

# Responsible gambling

The majority of people do gamble responsibly. It may help you to keep your gambling under control by remembering the following;

- You're buying fun, not investing your money
- Before playing, set strict limits on how much time and money you're going to spend
- Quit while you're ahead
- Only gamble with money you can afford to lose
- Don't spend more money on gambling with the hope to win back money that you have lost
- Keep up other interests and hobbies – don't let gambling take over your life
- Don't gamble in order to escape from stress or boredom
- Gambling in moderation is okay

For some however gambling can become a problem. If you are concerned about the amount you are gambling, and feel it is taking over your life (or you are concerned for a friend or relative) then the following questions may help you, to give you some guidance.

- Have others ever criticised your gambling?
- Have you ever lied to cover up the amount you have gambled or time you have spent doing it?
- Do arguments, frustrations or disappointments make you want to gamble?
- Do you gamble alone for long periods?
- Do you stay away from work or college to gamble?
- Do you gamble to escape from a boring or unhappy life?
- Are you reluctant to spend 'gambling money' on anything else?
- Have you lost interest in your family, friends or pastimes due to gambling?
- After losing, do you feel you must try to win back your losses as soon as possible?
- When gambling and you run out of money, do you feel lost and in despair, and need to gamble again as soon as possible?
- Do you gamble until your last penny is gone?
- Have you lied, stolen or borrowed just to get money to gamble or to pay gambling debts?
- Do you feel depressed or even suicidal because of your gambling?

If you feel you have answered 'yes' to several of these questions then it may be that a gambling problem exists. For friendly and helpful advice from trained counsellors call the GamCare helpline on 0845 6000 133. The helpline is open 24 hours a day. Sometimes just telling someone about your problem can be a relief and it is the first step towards dealing with your problem. You can also visit the GamCare website [www.gamcare.org.uk](http://www.gamcare.org.uk) for more information and advice