



Tips for Having a Conversation about Problem Gambling

Casino Team Members

Around 26,000 people in the Metro area meet criteria for gambling addiction, and many more are affected by an individual's gambling problem, yet only a fraction seek help. We believe many who suffer in silence do so because they don't know they've developed a problem, what gambling addiction is, or where to get help.

Problem Gambling is a public health issue affecting all aspects of physical, social, and mental health. It can affect families, work performance and general well-being. It is important to know the signs of a gambling problem, treatment is available, and it can and does work. ***Please let this document serve as a resource when you, as a Casino Team Member, are having a difficult conversation with a customer about the Self-Exclusion Program or other "problem" behavior needing addressed on the casino floor.***

Team Members play a very important role in identifying customers who may have a problem and may need professional help. We value your role and all you do for your company and customers.

When a customer is signing the self-exclusion only because a family member is requesting / demanding him or her to sign

"This is something we can do, however, being able to sit down and talk to someone who can help you to think through and talk about your concerns might be a better option."

Customer states "treatment doesn't work"

"Sometimes treatment doesn't work the first time for many reasons. The relationship between the therapist and client really helps; maybe the person you saw wasn't the right person for you. Maybe they didn't understand gambling. Maybe you could go to a GA (Gamblers Anonymous) meeting."

When overhearing a customer state "I just lost my ____ (paycheck, rent payment etc.)"

"I can imagine that has to be really tough for you and you are concerned about paying your bills. This (Heartland Family Service) is a place that can help. They can connect you with resources and talk about your gambling or your financial problems."

A customer is angry and no longer having fun

“Hey, how are you doing? Do you want to step away for a bit? (Just check in with them) Have you ever thought about talking to someone about this? You don’t seem as happy as you usually are.”

(Note: we also work with individuals with mental health concerns (depression, grief, anxiety, etc.) which could be affecting their gambling patterns, sometimes if those issues are addressed the gambling problem resolves as well)

Partner is with the customer pressuring them to sign self-exclusion

“There are trained therapists who can sit down with you together to determine if this is the best thing for you to do. They won’t tell you what to do; they will find the best solution for your family.”

Customer is angry about having a bad night or losing

“It seems like you aren’t having fun. Are you having a bad night? We can’t have you yelling in here (or acting this way, etc). There is someone you can talk to about this.”

Customer states that they are friends with staff and they are having second thoughts about banning because they won’t be able to see their “friends”

“It is a loss, and talking to professionals can help you with the loss. They can help you create avenues for new friendships and support systems.”

Customer “just looking into’ self-exclusion

“It appears to me that there is something going on that makes you want to look into this possibility. There are some people who can talk through this decision with you.”

Customer comments “I feel different” once the self-exclusion is finished

“This does alleviate a huge part of what was going on, but if you are still experiencing depression or financial struggles there are people who can help with that. You took the first step, but for the (self-exclusion) program to work it helps to talk to someone.”