



1♥800♦GAMBLER
The Problem Gambling Help Network of WV

Annual Report

STATE FISCAL YEAR

2022



Executive Summary

The fiscal year 2022 was marked by more people accessing online gambling, especially young people. The Problem Gambling Help Network of West Virginia (PGHNWV) responded by expanding prevention and outreach activities with teenagers and college students. PGHNWV also provided training on recognizing, assessing, and treating increasingly popular gambling types. The 1-800-GAMBLER helpline experienced a 6% increase in intakes. The primary form of problematic gambling cited was limited video lottery terminals in bars and restaurants, as it has been for many years. However, for the first time, internet gambling on casino games (iGaming) was the second most cited form of problematic gambling, followed by sports gambling. Helpline callers are offered immediate crisis counseling and referrals for a free, private consultation with a PGHNWV network clinician. PGHNWV provides additional treatment funds for those who cannot pay for more sessions. This year, PGHNWV expanded telehealth and other telephone and online support services. PGHNWV also offered a weekly in-person support group, an online wellness meeting, and one retreatment weekend™ event.

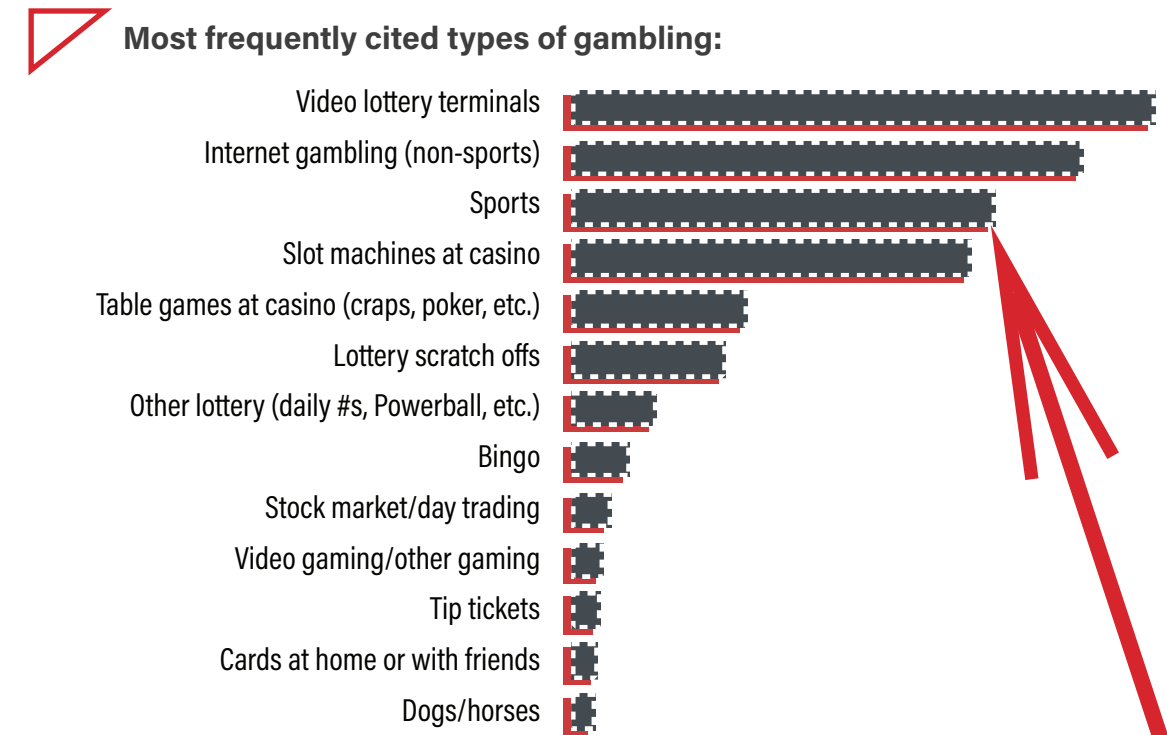
PGHNWV's relationship with First Choice Services (FCS), the company contracted to operate the program, has provided many growth opportunities. FCS continues to grow and operates 15 helplines and programs, with over 150 staff members and a collective call volume of more than 120,000 calls per year. These programs primarily target West Virginians and offer assistance for mental health counseling, tobacco cessation, substance use disorder treatment, suicidal ideation, crisis counseling, social services, Affordable Care Act health insurance enrollment, employment barriers, and much more. PGHNWV staff members work closely with other FCS staff to provide them with information on how to access help for their callers who are experiencing problem gambling. FCS is additionally contracted to provide helpline services for the Virginia Council on Problem Gambling.

This year, PGHNWV generated 40 earned media stories, presented at 61 conferences and seminars, exhibited information on problem gambling at 87 events, distributed outreach material to 54 sites, awarded 14 new prevention subgrants, and increased the number of helpline coordinators. PGHNWV Program Coordinator Lisa Lewis initiated several partnerships to provide continuing education units on gambling addiction, resulting in 98 hours of professionally accredited training. PGHNWV maintained accreditation for PGHNWV to provide certified training through the International Gambling Counselor Certification Board (IGCCB). PGHNWV is recognized as a leader in the provision of gambling addiction services and has added several valuable national partnerships this year. Program Director Jennifer Davis-Walton chaired the National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) Helpline Committee and contributed to several national initiatives. She is also on the National Association of Administrators for Disordered Gambling Services (NAADGS) board. Program Coordinator Maricel Bernardo is active in the Prevention Committee for NCPG.

PGHNWV staff is working closely with NCPG on several initiatives to improve the consistency of services for those seeking help for gambling addiction. The first step in this process is nationalizing the 1-800-GAMBLER helpline, which occurred in June 2021. Another significant step will be the modernization of the helpline, including the ability to receive texts and to collect consistent clinical and demographic data about those seeking help.

Helpline Data

The 1-800-GAMBLER telephone, text, and chat services are staffed 24/7. This year, 1,759 people contacted the helpline and 691 of those completed an intake. The following is data from callers who provided information during the intake:



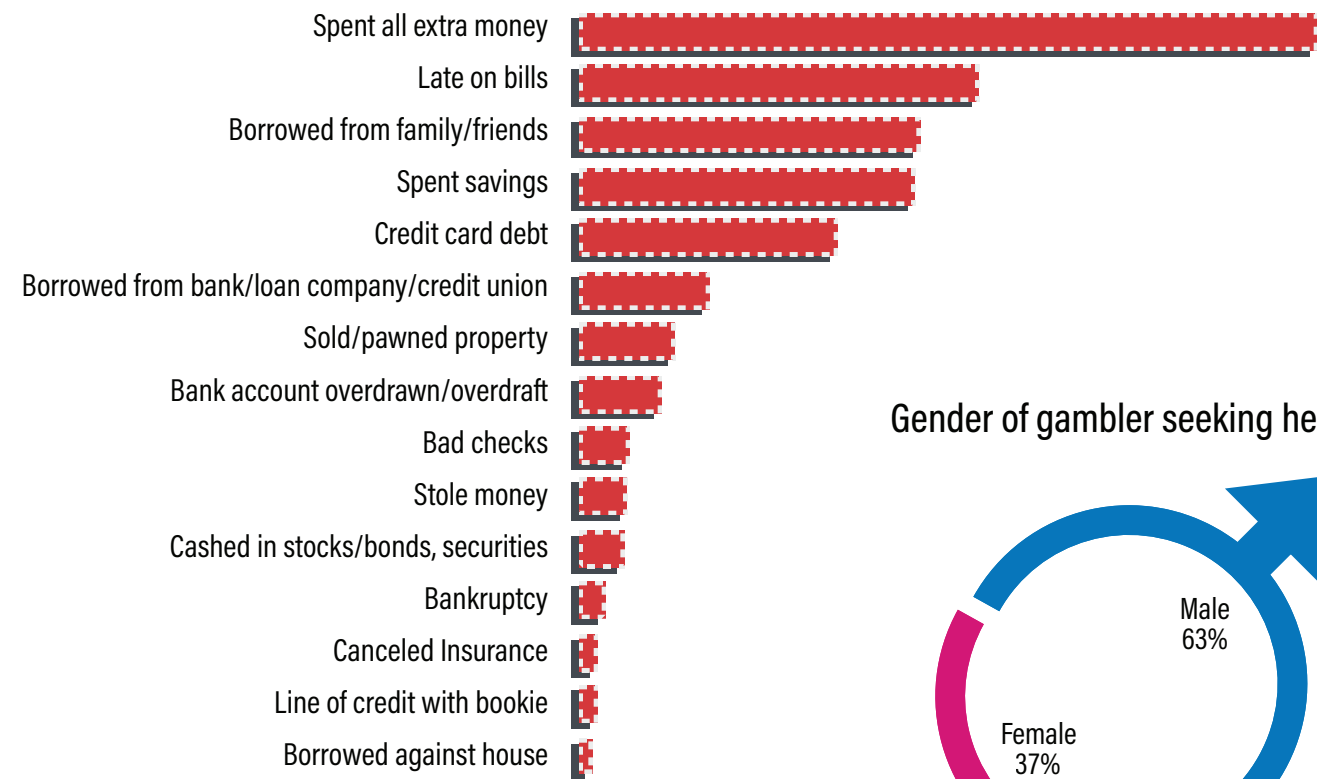
The overwhelming majority of callers who reported **gambling on sports** were doing so **online**

Most frequently mentioned symptoms of gambling disorder mentioned by helpline callers:

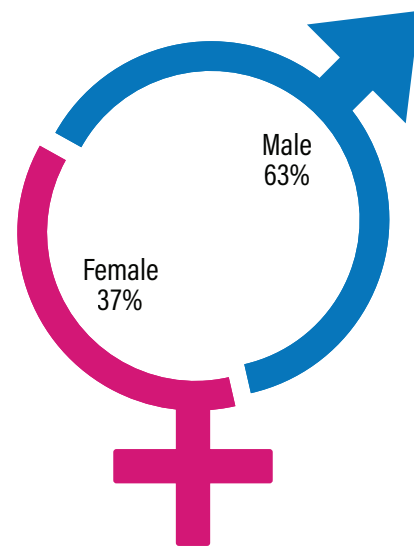


Helpline Data

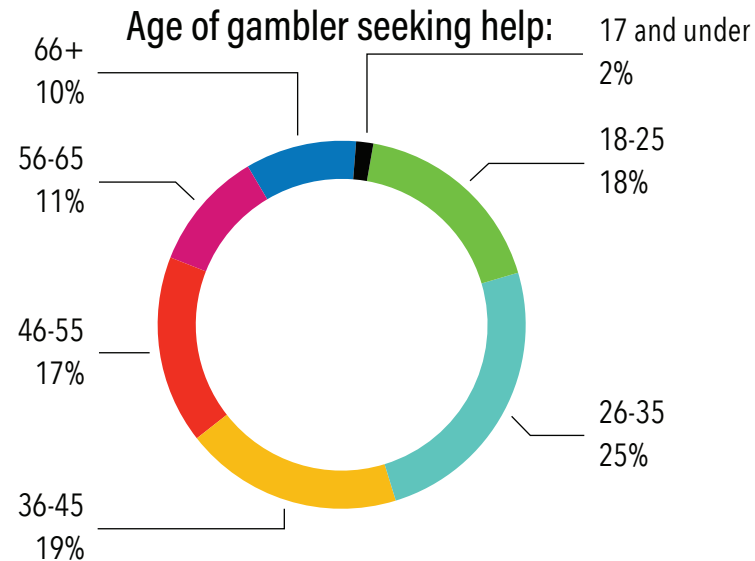
Resources shared with caller:



Gender of gambler seeking help:



Age of gambler seeking help:



Treatment Services

Private Counseling

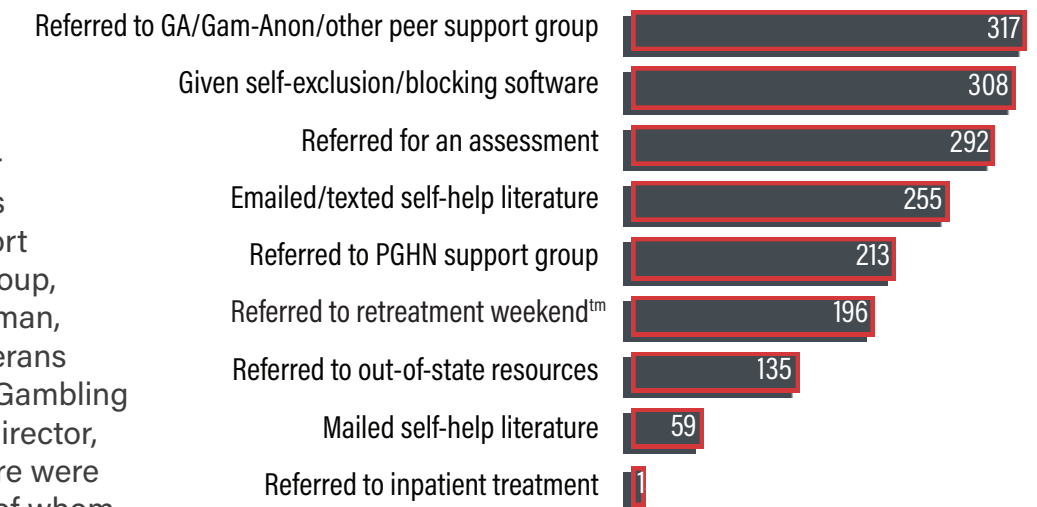
All callers experiencing a gambling problem or who are concerned about the gambling of a loved one are offered a free consultation with a PGHNWV network counselor. This year, 79 people attended an initial consultation. Those unable to pay for additional sessions were offered funds to attend up to 20 therapy sessions. PGHNWV paid for 311 additional sessions of individual therapy.

Support Groups

PGHNWV offers a bi-weekly online wellness call for anyone who wishes to stop gambling or who is in recovery. The wellness call is a combination of a support group and a therapy process group, and is led by Dr. Heather Chapman, the Louis Stokes Cleveland Veterans Administration Medical Center Gambling Addiction Treatment Program Director, along with PGHNWV staff. There were 66 participants this year, many of whom attended each group. This is twice as many participants as last year. Examples of topics addressed include financial recovery, reflections shared in a letter, cross-addiction, relapse, and accountability.

PGHNWV offers a weekly in-person therapy group in Morgantown, West Virginia. Kathy Servian and Vickie Hoffman, PGHNWV network clinicians, lead this free group. There are currently three in-person active Gamblers Anonymous groups in West Virginia. PGHNWV provides each caller information on these meetings, other online and telephone Gamblers Anonymous meetings, and inclusive addiction support groups, such as Celebrate Recovery and Smart Recovery.

Resources shared with caller:



*Many callers received multiple resources

More Resources

Helpline callers are offered many other free resources, including:

- A self-help workbook
- Information on self-exclusion
- Credit counseling and debt relief referrals
- Access to software that blocks gambling sites from computers and mobile devices
- Referrals for psychiatric, counseling, or social services for comorbid conditions

retreatment weekendtm



PGHNWV held a retreatment weekendtm event in Canaan Valley. It featured 26 sessions covering topics such as spirituality, wellness, the importance of exercise, relaxation techniques, and how gambling affects relationships. Individual counseling and support groups were offered to all participants. There were 44 participants, including those experiencing gambling addiction, FCS staff, and clinical staff. The theme was "Planting Seeds in Recovery."



Outcomes

PGHNWV offers follow-up services to all consenting callers. Those who do not attend an appointment, but request emailed or mailed resources, receive a call one week after their initial call. Those who attend an appointment get a reminder call before the appointment and a follow-up after their appointment. All callers can receive follow-up calls at three months, six months, and one year from their initial call.

One Year Recovery Status:

Gambling Behavior:	
Not Gambling	51%
Decreased Gambling	36%
Increased Gambling	4%
Same	9%

Ability to Handle Problems:	
Better	67%
Same	31%
Worse	2%

How Do You Feel About Yourself:	
Better	80%
Same	17%
Worse	3%

Reduced Debt:	
Yes	82%
No	18%

Relationship with Family:	
Better	66%
Same	17%
Worse	17%

Job Performance:	
Better	100%
Same	0%
Worse	0%

Recreational Activity:	
Same	67%
Better	33%
Worse	0%

Six Month Recovery Status:

Gambling Behavior:	
Not Gambling	53%
Decreased Gambling	31%
Increased Gambling	7%
Same	9%

Ability to Handle Problems:	
Better	75%
Same	20%
Worse	5%

How Do You Feel About Yourself:	
Better	79%
Same	17%
Worse	4%

Reduced Debt:	
Yes	78%
No	22%

Relationship with Family:	
Better	83%
Same	17%
Worse	0%

Job Performance:	
Better	88%
Same	12%
Worse	0%

Recreational Activity:	
Better	91%
Same	9%
Worse	0%

Three Month Recovery Status:

Gambling Behavior:	
Not Gambling	53%
Decreased Gambling	37%
Increased Gambling	4%
Same	6%

Ability to Handle Problems:	
Better	75%
Same	19%
Worse	6%

How Do You Feel About Yourself:	
Better	76%
Same	21%
Worse	3%

Reduced Debt:	
Yes	83%
No	17%

Relationship with Family:	
Better	75%
Same	25%
Worse	0%

Job Performance:	
Better	60%
Same	30%
Worse	10%

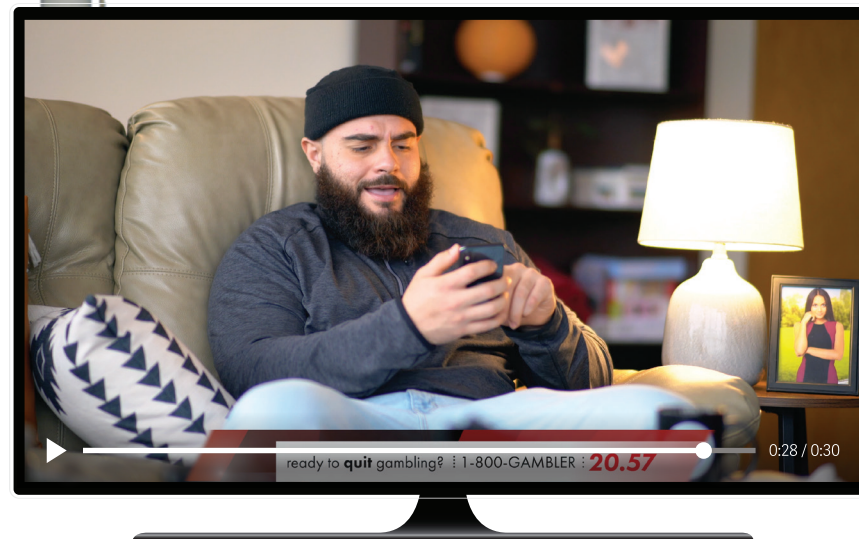
Recreational Activity:	
Better	80%
Same	20%
Worse	0%

Marketing

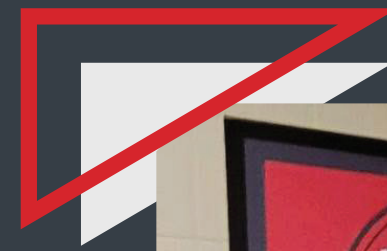
Billboards are one of the most common ways callers say they learned about the PGHNWV services. This year there were 64 billboards statewide with this message:



PGHNWV aired commercials on network, cable, and streaming television. This year, a basketball-themed ad, "Don't Be Beat By A Game," was produced in-house by PGHNWV.



PGHNWV additionally produced a digital ad campaign that displayed ads to a target audience of people interested in gambling. The target audience included people visiting gambling websites, engaging with gambling content on Facebook, and visiting limited video lottery establishments (according to geolocation data). The ads were shown to over 700,000 people in West Virginia, and nearly 5,000 visited the 1800GAMBLER.net website due to this campaign.



PGHNWV placed posters in 37 restaurants, bars, and video poker locations. These posters were strategically placed at entrances and bathrooms to attract the attention of patrons gambling at these establishments.



Each year, PGHNWV participates, along with the West Virginia Lottery, in the National Council on Problem Gambling's "Gift Responsibly" program, which discourages gambling-themed gifts for children. Flyers were given out to thousands of families at outreach events.

Outreach and Media



Program Coordinator
Maricel Bernardo

Community outreach is a vital part of the program. PGHNWV staff presented information on gambling addiction to 61 groups, including professional conferences, civic clubs, and employee groups. PGHNWV staff distributed information at 87 community events, conferences, health fairs, schools, and medical and social service facilities. Promotional materials were mailed to 54 individuals and organizations.

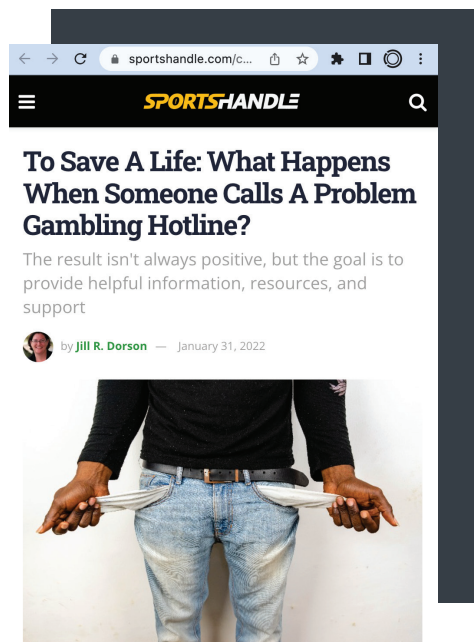


Network Counselor
Virginia Shelhammer

Work is performed all year to garner local media coverage of problem gambling, highlighting the program as a path to recovery. This year PGHNWV was responsible for generating more than 66 newspaper, radio, or television stories on gambling addiction in West Virginia. Additionally, Program Director Jennifer Davis-Walton was interviewed on HBO's "Real Sports" television program. PGHNWV's successful efforts at generating earned media led to a presentation on how to interact with the media at the July 2022 National Conference on Problem Gambling.



Marketing Director Sheila Moran on WSAZ



"What happens when somebody calls is one of our trained helpline coordinators picks up, and one of the first things we are going to say is, 'Tell me what's going on!' We want to hear from their perspective what's going on, so we'll ask open-ended questions. Some people are kind of closed and some people tell you pretty much anything and everything. We are as conversational as you and I are today, and we're going to treat the person on the other end of the phone like someone we know. We want to make sure they feel like we're listening or that we know a little bit about what we're talking about and that we care."

Jennifer Davis-Walton, Program Director,
The Problem Gambling Help Network of West Virginia

Website

The PGHNWV website, 1800GAMBLER.net, had 65,000 unique visitors this year. Online presence is optimized, and the program is often at the top of search results for West Virginians seeking help with a gambling problem. Website users can chat online 24/7, search for treatment resources in their area, and view self-help material.

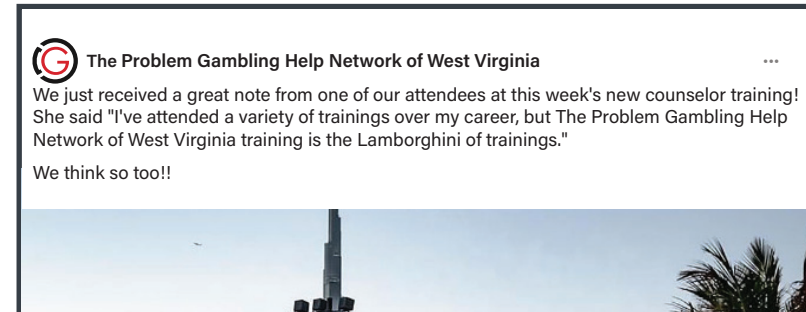


The website highlights an interactive Lie/Bet Questionnaire, a two-question screening tool for Gambling Disorder. Answering "Yes" to either question indicates a possible problem and a need for further assessment. Of the 1,437 people who used the tool, 1,118 said they or their loved one had lied about their gambling, and 1,295 said they or their loved one felt the need to increase their bets. Sixty-six percent (66%) of respondents indicated they were seeking help for themselves, with the remainder indicating they were seeking help for a loved one.

All nine symptoms of Gambling Disorder are listed in a separate interactive quiz. Almost all of the 1,274 people who took this quiz to evaluate their symptoms reported at least one symptom.

Social Media

In addition to the website, PGHNWV also maintains a very active social media presence that helps to educate and promote the services provided. PGHNWV has accounts on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube.



Prevention

According to NCPG, youth are significantly more likely to develop a gambling addiction than adults. Those who start gambling young are more likely to develop gambling problems. Issues contributing to an increase in youth gambling include:

- There has been a convergence of video/mobile gaming and gambling, and both activities are accessible to youth. Gamification, which adds games or game-like elements to encourage participation, is becoming more prominent on gambling platforms. Likewise, mobile and video games often contain gambling themes or actual opportunities to gamble within the game.
- Financial ventures such as cryptocurrency and day trading, which have gambling elements, attract young participants.
- The ubiquity of sports betting ads has created an environment in which youth are constantly exposed to the message that gambling is risk-free.

PGHNWV collaborates with prevention organizations to educate and spread problem gambling awareness. PGHNWV partnered with Southern West Virginia Collegiate Peer Recovery Network to share prevention and treatment information with the campus community. According to NCPG, about 75 percent of college students gamble yearly, and approximately 6 percent have serious gambling problems. PGHNWV also worked to educate younger students about the risks of gaming and gambling addiction. Grants were awarded to the following organizations to assist with youth outreach and prevention work:

- Brooke-Hancock Family Resource Network (FRN)
- Calhoun FRN
- Clay FRN
- Community Connections, Inc.
- Eastern Regional FRN
- Marion County FRN
- Pleasants County Committee on Family Issues/FRN
- Rainelle Medical Center
- Regional FRN
- Taylor County FRN
- Wetzel County Center for Children and Families/FRN
- Williamson Health & Wellness Center
- Clay County Health Department Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD)
- Mission WV/SADD



This website is youth-oriented and dedicated to providing education about the risks of gambling

Grantees received a full day of training on problem gambling and evidenced-based practices to prevent youth gambling. PGHNWV also provided them with ongoing support throughout the year. The prevention grantees specialize in community prevention, education, and mentorship. The pervasive COVID pandemic continued to present many challenges, but PGHNWV grantees found creative ways to reach out to the youth and communities. Subgrantee organizations worked virtually and in person with youth and educated parents, community members, and other organizations about gaming/gambling addiction and prevention. Most subgrant recipients agreed that before they received the grant and training from 1-800-GAMBLER, they were unaware of the risks of youth problem gambling.



Billboard by Putnam Wellness

PGHNWV prevention activities reached OVER 20,000 students and families through the following activities:

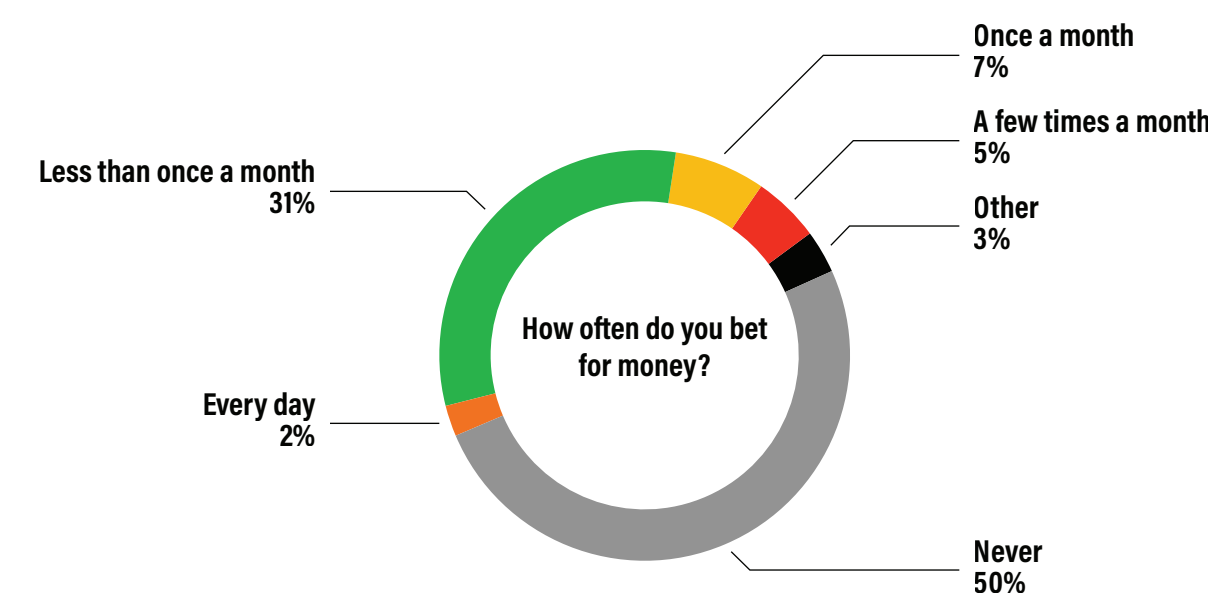
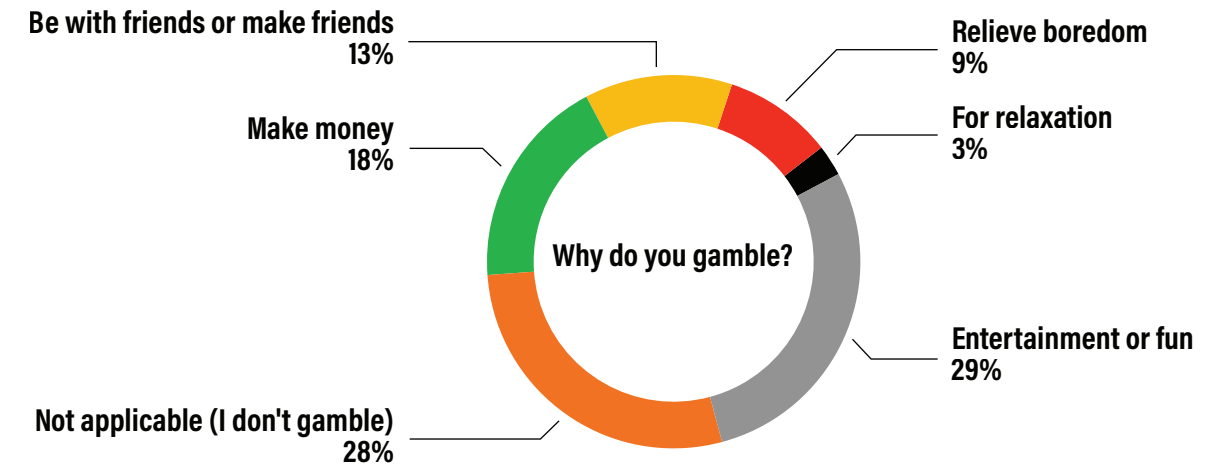
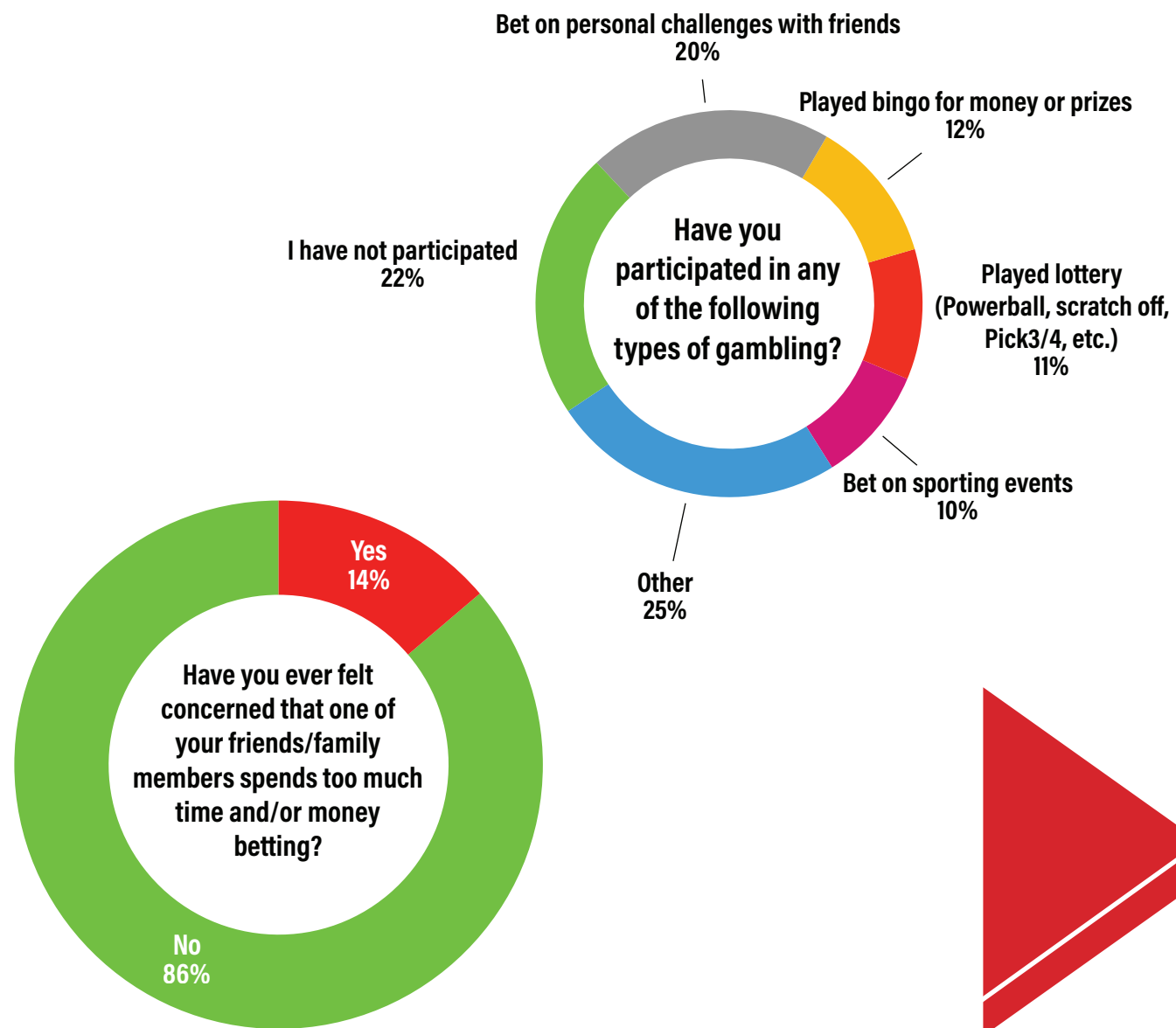
- Distribution of information and giveaways for outreach at sporting/school events, community meetings, local and state fairs, health fairs, malls, open-air markets, and various holiday events
- Distribution of information and giveaways at local food pantries and food drives throughout the year
- Placement of information at libraries, courthouses, health departments, public locations
- Workshops and presentations to high school and college students
- Youth surveys on gambling activities
- Teaching Stacked Deck evidence-based curriculum
- Weekly intercom announcements for one high school
- Poster and door contests
- Active youth participation in creating PSAs
- Messages on social media, radio, newspapers, and neighborhood message boards
- Youth participation in coalition meetings
- Movie night and escape room activities as alternative interests to gaming
- Window displays at FRNs
- Community discussion of problem gambling throughout the year, and especially during Red Ribbon Week, National Prevention Week, Problem Gambling Awareness Month, Mental Health Awareness Month and Prom Promise



Exhibit at Marshall University

Results from youth surveys conducted by prevention grantees

Over 700 youth were asked to rank the following statements:



Of the youth surveyed:

- 128 did not think gambling could become an addiction
- 41 said they gambled "often"
- 21 admitted they hid their gambling from others
- 67 said they would like to stop gambling, but did not know how

National Problem Gambling Awareness Month



Each year, PGHNWV participates in National Problem Gambling Awareness Month in March. This month is an opportunity to bring attention to an often under-recognized and stigmatized disorder that affects millions of Americans.

This year, PGHNWV:

- Presented seminars on gambling disorders
- Mailed promotional materials to schools, colleges, mental health, and social service agencies
- Issued press releases and participated in media interviews
- Exhibited information at the state basketball tournament
- Spoke to high school classes and offered screenings

Program Coordinator Maricel Bernardo and First Choice Services Outreach Coordinator Anita King share a space providing outreach at Concord University



Promotional treats given out to network providers and community partners



Program Coordinator Maricel Bernardo and Helpline Coordinator Errin Bays with Charleston Mayor Amy Goodwin (center) after receiving a proclamation from the city recognizing Problem Gambling Awareness Month



PGHNWV staff with the proclamation from Governor Jim Justice recognizing Problem Gambling Awareness Month

Responsible Gaming Education Week

Each year, Responsible Gaming Education Week (RGEW) is an opportunity for the gambling industry to highlight its efforts to promote responsible gambling. Though PGHNWV works with the gambling facilities throughout the year, providing stickers and posters, extra effort is given this week to supply educational and promotional material. This year, PGHNWV provided staff at Hollywood Casino in Charles Town with literature and buttons for RGEW.



Clinical Training

Despite the ongoing inconveniences of the COVID-19 pandemic, PGHNWV increased the training sessions offered to network clinicians and other professionals. PGHNWV staff presented information in person or through virtual webinars to 69 groups. Presentations and training were offered to treatment centers, recovery houses, medical centers, mental health centers, child care groups, Rotary Clubs, Girl Scout troops, schools, student groups, colleges, family resource centers, community collaboratives, and county offices of the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources. In addition, PGHNWV was honored to have been invited to present at several professional conferences throughout the year. PGHNWV offered a special training session to over 300 mental health and social service professionals on how to help Veterans with a gambling disorder.

PGHNWV offered exclusive training to the 50+ network clinicians who treat 1-800-GAMBLER callers. This included a 35-hour training to welcome twelve new counselors to the network. Current clinicians also received clinical consultation training and advanced training specific to trending types of gambling, such as mobile day trading, cryptocurrency, and meme stocks.

PGHNWV provided eight clinicians with the additional, necessary training to obtain their International Gaming Disorder Treatment certificates. As the lines between gaming and gambling have blurred and the comorbidity between these disorders has increased, clinicians must have current treatment knowledge and employ best practice techniques most closely suited to their clients' experience.

Many PGHNWV network clinicians and staff are certified or studying to become certified as Internationally Certified Gambling Counselors (ICGC). Dr. Heather Chapman, Director of the Louis Stokes Cleveland Veterans Administration Medical Center Gambling Addiction Treatment program, continues to act as PGHNWV clinical consultant. This year, Dr. Chapman received the Robert L. Custer Lifetime Award for Direct Service in gambling addiction treatment. She provided ongoing consultation for all network clinicians and provided the additional training necessary for nine network clinicians to obtain their ICGC certifications this year.

In the course of providing training, PGHNWV offered Continuing Education Units (CEUs) to psychologists, social workers, counselors, nurses, and addiction professionals. This year PGHNWV offered a total of 85 CEU hours to more than 1,000 clinicians. Additionally, PGHNWV took steps to become a preferred provider for the International Gambling Counselor Certification Board (ICCCB).



This flyer is from a training session offered by PGHNWV. There were 160 participants, and many agreed to display promotional material to assist in statewide prevention efforts.

Comments from PGHNWV helpline caller satisfaction surveys



“I was very comfortable about a very serious, personal and embarrassing situation. I appreciate having this channel of help. Thank you.”

“Maricel was absolutely fantastic.”

“Heather was very understanding. She made me comfortable and less ashamed. I’m so thankful someone like her was there to answer my call.”

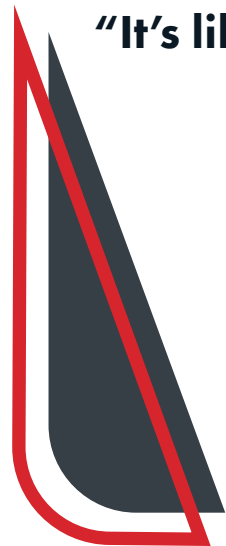
“Heather was a pleasure to talk with. I was really upset the day I called. After talking to her I feel so much better and at peace with myself. She let me know that I wasn’t by myself. Thank you Heather for the support you gave me that day I called.”

Comments from retreatment weekend™ evaluations

“It’s like a booster shot to keep me well.”

“The fellowship and seeing people I haven’t seen in quite awhile. It is like a rejuvenation for my recovery.”

“Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! It was a great experience and I look forward to coming back in the future.”



Financial Report

SFY 2022

<i>INCOME:</i>	
PGHNWV Contract	1,359,223.00
Other Income	45,430.00
Total Income	1,404,653.00
<i>EXPENSE:</i>	
Payroll	465,166.03
Marketing/Media/Outreach	175,480.53
Direct Program Expense	75,771.30
Treatment Services - Direct	91,633.28
Treatment Services - Admin	573.04
Insurance Expense	768.36
Communication	14,486.48
Equipment	5,601.65
Contracting Expense	14,130.30
Supplies	4,975.15
Travel	4,130.07
Rent	9,723.18
Training	44,760.83
Administrative Costs	193,450.50
Total Expense	1,100,650.70
Net Income	304,002.30

Staff

Lata Menon, MSW, LGSW, CEO

David Sheppard, CPA, CFO

Jennifer Davis-Walton, MA, ICGC-II, Program Director

Lisa Lewis, MSW, LGSW, Program Coordinator

Maricel Bernardo, MSM-HCA, Program Coordinator

Sheila Moran, MSW, LSW, ICGC, Director of Marketing

Adam Sypolt, Media Coordinator

Kay Goff, Office Manager

Tammy Samms, Accounting Assistant

Heather Downey-Payne, Helpline Coordinator

Kriston Vanhorn, Helpline Coordinator

Gina Lancianese, Helpline Coordinator

Samantha Perry, Helpline Coordinator

Tara Woods, Helpline Coordinator

Errin Bays, Helpline Coordinator

Doug Squire, Helpline Coordinator



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