



**PROBLEM GAMBLING
COMMUNITY AWARENESS
AND EDUCATION STRATEGY**

March 2009

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1.

Introduction

Educating, promoting responsible gambling, and informing Victorians about the potential harm arising from excessive gambling is the core objective of the Promoting Healthy Communities component of *Taking Action on Problem Gambling*.

The Victorian Government's Problem Gambling Community Awareness and Education Strategy is a powerful and comprehensive population health approach to minimise and manage problem gambling in the community. It presents an integrated, multifaceted range of programs that will target both individual behaviours and whole of community awareness, to attain and maintain real social change.

Programs are built around three core principles of building community resilience to problem gambling, raising awareness of risks and promoting services for those who need help.

This strategy uses the principles of social marketing to target individual behaviour change and aims to attain and maintain real social change in the ability of the whole community to reduce and manage the incidence of problem gambling.

The strategy engages a wide range of tools to effect positive change in gambling behaviours in Victoria. It recognises that social marketing is the use of marketing principles and techniques to improve the welfare of people and the physical, social and economic environment in which they live, and applies that across all programs and initiatives.

A key focus will be to build on the success and strong recall of the previous 'Think of what you're really gambling with' campaign and Gambler's Help services, to deliver a new suite of innovative and cutting-edge initiatives. These will continue to position Victoria as a world leader in the delivery of social marketing and integrated public health promotion.

The strategy provides a road map to guide all Government communication and education activities in partnership with Gambler's Help services and with support from health and welfare professionals, partner organisations, the gaming industry and community.

What is problem gambling?

Problem gambling is defined as behaviour characterised by difficulties in limiting money and/or time spent on gambling, which leads to adverse consequences for the gambler, others or for the community.

Policy context

The policy objectives of *Taking Action on Problem Gambling*, particularly Action Area 3 - Promoting healthy communities, are implemented through this strategy.

This strategy complements the recent redevelopment of Gambler's Help services and the implementation of the new integrated model of local community education. This is a core deliverable of Action Area 3 – Promoting healthy communities, which combines public health, social regulation and consumer protection approaches to problem gambling.

It also complements the Strategic Policy Framework for Gambler's Help services, the Operational Guidelines for Community Education, and the Implementation Framework for Primary Care Partnerships.

“It’s useful to re-frame the way we think of ‘social marketing’ – too often a label for advertising and promotion, with little thought of what other activities are needed to succeed in ‘selling’ health and wellbeing.” Todd Harper, CEO Victorian Health Promotion Foundation

2.

Strategy overview

Our vision →

Strategic approach →

A healthy and resilient Victoria in which responsible gambling is promoted and the harm associated with problem gambling is minimised.

1. Build community resilience to problem gambling in Victoria

Audiences/market segments:

- Victorian community
- All gamblers (low, moderate and high risk)
- Healthcare professionals
- Industry
- Partners
- Targeted market segments

Messages:

- Preventative

Key result areas:

- Educate the Victorian population about safe gambling practices
- Raise community awareness of the early warning signs of problem gambling
- Reduce the stigma of problem gambling to build a foundation for help-seeking
- Promote social inclusion and connectedness
- Work with other health care professionals
- Building resilience in school children through broad financial management and consumer education

2. Educate and target community segments at risk of developing a gambling problem in Victoria

Audiences/market segments:

- People with mental health issues (eg depression)
- People with co-morbid addictions (eg drug/alcohol)
- People in vulnerable communities
- People who are socially isolated
- People with intellectual disability/cognitive impairments
- People of Indigenous backgrounds
- Senior Victorians
- People in community services or correctional clients
- People in rural/remote communities
- Young people
- People of CALD backgrounds

Messages:

- Early intervention

Key result areas:

- Develop and implement strategies to mitigate the incidence and impact of problem gambling by targeting community segments at-risk of problem gambling in Victoria
- Implement place-based pilot programs
- Risk awareness promotion and education (eg Responsible Gambling Awareness Week)
- Reinforce Gambler's Help brand
- Educate children about the risks of gambling and the harm caused by problem gambling

3. Service awareness and promotion

Audiences/market segments:

- Problem gamblers
- At-risk gamblers
- Healthcare professionals
- Significant others
- Industry
- Partners

Messages:


- Tertiary

Key result areas:

- Encourage a 'no wrong' door approach to accessing services and treatment options
- Encourage problem gamblers and their family and friends to seek help
- Promote the suite of services that respond to the needs of problem gamblers and their friends and family (eg problem gambling counselling, financial counselling, group work, online self-help and self exclusion programs)
- Reinforce the Gambler's Help brand

Programs →

→ Commitment to progress

<p>Statewide communications</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statewide Communication Campaigns • Responsible Gambling Awareness Week • Player information standards • High value channels
<p>Community Education – Integrated health promotion</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local community education • Gambler’s Help services • Provider education • Primary Care Partnerships
<p>School-based learning</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumer Affairs Victoria - Consumer Education in Schools (CEIS) • BIG DEAL resource • Resource guide for school counsellors
<p>Partnerships and stakeholder engagement</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships with sporting organisations (such as AFL) • Place-based partnerships • Industry training and collaboration • Potential partnerships with peak health organisations
<p>Online</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage target audiences • New navigation of website • Information portal • Online counselling

This strategy provides a clear roadmap for guiding community awareness and education.

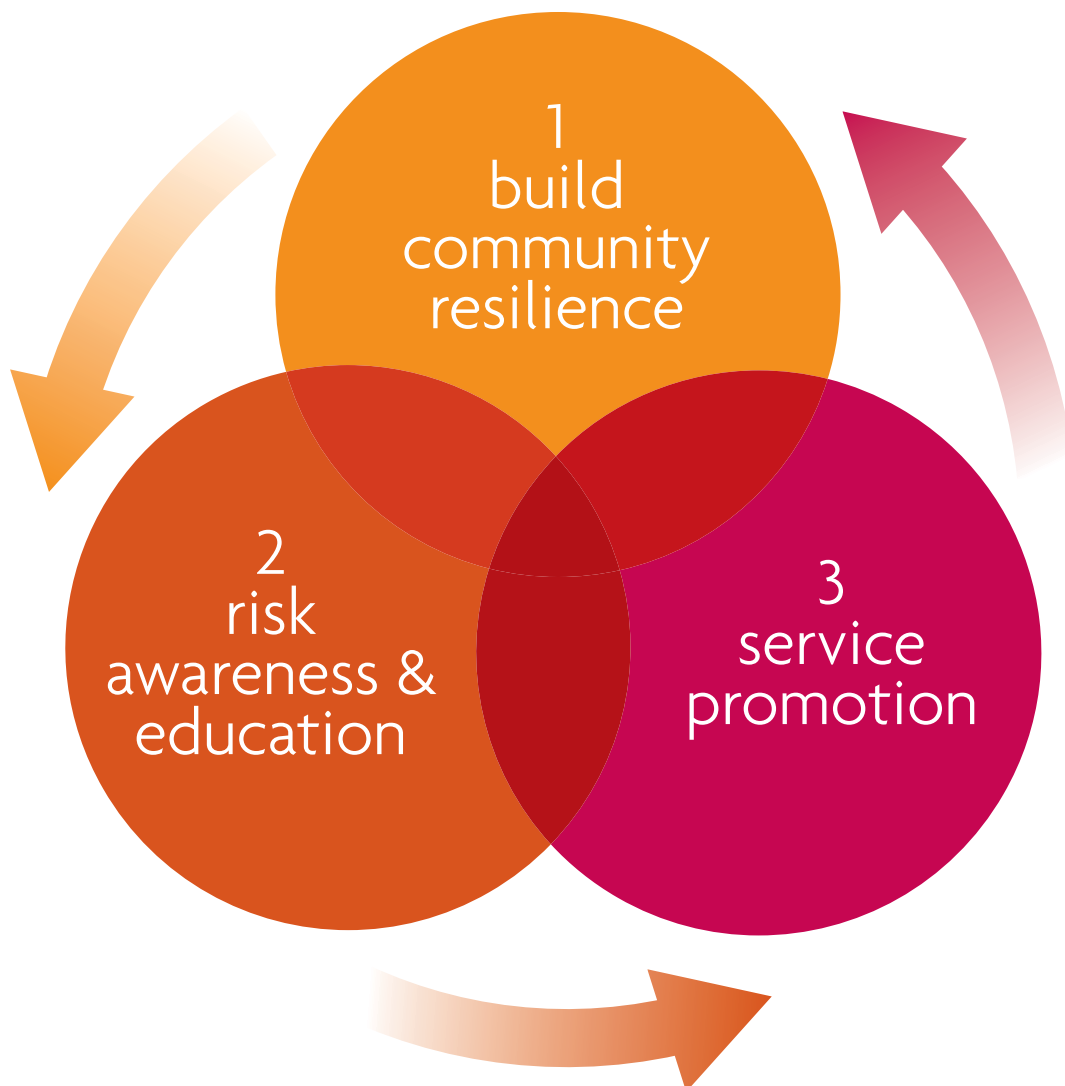
Each program within the strategy will be closely monitored and evaluated against a set of clear criteria developed to support the implementation of *Tacking Action on Problem Gambling*.

The effectiveness and delivery of the programs will be assessed, and there will be flexibility to respond to changing community needs and expectations.

2.

Strategic approach and principles

The strategic approach for Victoria to minimise problem gambling relies on three integrated and parallel principles: build community resilience, educate and promote risk awareness and service promotion. These are interlinked and will guide all communication and education.



1

Build community resilience

At the heart of the strategic approach is to build real and lasting resilience against problem gambling within the Victorian community. This will be done by addressing the broader social determinants of health and by empowering the Victorian community with the knowledge of how to gamble safely to protect against problem gambling and build stronger communities.

The focus will be to increase resilience to problem gambling, promote social inclusion and build social connectedness to prevent and reduce the incidence of problem gambling.

This will be achieved through the delivery of integrated whole of community health promotion programs including community education, the statewide campaign, partnerships and school-based learning.

These will:

- encourage responsible gambling behaviour in the Victorian community
- raise community awareness of the early warning signs of problem gambling
- reduce the stigma of problem gambling to build a foundation for help seeking
- promote social inclusion and connectedness
- educate the next generation about the risks of gambling and the harm caused by problem gambling.

2

Educate and target community segments at risk of developing a gambling problem

The results of the market segmentation study, analysis of presentations to Gambler's Help and findings of the Risk and Protective Factors study¹ enable a highly targeted approach to communicating with and educating segments of the community who are at moderate to high risk of developing problem gambling.

Strategies to mitigate the incidence and impact of problem gambling by targeting community segments at-risk for problem gambling in Victoria will be developed and implemented. Key community segments to be targeted include people with health issues (eg mental health and co-morbid conditions), people in socio-economically vulnerable communities, people who are socially isolated, people with intellectual disability/cognitive impairments, people of Indigenous backgrounds, senior Victorians, people on community services or corrective orders, people of CALD backgrounds and young people.

3

Service awareness and promotion

Victoria offers a range of highly effective treatment services for people who experience problem gambling. It is essential that the community, particularly people at-risk or experiencing problem gambling and their family and friends, know how to access advice and treatment and feel comfortable doing so.

The programs in this strategy will encourage problem gamblers and their family and friends to seek help for their gambling, promote the range of services available to problem gamblers (and their family and friends), such as problem gambling counselling, financial counselling, group work, online self-help and self-help exclusion programs.

Health professionals continue to be an effective, trusted source of information to the community about problem gambling and are at the frontline for detection and diagnosis. They are a vital source of referral to specialist health and treatment services.

Advertising and communications will reinforce and build on awareness of Gambler's Help Line and services and the associated branding and logo.

¹ *Risk and Protective Factors in Problem Gambling, April 2008, Shane A. Thomas and Alun C. Jackson, Monash University – preliminary findings.*

2.

Aims and objectives

There are specific aims for each of the three principles underpinning this strategy. These aims guide and direct all actions and initiatives undertaken to educate and communicate with the Victorian community about responsible gambling and the risks of problem gambling.

Aims

1

Build community resilience

Educate all Victorians about responsible gambling behaviours.

Create partnerships and promote social inclusion and connectedness to strengthen community capacity to respond to at-risk and problem gambling.

Support communities in preventing problem gambling through proactively addressing known risk and protective factors.

2

Risk awareness & education

Target at-risk community segments to raise awareness of the potential harms and risks associated with problem gambling.

3

Service promotion

Increase awareness of the range of help options available to problem gamblers to encourage uptake.

Demonstrate help and treatment options work and show how to access them.

Support health professionals in recognising, diagnosing and referring problem gambling.



Objectives

- Foster greater community empathy for problem gamblers as people with a health condition (reduce stigma).
- Create greater awareness of help and treatment options amongst target groups in the community deemed most at risk.
- Increase the percentage of problem gamblers who access Gambler's Help services.
- Increase calls from problem gamblers to the Gambler's Help Line.
- Increase awareness of problem gambling and Gambler's Help services with health professionals.
- Increase referrals to Gambler's Help services from community groups, other help services and venue operators.
- Create greater awareness of the risks of problem gambling in CALD and Indigenous communities, leading to an increase in the percentage of problem gamblers who present to Gambler's Help services.
- Increase awareness of risky gambling behaviours amongst consumers and young people (as future consumers).
- Increase the number of "significant others" seeking advice from Gambler's Help services.

The evidence base

The Problem Gambling Community Awareness and Education Strategy draws on the strategic social marketing approach, policy framework and sound evidence base to achieve significant progress in tackling problem gambling in Victoria.

Stage 1

A synopsis of the lessons learned from existing problem gambling strategies, best practice public health communication strategies, and national and international approaches to problem gambling community awareness and education.



Stage 2

A market segmentation study of Victorian adults exploring community attitudes and behaviours to gambling. This research forms a strong basis for targeting specific sectors of the community to raise risk awareness.



Stage 3

Stakeholder input and strategy development, including one-on-one interviews with key stakeholders and workshops with the Department of Justice project team and relevant reference groups.

Statewide communications

Introduction

The Problem Gambling Community Awareness and Education Strategy requires the development and execution of a social marketing program that contains, at its core, a thematically linked sequence of communications aimed at minimising the harms associated with gambling and problem gambling.

While a single communications theme will be run at any given time, targeted social marketing campaigns and activities addressing particular audiences may run concurrently.

The integrated structure will address protective, risk and treatment seeking objectives and be targeted using a range of appropriate channels and a detailed segmentation approach (based on the target audiences identified in this strategy).

Research outcomes

Based on the findings of the Stage 1 research and Stage 2 segmentation study, statewide communications will feature:

- a series of personal stories to resonate with target audiences. This is a proven and powerful tool in social marketing campaigns to create empathy and identification. It is also a key element in reducing stigma. Real stories will use a range of actors reflecting the target demographics for the delivery
- a series of integrated themes over the life of the strategy
- strong promotion of the success of treatment options and how to access these
- delivery of campaign messages across highly-targeted media
- support with a fully-integrated communication and public relations program
- a clear and long-term advertising brand hierarchy.

Strategic direction

The development of an integrated and multi-faceted communication program is a key plank in this Community Awareness and Education Strategy. At its core is the intent to deliver a suite of highly effective health promotion messages to ensure that the Victorian community can participate safely in gambling. Importantly, it supports and addresses all three themes of this strategy – building community resilience, risk awareness and service promotion. It will be based on evidence, emphasise social interaction and empower individuals. It will deliver well-developed and tested messages to target audiences via mass media advertising and targeted promotions.

Future themes

Future themes will incorporate ongoing execution development and draw on evaluative data and broader problem gambling epidemiological data obtained by the Department of Justice or published by reliable sources.

Commitment and evaluation

The strategic focus of the communications and development of a brand hierarchy will be implemented over three years. The impact of communication will be evaluated against the objectives outlined in the strategy. Key measures will include the impact of problem gambling in the community, access to services and campaign recall and awareness.

Key initiatives	Target audiences	Key message direction	Resources and support
STATEWIDE CAMPAIGNS			
<p>Theme 1 Preventative messages</p> <p>This is a key strategy in building long-term community resilience to problem gambling by teaching people how to gamble safely and focusing on the broader determinants of health.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victorian community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gamblers cannot influence the odds of winning Practice safe gambling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertising Online Collateral Public relations Media relations School-based learning resources
<p>Theme 2: Risk Awareness</p> <p>This theme will address the whole community and include specific market segments deemed moderate or at-risk gamblers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All market segments considered moderate or at-risk problem gamblers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe gambling practices Is your gambling still fun? Ways to reduce the negative impacts of gambling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertising Online Collateral – including calculators and screening tools Public relations Media relations School-based learning resources
<p>Theme 3: Service promotion (including the national 1800 number)</p> <p>Primarily focused on service promotion, this phase will also create strong general awareness of support and treatment options for problem gamblers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Problem gamblers and significant others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help with your gambling problem begins today by calling Gambler's Help Line on 1800 858 858 Put your friendship first: talk to your friend about how to get help for their gambling problem Important to convey messages of hope and empathy towards people with a gambling problem Problem gambling can affect anyone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertising Online Collateral Public relations Media relations
<p>Responsible Gambling Awareness Week (RGAW)</p> <p>RGAW is a key initiative of Theme 1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership with industry & community sector agencies Broad community awareness of safe gambling behaviours Promotion of safe gambling practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victorian community, particularly those who gamble Venue staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gamble responsibly: stay in control The Government is working to build healthy communities to minimise the risk and harm of problem gambling Gamblers cannot influence the odds of winning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collateral Media relations Advertising PR and launch activities High profile ambassadors Steering Committee
<p>High value channels</p> <p>In-venue messaging and targeted radio are essential for the delivery of ongoing information to people who gamble. These channels support all communications and stand alone to reach those most at risk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-venue advertising and information Player information standards Key risk awareness Information and support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gamblers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consumer protection: facts to know about gambling/myth de-bunking Risk awareness and player information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key collateral Advertising In-venue advertising

Introduction

The key objective of community education is to deliver a range of integrated, planned activities to increase awareness of responsible gambling, problem gambling and help services. It also aims to build community resilience through awareness-raising, health promotion and education programs for professionals.

Community education recognises building community and individual resilience through addressing the broader determinants of health – such as social inclusion, health and wellbeing – can help prevent problem gambling or facilitate early intervention before gambling becomes a problem.

On 1 July 2008, a new innovative community education model was introduced. The model, which is delivered via two avenues – the existing structure of the Department of Human Services Primary Care Partnerships model and Gambler's Help Services Community Education Program – promotes the help services and plays a secondary role in raising awareness of risks associated with gambling. The provider education element is aimed at educating other health and welfare professionals about the diagnosis, referral and support of problem gamblers and their family and friends.

Research outcomes

Problem gambling does not occur in isolation.

Research shows problem gamblers are likely to suffer from three or more other health-related issues, most often mental health, alcohol and drugs, and family violence issues.

Research also suggests problem gamblers have few social networks and supports to help protect them from problem gambling.

Strategic direction

Together Primary Care Partnerships, Gambler's Help services and provider education address all three objectives of this strategy:

- Building resilience – Primary Care Partnerships do this through member agencies, promoting social inclusion and social connectedness by addressing the social determinants of health and co-morbidities.
- Risk awareness – Gambler's Help services create awareness of the issue and risk of problem gambling locally as Primary Care Partnerships do with their member agencies. Gambler's Help services provide provider education to non-problem gambling services to raise awareness of problem gambling and the impacts.
- Service promotion – Gambler's Help services promote help locally and Primary Care Partnerships promote services to member agencies. Provider education activities also strengthen the capacity and raise the awareness of non-problem gambling services professionals to identify and respond to individuals and their families who are experiencing the impacts of problem gambling.

Commitment and evaluation

Performance monitoring and reporting of the community education program will be undertaken by Gambler's Help services and the Primary Care Partnerships on an ongoing basis against planned activities and primary performance measures. To facilitate concise and consistent reporting, a Performance Management Framework has been developed to provide a structure for measuring, monitoring and reporting performance.

References:

Department of Human Services: Integrated health promotion resource kit (2003)

VicHealth Mental health promotion framework (1999 – 2002)

OGR Performance Management Framework (2008)

Key initiatives	Target audiences	Key message direction	Resources and support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated health promotion • Work with Primary Care Partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member agencies including Gambler's Help services • Peak health promotion bodies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem gambling is a public health issue • Problem gambling does not occur in isolation, but has co-morbidities in particular with mental health, drug and alcohol and family violence • Problem gambling can be addressed through the social determinants of health, for example, social inclusion and social connectedness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem gambling featured in the Primary Care Partnerships community health plan • Local Community Education Reference Group • Workshops • Forums • Best practice resources • Strategic planning sessions between Gambler's Help services and Primary Care Partnerships • Development and dissemination of collateral and resources (eg best practice case studies, website)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service and health promotion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gambler's Help services coordinators and community educators • Industry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service and health promotion activities will be planned, and integrated to improve the health of local communities, in particular for those groups with the most disadvantage and poorest health status • Playing a role to reduce shame and stigma so more people will feel comfortable seeking help 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops • Forums • Local Community Education Reference Group.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provider education • Gambler's Help services working with other health and welfare professionals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General practitioners • Primary health providers (public health and private practice) • Allied health providers (public health and private practice) • Community welfare organisations • Justice system • Primary Care Partnerships member agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition and early intervention with problem gamblers • Consistent statewide screening practices • Increase referrals to Gambler's Help services • Improved service coordination relating to problem gambling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops • Forums • Training sessions regarding problem gambling interventions and case work practices, including therapeutic treatment practice • Implementation of referral and other statewide service coordination protocols

School-based learning programs

Introduction

School-based learning is an important initiative area to prevent and build resilience to problem gambling in the next generation of Victorians.

Education-based interventions provide individuals with important information regarding gambling, increase their awareness of risks associated with gambling and help with the development of coping skills and problem resolution when faced with high pressure gambling situations.

School-based learning aims to provide the broader school community with practical information and expert advice about problem gambling when it is an issue for a young person's family or for the young person themselves.

Background

The literature shows gambling behaviour begins around the ages of 12 to 13 years and interventions need to be implemented prior to the onset of gambling behaviour, to delay or prevent the behaviour from occurring.

It was found that schools are the best avenue to easily access this target group. This is shown to be more effective than parent resources given that:

- at-risk parents may actually pose a higher risk to their children (whom the strategy therefore most needs to reach), yet are the least likely to talk to their children about the risks; and
- it appears that some people from CALD backgrounds are concerned that talking to their children about gambling may actually increase the risk.

According to research, parents and the Victorian community are strongly supportive of educating school-age children about problem gambling from the mid-primary years and throughout secondary school.

There are links between adolescent gambling and other health risks, anti-social behaviours and early disengagement from school. Young people who are disengaged from mainstream schools are a key target group for preventative interventions.

Strategic direction

School-based learning builds community resilience through developing the coping mechanisms and life skills of young people as well as raising awareness of the early warning signs of problem gambling.

It also aims to create awareness of the issue in at-risk groups through educating and targeting young people and the broader school community about the risks of problem gambling.

Future themes:

- Pilot to extend consumer education in schools program to upper primary school curriculum
- Media relations around the program in education, parenting and CALD media (media relations program)
- Student games and website resources (online strategy)
- Tips for talking to students: resources for welfare counsellors to talk to students who may be experiencing the impact of a family member's problem gambling.

Commitment and evaluation

The teacher resource, the Big Deal kit and teacher professional development has been successfully piloted and evaluated. The next iteration of the program will build on the recommendations of this evaluation and implement the Big Deal program in an additional 20 Adult Community Education providers.

A Guide for Victorian schools was launched in 2007 and was distributed to all Victorian state, Catholic and independent schools. This guide will form a basis for future school curriculum activities, such as professional development.

The program will be evaluated regularly. These findings will be used to inform the development of stand alone responsible gambling curriculum materials.

Key initiatives	Target audiences	Key message direction	Resources and support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumer Education in Schools (CEIS) program • Working with Consumer Affairs Victoria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School age children Years 7 to 11 (ie 12-16 years) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important to develop personal skills and strategies for coping with a range of life issues • Young people need to be aware of the risks of gambling, including new technology-based gambling • Gambler's Help services can assist you if you or a family member has a gambling problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher professional development • Teacher resource guide • DVD and specific VCAL materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Big Deal A Responsible Gambling Education program for young people in the non-mainstream school system. • Working with the Council of Adult Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people (16-24 years) who are disengaged from mainstream school system • ACFE Directors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important to develop personal skills and strategies for coping with a range of life issues • Young people need to be made aware of the risks of gambling, including new technology-based gambling • Gambler's Help services can assist you if you or a family member have a gambling problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainer guide • DVD • Student worksheets • CD of other activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further distribution of a resource guide for school counsellors and the broader teaching community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher and principals, as educators of the next generation • School counsellors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people need to be aware of the risks of gambling, including new technology-based gambling • School welfare counsellors can look out for children who may be struggling with the impact of a family member's gambling • Gambler's Help services assist people overcome gambling problems, as well supporting family members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher professional development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development to support schools initiatives • Working in partnership with Consumer Affairs Victoria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers and welfare counsellors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and support is available to school teachers and welfare counsellors • School teachers or welfare counsellors can educate young people about responsible gambling and the risks associated with program gambling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumer Affairs Victoria

3.

Partnerships and stakeholder engagement

1

2

3

Introduction

The Office of Gaming and Racing will work collaboratively with local and statewide partners to build community resilience and promote awareness of problem gambling amongst vulnerable and at-risk target groups.

The criteria for statewide partnerships includes:

- a large peak body, with widespread networks and reach within key target audiences
- opportunities for shared, co-branded information, online resources and delivery of strategy and statewide campaign key messages
- commitment to the aims and objectives of this strategy
- ability to resource and support the partnership
- ability to provide information and insight into community trends and responses to problem gambling.

Local, place-based partnerships aim to bring local residents together with government and community agencies to plan for and address local needs, build local leadership and foster community networks.

Background

Research has found that major partnerships with leading health and community partners – such as peak health promotion bodies – will deliver more consistent messages and best results.

These partnerships will address:

- the strong links between problem gambling and health co-morbidities including depression, alcohol and drug addiction.
- the strong interest many problem and at-risk gamblers have in sport, particularly in football, as media consumers and participants.

Local, place-based, partnerships recognise that community resilience-building is being carried out in other areas of the Victorian Government, in particular through place-based initiatives such as Neighbourhood Renewal (Department of Human Services) and Community Building Initiative (Department of Planning and Community Development). Place-based partnerships facilitate a collaborative working arrangement between government and community to address mutual community strengthening aims.

Strategic direction

Partnerships will build community resilience through promoting social inclusion and connectedness.

Partnerships aim to raise community awareness of the early warning signs of problem gambling and the potential harms and associated risks.

Statewide partnerships are also an ideal avenue to educate and target segments of the community at-risk of developing a gambling problem.

Future themes

Partnerships with peak health organisations will continue to build community resilience and integrate with broader social inclusion and community wellbeing.

Commitment and evaluation

Partnerships with various sporting organisations have enabled responsible gambling messages to be communicated to club administration, players and supporter bases. This has been facilitated by the use of high profile ambassadors and unique initiatives such as the Essendon Football Club Elite Sports Forum.

This approach will be built on and extended by establishing partnerships that target vulnerable groups within the community and collaborative partnerships that address the strategic objectives of this strategy.

Local place-based partnerships are a new pilot program that works within the governance structures of the Department of Human Services Neighbourhood Renewal and Department of Planning and Victorian Community - Community Building Initiative. The program will build on the strengths of these existing place-based initiatives and be evaluated against community-strengthening indicators.

Key initiatives	Target audiences	Key message direction	Resources and support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peak sporting organisations • Working in partnership with AFL Victoria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Players (professional, metro and regional clubs, junior) • Coaches and managers • Volunteers • Supporters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young men (18-35) years are the prime demographic for problem gambling. They are also keen supporters of AFL • We are promoting leisure activities for young men that are healthy, community-based and low-risk alternatives to excessive gambling • Footballers can be powerful, positive role models for personal behaviour and decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-branding • Training • Forums • Organisational responsible gambling policies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place-based partnership initiatives that target vulnerable communities • Working in collaboration with Department of Human Services and Department of Planning and Community Development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents of the community • Community and non-government agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Government is working to build healthy communities to minimise the risk and harm of problem gambling • Making social connections helps us all lead more fulfilling lives • Your community offers alternative leisure and social activities to gambling • Problem gambling is everyone's problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working collaboratively with Neighbourhood Renewal and Community Building Initiatives structures. Linkages to local alternative recreation programs such as Mens Shed, Community Kitchens, Neighbourhood Houses, and Community Gym Programs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic alliances • Working with peak health promotion organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Segments of the community who are at-risk of developing a problem with gambling and difficult to engage through broader community education to encourage identification of the warning signs and help-seeking through expanded service offerings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem gambling often goes hand-in-hand with other health issues, including depression and drug and alcohol abuse • We want to work with you to address this important community issue • We need your help in educating the community on gambling as a community health problem • We need you to promote the Government's problem gambling assessment tools to mental health professionals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-branded information • Online resources • Delivery of strategy and statewide campaign key messages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry training and collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular gamblers • Gaming industry staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumer Protection and informed choice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of Conduct • Player information standards • RGMAC Risk Awareness and Reduction Working Group

Introduction

The online strategy will play a vital role in providing information, resources and ultimately, online help services for tackling problem gambling. Currently, a public information resource on problem gambling and where to get help is being re-developed at: www.problemgambling.vic.gov.au

This will:

- improve targeting of key audiences in line with the strategy and, in particular, problem gamblers and significant others
- provide a resource for health professionals and the funded sector
- support the statewide campaign and activities in the other major initiative areas
- align with campaign branding.

The online strategy will work with other popular websites to ensure appropriate incorporation of responsible gambling and problem gambling messages, for example, youth health and wellbeing sites to ensure age appropriate information on gambling.

An Australian Online Gambling Counselling and Support Program – a joint initiative of all Australian jurisdictions – is being developed to deliver online and email counselling and support to problem gamblers and significant others.

Background

Australians have an extremely high rate of internet usage – both at workplaces and in the home. The way in which people engage with and use this medium has grown and changed. Therefore, the online direction will be to develop a national leading-edge web interface, facility and ultimately, services, to meet the changing needs and expectations of the Victorian community.

Segmentation research identified that at-risk and problem gamblers have high levels of internet use, which increases the need and opportunity to provide a range of accessible and engaging online information and services.

Strategic direction

The online strategy addresses all three strategic directions. It will contribute to building community resilience by providing a comprehensive range of resources to support health professionals, teachers and the general community. It will support risk awareness by providing relevant, real time resources to key market segments. The online presence supports service promotion by being the major support to all advertising and communications calls to action, by acting as a portal to services and as a service itself.

Commitment and evaluation

The online strategy and problem gambling website will be regularly assessed and monitored to continue to be a highly relevant, up-to-date and leading resource. The usage of each web page and service will be reviewed to ensure it is meeting consumer needs and expectations.



Key initiatives	Target audiences	Key message direction	Resources and support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redevelopment of problemgambling.vic.gov.au 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industry Victorian community At-risk gamblers Problem gamblers Significant others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New website problemgambling.vic.gov.au is a valuable source of information for Victorians 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service promotion and links Partnership links Information portal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources for health professionals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health professionals Gambler's Help agencies and staff Primary Care Partnerships Teachers/school counsellors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> problemgambling.vic.gov.au is a valuable resource to help you identify, assess and treat problem gambling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource links Service promotion links
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of online counselling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Problem gamblers At-risk gamblers Significant others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New online counselling offers a high quality service via the internet that is free, easy to access and confidential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional and further services Information and partner links Health services

