choose to gamble, it's important to be aware of how you manage your money and to plan ahead so that you stay in charge."

This year, RGC has launched a free Cost2Play Calculator on their website, www.noregrets.ca. It's easy to lose track of how much you're spending – small bets can add up. This free, online tool (also useable on smartphones) helps people understand the cost of play for three popular games: slots, blackjack and roulette.

"The new Cost2Play Calculator will help the gambler understand just how much that 'game' is costing over time," said Ms. Antoniazzi.

Problem gambling impacts people's lives in many ways – from personal relationships to work performance, from health issues to the ability to financially support oneself and family. Knowing how to minimize those risks is key to steering you clear of potential problems.

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If you choose to gamble, here are some tips from the Responsible Gambling Council:

- Only gamble with money you can afford to lose.
- Never borrow money to gamble.
- Don't try to win back what's been lost.
- Set money and time limits and stick to them.

Problem Gambling Resources

Toronto residents can access local help at:

- Problem Gambling Service Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), 33 Russell Street, Toronto, 416-599-1322, www.problemgambling.ca
- COSTI Immigrant Services, 1700 Wilson Avenue, Ste. 105, Toronto, 1-866-222-9993, www.costi.org
- Chinese Family Services of Ontario, 3330 Midland Avenue, Ste 229, Scarborough, 866-979-8298 www.chinesefamilyso.com
- Ontario Problem Gambling Helpline at 1-888-230-3505

For more money management strategies, safer gambling tips, tips on recognizing signs of potential problem gambling and the new free Cost2Play Calculator, go to www.noregrets.ca.

About the RGC

The Responsible Gambling Council (RGC) is an independent, non-profit organization committed to problem gambling prevention. RGC designs and delivers highly effective awareness programs in Ontario and across Canada. Through the RGC Centre for the Advancement of Best Practices, the Council also promotes the identification and adoption of best practices in problem gambling prevention.

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