THE ESCALATING RISKS AROUND PROBLEM GAMBLING & SUICIDE

Problem gamblers have the highest suicide rate of any addiction disorder.

Problem gambling is defined by ongoing gambling that causes significant distress and often coincides with mental health issues and increases the risk of suicidal thoughts.

$14 BILLION
ANNUAL NATIONAL COST OF PROBLEM GAMBLING
NCPGAMBLING.ORG

50%
HALF OF INDIVIDUALS WITH GAMBLING PROBLEMS HAVE CONSIDERED SUICIDE
GAMBLINGHELP.ORG

2.91x
HIGHER ODDS OF SUICIDE ATTEMPTS COMPARED TO THOSE WITHOUT GAMBLING PROBLEMS
PUBMED.NCBI.NLM.NIH.GOV/41192390/

74%
INDIVIDUALS FACING FINANCIAL STRESS FACE AN INCREASED RISK OF SUICIDE
PUBMED.NCBI.NLM.NIH.GOV/37194640/

The rising cost of problem gambling and the importance of early intervention

Online sports betting has increased gambling accessibility and raised concerns about related mental health risks including depression, anxiety, financial distress, and shame. In Ohio, males ages 18-44 are at an elevated risk, underscoring the need for early intervention, coordinated care, strong social support systems, and stigma reduction to preventing gambling-related harms like suicide.

The Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation takes a multifaceted approach to connecting people impacted by problem gambling with support including engaging friends, roommates, partners, and family members. By helping loved ones recognize warning signs, start conversations, and connect others with resources, OSPF promotes and encourages early intervention and support before gambling leads to a crisis. **These focus areas include:**

YOUTH EDUCATION
Helping young people recognize gambling risks early and build healthy habits before gambling becomes a problem

988 | OHIO PROBLEM GAMBLING HELPLINE
Connecting individuals and loved ones with support through 988 for mental health and emotional distress or to the Ohio Problem Gambling Helpline for specific resources

MAN THERAPY OHIO
Encouraging men to prioritize their mental health, recognize warning signs of problem gambling, and seek support when they need it

A prevention pathway for Ohio

What can policymakers do to address problem gambling and its connection to suicide?

Champion early suicide prevention
Encourage assessment of problem gambling and suicide risk in behavioral health and addiction services

Expand access to timely care
Strengthen funding and referrals for gambling support, behavioral health, and suicide crisis services

Invest in education and training
Equip healthcare professionals, community organizations, and relevant industries to recognize warning signs and connect people to support

Support cross-sector coordination
Encourage partnerships between suicide prevention organizations, gambling treatment providers, public health agencies, and regulators to address service gaps

OHIO SUICIDE PREVENTION FOUNDATION ospf.org
OSPF educates, advocates for, and builds connections and support for individuals, families, and communities to prevent suicide.

OHIO'S VOICE FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION
OSPF
Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation
OhioSPF.org