

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF GAMBLING HARMS



Over half the population of Greater Manchester has gambling in the past year, and one in 15 residents have either directly or indirectly been affected by gambling harms.

Would you know how to spot if your own or someone else's gambling is causing harm? Gambling is often described as a hidden harm and quite often, the signs are not clear or obvious. We've broken down some common behaviours to help you consider if someone needs further support.

Preoccupation

Do you spend a lot of your day thinking about gambling? Does it distract you at work, or divert your attention when spending quality time with friends and family? Thinking about or planning to gamble can be an early warning sign that you could be at risk of harm.

Withdrawal

Choosing not to take part in social activities with friends, family and/or colleagues to place a bet could be a warning sign.

Escape

Life can be hard, especially following the pandemic and with the cost-of-living crisis

hitting us all. Using gambling to forget your other troubles could be a sign of adversity and harm.

Chasing losses

Many people gamble in the hope of winning some extra money. But if you lose money gambling, you could end up trying to make back the money you've lost. This is one of the most dangerous situations as it can lead to significant losses.

Lying

If you find yourself being dishonest about how much you have spent or hiding how late you are on your bills, then this could be another warning sign. Falling behind on payments on mortgages can be incredibly challenging.

High-risk products

Around one in two adults play the national lottery and many others may put a bet on their local team to play every week. However, if you start switching to higher risk products, such as in-play sports betting, or even online slots and casino games, it may be time to seek help.

AGAINST THE ODDS

Signs to look out for if you're concerned about someone else's gambling:

Mental health and mood

People may say they are feeling anxious, worried, guilty, depressed, or may even come across as upset, irritable or aggressive. Gambling may be part of or a symptom of adversity driving poor mental health which is affecting their mood.

Relationship breakdown

If individuals begin having regular arguments with friends or family, particularly concerning finances, this could be a sign they are experiencing harm from gambling.

Conversation topics

People who gamble regularly may also talk about betting a lot. They may also be particularly interested in statistics, player and team form which may could be a sign they are spending a lot of time researching their next bets.

Borrowing money

Individuals who may ask to borrow money, are suddenly selling valuable possessions, or are not paying bills may be doing so to fund their gambling behaviour - they may even be chasing losses.

Sleeping problems

If someone is chasing losses and losing money, and subsequently is anxious about their situation, they may have difficulty sleeping. People who gamble online may also bet late into the night, reducing the amount of sleep they get.

Further support

If you or someone you know would like further help and advice and support accessing services, please visit:

<https://www.againsttheodds.org.uk/get-support/>

Or scan the QR code below with your mobile or tablet:

