



Pennsylvania
Department of Drug and
Alcohol Programs

DECEMBER 1, 2025

Integrating Problem Gambling Screens into Existing Strategies

DDAP TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WEBINAR

JOSH ERCOLE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Council on Compulsive Gambling of Pennsylvania, Inc.

Disclaimers

- Alignment with The ASAM Criteria is required of drug and alcohol treatment providers that receive funding for providing treatment services under agreements with Single County Authorities and/or Managed Care Organizations.
- DDAP stresses the importance of reviewing the ASAM Criteria text in its entirety, attending the ASAM training, and reviewing the resources available through DDAP including trainings and documents

Poll Question 1

What is your role at your agency?

- Executive Director
- Clinical Director
- Counselor
- Administration
- Medical Staff
- Support Staff (e.g. CRS)
- Case Manager
- DDAP
- SCA
- MCO



Poll Question 2

Do you/does your agency currently conduct any type of problem gambling screen during assessments/intake?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. I am not sure



Poll Question 3

If someone expressed to you that they were experiencing gambling related issues, would you have resources to share with them?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. I am not sure



Today's Presenter

Josh Ercole, Executive Director

Council on Compulsive Gambling of Pennsylvania, Inc.

Council on Compulsive Gambling of Pennsylvania

- CCGP is a non-profit advocacy organization whose purpose is to assist individuals in Pennsylvania who are experiencing gambling related issues
- CCGP oversees the Problem Gambling Helpline - this 24-hour service connects individuals with help and resources throughout Pennsylvania
- CCGP provides outreach, prevention and clinical training programs to community groups, professionals and treatment organizations throughout PA



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www.pacouncil.com

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this workshop, participants will:

- Become familiar with gambling and factors included in the development of problematic gambling
- Describe potential warning signs of problem gambling
- Identify connections between gambling disorder, mental health issues and substance use disorders
- Have awareness of screening tools and strategies, as well as available local and regional resources

Trigger Warning

This presentation may contain imagery, discussion and elements that some attendees may find distressing to see and/or hear about.

If this may be challenging for you, or if there is any concern that you may have difficulty in coping with the associated content, please take any necessary steps to avoid such experiences or remove yourself from the program at this point.



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**How would
you
define
gambling?**

What is Gambling?

The activity or practice of playing a game of chance, or taking a chance, for money or some other stake, where there is a risk of losing that stake

- Dictionary.com

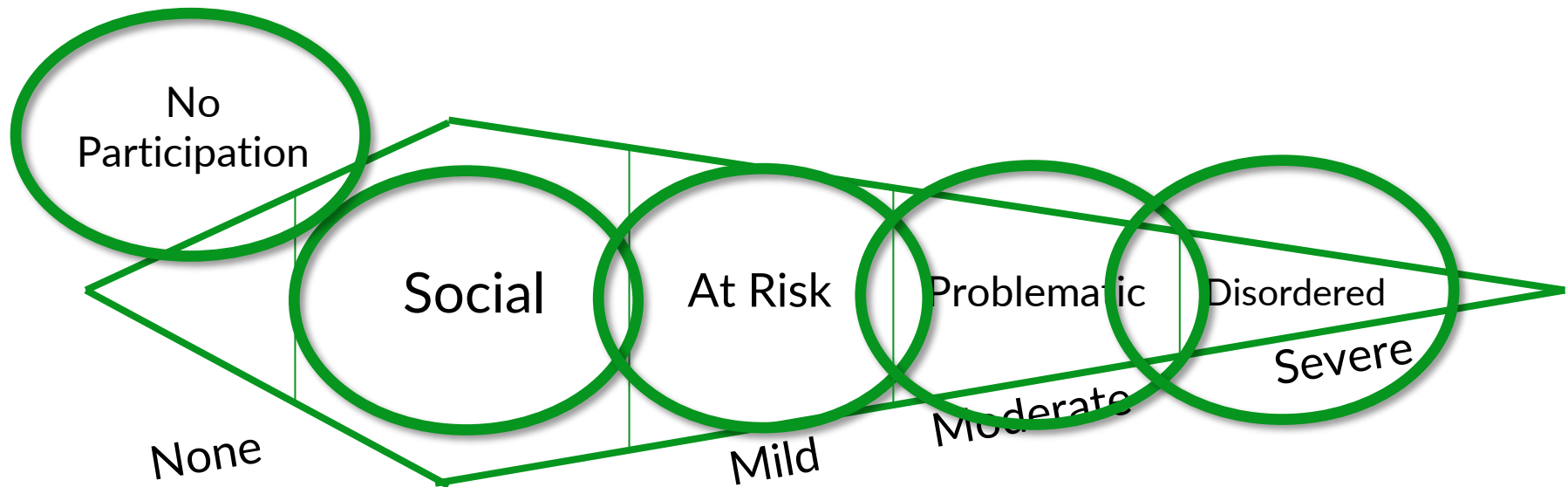
Types of Legal Gambling in PA - 2025

- Horse Racing & Off-Track Betting (1959)
- Lottery (1972) / Online Lottery (2018)
- Bingo (1981) / Games of Chance (1988)
- Category 1, 2, 3 & 4 Casinos (2004/2017)
- Fantasy Sports (2017)
- Truck Stop VGT's (2017)
- Airport Gambling (2017)
- Sports Gambling (2017)
- Online Casino Gambling/iGaming (2017)

PA Past 12 Month Gambling

- Nearly 2/3 of Pennsylvania adults engaged in some form of gambling in the past 12 months
- Most popular type of gambling overall - Lottery
- Nearly 20% of Pennsylvania adults reported gambling online in the past 12 months
- Sports betting was the most popular online gambling format

Problematic Continuum





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**What are signs that
someone may have a
gambling problem?**

Gambling Disorder

DSM-5 Diagnostic Criteria

- **Preoccupation**
- **Tolerance**
- **Withdrawal**
- **Loss of Control**
- **Escape**
- **Lying**
- **Risked Relationship**
- **Chasing**
- **Bailout**



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**What impact can
gambling problems
have on a
person's life?**

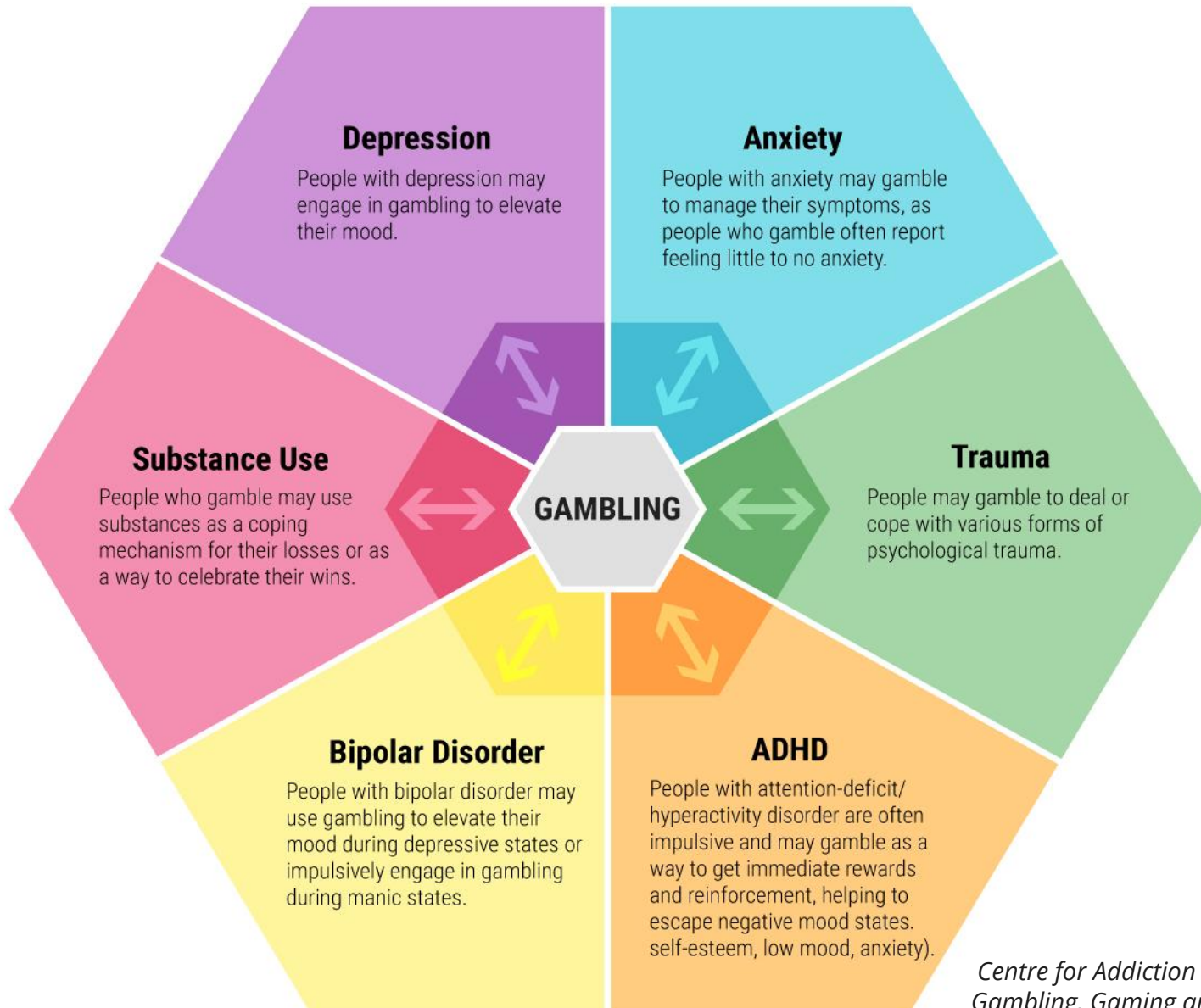
Why Screen for Gambling Disorder?

- High risk of gambling problems among individuals diagnosed with substance use and mental health disorders

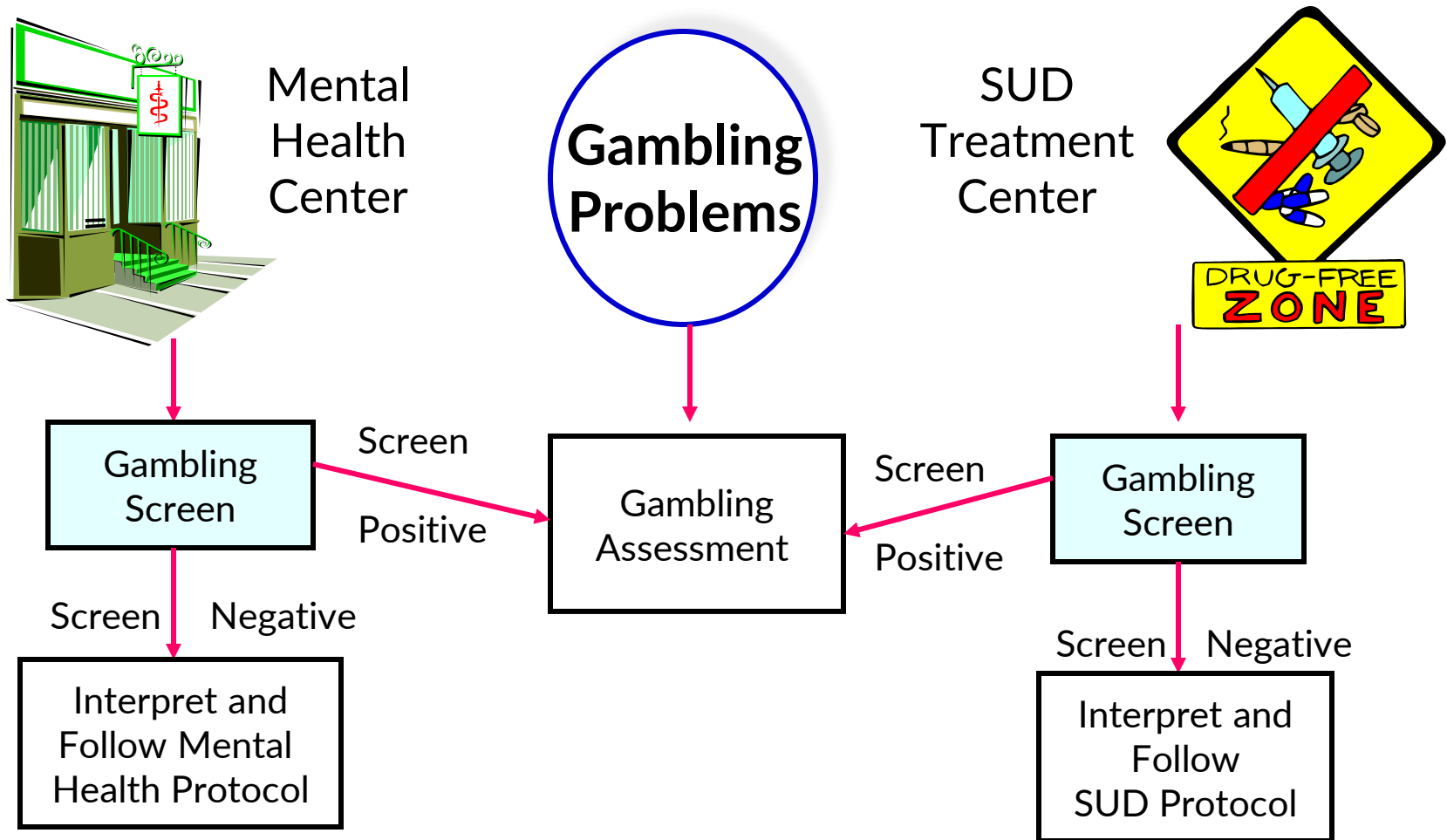
(Himelhoch et al, 2015; Ledgerwood et al, 2002) (Rush et al, 2008)

- Not addressing gambling issues
 - Decreases treatment effectiveness
 - Adds to treatment costs
- Early intervention and treatment work

Co-Occurring Disorders



No Wrong Door – Integration of Services




Problem Gambling Assessment Instruments & Screens

- Brief Screen - “Lie-Bet”
 - NODS PERC and NODS CLiP
 - Brief BioSocial Gambling Screen (BBGS)
- South Oaks Gambling Screen (SOGS)
- SOGS-RA - Adolescent Screen
- National Opinion Research Center DSM Screen for Problem Gambling (NODS)
- G.A. / Gam-Anon Twenty Questions



**Do you
gamble?**



**Gamble? Me? No way!
I hate casinos and don't
know anything about sports.
I sure hope this ends soon
though, I have Bingo in an
hour, and I haven't gotten my
lottery tickets yet!**

**Nope, not
at all!**

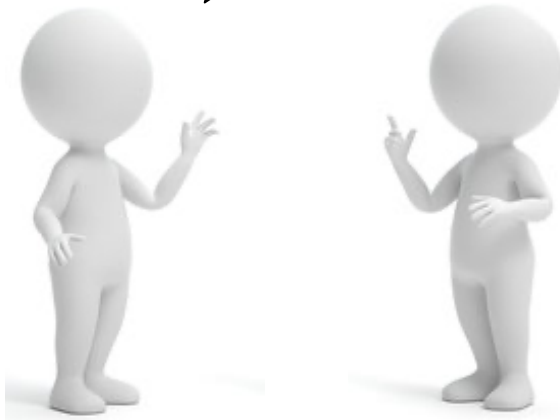


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**What else
could you ask?**

What do you do for fun, to relieve stress, for entertainment, to be social, etc.? Do you have any favorite leisure activities?

I usually hang out with friends...we don't do a lot, but sometimes we go to the movies or to a concert or maybe just get together to play cards. We also like to go out to eat sometimes and then find a Bingo game somewhere.



Determine Frequency

During the past 12 months
how many times
have you gambled?

Assess for Potential Problems

- Have you ever felt restless, on edge or irritable when trying to stop or cut down on gambling?
- Have you hidden/tried to keep it a secret, just how much you have gambled/been gambling from your family or friends?
- Have you had to ask other people for money to help you deal with the financial problems that had been caused by gambling?

Assess for Potential Problems

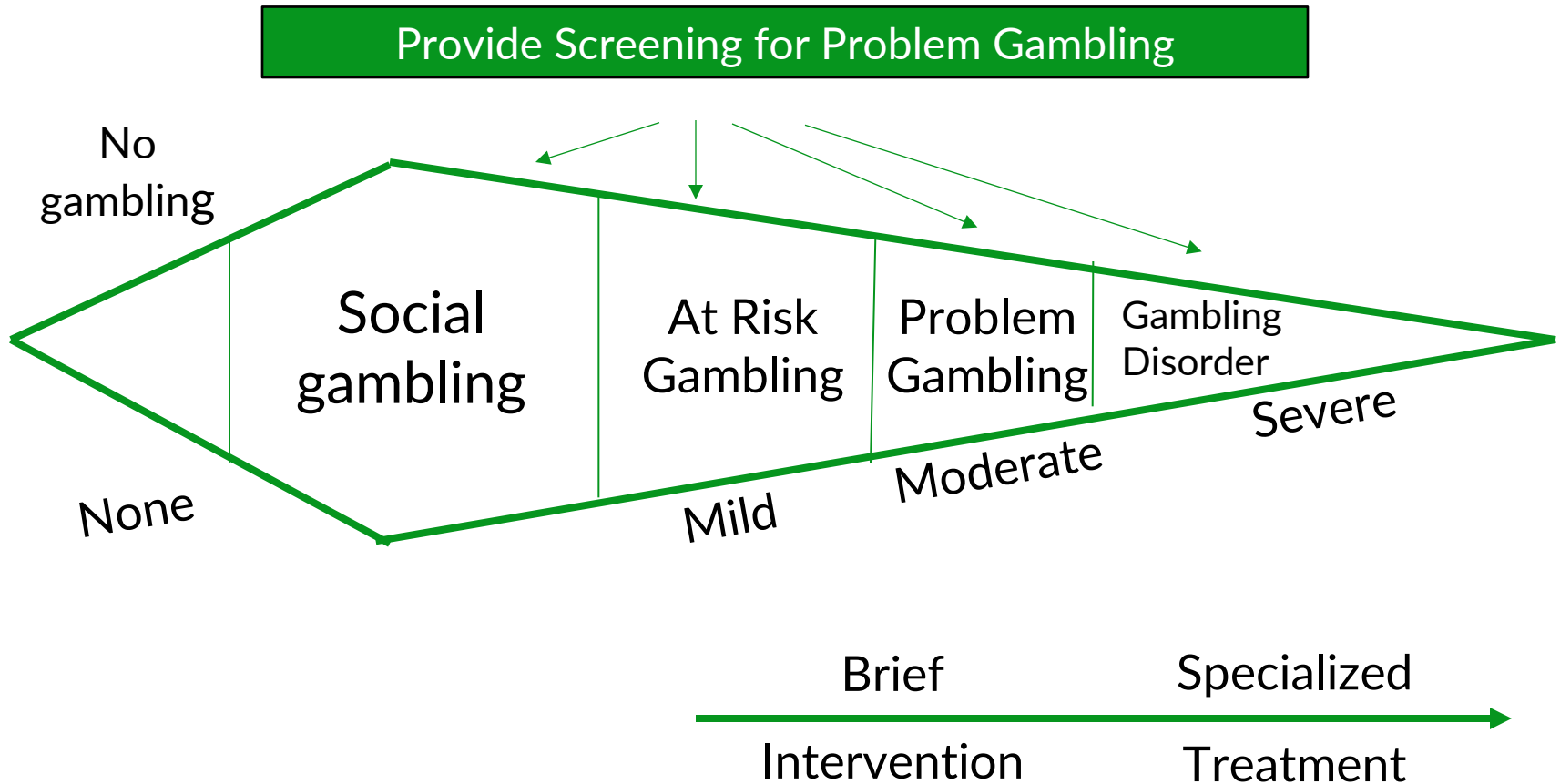
- Have you ever gambled to escape from stress or negative feelings?
- Have you ever felt the need to gamble more money to get the same excitement?
- Did you ever find yourself focusing on trying to win back money that you lost?
- Has your gambling ever caused problems in personal relationships or with work?

Ways to Respond

- "Yes" responses > assess risk & further discussion!
- Use as education/awareness opportunity
- Discussion & responses will be kept confidential
- Share resources & options
- Keep brief and review in the future

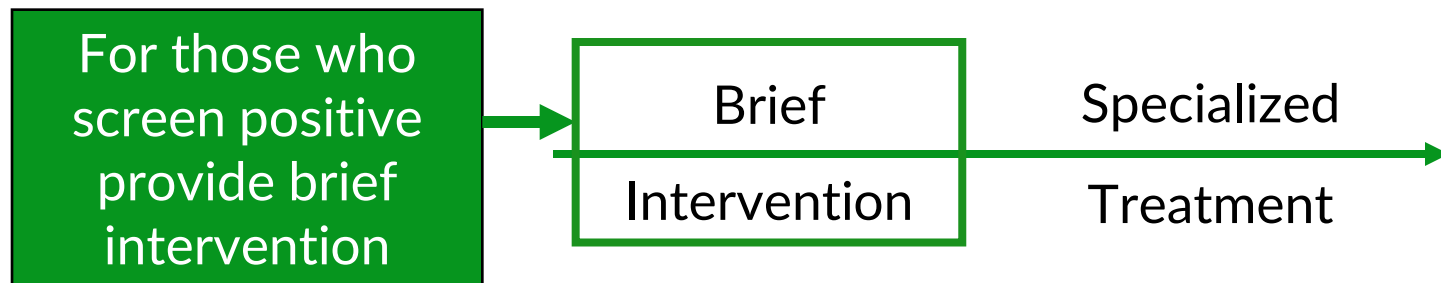
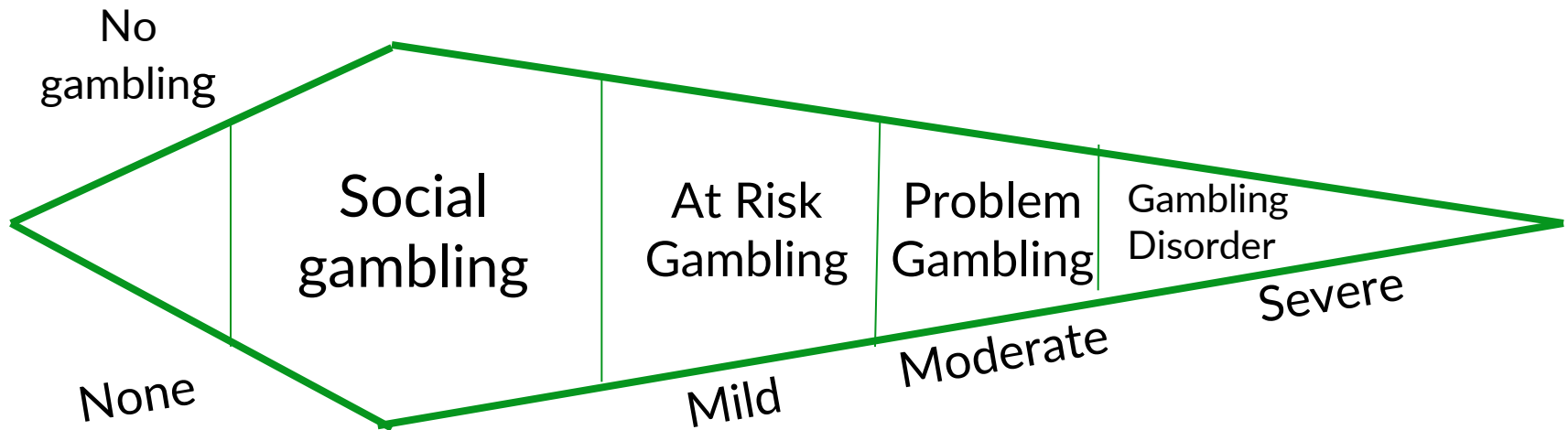
Problem Gambling

Public Health Interventions



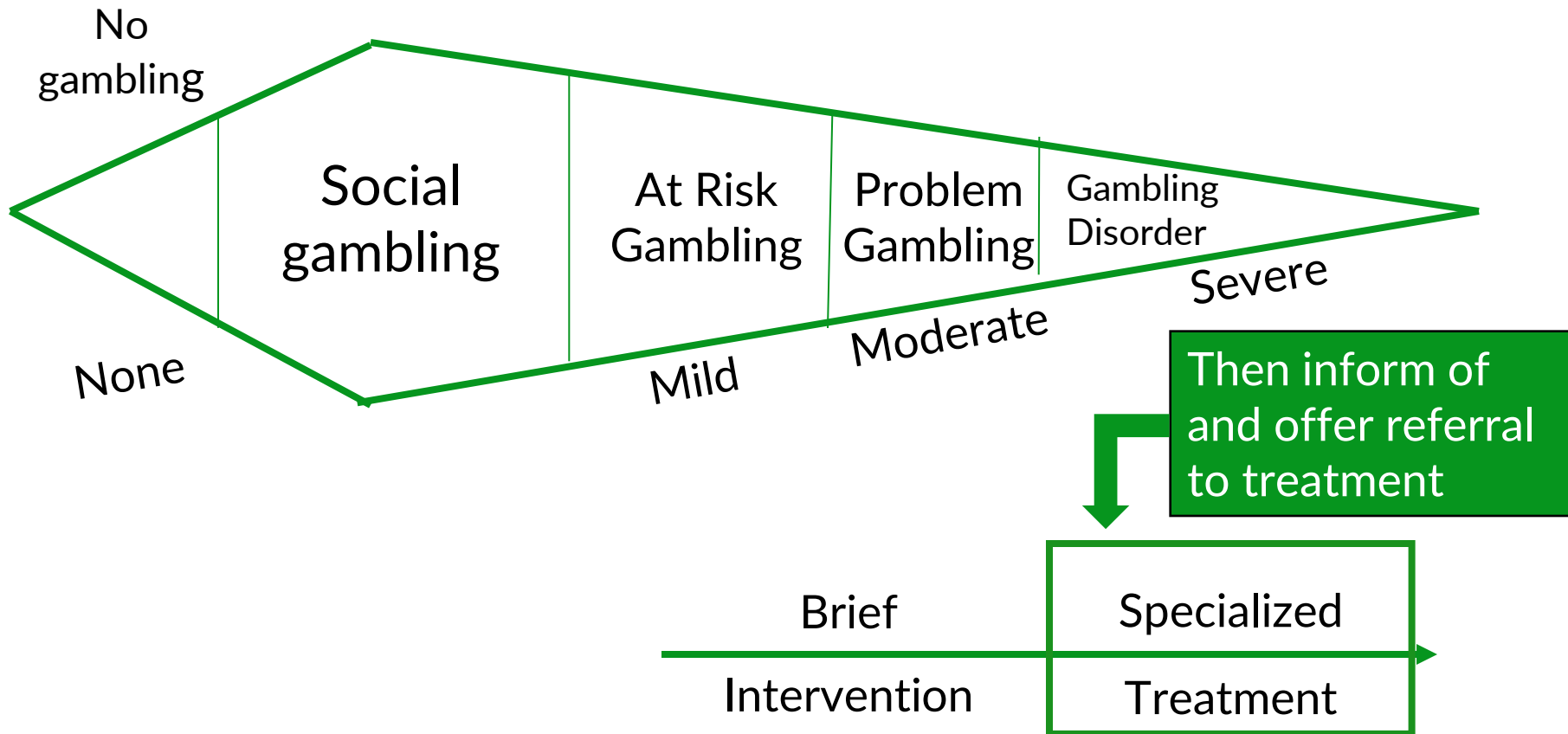
Problem Gambling

Public Health Interventions



Problem Gambling

Public Health Interventions



Where to Refer

- 800-GAMBLER®
- Council on Compulsive Gambling of PA
 - www.pacouncil.com
- Department of Drug & Alcohol Programs
 - Treatment Providers
 - Counseling Agencies
- Recovery Groups & Self-Help Meetings

Grant Details

- DDAP Offers a contract opportunity for treatment providers
 - Reimbursement for problem gambling outpatient treatment
 - Free virtual 30-hour problem gambling training offered
- Problem Gambling Outpatient Treatment
 - For individuals and their affected others
 - Individual sessions or group sessions
 - In-person or telehealth

If you are interested in learning more, please contact Amy R. Hubbard at amhubbard@pa.gov



Self-Help Meetings & Recovery Groups

- gamblersanonymous.org
- gam-anon.org
- smartrecovery.org
- gamblersinrecovery.com
- recoveryroadonline.com

Office of Compulsive & Problem Gambling

responsibleplay.pa.gov



[About Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board](#) [Manage Your Self-Exclusion Account](#)

[Do I Have a Gambling Problem?](#)

[Get Gambling Addiction Help](#)

[Self-Exclusion](#)

GAMBLING PROBLEM? **GET YOUR LIFE BACK**

If you've lost control of your ability to gamble responsibly, it may be time for a change. Self-exclusion allows you to voluntarily ban yourself from gambling activities such as casinos, interactive gaming and fantasy contests, so you can regain your life.

[Sign Up for Self-Exclusion](#)

[Learn More](#)

PGCB-OCPG



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Gamban

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Can't Stop
Gambling

Worried about
friend or loved one

There is help in
Pennsylvania.



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Pennsylvania Lottery and the
Pennsylvania Department of
Drug and Crime Prevention



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10 RULES OF RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING

1. If you choose to gamble, do so for entertainment purposes.
If your gambling is no longer an enjoyable activity
then ask yourself why you are still "playing"?

2. Treat the money you lose as the cost of your entertainment.
Treat any winnings as a bonus.

3. Set a dollar limit and stick to it.
Decide before you go what you can "afford" to lose & how
much you want to spend. Do not change your mind after losing.

4. Set a time limit and stick to it.
Decide how much of your time you want to allow for
gambling. Leave when you reach the time limit whether
you are winning or losing.

5. Expect to lose.
The odds are that you will lose.

6. Make it a private rule not to gamble on credit.
Do not borrow money to gamble.

7. Create balance in your life.
Gambling should not interfere with or substitute for
friends, family, work or other worthwhile activities.

8. Avoid "chasing" lost money.
Chances are the more you try to recoup your losses the
larger your losses will be.

Way to cope with emotional/physical pain.
More than entertainment can lead

ONLINE GAMBLING

As technology advances, the internet acts
as a growing hub of information and
providing fast and easy access.
Online gambling activities is online gambling
and thousands participate in
many are able to keep
out of control, there is
a population who are

Online gambling is now available
at casino gambling,
licensed facility,
accessed from
at any time.
combined
play, may
lead to problems.

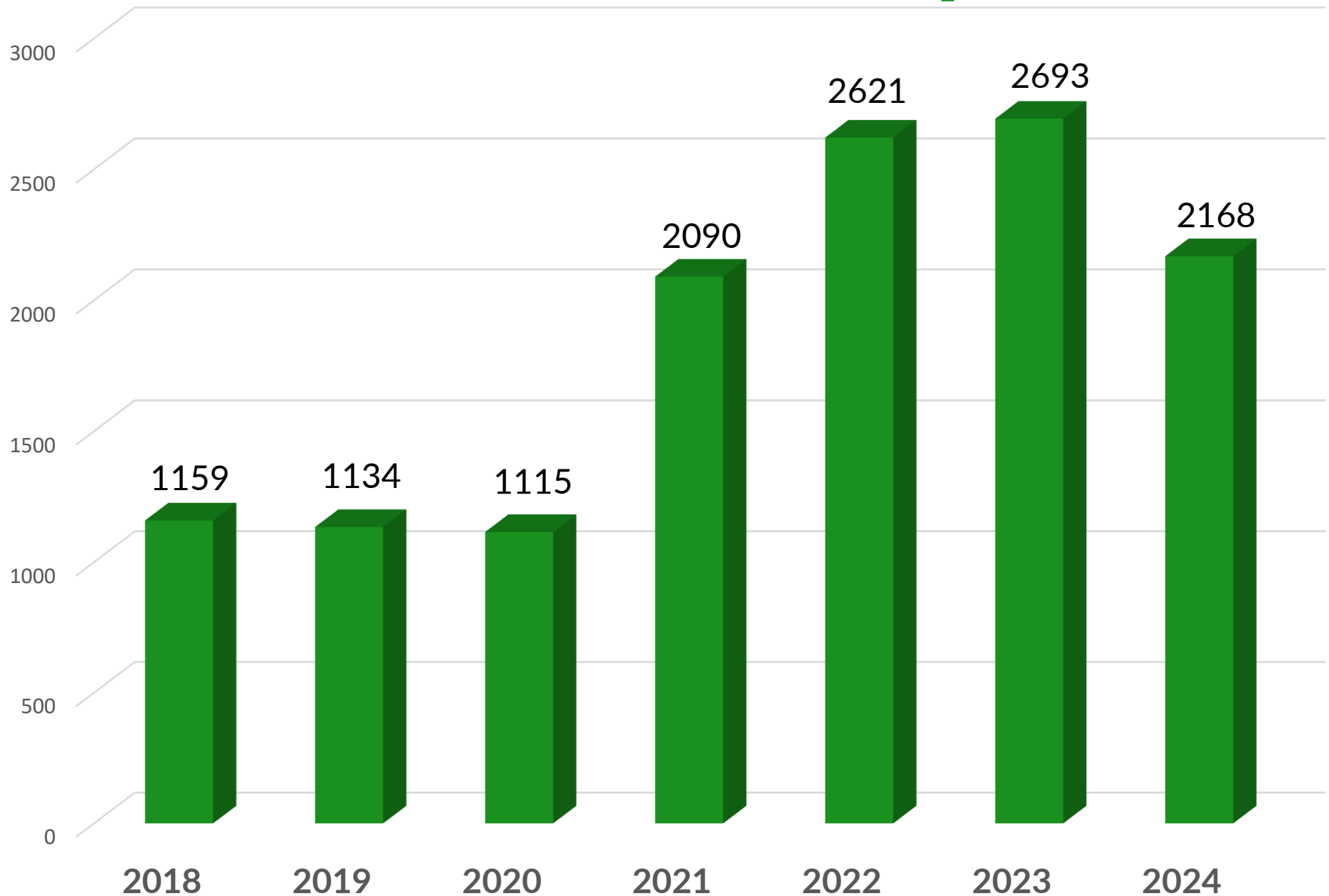
PA Gambling

Remember...

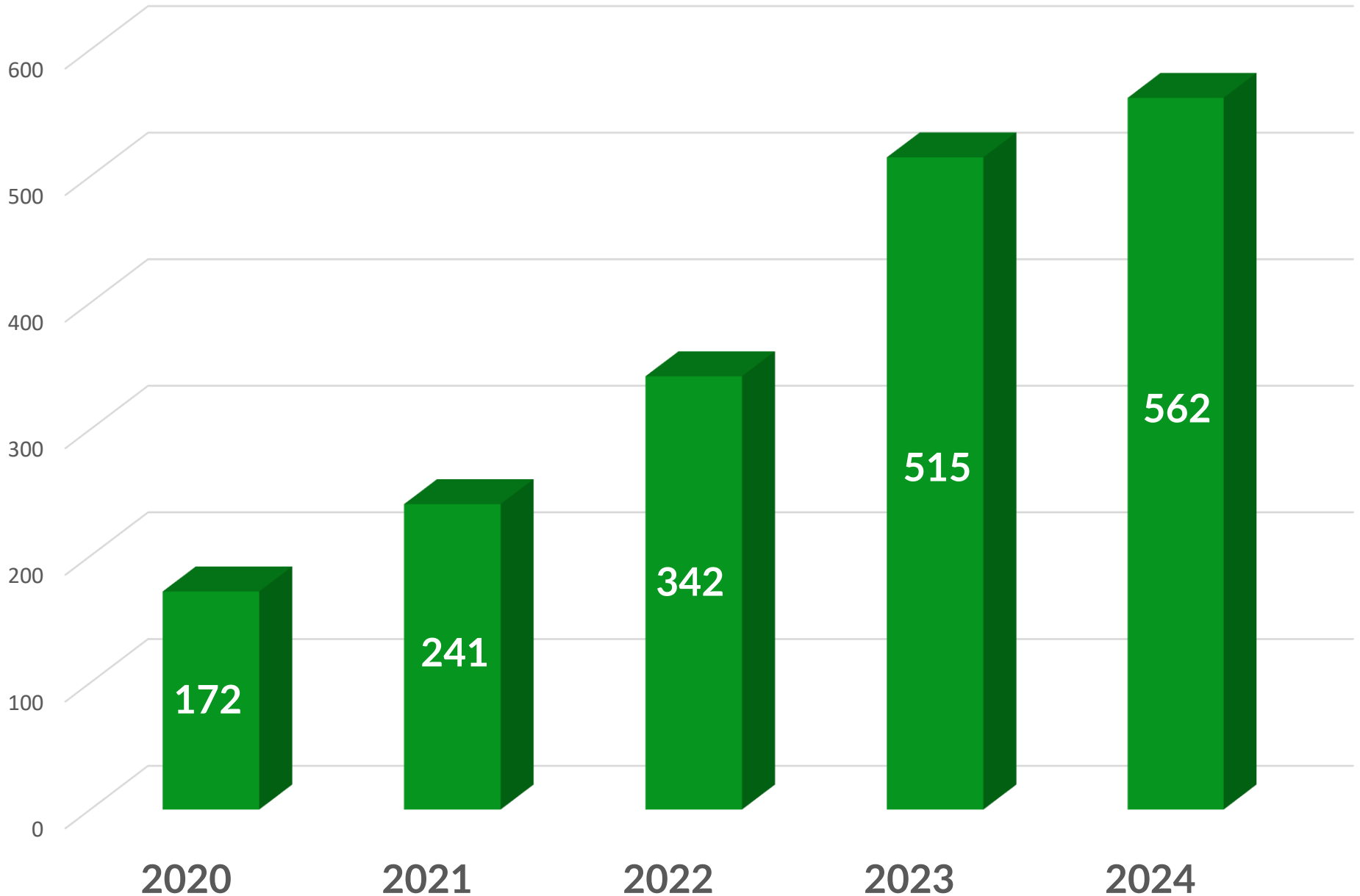
Most people will not
develop problems!

(BUT, SOME WILL)

Calls For Help



Chats & Texts for Help





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Find a Meeting

Enter ZIP

Search

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HOME

ABOUT

PROBLEM GAMBLING

LOOKING FOR HELP

PROVIDING HELP

EVENTS

HELPLINE



Recovery is Possible



www.pacouncil.com



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Thank You!!

Council on Compulsive Gambling of Pennsylvania, Inc.

Josh Ercole, Executive Director

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www.pacouncil.com

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Pennsylvania
Department of Drug and
Alcohol Programs



Next Technical Assistance Call
Monday, March 2, 2026, at 10 a.m.
Topic: To Be Determined