



ARIZONA OFFICE OF
**PROBLEM
GAMBLING**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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With Internet Gambling In The Headlines, OPG Provides Tips on Recognizing Problems

*Arizona Office of Problem Gambling Available As Resource;
Help Available For Problem Gambling By Calling **1.800.NEXT STEP***

PHOENIX, Arizona (August 21, 2006) — Internet gambling has been a hot topic in the news recently, and with good reason.

An estimated \$6 billion per year is spent by Americans on Internet gambling. Congress is even considering legislation that would ban Internet gambling altogether.

And just as with more traditional forms of gambling, the effects of Internet problem gambling are significant on individuals and their families. The American Psychological Association says that Internet gamblers may be even more likely to develop into problem gamblers than regular gamblers.

Additionally, it is easy for young people to develop gambling problems through online gambling, because it's difficult for parents to know what their children are doing online at all times.

The Arizona Office of Problem Gaming is working to educate Arizonans to recognize the signs of Internet problem gambling. The Office is currently focusing on Internet gambling by providing a variety of different informational resources.

"Internet gambling has shown itself to be just as addictive — if not more so — for some people than other forms of gambling," said Rick Pyper, Director of the Office of Problem Gambling. "That means it can lead to the same sort of problems for individuals and their families, including financial distress, psychological harm and other significant problems. Fortunately, there's help for those with an Internet gambling problem just as there is for those with other types of gambling problems."

Help for problem gambling.

1.800.NEXTSTEP
(1.800.639.8738)

Pyper said there are specific warning signs to watch for that can indicate if someone has a gambling problem, including a problem with Internet gambling. Those include:

- Betting more and more money over time
- Spending more time gambling than planned
- Lying to people about gambling or hiding Internet gambling from loved ones
- Using gambling to escape problems
- Borrowing to replace lost money
- Using credit to gamble
- Gambling to get lost money back
- Unsuccessfully trying to cut back or quit
- Gambling alone
- Losing interest in other activities

“We are providing families and communities with as many resources as possible to help them recognize problem gambling and get help for those who are affected by it,” Pyper said.

The **1.800.NEXT STEP** number provides those concerned with their own gambling or those worried about loved ones with a variety of resources to help them deal with the issues caused by problem gambling. Those resources include:

- How to recognize the warning signs of problem gambling
- Information on Tribal/State-funded treatment and counseling
- Information on Gamblers Anonymous meetings
- Help for families affected by problem gambling

“The **1.800.NEXT STEP** number is a tremendous resource for these individuals and their loved ones, and we encourage anyone who may have a gambling problem or know of someone who might to give us a call or visit us on the web at www.problemgambling.az.gov,” Pyper said.