

RANDY STINCHFIELD, Ph.D.
RECEIVES AWARD
FROM NCRG



Randy Stinchfield, Ph.D., L.P., associate director of the Center for Adolescent Substance Abuse Research at the University of Minnesota's Department of Psychiatry, received a Scientific Achievement Award from the National Center for Responsible Gambling (NCRG). The award honors individuals who have made exceptional scientific contributions to the field of gambling research. Dr. Stinchfield, who has conducted some of the earliest and most significant research on youth gambling, is also a board member of the Northstar Problem Gambling Alliance.

Dr. Stinchfield is a leading researcher in investigating the accuracy of instruments intended to measure and diagnose gambling problems, including the South Oaks Gambling Screen (SOGS) and the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV) diagnostic criteria for pathological gambling, the most commonly used assessment instruments for both epidemiological and clinical work. He has calibrated the classification accuracy of both the SOGS and DSM-IV, which has led to a greater understanding of reported prevalence rates using these instruments.

SPORTS BETTING:

Every Day's a Super Bowl

Sports betting has been around for a long time in the United States. The country's founding fathers were risk takers by nature, and colonists from England brought with them a gambling history that went back generations.

Early sports betting took the form of wagers on horse races, cockfights and bare-knuckle boxing. It became increasingly popular in the nineteenth century, and the advent of television created an explosion in betting on sports such as baseball, football and basketball.

Today, sports gambling is pervasive in our country. In 2008, approximately \$2.57 billion was gambled in Nevada's legal sports book. However, that figure is dwarfed by the estimated \$380 billion that's bet through offshore books or bookies each year. And, according to an ESPN survey, about 118 million Americans gambled on sports in some manner in 2008.

There's a common misperception that sports betting is always illegal. However, that's not always the case. It is not illegal if friends wager on a Vikings-Packers football game. However, if someone is running a pool and taking a percentage off the volume bet, it's illegal betting activity.

The last annual Minnesota gambling survey conducted in early 2012 provides a general picture of sports betting behavior in Minnesota. Fifteen percent of Minnesota adults reported betting on a sports event in the past year with 28 percent reporting placing a sports bet in their lifetime. These responses are essentially the same as the



SIGN OF THE APOCALYPSE

After an 18-month investigation in Broward County Fla., nine men were arrested and charged with running an illegal gambling ring that took in more than \$100,000 in wagers on peewee football games; seven of the nine (none of whom have entered a plea) were youth team coaches.

From the November 12, 2012 issue of Sports Illustrated

results of a survey conducted ten years ago.

Not surprisingly, men in Minnesota were twice as likely to have placed a sports bet in the last year than women (20 percent compared to 10 percent). The survey also

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Cathie Perrault
Executive Director
NPGA

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Keeping Problem Gambling Front and Center

Almost every day, it seems, you read about someone in the paper who's been charged with a crime related to a gambling addiction. In the last three years in Minnesota, gambling-related embezzlement charges have been brought to a city clerk, a restaurant bookkeeper, an assisted living nurse and a church pastor, among many others. It's truly no exaggeration to say that problem gambling can strike anyone.

Compulsive gambling continues to be a problem for too many people. While the majority of Minnesotans gamble responsibly, there's a small percentage for whom the consequences range from problematic to tragic. Gambling addictions have resulted in broken marriages and families, depleted retirement savings, criminal activity and suicide.

Fortunately, early intervention and treatment can make a great impact, sparing many the worst of the addiction before it inflicts irreparable damage. Indeed, this is what motivates us to do what we do.

With effects of problem gambling so devastating – yet also preventable and treatable – it's incumbent upon all of us to keep the issue of addictive gambling front and center. We must all work hard to ensure that those in positions to appropriate resources for the education and treatment of this disease are aware of the depth of the problem.

With the 2013 legislative session now upon us, you can take important grassroots steps to make your voice heard and help ensure there's adequate funding for awareness and treatment. Talk openly with friends and families about problem gambling. Educate yourself through the Northstar website (www.NorthstarProblemGambling.org) and other online resources. And, perhaps most importantly, contact your local legislator to express your support for allocation of financial resources to combat and minimize the effects of this destructive addiction.

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!

We thank all our members, donors, volunteers and affiliates who have contributed to our mission.

Become a member today. Visit www.NorthstarProblemGambling.org to join us.

Northstar Problem Gambling Alliance is a nonprofit agency whose mission is to help those affected by problem gambling in Minnesota. We do this by promoting awareness and understanding of the issue via our website, newsletter, community education programs, sponsorship of the Minnesota State Conference on Problem Gambling, and training of professionals in preventing and treating problem gambling.

Northern Light is funded by a grant from the state of Minnesota. Designer: ESD Graphics. Writer: Bill Stein

MARCIE CARPER

the "Gambling Lady" of Central Minnesota



Marcie Carper, "the gambling lady".

In the hinterlands of Minnesota where Charles Lindbergh spent much of his childhood, there's a spunky 78-year-old woman who's affectionately known as "the gambling lady." It's a label that Little Falls' Marcie Carper is more than happy to accept.

The reputation is well earned. Marcie's written numerous articles about compulsive gambling that have appeared in newspapers throughout central Minnesota. She's also spoken frequently to various groups and audiences in an effort to educate people about an addiction that tends to be less understood in rural Minnesota.

Marcie understands gambling addiction better than most because she's a recovering compulsive gambler herself. From her late 50s into her early 60s, she was unable to control her gambling. "I couldn't understand what was happening, but all I knew is that I'd maxed out my credit cards and was running out of money," says Marcie.

"There are still a lot of different attitudes about gambling," says Marcie. "People think that if there were no casinos then there'd be no problems. This addiction is still not well understood."

Marcie's personal experience gave her special insight into just how powerful the addiction can be and how it's not well understood. She learned about a treatment program from a friend in Duluth and decided to pursue counseling for problem gamblers. She then earned her certification and began training, and has been a gambling counselor since 1998.

After receiving her certification for problem gambling counseling in Duluth, Marcie was given the opportunity to go to Brainerd to

start a program. When that grant ended she went to Northern Pines Mental Health Center in Little Falls and started a problem gambling program there.

Marcie provides individual counseling for people in the central Minnesota counties of Morrison, Todd, Wadena and Crow Wing. She provides assessments, referrals and treatment. Marcie encourages her clients to attend the closest formal treatment program in St. Cloud, when appropriate. If a client is in dire circumstances, Marcie will recommend they go to Project Turnabout's Vanguard Center for Compulsive Gambling in Granite Falls.

Unfortunately, her caseload in such a relatively unpopulated area does not allow for group therapy, something Marcie feels strongly about. "It can be a tough process in this part of the state because of the long distance people have to travel," says Marcie. She encourages clients to attend Gamblers Anonymous so they can find others who can relate to the power of the addiction.

Marcie, who's part of Northstar's Speaker's Network, a group that makes presentations to people all over the state to educate them about problem gambling, believes there remains a stigma with gambling addiction. "There are still a lot of different attitudes about gambling," says Marcie. "People think that if there were no casinos then there'd be no problems. This addiction is still not well understood."

At an age when others might spend time enjoying retirement, why does Marcie continue to work? "I'm very comfortable in this field and I enjoy working with people. If I can be there to help people understand problem gambling, provide counseling or guide gamblers to available resources, that's important. This addiction can ruin your life, and it's important to stop it before it wrecks it all the way."



REAL *Voices*



As a child, you're in need of security and stability, but having a parent with a gambling problem does not provide either.



The best thing that happened was that my dad's attorney, himself a recovering alcoholic, convinced my father to go to treatment and encouraged our family to do an intervention.

I grew up in your average Minnesota small town. We were neither rich nor poor, just like most everyone growing up in that area.

My father was sporadically employed as an accountant. However, he was also a big gambler and a big drinker. His addictions affected our family in ways that have taken me a lifetime to fully understand.

My father's gambling problem resulted in our losing our house twice – once when I was four and again when I was 12. We were lucky in that the mortgage company felt sorry for us and allowed us to keep the house, primarily because my mother was a fulltime worker.

When I was about 10, I remember sensing that something was wrong. I went upstairs

and heard my dad screaming and crying into the phone. I heard him saying, "I paid you. I paid you. You're not getting another penny out of me!" I remember his distress vividly, and it was devastating to me to see my dad in that way. Later, I learned he was talking to a loan shark because of financial problems brought about by gambling.

After that, I remember my father had a good job as a comptroller for a company. However, he continued to drink and gamble too much. He was a regular at fraternal clubs over lunch hour where he'd play card games with large stakes of up to \$4,000 per game, hardly casual gambling. This was during the late '60s and early '70s when there were no casinos or other ways for someone to gamble.

In those days when my father had a good job and gambled, we lived the roller coaster life that he did. Our lives – and lifestyle – dramatically improved when he was winning, but they would be dramatically worse when he was losing. The peaks were wonderful; the valleys were horrific.

... intervention helped liberate me from the addiction hold. It took time for me to process everything and to realize the power of the addiction and the damage it caused.

As a child, you're in need of security and stability, but having a parent that gambles does not provide either. As a family, our emotions were tied to the fate of the breadwinner. In good times, things were okay, but still untrustworthy. In the bad times, it felt like we were in freefall, never knowing when we'd hit bottom or if things would get better again.

During these years, my mother did her best to shelter the family from all that was going on. She absorbed as much of it as she could. Later, when I understood all that had happened, I felt anger for all that my father had put her through.

Things came to a head a few years later. When I was 21, my father was arrested after he didn't show up at work. He was charged with forgery and embezzlement. He had been diverting checks intended for others and convinced the banks to give him cash for those checks, money that he'd use for gambling. I remember thinking that it was all so inevitable – it was the gambling and the drinking.

The best thing that happened was that my dad's attorney, himself a recovering alcoholic, convinced my father to go to treatment and encouraged our family to do an intervention. This intervention helped liberate me from the addiction hold. It took time for me to process everything and to realize the power of the addiction and the damage it caused. I made choices to not live an addictive lifestyle and transcended away from the cycle of addiction.

Having a parent with an addiction problem often means that children will suffer with the same types of behaviors. That was true in my family as well. There were eight of us kids, and half suffered addiction issues of one sort or another or were in relationships with others suffering abuse or addiction issues. I've been fortunate in recognizing the power of addiction.

I'm sometimes asked what advice I might give to the child of a problem gambler given my experience. I have two suggestions. One is to seek help individually – and sooner than later – before they have to experience all the destructive aspects. They can get help even if they are not the subjects of the addiction. A second thing I would encourage is getting involved in the intervention and not to be fearful of it. They likely have been afraid of this for a long time, but getting involved in the intervention is a chance for them to flip things upside down and gain control for themselves.



67

Percent of all college students who bet on sports¹

2

Sports betting ranks second only to poker in popularity of gambling games among college students¹

33

Percent of American men who say they gamble on sports (source: Pew Research Center)

44

Percent of 12th grade males reporting wagering on sports at least once²

82.3

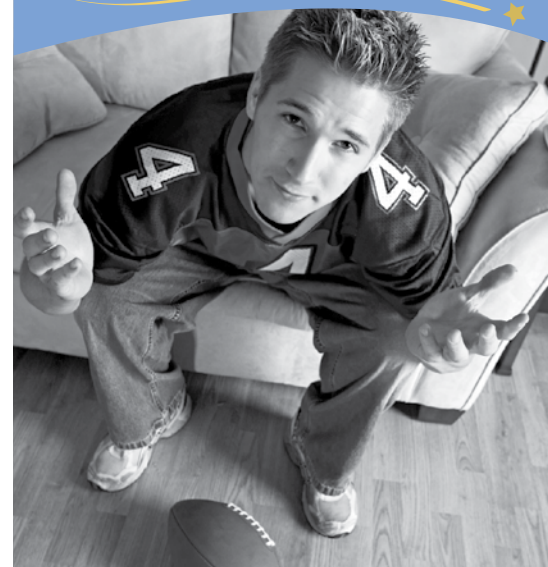
Percent of sports wagers on a win/lose outcome. Other wagers include 24.3% on over/under, 33.6% on pools, 37.6% on point spread and 4.9% on proposition bets²

1-800-333-4673

The phone number to call for the Minnesota state gambling problem gambling helpline, available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Also 1-800-333-HOPE.

¹ Source: National Problem Gambling Awareness Week

² Source: NCAA Research on Collegiate Wagering, Thomas S. Paskus, Ph.D. NCAA, Jeffrey Derevensky, Ph.D., McGill University



Glory Days

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE SPORTS GAMBLER



The only time my 74-year-old father swears is when his Vikings make a bad play or the referee makes a “bonehead” call. Many of us, like my father, get animated when our favorite sports team plays. We feel connected to our team, and feel their wins and losses almost as if they are our own.

For a sports gambler, however, a football game can be absolutely thrilling or completely excruciating. Allow me to introduce you to “Joe,” a composite of the sports gamblers I’ve counseled over the years.

Joe is a good-looking guy who earned decent grades while growing up in a middle-class family in Northfield, Minn. What made Joe really special, though, was that he was the town’s star athlete. He was an idol to younger players, a savior to the coaches and someone that everyone in town was proud to know.

Joe learned at an early age that the rules didn’t apply to him – at least not in the same way they applied to others. As a “star,” he got away with things. If he was pulled

over for speeding, the police gave him a warning. If he was late for class or late in completing assignments, it was overlooked. He was only expected to be good when it mattered – on the field.

After high school, Joe attended college on a full scholarship. No longer a big fish in a small pond, he had to re-establish his rank in the hierarchy. He did well, and soon he had again proven himself a star. He was known in the community, on campus and by the local police, who did their best to ignore his shenanigans. He was put on a pedestal, and he liked the view.

Fast-forward a few years. Joe lives in Minneapolis, where he works as an accountant for a non-profit. He does well at his job, met a nice gal at school and has “settled down” into a solid relationship. Nevertheless, however, he finds himself feeling restless, bored and wondering, “What’s next?”

Joe begins to make sports bets online and finds he’s pretty good at it. He knows sports, statistics, players, teams and

Like most gamblers, sports gamblers only come to the attention of treatment professionals after they’ve run out of funds, burned bridges by not repaying debt, ruined their credit and seemingly have no way out, like Joe.

coaches. He wins some money, feels smart and becomes obsessed with doing better.

One big win allows him a night out with the guys. He brags about his winning and buys everyone a few rounds of drinks. Despite backslapping and toasts to his success, Joe can’t wait to get back home to his computer to place more bets.

Over the next year, Joe spends more and more time tracking players and teams, and making bets. He sometimes wins, but, despite knowing more about sports than ever, he loses more often and debt begins

to pile up. He's maxed out his credit cards, dipped into his retirement fund and even borrowed money from family and friends for "unexpected car repairs."

Joe spends more of his time keeping up with statistics and less and less time with friends and family. Life quickly spirals out of control when his wife finds they are three months behind on their mortgage and his employer warns him about his poor performance and missed days at work.

Joe becomes obsessed with finding the next "sure thing" so he can recover from his financial predicament. He believes he's found the answer in the next Super Bowl, and he borrows \$10,000 from his employer to place a bet on the underdog.

Joe's friends and family gather at a local bar to watch the big game. Food and beer and jokes abound, but Joe can't stop pacing. He's preoccupied – if he can just win, get the money back into the account at work and pay off some of his debt, everything

will be fine. He vows to himself that he'll never let things get like this again.

"Hey buddy, loosen up!" his friend says to him. "What's got you in a bundle?" "Oh, just nervous about some things at work," Joe replies. He lies to his friend with surprising ease. He's been lying for months now, about everything, to everyone.

His team doesn't win and he has reached a new low. If Joe is lucky, this may be when he seeks treatment for his gambling addiction. If not, he might jump off a bridge, overdose on pills or find another way to end his life. More gambling addicts commit suicide every year than from any other type of addiction.

Like most gamblers, sports gamblers only come to the attention of treatment professionals after they've run out of funds, burned bridges by not repaying debt, ruined their credit and seemingly have no way out, like Joe.

Working with sports gamblers is always a challenge. Like many gamblers, sports gamblers are often grandiose, intelligent and may feel the rules don't apply to them. They may even approach treatment as another game to win, another system to beat. At this point, their sense of self depends on it as these guys (yes, they are almost always young men) have been using sports gambling to maintain their "star status." It can be difficult to help them stay focused on themselves and not on "analyzing the data" presented to them.

Once you've proven yourself a worthy advocate, they will begin looking at how their gambling has taken over their lives rather than maintain their egos. As with any other gambler in treatment, it's a long road, but one always worth the pursuit.

Susan Campion, MS, is a nationally certified gambling counselor and outreach and training manager for Northstar Problem Gambling Alliance.



Sports Betting: Every Day's a Super Bowl *continued from page 1*

found that age is not a predictor of sports betting, that more educated people are more likely to play (17 percent of college grads vs. 10 percent of those with a high school degree or less), and that gambling is more popular for those with higher incomes (22 percent of those with household incomes over \$100,000 had played in the past year compared to 10 percent of those with incomes less than \$35,000).

As with other forms of gambling, most who bet on sports do so responsibly and are not considered problem gamblers. However, others become addicted to this form of gambling.

Sports bettors tend to be "action" gamblers

in comparison to "escape" gamblers who prefer to gamble as a retreat from physical or emotional pain. "A sports bettor might be following four games on television at once and still be on the phone and online," says Sandi Brustuen, a coordinator for the gambling program at Project Turnabout. "It's all about the action."

Unlike the escape gambler who can avoid going to favorite gambling locations such as bingo halls, casinos or pull-tab sellers, sports bettors in recovery have a difficult time avoiding sports-related triggers because sports are so ingrained and visible in our culture. A trigger could be something very simple that non-addicted people wouldn't even think about. This includes



a co-worker discussing the results of a particular game, a March Madness office pool and even sports promotions in stores.





2233 Hamline Avenue North
Suite 630
Roseville, MN 55113

Upcoming Event

Never Enough Workshop And Presentation

Attorney Michael Burke will share his story of the devastating effects of compulsive gambling and how his alcoholism and gambling addictions took him from a successful law practice to the gates of prison.

Thursday, Feb. 21, 7 p.m.
Sheraton Minneapolis West

Saturday, Feb. 23, 7 p.m.
Project Turnabout, Granite Falls
www.ProjectTurnabout.org/neverenough



scan to visit
www.NorthstarProblemGambling.org

Northern Light

NORTHSTAR PROBLEM GAMBLING ALLIANCE
Winter 2013 • Volume Nine

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Changing Problem Gambling Behavior through:
AWARENESS • EDUCATION • RESEARCH • ADVOCACY