



Prevention Resource & Media Center
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NEWS from the N.D. Department of Human Services
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Gambling Awareness Week is March 6-12: North Dakotans are reminded that gambling treatment and prevention resources are available

Bismarck, N.D. – In the United States, 2-3 percent of the population will have a gambling problem in any given year. That equals 6 million to 9 million Americans, yet only a small fraction seeks out services such as treatment and self-help recovery programs.

During **National Problem Gambling Awareness Week March 6-12**, the North Dakota Department of Human Services reminds residents they can seek services through Gamblers Choice, a Lutheran Social Services program that the department helps fund. Gamblers Choice is an outpatient treatment program for problem gamblers and family members who may have been affected by gambling behaviors. Group and individual counseling is available, along with education and support for family members. Public education and awareness is also available for a variety of audiences including schools, churches, civic groups, and mental health professionals.

Gamblers Choice treatment and support services are available in Bismarck, Fargo, Grand Forks, Minot, and Williston. A private provider is located in Devils Lake. Details are online at www.lssnd.org/gamblerschoice/index.html or by calling 1-877-702-7848.

“Not all people who gamble are problem gamblers; many are able to do it socially,” said Lisa Vig, program administrator for Lutheran Social Services. “However, there are some people, who because of genetics, environment and pre-disposing factors, respond differently to gambling activities.”

Vig said the number of females seeking treatment for gambling in North Dakota is rising.

The Prevention Resource and Media Center (PRMC), which is part of the North Dakota Department of Human Services’ Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, has free informational materials available on problem gambling prevention. These include brochures, DVDs, and a curriculum.

“During this awareness week, our agencies hope to educate people about gambling addiction and to raise awareness that help is available. Problem gambling has many characteristics similar to substance abuse addiction,” said division director JoAnne Hoesel.

For more information on prevention resources, contact the Prevention Resource and Media Center at 701-328-8918, toll-free 1-800-642-6744, TTY: 701-857-8666, or visit the Web site www.nd.gov/dhs/prevention.

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