



# February 2025

# Unmasking Gambling Addiction

Coming in February:

2/4: Recovery  
University

2/13: MHRS Board  
meeting

2/17: Presidents  
Day-office closed



**Problem gambling** is a growing concern that impacts individuals, families, and communities across the nation. Often described as a "hidden addiction," it is characterized by an inability to resist the impulse to gamble, even when it leads to negative consequences.

Unlike substance use disorders, problem gambling does not involve physical substances, making it harder to detect. However, its effects can be just as devastating. Financial difficulties, relationship breakdowns, job loss, and mental health challenges such as anxiety and depression are common outcomes of problem gambling.

In Ohio, gambling is widely accessible, including casinos, sports betting, and online platforms. While most people gamble responsibly, an estimated 1-3% of the population struggles with problem gambling. This percentage may seem small, but its ripple effects can touch countless lives, as family members and loved ones also bear the burden.

It's important to recognize the warning signs of problem gambling. These can include:

- Spending more time or money gambling than intended.
- Borrowing money or selling possessions to fund gambling.
- Lying to loved ones about gambling habits.
- Chasing losses by gambling more.
- Feeling restless or irritable when not gambling.

Understanding the risks and potential consequences of gambling is crucial. Gambling should be viewed as entertainment, not a way to solve financial problems or escape stress. Setting time and money limits can help keep gambling in balance.

For those who may be struggling, help is available. The Ohio Problem Gambling Helpline (**1-800-589-9966**) offers confidential, 24/7 support. Locally, counseling services are available through community organizations, providing personalized care to those affected.

This February, let's take the opportunity to educate ourselves and others about problem gambling. Awareness is the first step toward prevention and recovery, ensuring a healthier future for all.

