



RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING COUNCIL

Time for a Gambling Reality Check?

March is Problem Gambling Prevention Month

New Data Released by the Responsible Gambling Council Finds that more than 40% of Ontario Adults Believe at least one Gambling Myth

March is *Within Limits*: Problem Gambling Prevention Month and according to new data from the Responsible Gambling Council, Ontario may be ready for gambling myth reality check. According to the study, *Gambling Myths in Ontario*, 43 per cent of Ontarians believe at least one gambling myth or misperception.

The Council is urging people to take the *Gambling Myths Quiz*, available at www.responsiblegambling.org, to see if they can separate gambling fact from gambling fiction.

“We all like to think we are making decisions purely based on fact, but often, we’re not – especially when it comes to gambling,” says Jon Kelly, CEO, Responsible Gambling Council. “There all kinds of gambling myths: This slot machine is ready to pay; I have a system to beat the roulette wheel; Gambling is a good way to make money; I can win enough to pay off my debts. If you act on these beliefs, you are much more likely to have a gambling problem than a big win.”

The Responsible Gambling Council’s survey also showed that 11 per cent of people in Ontario believe that gambling can be a good way to get rich. Money-related myths topped the list, but people believed other types of myths, including those about the ability to control or predict outcomes, luck and the real chances of winning and losing. Almost nine per cent (8.7%) of Ontario adults believed that the more you gamble, the more likely you are to win a lot of money.

“If you believe you’re going to get rich by gambling – or any kind of gambling myth – it’s going to affect the decisions you make,” says Kelly. “You may find yourself spending more money than you can afford gambling. Or more time. Or spending increasing amounts of money to win back the money you have lost. These are all signposts on the way to a problem.”

Responsible Gambling Council is touring the province to challenge people to assess their own gambling myths.

“If you choose to gamble, check your gambling myths at the door,” says Kelly. “We urge people to do their own gambling reality check. Take our Gambling Myths Quiz on our website to see where you stand.”

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Within Limits 2008 – Time for a Gambling Reality Check? (cont'd)

Gambling in Ontario

The general population of Ontario has a problem gambling rate of 3.4 per cent. The average Ontario gambler spends about 1.5 per cent of their personal income on gambling, while people with severe gambling problems spend an average 21 per cent of their personal income on gambling. More than one million Ontarians are affected by a gambling problem. Specifically, 9.6% report being negatively affected by someone else's gambling

More highlights from the *Gambling Myths in Ontario* survey:

- Almost nine per cent (8.7%) of Ontario adults agreed that “the more you gamble, the more likely you are to win a lot of money”
- Just over seven per cent (7.3%) agreed that “gambling is an easy way to make money”
- “Gamblers usually lose” – just over 10 per cent (10.3%) of Ontario adults disagreed with this true statement

Focusing Community Attention

Within Limits is an awareness program designed to provide people who choose to gamble with information to make informed decisions. *Within Limits* focuses community attention on: the risks of problem gambling, ways to limit those risks, realistic expectations of winning and losing and where to get help if you have a problem.

The Responsible Gambling Council Gambling Myths Survey— Methodology

The survey was administered by Youthography Inc to a sample of adults (18+) in Ontario from November 30 to December 5, 2007. The sample was obtained from various databases that are built and maintained by Youthography and its research partners to reflect the general population composition in Ontario that can be reached online. Overall, there are over 1,000,000 members in the databases who agreed beforehand to receive various study surveys to complete.

Responsible Gambling Council

The Responsible Gambling Council is an independent, non-profit organization committed to problem gambling prevention. RGC designs and delivers highly effective awareness programs, 60 per cent of which concentrate on educating and cautioning young people about the realities of gambling. RGC also promotes the identification and adoption of best practices in problem gambling prevention through research and information dissemination.

The Responsible Gambling Council gratefully acknowledges the Government of Ontario, Ministry of Health Promotion, for its support of *Within Limits*: Problem Gambling Prevention Month.

To learn more about ***Within Limits*** and take the ***Gambling Myth Quiz*** for your own reality check, please visit www.responsiblegambling.org.

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