



Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling

We understand the problem. We can help.

Understanding Problem Gambling
June 25, 2012
Massachusetts Gaming Commission



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Compulsive Gambling

We understand the problem. We can help.

The Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling's mission is to provide leadership in reducing the social, financial, and emotional costs of problem gambling and to promote a continuum of prevention and intervention strategies including information and education, capacity building, advocacy and referral services for problem gamblers, their families and the greater community.



History



- Founded in 1983 by Tom Cummings
- Secured funding in 1987 for problem gambling services statewide
- Advocated for treatment system in 1998





Neutrality

- The Council is neither for nor against legalized gambling.
- We provide services and advocate for those who might develop a gambling problem.
- We advocate for responsible gambling-related public policy in the Commonwealth.



Council Programs

- Information and Public Awareness
- Education/Training, Tech. Assist/Cap Bldg
- Helpline and Referral
- Prevention and Recovery Services
- Advocacy



Connect with Us--Helpline

Anyone can contact the Council for help:

- Available in:
 - English 1-800-426-1234 (translators available in 300+ languages)
 - Chinese 1-857-383-3557
 - Vietnamese 1-857-383-3567
 - Khmer 1-857-383-3577
 - Spanish 1-857-383-3558
- *Your First Step to Change* Guidebook
- 12-step self-help meetings like Gamblers Anonymous
- Referrals to treatment centers and private clinicians



Connect with Us—Web/Office

- 190 High St, Suite 5, Boston, MA 02110
- 617.426.4554, Monday-Friday, 9 am – 5 pm
- www.masscompulsivegambling.org



What is Problem Gambling?

- Pathological Gambling
- Compulsive Gambling
- Gambling Disorders
- Gambling Addiction



Definitions

Gambling: “... risking something of value on the outcome of an event when the probability of winning is less than certain.”

(David A. Korn & Howard J. Shaffer, *Journal of Gambling Studies*, Winter 1999, Vol. 15 - #4, pg. 292)



Definitions

Problem Gambling: is the term used to cover the entire range of harmful gambling involvement. That is, gambling that results in some kind of negative impact on the person's life or on the lives of the gambler's family, friends, and/or co-workers. It can be an occasional impact or an ongoing and serious situation.



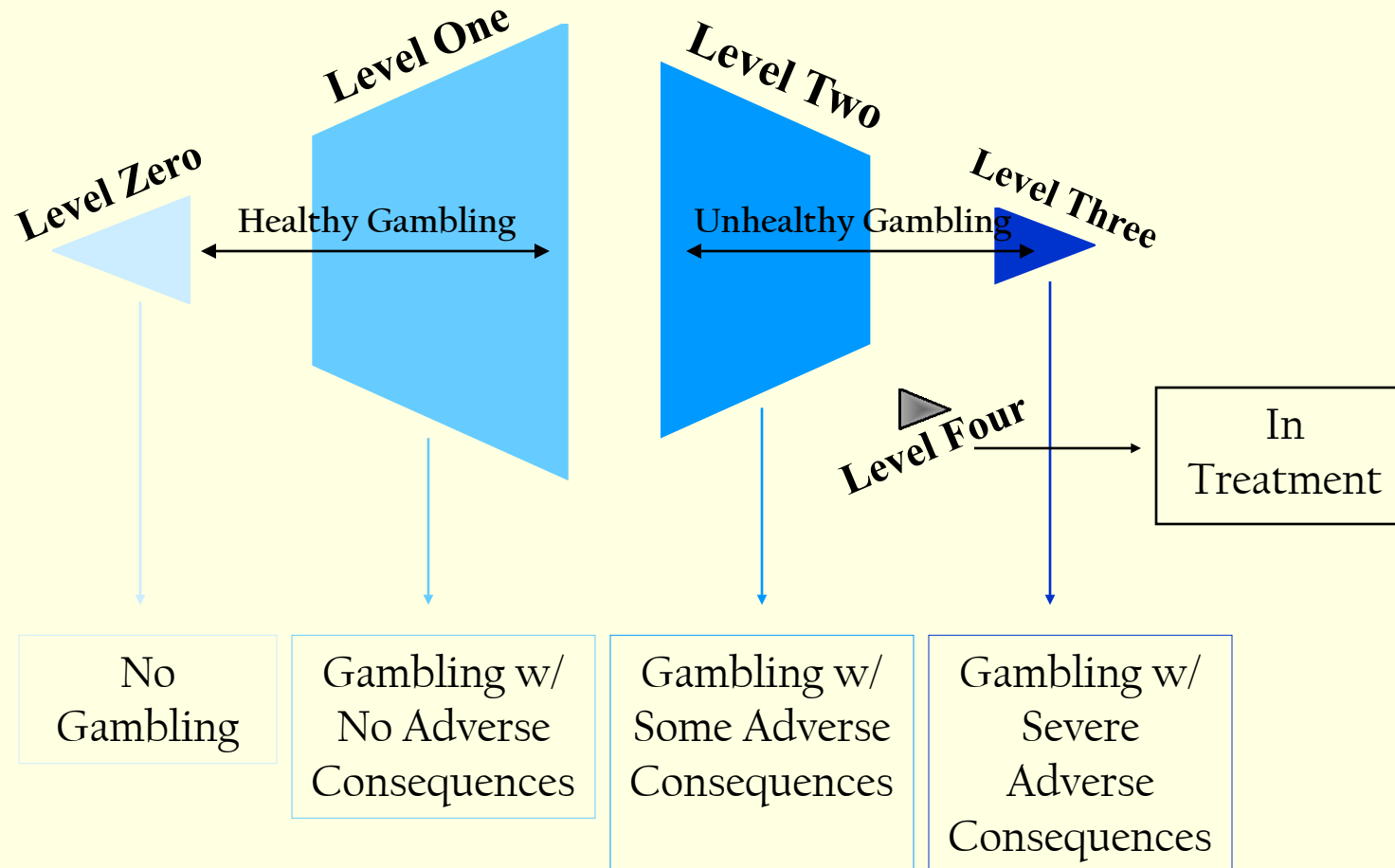
Definitions

DSM-IV definition of pathological gambling:
“Persistent and recurrent maladaptive gambling behavior that disrupts personal, family or vocational pursuits”.



Levels of Gambling

Continuum of Problems



High Risk Categories

- Child of a compulsive gambler (or other addiction)
- Belief that skill is involved
- An early big win
- Feeling that one must chase gambling loss with more gambling
- Early age of onset (8.5 years for pathological gamblers; 11.5 years for non-pathological gamblers)
- Large first bets
- Otherwise addicted or mental health disorder



Characteristics of Low Risk Gambling

- For fun or recreation, never for financial gain
- Knowledge that over time nearly everyone loses
- Socially with family and friends, not alone
- Limited time – frequency and duration
- With predetermined limits for losses
- Acknowledging that knowing a lot does not make you a better gambler



DSM-IV Criteria

A. Persistent and recurrent maladaptive gambling behavior as indicated by 5 or more:

- preoccupied with gambling
- needs to gamble with increasing amounts of money to achieve desired excitement
- repeated unsuccessful efforts to control gambling
- restless or irritable when trying to cut down or stop
- after losing, often returns another day to get even



DSM-IV Criteria

- lies to others to conceal extent of involvement with gambling
- has committed illegal acts to finance gambling
- has jeopardized or lost significant relationship, job, educational or career opportunity due to gambling
- relies on others to provide money to relieve a desperate financial situation caused by gambling
- B. The gambling behavior is not better accounted for by a Manic Episode.

