



C A L I F O R N I A D E P A R T M E N T O F
Mental Health

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February 16, 2006

DMH INFORMATION NOTICE NO.: 06-01

TO: LOCAL MENTAL HEALTH DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: CALIFORNIA PROBLEM GAMBLING AWARENESS WEEK
MARCH 6-12, 2006

Many states recognize the second week of March as *National Problem Gambling Awareness Week*, the goal of which is to educate the public about warning signs of problem and pathological gambling behavior.

Newspaper stories concerning suicidal behavior often cite studies justifying the belief that pathological gamblers are more likely to attempt suicide than the rest of the population.

For most people, gambling is recreational. However, an estimated two to five percent of the general population experiences significant difficulties because of their gambling, which includes financial, mental health, and interpersonal problems. All segments of society have problem gamblers. The detrimental impact is not limited to problem gamblers themselves but extends to families, communities, and employers.

Please find a poster enclosed for distribution to your various clinics and programs. The helpline number on it reaches master-level counselors who are experts in the field of gambling problems and addictions. We hope this information will assist in educating the public and provide a resource to those individuals who may be experiencing distress because of a gambling problem or addiction.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Original signed by;

STEPHEN W. MAYBERG, Ph.D.
Director

Enclosure