

# *Arizona Office of Problem Gambling*



# 2012 Stakeholder's Report

For most people, gambling is a diversion from everyday life. While most are able to buy a few lottery tickets or spend an hour or two at a casino without developing a gambling problem, some will end up with a dependency on gambling. Statistics tell us, nationally, about six million Americans are classified as being addicted to gambling. But mere numbers can't begin to tell the whole story – about the emotional and financial havoc problem gambling wreaks on the gambler as well as his or her family and circle of friends.

The Arizona Office of Problem Gambling (OPG) was established after Arizona voters approved the Indian Gaming Preservation and Self-Reliance Act in 2002. That initiative mandated two percent of the contributions made by Indian tribes to the state's Benefits Fund be used by the Department of Gaming to fund state and local programs for the prevention and treatment of problem gambling as well as for education about the disorder.

The Office of Problem Gambling is dedicated to providing the resources which enable problem gamblers to successfully deal with their addictions and getting their lives – and futures – back on track.

From its inception, the Office of Problem Gambling has been charged with an important mission: provide and support effective problem gambling prevention, treatment, and education programs throughout our state. We are committed to taking a proactive, public health approach to address concerns surrounding the tough issue of problem gambling. We consider biological, behavioral, economic, cultural, policy, and environmental factors which influence gambling and health. We strive to be culturally sensitive and responsive to the needs of our partners and those we serve. We endeavor to be professional, collaborative, equitable and innovative in our solutions to address problem gambling.

Healthcare professionals tell us there are several behaviors which indicate a person might have a gambling problem. These can include:

- Using income or savings to gamble while letting bills go unpaid

- Repeated, unsuccessful attempts to stop gambling
- Breaking or considering breaking laws to finance gambling
- Having depressed or suicidal thoughts because of gambling losses
- Arguing with friends or family about gambling behavior

The OPG website, [www.problemgambling.az.gov](http://www.problemgambling.az.gov), offers extensive resources, including a list of twenty questions to help people determine if they might be a problem gambler. The site features a multi-pronged approach to dealing with problem gambling, which includes a list of the services we provide. We present information on:

- State-funded out-patient treatment
- Residential treatment options
- Information on support programs for problem gamblers and their families, including Gamblers Anonymous and GamAnon
- Statistics from various sources concerning problem gambling

One of our important resources is the self-exclusion program, which allows problem gamblers to voluntarily exclude themselves from entering casinos for 1, 5, or 10 years. Our website also includes links for problem gamblers to ban themselves from being able to access many casino ATMs and Internet gambling sites.

There is also assistance by phone. When someone calls 1-800-NEXT-STEP, he or she is connected with a knowledgeable, caring professional who will listen in an empathetic, nonjudgmental way, putting people in touch with the resources they need to deal with problem gambling.

Working together we can bring meaningful resources to bear on this important public health issue.

Rick Pyper  
Director  
Arizona Office of Problem Gambling

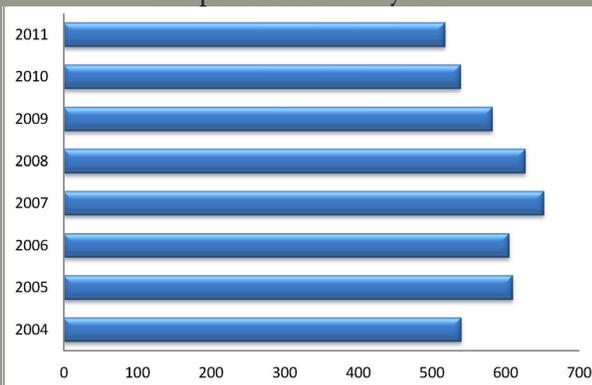
# SELF-EXCLUSION

The Office of Problem Gambling and Arizona's gaming Tribes work as partners to administer the statewide casino self-exclusion program. Participants choose one, five or ten years to exclude themselves from Tribal casinos. Going back into a casino after signing the agreement can result in forfeiture of winnings, citation for trespassing, or even arrest.

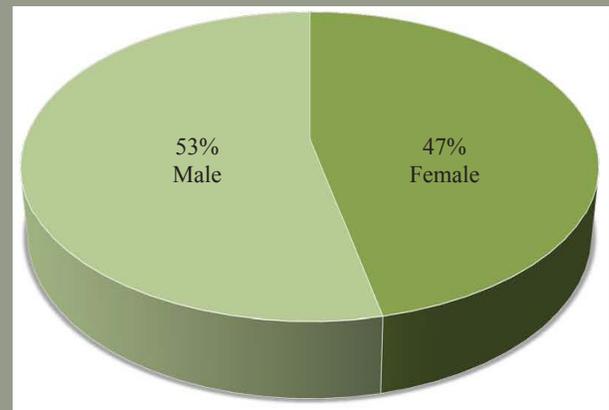
By the end of FY 2012, nearly 4,500 people had participated in the program since it began in April of 2003. When self-exclusion agreements have expired, many participants have chosen to sign up again — some multiple times.

Men tend to participate more than women (6 of the 10 years tracked). When both first-time and renewal applications are taken into account, over 5,100 self-exclusion forms have been processed.

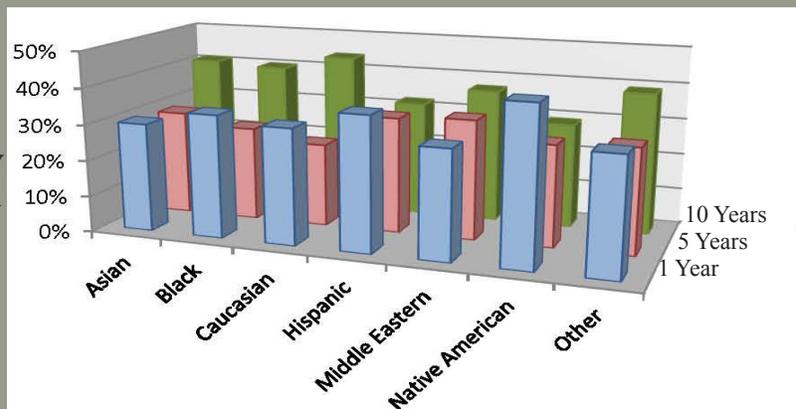
Self-exclusions processed the past 8 calendar years



At the end of Fiscal Year 2012, 2,728 individuals were on the self-exclusion list



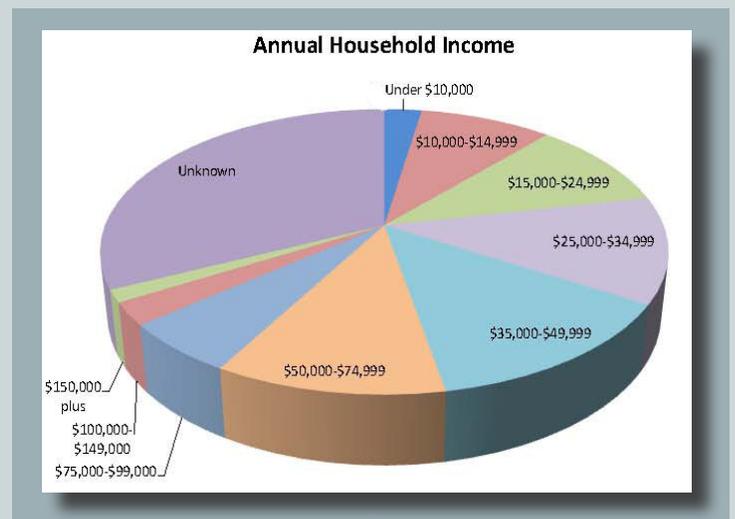
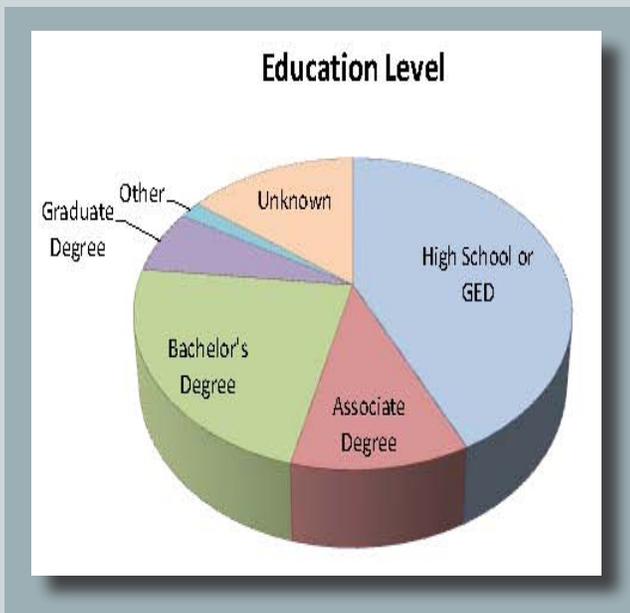
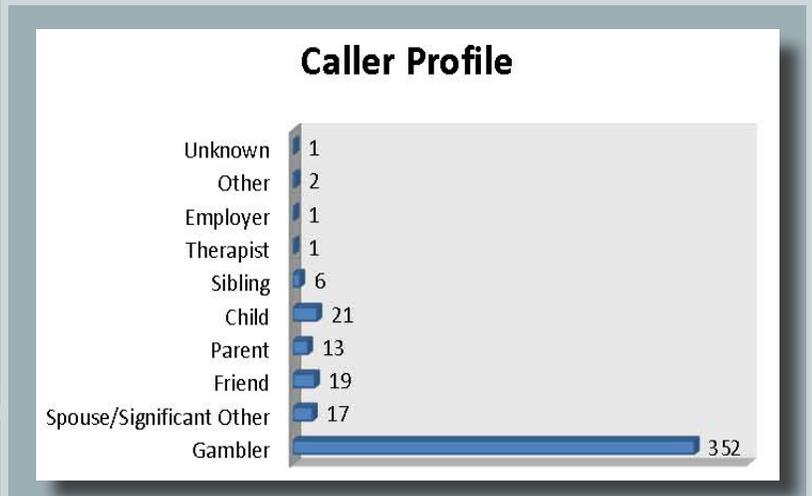
Duration chosen by race/ethnicity, April 2003 — June 2012



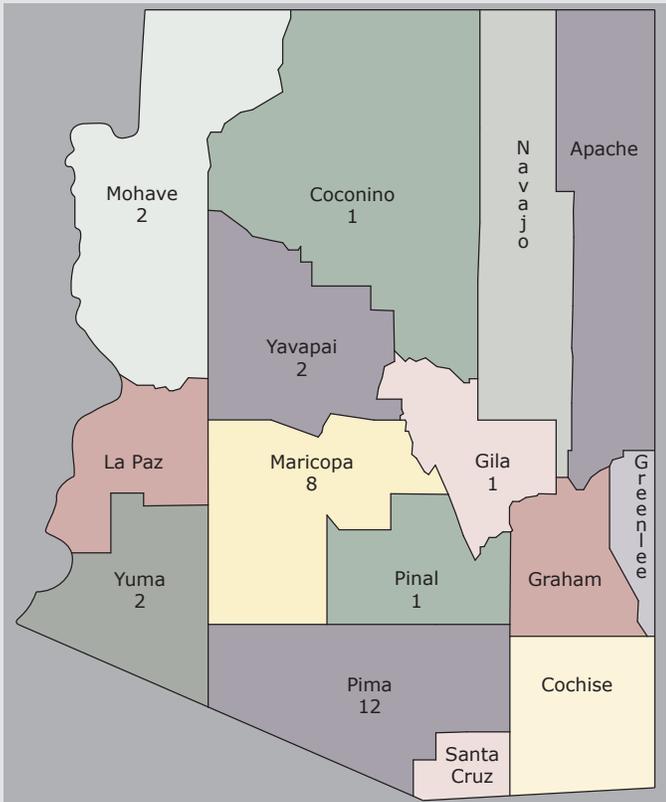
The Office of Problem Gambling maintains a 24/7 helpline—1.800.NEXT-STEP. As with self-exclusion, most gamblers calling the helpline are male—but not by much (just under 52% last year). Most gamblers who have called over the past eight years are single, most are employed, and most have no children living in their household. Less than 7% have suffered from physical, emotional or sexual abuse, and over 10% have considered suicide.

The public learns about the helpline from various sources. Last year, more than half of the callers identified a casino as the place where they learned of the number. Phone book and lottery displays were the next highest percentages. On average, we receive 666 helpline calls each year.

## Fiscal Year 2012 Statistics

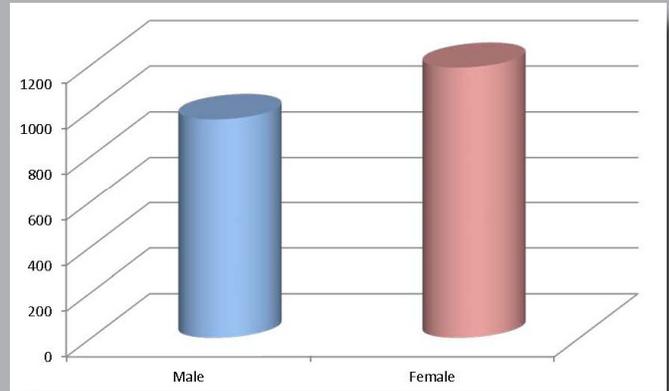


# TREATMENT



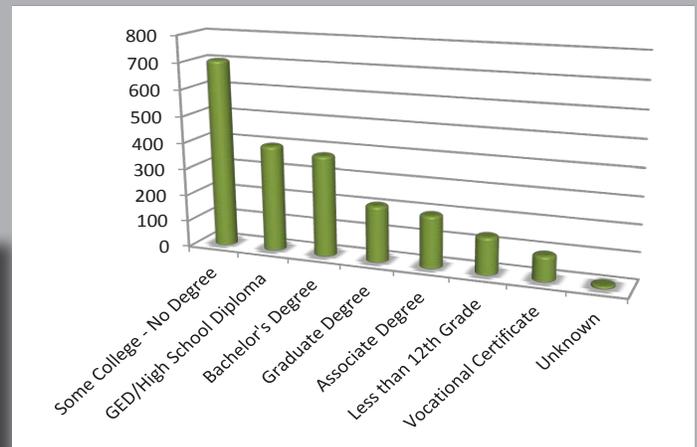
Unlike the self-exclusion and helpline programs, the majority of those who participated in treatment last year were women. Family and friends are the most common way clients learned about treatment followed by Gamblers Anonymous and the state's helpline —1.800.NEXT-STEP.

## Gamblers in Treatment January 2009 - September 2012



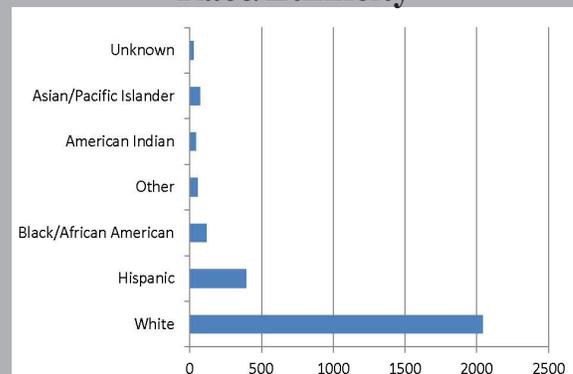
The Office of Problem Gambling contracts with numerous behavioral health treatment counselors throughout the state to provide counseling to problem gamblers. In total they treated 840 clients last fiscal year.

## Problem Gambler Education Level



*Mathew McMillan, a problem gambling clinician from Nelson, New Zealand contacted the Office of Problem Gambling this year desiring to meet with us to learn from our program. We were happy to host him and bring in Tribal representatives, treatment counselors, and the Arizona Council on Problem Gambling to inform him of how we work collaboratively to ensure a successful program.*

## Race/Ethnicity





This year we plan once again to provide two advanced trainings, one in Phoenix and one in Tucson. Additionally, we are planning to provide our Phase II training beginning in the fall. The Phase II training has not been offered since 2008 and includes topics such as:

- Family Issues
- Case Management
- Legal Issues
- Special Populations

We encourage our treatment counselors and stakeholders, as well as any interested members of the public, to attend these valuable trainings. The training schedules will be posted on the home page of our website and sent to those who sign up at our News and Updates link—also on our home page.

## EVENTS

Once again the Governor of Arizona declared the first week in March “Arizona Problem Gambling Awareness Week”. This coincided with national efforts. The Office of Problem Gambling sponsored a day-long Symposium on March 5th. Don Feeney, President of the National Council on Problem Gambling, provided the keynote address. A wide variety of sessions allowed those new to the field to begin to gain an understanding of compulsive gambling, while seasoned veterans were able to hear new perspectives. Causa Hispana Invocando Salud Para Adictos (CHISPA), a new organization in Arizona designed to meet the needs of Hispanic problem gamblers, provided our “Voices of Recovery” panel. Respondents to our post-symposium survey indicated a high level of satisfaction regarding their experience at the event. Mark your calendars for Monday, March 4th to attend the 2013 symposium.

Other events we participated in this past year included the Arizona Rural Health Conference, ASU’s Summer Institute on Behavioral Health, and the National Council on Problem Gambling Annual Conference.

These efforts compliment our numerous face-to-face interactions at health fairs and other gatherings across the state. We also gave presentations to the City of Scottsdale and the Pinal County Community Care Network.



*OPG Administrative Assistant, Ryan Ruelas, with football legend Herschel Walker at this year’s Art of Recovery*

The Office of Problem Gambling has directed extensive efforts to build awareness of problem gambling throughout the upcoming year. Print, billboards, radio and a new TV ad will support the message that there is hope for problem gambling. Here are four print ads that will be running in magazines and newspapers throughout the state:



**Are you gambling with your family's future?**

IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE WITH A GAMBLING PROBLEM, WE CAN HELP.

ARIZONA OFFICE OF **PROBLEM GAMBLING**

Resources include:

- Treatment
- Self-exclusion from casinos
- Gamblers Anonymous

Call 1-800-NEXT-STEP (639-8783) or visit [www.problemgambling.az.gov](http://www.problemgambling.az.gov)




**Are you in over your head?**

IF YOU HAVE A GAMBLING PROBLEM, WE'LL THROW YOU A LIFELINE.

ARIZONA OFFICE OF **PROBLEM GAMBLING**

Resources include:

- Treatment
- Self-exclusion from casinos
- Gamblers Anonymous

Call 1-800-NEXT-STEP (639-8783) or visit [www.problemgambling.az.gov](http://www.problemgambling.az.gov)




**You may be losing more than your money.**

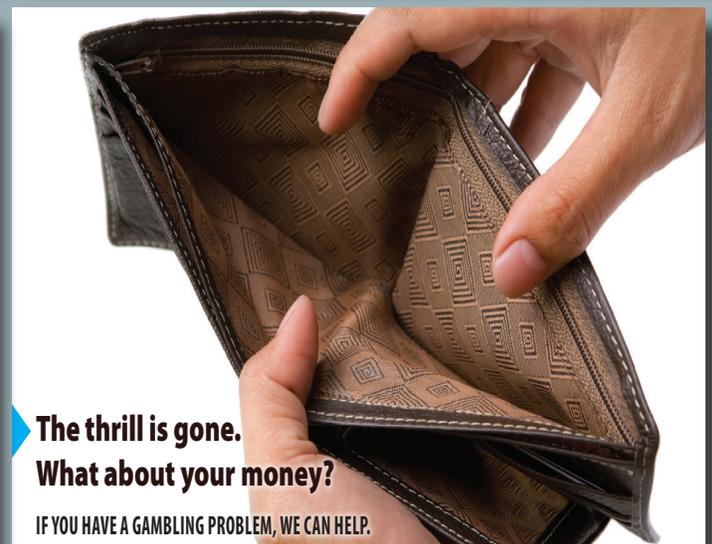
IF YOU HAVE A GAMBLING PROBLEM, WE CAN HELP.

ARIZONA OFFICE OF **PROBLEM GAMBLING**

Resources include:

- Treatment
- Self-exclusion from casinos
- Gamblers Anonymous

Call 1-800-NEXT-STEP (639-8783) or visit [www.problemgambling.az.gov](http://www.problemgambling.az.gov)

**The thrill is gone. What about your money?**

IF YOU HAVE A GAMBLING PROBLEM, WE CAN HELP.

ARIZONA OFFICE OF **PROBLEM GAMBLING**

Resources include:

- Treatment
- Self-exclusion from casinos
- Gamblers Anonymous

Call 1-800-NEXT-STEP (639-8783) or visit [www.problemgambling.az.gov](http://www.problemgambling.az.gov)



## MISSION

Provide and support effective problem gambling prevention, treatment, and education programs throughout Arizona.

## VISION

Support a sustainable continuum of services that reduces to a minimum level the impact of problem gambling in Arizona.

## VALUES

The Office of Problem Gambling is committed to a public health approach to address problem gambling issues. This takes into consideration biological, behavioral, economic, cultural, policy, and environmental factors influencing gambling and health. We will accomplish our mission and realize our vision by being culturally sensitive and responsive to the needs of our partners and those we serve. We will be professional, collaborative, equitable, and innovative in our solutions to address problem gambling.

ARIZONA OFFICE OF PROBLEM GAMBLING  
1110 W. WASHINGTON ST., SUITE 450  
PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007  
PHONE: 602.542.8998  
FAX: 602.274.7546  
CONTACT@PROBLEMGAMBLING.AZ.GOV  
WWW.PROBLEMGAMBLING.AZ.GOV



**1.800.NEXTSTEP**