



We understand the problem. We can help.

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## THE GANDARA CENTER IN SPRINGFIELD: Now Offering Problem Gambling Treatment Services

The Gandara Center, a bilingual minority-serving organization providing residential, mental health, substance abuse and preventive services to individuals in Springfield and the Pioneer Valley, is now offering problem gambling treatment services. As a Massachusetts Department of Public Health / Bureau of Substance Abuse Services (DPH/BSAS) agency, the center offers state-funded problem gambling intervention and treatment services for individuals with gambling problems or their loved ones impacted by the disorder. Currently, there are 13 DPH/BSAS agencies in the Commonwealth offering these services.

Gandara has more than a dozen clinicians in process to receive their Mass. Problem Gambling Specialist (MAPGS) Certificate after going through a series of trainings designed and delivered by the Council. This type of access, coupled with the agency's commitment to serving children, adolescents, families and adults allows Gandara to receive problem gambling-related referrals, and to move people through personalized levels of care with a sensitivity that is mostly unmatched in the treatment of gambling disorders.

The gambling disorder program was initiated by Gandara's Executive Director, Henry East-Trou and Clinical Director, Natalie Hall. When asked why they chose to expand in this way, Ms. Hall stated, "The Gandara Center is a culturally competent agency with a long history of treating addiction problems. Presently the Gandara Center has decided to increase services and face the challenges associated with growing awareness of gambling problems by assembling an energetic treatment team to intervene and treat compulsive gambling."

The Mass. Council welcomes the services and experience of the team from Gandara to the current problem gambling treatment system. To learn more, please contact the Gandara Center at 413.736.0395 / [www.gandaracenter.org](http://www.gandaracenter.org). For a full list of DPH/BSAS gambling treatment centers, please visit the Council website: [www.masscompulsivegambling.org](http://www.masscompulsivegambling.org) and click on "help for problem gambling."



*The Council's Haner Hernandez (top left) pictured with members of the Gandara Center staff*

## Gambling Expansion in the Commonwealth: LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

In April, the Massachusetts House of Representatives approved a bill (House 4591) that expands gambling in Massachusetts to include slot machines at four existing racetracks and to build two resort casinos.

While the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling does not take a position for or against gambling, the Council does advocate for responsible public policy related to gambling. We know that for most people gambling is simply entertainment, however for others, it can lead to devastation. The social, financial, and emotional costs related to a gambling problem are similar to what happens with alcohol and drug use disorders.

Since the 1990's policy makers have debated the expansion of gambling in Massachusetts and the Council has consistently urged them to consider the downside of gambling as they make their decisions. Most recently, the Council advocated for a comprehensive public health response to the impact of expanded gambling that would include: prevention, intervention, treatment, research, and services to address problem gambling in all state agencies who serve consumers at high risk for gambling problems. In addition, the Council recommended regulations to assure that casinos and/or slot machine operators would follow the highest standards of responsible gambling programs.

The House bill to expand gambling in Massachusetts would provide for "programs dedicated to addressing problems associated with problem

gambling." Not less than \$5 million is dedicated to "addressing problems associated with compulsive gambling."

The bill also requires gambling operators to create and implement responsible gambling programs to "mitigate the potential public health consequences associated with gambling." These include: space for on-site counseling, prominently displayed signage, a self-exclusion process, training of employees, and prevention programs targeted to vulnerable populations.

The Council is pleased that the House, under the leadership of Speaker Robert DeLeo and Chairman Brian Dempsey, has committed to matching any expansion of gambling in Massachusetts with an expansion of problem gambling services. The legislation recognizes the importance of dedicating resources to address the very real issue of problem gambling. It is vital to fund the full array of services for problems that will arise in connection with an expansion of gambling in Massachusetts.

The Senate is expected to consider expanded gambling in the coming days with the release of its own bill.

### in this issue:

- page 2 Introducing the Brief Bio-social Gambling Screen
- page 3 *America Anonymous* Review
- page 4 Council Staff Member Appointed to Governor's Commission

## NEW PROBLEM GAMBLING SCREENING TOOL

Researchers from the Division on Addictions, Cambridge Health Alliance, a teaching affiliate of Harvard Medical School (DOA), recently developed the Brief Bio-social Gambling Screen, a three item gambling screen based on the Diagnostic Statistical Manual (DSM-IV) criteria for pathological gambling.

The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry states that the Brief Bio-social Gambling Screen is "sufficiently sensitive to identify DSM diagnosed problem gamblers correctly, and specific enough to exclude non-problem gamblers from being incorrectly classified as problem gamblers" (i.e., false positives).

The screen includes biologically, psychologically, and socially-oriented criteria:

### WITHDRAWAL:

During the past 12 months, have you become restless, irritable or anxious when trying to stop/cut down on gambling?

### DECEIT:

During the past 12 months, have you tried to keep your family or friends from knowing how much you gambled?

### NEED MONEY:

During the past 12 months, did you have such financial trouble that you had to get help with living expenses from family, friends, or welfare?

The Brief Bio-social Gambling Screen uses just three questions that are easy to ask, easy to answer, and easy to include in all modes of interviewing. The Council will promote this new tool to further help people experiencing problems with gambling to receive the support and services that they need.

## book review

*AMERICA ANONYMOUS: Eight Addicts in Search of a Life* by Benoit Denizet-Lewis. New York: Simon & Shuster, 2009.

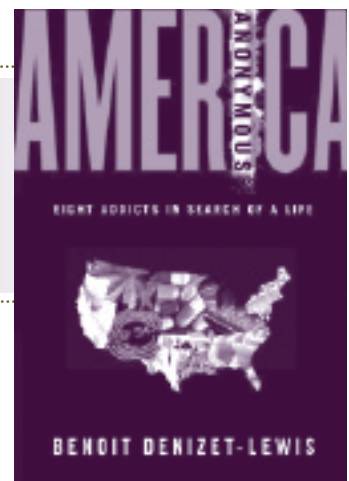
*Reviewed by: Marlene Warner, Program Director and Haner Hernandez, PhD, Associate Director of Prevention and Programs, Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling.*

Although Benoit Denizet-Lewis has recently been interviewed on national newscasts to discuss the alleged sex addictions of Tiger Woods and Jesse James, his knowledge comes from his personal and professional explorations of addiction. The work that resulted is entitled, *America Anonymous: Eight Addicts in Search of a Life*.

The book follows eight adults through their individual struggles with drugs, alcohol, sex, overeating and gambling addictions, and details the emotional, mental, and physiological impacts of addiction. It also explores how the systems and groups designed to help people with addictions have helped or failed during active addiction, recovery and relapse. Mr. Denizet-Lewis sprinkles details of his own story as a recovering sex addict throughout, but the bulk of the book is about a three-year journey into the relationships of the eight individuals featured in the book.

We highly recommend this book because among many other things, it demonstrates the experiences shared between people with gambling addictions and other addictions. Mr. Denizet-Lewis has brought a contemporary and unbiased view of gambling addiction to a popular read. This will hopefully allow people to look past the top news stories of criminal activity related to problem gambling, and to see a more personal view of gambling addiction. It also engages the reader in a thoughtful process as to whether the insular community that provides support and treatment to addictions is suffocating the recovery progress.

Mr. Denizet-Lewis' work enables and encourages readers to move beyond the socially constructed stereotypes about addictions, which serve to misinform and alienate people. This book is a page turner that is written and laid out so that it is accessible by anyone, not just people familiar with gambling disorders and other addictions. Anyone wishing to make a positive contribution, people striving to recover, or those who just want to understand addiction a little better will want to consider reading *America Anonymous*. To find out more, visit [www.americaanonymous.com](http://www.americaanonymous.com)



*"As a person living in long-term recovery, and working in the addictions field for over two decades, I can appreciate the complexities of the lives of the people described by Mr. Denizet-Lewis. The easy to follow and well written narrative provided me with yet another opportunity to further understand how millions of people in the United States struggle with many forms of addiction and recovery on a daily basis."*

Personal Reflection by Haner Hernandez, Assistant Director of Prevention and Programs at the Mass. Council.



*Haner Hernandez, PhD, CADACII, LADCI, Assistant Director of Prevention and Programs, Mass. Council on Compulsive Gambling*

## COUNCIL STAFF MEMBER

*Appointed to*

## GOVERNOR'S LATINO-AMERICAN ADVISORY COMMISSION

The Council is pleased to announce that Haner Hernandez, PhD, CADACII, LADCI, Assistant Director of Prevention and Programs at the Council has been appointed to the Governor's Latino-American Advisory Commission. The Latino-American Advisory Commission, which is co-chaired by Lieutenant Governor Murray and Ms. Lillian Santiago-Bauza, was established in 1993. It focuses on interests and concerns important to Latino-Americans, works to expand commercial and cultural ties with Latin American Countries and the U.S. Territories, and educates the citizens of the Commonwealth regarding the unique qualities, talents, diversities and challenges of the Latino-American community. Hernandez earned his PhD from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst's School of Public Health, and has more than 20 years of experience working in the addictions field.

# Responsible Gambling Partnership Announces Recommendations for Public Policy

On February 9, 2010 the Massachusetts Partnership for Responsible Gambling held a press conference at the State House to announce a series of public policy recommendations to ensure responsible gambling practices in the Commonwealth.

The group recommended that any gambling legislation contain provisions to ensure adequate resources and funding for preventing, intervening and treating problem gambling, as well as comprehensive regulations and policies to ensure responsible gambling practices.

The Massachusetts Partnership for Responsible Gambling, a landmark alliance of gambling industry leaders and problem gambling experts, is committed to increasing public awareness of problem gambling, encouraging programs for education and prevention, and promoting responsible gambling policies and practices in the Commonwealth.

“The Partnership supports programs that prevent the development of gambling-related problems, intervene when problems exist, and assure treatment for those who develop gambling-related problems and seek care,” said Kathleen M. Scanlan, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling, during the press conference.

Specific Partnership recommendations include provisions that require gambling operations in Massachusetts to have plans to guarantee compliance with the highest standards of responsible gambling programs; that any oversight authority include individuals with expertise in public health and in the field of gambling addiction; and that the authority continually study the efficacy of gambling laws and regulations, and their impact on public health.

Scott S. shared his personal struggle with casino and lottery gambling. He joined Jeff Hartmann, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of Mohegan Sun, Chip Tuttle, Chief Operating Officer for Suffolk Downs, and Mark J. Cavanagh, Executive Director of the Massachusetts State Lottery to discuss the Partnership and their shared vision for responsible gambling public policy at the press conference.

“Mohegan Sun is proud to be a member of the Partnership for Responsible Gambling, and as a company that has been operating in the region for more than a decade, we understand the importance of developing and implementing responsible gaming practices and policies,” said Hartmann. “This Partnership continues to engage in important work and our goal with these recommendations is to provide input to help achieve the most effective gambling policies.”

Michael Botticelli, Assistant Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Bureau of Substance Abuse Services (DPH/BSAS) said that he was very pleased with the Partnership’s dedication to the issue and that the implementation of the recommended regulations was a vital component in governing the problem gambling services provided by DPH/BSAS.

In a recent national survey of funding for problem gambling services in the United States, Massachusetts ranked 18th in per capita expenditures to address problem gambling. The Partnership seeks to change this by making Massachusetts a national leader in responsible gambling public policy.

For more information about Massachusetts Partnership for Responsible Gambling members, please visit the Council website: [www.masscompulsivegambling.org](http://www.masscompulsivegambling.org), and click on “advocacy.”



Panelists (from left to right) Mark Cavanagh, Chip Tuttle, Jeff Hartmann, Steve O’Toole



Jeff Hartmann speaks with reporters at the event

## PROBLEM GAMBLING AWARENESS WEEK 2010



Workshop participants

In recognition of Problem Gambling Awareness Week, Governor Patrick issued a proclamation which in part read, “Problem gambling is a public health issue affecting Americans of all ages, race, ethnic backgrounds in all communities; and intervention and treatment are effective in minimizing the harm to both individuals and society as a whole.”

The goal of the week-long campaign was to inform the general public and health care professionals about the warning signs of problem gambling, and to raise awareness about the help that is available.

The Mass Council hosted two community forums in recognition of Problem Gambling Awareness Week 2010. The events were held at the Psychological Center in Lawrence on Friday, March 12, 2010, and at the Gandara Center in Springfield on Monday, March 15, 2010.

Public health officials and community leaders from the host communities were invited to learn about “*Real Addiction, Real Recovery*” from problem gambling treatment providers and from people in problem gambling recovery at the centers who found help and hope.

The forum in Lawrence on Friday, March 12 was followed by a one-day workshop held for clinicians at Heritage State Park. *Meeting the Needs of Diverse Communities: Asian & African American Outreach Efforts and Treatment Resources* provided culturally-nuanced clinical information for screening, assessing, referring and for treating Asian and African American problem gambling clients with culturally and linguistically appropriate resources.

190 High Street, Suite 5  
Boston, MA 02110-3031

**Helpline:** 800.426.1234 | **Business:** 617.426.4554  
**TTY:** 617.426.1855 | **Fax:** 617.426.4555  
**e-mail:** gambling@aol.com  
**web:** www.masscompulsivegambling.org



The Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling is a private, non-profit health agency dedicated to reducing the social, financial and emotional costs of problem gambling. The Council provides prevention, information, education, advocacy, and referral services for problem gamblers, their loved ones, and the greater community.

*The Council is funded in part by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Public Health, Bureau of Substance Abuse Services.*

## Massachusetts Problem Gambling Treatment Centers

**Boston ASAP, Boston:** 617.482.5292  
**Community Care Services, Attleboro MA:** 508-226-1660, ext. 213  
**The Gandara Center, Springfield:** 413.736.0395  
**Henry Lee Willis Community Center, Worcester:** 508.799.2934  
**Let Us Know (LUK), Inc., Fitchburg:** 978.829.2244  
**Lowell House, Inc., Lowell:** 978.459.8656  
**Mt. Auburn Hospital Prevention & Recovery Center, Cambridge:** 617.499.5051  
**North Suffolk Mental Health Services, Chelsea:** 888.294.7802  
**The Psychological Center, Lawrence:** 978.685.1337  
**Stanley Street Treatment & Resources, Inc., Fall River:** 508.679.5222  
**Steppingstone, Inc., Fall River:** 508.674.2788 ext. 120  
**Team Coordinating Agency, Inc., Haverhill:** 978.373.1181 ext. 42

## Resources

**Bettors Anonymous:** 978.988.1777 or 781.662.5199  
**Community Care Services, Attleboro:** 508.222.7525 ext. 213  
**Division on Addictions, Cambridge Health Alliance, a teaching affiliate of Harvard Medical School:** 781.306.8600  
**Gam-Anon (family/friends):** 888.644.8482  
**Gamblers Anonymous MA Hotline:** 888-GA HELPS (888.424.3577)  
**Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling Helpline:** 800.426.1234  
**National Council on Problem Gambling Helpline:** 800.522.4700

## WANTED! Your e-mail Address

In an effort to reduce paper waste, as well as conserve financial resources in challenging economic times, the Council has begun to send out more of its newsletters and other information via e-mail. If you are not receiving e-newsletters from the Council, please sign up today. It's easy! Simply visit [www.masscompulsivegambling.org/news/newsletters.php](http://www.masscompulsivegambling.org/news/newsletters.php) and type in your name and e-mail address. You will receive email from us monthly or less often, and you will be informed.

## HELP OTHERS Who Are Struggling With Gambling Problems

The Council is seeking people in recovery, and family members alike, from all areas of the state, to share their personal experiences with problem gambling and their strength and energy from recovery. In order to help others who are struggling with gambling problems, the Council would like people who are willing to speak to individuals seeking help, training groups, and/or the media to raise public awareness about how problem gambling impacts lives. If you are interested in participating, please contact Program Director, Marlene Warner, at the Council at 617-426-4554/ [marlene@masscompulsivegambling.org](mailto:marlene@masscompulsivegambling.org)

## HELPLINE – NOW OFFERING LIVE CHAT

The Council website [www.masscompulsivegambling.org](http://www.masscompulsivegambling.org) now offers live chat. This will allow people to "chat" (e-mail back and forth on a split screen—similar to instant messaging) with a Helpline Specialist in a dialog box in real time, while still receiving the same level of compassion, resources, referrals and confidentiality offered via a phone call. Helpline Specialists are available to chat Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

