

## ***Super Bowl Handicappers: A Word to the Wise***

The Super Bowl and March Madness are the two biggest sports betting events of the year. An estimated **\$10 billion worldwide** will be bet on this year's Super Bowl (legal and illegal — last year's legal betting in Vegas alone weighed in at a record **\$119 million**). For most, a Super Bowl bet is harmless entertainment - A little extra fuel for nudging at the office on post-Super Bowl Monday, or the potential for a few extra bucks in the pocket to buy lunch for a friend.

But for about **16 % of lowans**, gambling has become more than just fun; it's a serious problem that interferes with their lives and an average of **1 in every 3 people** around them. The problem has quite a reach **as it affects families, jobs, and even the economy.**

So how would you know if someone's got a problem with gambling? We're not suggesting anyone be the "gambling police," just keep an eye on our friends and family if they seem to have gone too far.

### **Signs of more than just a fun game-day bet**

- Does he or she seem unusually **hung up on a certain detail** of the game? Maybe even change who they're rooting for, based on the score or a certain player's stats?
- Does s/he seem to **talk about odds** a lot?
- Is s/he offering to sell or trade something for a bet, because s/he's **out of money**?

General tips about loved ones, no matter their gambling preference:

- Are they **spending more and more time or money** on gambling?
- Can they **stick with limits** on their betting/gambling?
- Do they "**chase**" **losses** with more gambling, trying to win back money?
- Do they seem to **hide their gambling**, or lie about how much and when they have gambled?

### **Some helpful tips**

- Always set a limit on time and money — and stick with it.
- Avoid betting if you're intoxicated (!) — Or if you're mad, sad, hungry or tired. (***Hungry / Angry / Lonely Tired — HALT — This is a good idea no matter what the decision***)
- Don't try to "chase" bets you've lost with more bets.
- Parents, set a good example for your kids with alcohol and bets. Ads are a good opportunity to talk about not "needing" bets to have fun.

The good news is that, if you know someone with a problem, help is available— for the gambler and/or their loved ones — by calling the **24-hour gambling help line at [563-583-1216](tel:563-583-1216).**