

Having the conversation with family or friends

If someone you know has a problem with gambling, it's important to have a conversation and let them know support is available.

People often feel unsure about calling Gambler's Help services, and many may not know such services exist. The best way to find out if someone has a problem with gambling is to ask.

Choose a time when you can talk in private and are both calm. Before you talk to the person, be prepared for the full range of responses you may encounter, from relief through to anger. Have a few resources ready before your chat so you refer them to the information.

You can encourage someone to contact Gambler's Help by emphasising that it is free and confidential and that many people have found the support useful.

Be aware that they may feel ashamed or embarrassed and may not want to talk. That's OK, by just opening the conversation you have signalled to the person that you are there for them whenever they're ready.

Do

- Let them know you care about them
- Focus on positives and the help available rather than the problems of gambling
- Ask them "what could be some benefits to gambling less?"
- Acknowledge this is hard, "talking about these things can be hard"
- Be patient and sit with any silence. Seeking support can take a long time

Avoid

- Blame them for causing problems for others
- Label them as a "problem".
- Lecture or nag the person to get help
- Tell them what you would do, unless you've been in a similar position

**For more information, contact
Gambler's Help at Bethany**

Bethany Community Support 5278 8122 www.bethany.org.au
Gamblers Help 1800 858 858 www.gamblershelp.com.au



Having the conversation with family or friends

1) Explain how you feel

Explain what you've noticed, why it concerns you and how it makes you feel. For example, you may have noticed that they:

- Have stopped doing activities they used to enjoy
- Appear stressed or worried
- Have money troubles or are always short of money.

2) Listen to what they have to say

It's very important to listen to what the person has to say. They may say very little or deny there's a problem. They may get angry. If they deny they have an addiction or get angry, you can:

- Ask them to at least think about their gambling and supports available
- Ask them to take the test to help work out if their gambling is a problem
- Give them information about where to get help anyway – when they calm down, they might follow up
- Take a break and agree on another time to talk
- Ask them how they want you to help them

Often, people are relieved to finally talk about their gambling. An honest, non-judgemental discussion can be just what they need to get started on the road to recovery.

3) Encouraging them to act through helping themselves, working on it together, peer support or treatment

Self-help strategies and peer support are often helpful for people with mild gambling issues. For more complex addiction and mental health issues, professional gambling treatment is recommended. You can have an active role in encouraging your loved one to seek support and discover all the options available by being informed yourself. Often, people are relieved to finally talk about their gambling. An honest, non-judgemental discussion can be just what they need to get started on the road to recovery.

**For more information, contact
Gambler's Help at Bethany**

Bethany Community Support 5278 8122 www.bethany.org.au
Gamblers Help 1800 858 858 www.gamblershelp.com.au

