

# Gambling & the Criminal Justice System • Fact Sheet

The State of Connecticut spends over \$50,000 per year to incarcerate each inmate,<sup>1</sup> and gambling is common in criminal justice populations.

- Over one-third of inmates gamble while incarcerated.<sup>2,3</sup>
- An estimated 33% of inmates have gambling problems,<sup>2-4</sup> with rates as high as 49% in older adult inmates.<sup>5</sup>
- Over half of inmates with gambling disorder report that their incarceration resulted directly from gambling-related crimes.<sup>2,3</sup>

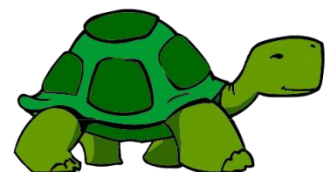
**PGS** PROBLEM  
GAMBLING  
SERVICES

**What is gambling?** The act of risking something of value, including money and property, on an activity that has an uncertain outcome.

**What is social gambling?** Social gamblers gamble for entertainment, will not risk more than they can afford, and often gamble with friends. They gamble for a limited period of time and are not preoccupied with gambling.

## MISSION of PGS

To provide a comprehensive network of consumer oriented problem gambling recovery services for people of Connecticut and to foster an environment throughout the State that promotes informed choices around gambling behavior.



Up to half of persons with severe gambling disorder commit illegal acts to support their gambling.<sup>2,6</sup>

- The most common illegal acts include writing bad checks and stealing or “borrowing” money or goods from friends or relatives, often with the intent of returning it.<sup>7</sup>
- Embezzlement is rare, but gambling-related fraud and embezzlement cases are growing especially in regions close to casinos.<sup>8</sup>
- Violent non-income generating crimes are also related to gambling disorder, and nearly two-thirds of persons with gambling disorder are perpetrators or victims of violence.<sup>9</sup>

# Gambling & the Criminal Justice System • Fact Sheet



Gambling and substance use disorders commonly occur together.

- Substance use disorders increase the likelihood of a gambling disorder by more than 4- fold.<sup>10</sup> Over 20% of persons with substance use disorders have gambling problems.<sup>11</sup>

- Gambling and substance use significantly increase suicidality, and up to one-third of persons with gambling disorder attempt suicide.<sup>12</sup>

**Despite the prevalence of gambling and related problems, almost no one in the criminal justice system receives treatment for gambling.**

Treatment for gambling can be very effective.

- Over 75% of persons treated for gambling substantially reduce their gambling.<sup>13-15</sup>

- Psychiatric distress and symptoms decrease markedly with gambling treatment.<sup>13,15</sup>

- Gambling treatment clients who commit illegal acts to support

their gambling respond as well to treatment as gamblers who do not commit illegal acts.<sup>7</sup>

**Free, Confidential, 24/7 Help Line - (888-789-7777)**

