

# FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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**DPS:** 05-017

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** District School Superintendents

**From:** Jim Warford, Chancellor, K-12 Education

**Date:** July 20, 2004

**Subject:** **Problem Gambling Prevention Program**

Problem and compulsive gambling among young people is a growing concern in the State of Florida. While gambling is not a new activity, changes in attitudes and access over the past two decades have contributed to its newfound status as a prevalent high-risk activity among youth. According to a 2002 Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling (FCCG) sponsored adolescent prevalence study (conducted by the University of Florida and funded by the Florida Lottery), 3.8% of Florida adolescents, ages 13-17, are suffering from serious to severe gambling-related problems and 8.2% are at risk of developing such difficulties in the future unless some type of intervention measures are undertaken.

JIM WARFORD  
K-12 Chancellor

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Currently, little gambling prevention information exists. To respond to this lack of available information, the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling has developed *Problem Gambling Prevention Program*, a prevention tool geared toward middle and high school youth, educators, counselors, parents and others associated with problem and compulsive gambling. This program is a result of a state-funded agreement between the Florida Department of Lottery and the FCCG.

The *Problem Gambling Prevention Program* contains middle and high school gambling curriculum instructor guides and a middle and high school counselor guide. The purposes of the curriculum are to bridge the gap in awareness and education of the problem gambling among youth and to provide knowledge of the risks associated with the activity of gambling. The FCCG made a concerted effort to facilitate awareness of problem and compulsive gambling in an educational format that is consistent with Florida Sunshine State Standards requirements across curriculum, including Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and Health and Physical Education components. The curriculum includes the following information:

- Risks and consequences associated with gambling
- Impacts of gambling on individuals, families and society
- Odds of winning at gambling
- Effects of gambling on credit and debt
- Strategies for identifying or assisting someone with a gambling problem
- Approaches to accessing help for a gambling problem

Copies of the Problem Gambling Prevention Program will be disseminated to Assistant Superintendents for Instruction, middle and high school principals, and Student Services Directors. *Copies of the Middle and High School Counselors Guide will be sent to Guidance Supervisors and Student Service Directors.* To request additional free copies of this program or to request training, please contact:

Ms. Pat Fowler, Executive Director  
Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling, Inc.  
237 Lookout Place, Suite 100  
Maitland, Florida 32751  
Telephone: (407) 865-6200  
Fax: (407) 865-6103  
E-mail: [pfowler@gamblinghelp.org](mailto:pfowler@gamblinghelp.org)

As educators, we can help to bridge the gap in awareness and education of problem and compulsive gambling among adolescents and provide knowledge of the risks associated with the activity of gambling. The Florida Department of Education appreciates your support to help facilitate information on and implementation of the *Problem Gambling Prevention Program*.

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This program provides a natural extension to existing alcohol and substance abuse prevention, education and treatment activities. It may be included in general curriculum areas, Life Management, and in personal/social development standards of middle and high school guidance programs.

If you have questions regarding this information, please contact Helen Lancashire.

JW:MP:hl

cc: Adult and Community Education Directors  
Area Technical Center Directors  
Assistant Superintendents for Instruction  
Directors of Secondary Education  
Dropout Prevention Coordinators  
Exceptional Student Education Directors  
Guidance Supervisors  
Health Education Coordinators  
High School Principals  
Middle School Principals  
Safe Schools Coordinators  
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