

? You and Your Family

A parent or carer's gambling problems can affect wider members of your family too. They may experience:

- Family disputes or breakdown
- Increased adult responsibilities e.g. household tasks, looking after siblings
- Not having enough to eat
- Trouble with their schoolwork
- Reduced interaction with friends and losing interest in hobbies
- Feelings of isolation, anger or depression

It is important to encourage young people to talk openly about gambling and what they're feelings are, and you can find further advice on how to do this through our dedicated website for young people, parents and teachers: www.bigdeal.org.uk

Young people who are affected by someone's gambling can also contact the Helpline for information, advice and support whenever it's needed, and our Advisers are trained to support them too.

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No matter what situation you are in, contact GamCare for help. It's so easy and so very worth it.

Getting help and support

The National Gambling Helpline, provided by GamCare, is 24 hours a day, every day of the week. You can talk to our Advisers on Freephone **0808 8020 133** or live chat via gamcare.org.uk whenever you need some advice and support, or even just to talk.

The team can talk you through all of the options available for support over the phone, online or in your local area.

You can also connect with others in similar situations through the GamCare online Forum and our daily chatrooms at www.gamcare.org.uk.

Gam-Anon

Support for friends and families affected by gambling.

gamanon.org.uk

Relate

Relationship counselling and advice.

0300 100 1234

relate.org.uk

Carer's UK

0808 808 7777

carersuk.org

Samaritans

Confidential emotional support for anyone in crisis.

116 123

samaritans.org.uk

Family Lives

Support and information for parents.

0808 800 2222

familylives.org.uk

National Gambling Helpline

Call Free: 0808 8020 133

Live chat via www.gamcare.org.uk

Gambling Problems: Support for family and friends

**Practical information, ideas
and support**



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GamCare

Call the National Gambling HelpLine on **Freephone 0808 8020 133** or live chat with one of our Advisers at **GamCare.org.uk**

We recognise that the impacts of excessive gambling behaviour can be wide reaching, affecting families, friends, carers and significant others. We know it's not just the gambler that needs support.

If you are affected by someone else's gambling and they are not yet ready to access support, it can also be a confusing and frustrating time.

There is plenty of help and support available for you, and GamCare is here for you 24 hours a day via the National Gambling Helpline – over the phone or via live chat. We can also refer you to further treatment and support, including through our practitioners across Great Britain. Our services can be provided face to face, online or over the phone.

We also offer an online Forum and daily group chatrooms through our website, as we know it can be helpful to connect with others in a similar situation to you, to seek advice and information as well as to share support.

How can I raise the issue?

Try not to make assumptions about why they gamble, just discuss what you have observed. Take time to think about what you want to say. Encourage the other person to reflect on the consequences of their behaviour and how this is affecting you and others. It may help to write your feelings down first.

Ultimatums can increase the guilt or shame a person feels about their behaviour and can push them to greater secrecy. Instead, encourage them to work with you and to think about their next steps.

While you can always offer to support a loved one, it is important for their own self-esteem that they can take steps to help themselves too. GamCare can support both you and them to find the right support to move forward.

You and Your Finances

You may experience:

- Increased debt and financial insecurity
- Reduced disposable income
- Need to increase hours at work
- Reduced productivity at work

You may want to consider:

- Working with your loved one to take control of their finances for a few months while they get other support in place. Remember that this is not always a permanent solution for either of you, and should not be an option if it would put either of you in danger.
- Freezing joint accounts so that only payments/withdrawals authorised by both parties can be made. Again, this may not be a permanent solution, but will hopefully give you both time to get other support in place.
- Speaking with any mortgage providers to ensure that your home cannot be re-mortgaged without your permission.
- Finding specialist finance and debt management advice, and finding out which banks and building societies will help you block gambling transactions. See our website or talk to our Advisers for more information.

A key piece of advice if someone is struggling with gambling is not to lend them money, as this may only make the issue worse.

We know it can be very difficult to refuse someone money if they are in difficulty, however, it will usually help them to confront the ways in which gambling is negatively affecting them, so that they can make positive changes to their situation.

“You really listened to what I had to say and made me feel like I mattered, even though I'm not the one with the gambling problem. Thank you.”

You and Your Relationships

You may experience:

- Loss of trust
- Relationship breakdown
- Social Isolation
- Increased arguments

If you want to maintain or rebuild your relationship with someone struggling with gambling, it will help for you to understand the triggers that led them to act as they have, and to receive emotional and practical support yourself.

Problem gambling is a compulsive behaviour disorder. That means that the person who is gambling has, in severe cases, lost control of their actions and are acting compulsively. Their actions are not a reflection of their feelings toward you; their actions are separate from you and your relationship.

Contact our Advisers today to talk through all of the options available for support. If your loved one is accessing treatment with us, we can also support your involvement in their treatment and recovery plan if they agree.

You and Your Health

You may experience:

- Increased Anxiety
- Poor diet
- Problems sleeping
- Low mood

Speak to GamCare today - we can help you find the right help and support to feel more like yourself again.