



MARCH 2025

Coming in MARCH:

3/13: MHRS Board meeting

3/28-30: CCRT TRAINING

PROBLEM GAMBLING MONTH



Muskingum Area Mental Health & Recovery Services Board

March is Problem Gambling Awareness Month, and let's face it—gambling can be exciting. Whether it's scratching off a lottery ticket, placing a friendly bet, or testing your "lucky numbers," that adrenaline rush is real! But sometimes, what starts as harmless fun can spiral into something that's, well... not so fun. (Like when you realize you spent your grocery money chasing a win that never came.)

So, what exactly is problem gambling? It's often called the "hidden addiction" because you can't spot it like you can with some other addictions—no telltale smell or slurred speech here. But there are warning signs:

- Gambling more than planned (because "just one more" turns into...ten more)
- Chasing losses (like thinking you'll win back what you lost if you keep playing—spoiler: you won't)
- Borrowing money to gamble (hint: your credit card is not your lucky charm)
- Feeling stressed, anxious, or irritable when you try to stop

Who's at risk? Honestly? Anyone. But if you're dealing with high stress, mental health challenges, or substance use issues, the risk goes up. Young adults may fall into gambling through online games, and seniors—bless their Bingo-loving hearts—may gamble to combat boredom or loneliness.

Here's the good news: Help is available—and no, it doesn't involve giving up fun altogether. The Ohio Problem Gambling Helpline is open 24/7 at 1-800-589-9966—free, confidential, and no judgment (they've heard it all). Locally, the MHRS Board partners with providers who offer counseling and recovery services tailored to support those dealing with gambling-related issues.

So this March, let's talk about it. Ask yourself, "Is my gambling just entertainment, or is it starting to control me?" And if it's the latter—reach out. There's no shame in getting help. Life's too short to be stressing over a lost bet when you could be enjoying that money on pizza, a movie, or—gasp—something responsible like paying bills.

Bottom line: Gambling should be fun, not a financial and emotional rollercoaster. Take care of yourself. Your future self (and wallet) will thank you!

