

# THE STATE OF GAMBLING IN IOWA.

IOWA GAMBLING TREATMENT PROGRAM  
Gambling Consumer Education Talking Points.

- For most, gambling is a form of recreation or entertainment. 80% of Americans and 88% of Iowans have participated in some form of gambling in the past year. Of those, approximately 3% have a gambling problem.
- Iowans currently have more types of gambling than other states, with the Lottery, bingo, raffles, horse and dog racing, casinos and riverboats, racetracks and American Indian casinos. In addition, there are opportunities to gamble on the Internet, sporting events and card games, as well as stocks and commodities investments.
- Iowa has 16 licensed commercial casinos with 1 more scheduled to open, 1 American Indian casino, 26 different scratch ticket lottery games, 5 Lotto games and 19 pull tab games.
- A 2005 study completed for the Iowa Racing and Gaming Commission ranked Iowa 10th nationally in its density of slot machines per capita.
- Each year, Iowa receives approximately \$250 million in tax revenues from legalized gambling, including the Lottery, riverboat casinos, racetrack casinos and pari-mutuel betting.
- With gambling being legalized in Iowa and used as a revenue source, the state has an obligation to educate Iowans on the true nature of gambling as an entertainment option, as well as the risks of problem gambling, so that Iowans can make an informed decision.
- There are many misunderstandings and misperceptions when it comes to gambling.
  - *Allusion of beating the house — “If I play enough, I will eventually win.”*
    - *The longer a player gambles, the greater the likelihood of loss because the odds always favor the house.*
  - *There is a skill involved — Games of chance operate on independent sequential trials.*
    - *Gambler’s skill level has no effect on the outcome of chance events.*
  - *Most gamblers lack an understanding of the relative costs of playing different games and that all legalized games are negative expectancy games.*
  - *Superstitions about lucky days, numbers, machines and charms don’t make a difference.*
- The best way for people to play is to treat the money lost as the cost of the entertainment and treat any winnings as a bonus. Limits, both monetary and time, must be established ahead of time and people need to stick to them.