

**NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services
600 East Boulevard Avenue, Bismarck ND 58505**

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Conference kicks off Problem Gambling Awareness Week

Bismarck, N.D. – A one-day conference titled, “It’s Not The Wins Or Losses... It’s How You Play The Game,” will kick off National Problem Gambling Awareness Week in North Dakota on March 8, 2004 at the Chieftain Conference Center in Carrington, N.D.

Intended for treatment professionals, employee assistance program personnel, compulsive gamblers and their family members, clergy, and students, the conference features Joanna Franklin, a leading authority on problem gambling and member of the Board of Directors of the National Council on Problem Gambling.

“This conference is an opportunity to provide training for treatment professionals and to raise awareness about gambling addiction and the availability and value of treatment services,” said Karen Larson, Director of the North Dakota Department of Human Services’ Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services.

The conference begins at 8:30 a.m. with welcoming comments by North Dakota Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem, followed by presentations by Franklin on various topics including current research on physiological or psychological addiction, stages of the disorder, and treatment issues related to co-occurring disorders, cultural awareness, and family needs. A Gamblers Anonymous panel discussion is also on the agenda. Carol K. Olson, Executive Director of the North Dakota Department of Human Services, will deliver concluding comments at 4:30 p.m.

This Problem Gambling Awareness Week activity is sponsored by the North Dakota Department of Human Services, the Council on Compulsive Gambling of North Dakota, Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota, and the Mental Health Association in North Dakota.

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