

# Annual Report

## Gambling: help and referral

April 1<sup>st</sup> 2000 to March 31<sup>st</sup> 2001

*Gambling: help and referral* is a telephone information service for listening and referral on compulsive gambling, open 24 hours, 7 days a week, for all Quebec. The personnel help people reflect on their gambling habits and refer compulsive gamblers and their family to helpful resources.

In the fall of 1993, at the time the Quebec government established the first casino, a wide range of measures for the protection of gamblers were put into place including the implementation of *Gambling: help and referral*. The service is provided by the Information and Referral Centre of Greater Montreal thanks to the financial support of Loto-Québec and their subsidiaries.

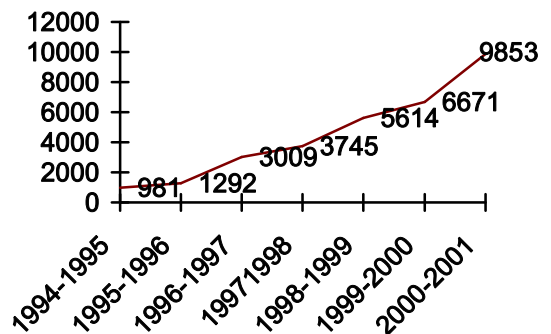
*Gambling: help and referral* is born from the need to promote prevention among the public and to make people aware of the fact that, for some of them, gambling is not a game anymore. People must feel as responsible towards gambling as with other risky activities, such as alcohol intake. Games of chance are not innocuous and the calls for help and support that we receive each day at *Gambling: help and referral* are an eloquent testimony.

### Statistics

Between 1993 and 2001, almost 32,000 people turned to *Gambling: help and referral*. By its mandate of info-referral and listening, *Gambling: help and referral* allows people who need help to contact the organizations which are the most able to help them. The anonymous and confidential nature of the communications allows people living in small communities to ask for help without being identified or recognized. Since the start of the service, the number of calls has increased gradually, whereby *Gambling: help and referral* received 9,853 calls in 2000-2001 a nearly 50% increase from last year.

The major element for this increase in the amount of calls received is surely the promotional campaign of Loto-Québec in the fall of 2000. In fact, during four months, television messages and printed advertising were produced and broadly broadcasted throughout the province. This information campaign was accompanied by a billboard campaign in more than 450 places equipped with video-lottery terminals. Before that campaign we were receiving 18 calls per day and it quickly increased to 30 calls a day from the first days of the campaign.

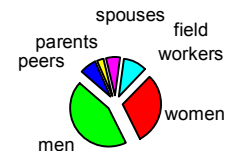
Number of calls



### The people seeking help

We can establish that 74% of the callers were worried about their gambling habits (30% were women and 44% were men). Among the other calls, 7% came from peers of a gambler (brother, sister, or friend); 6% were spouses; 3% parents; and 10% field workers. We must highlight the increase in demands by women.

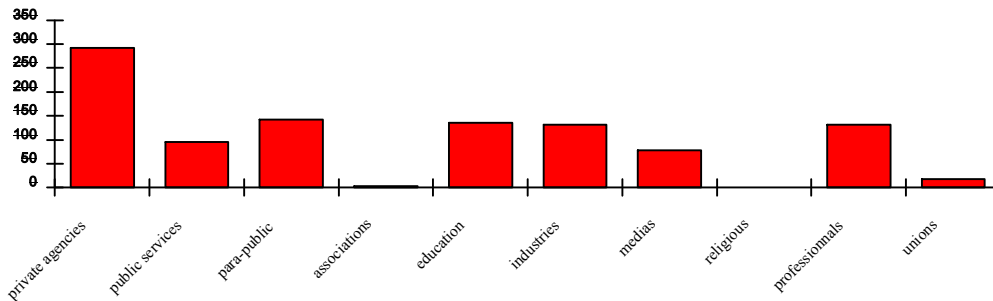
### The people who call :



## *The field workers*

We have noted an increase in requests coming from the private agencies, public and para-public services, industries sectors; and also from the medias.

Number of calls:



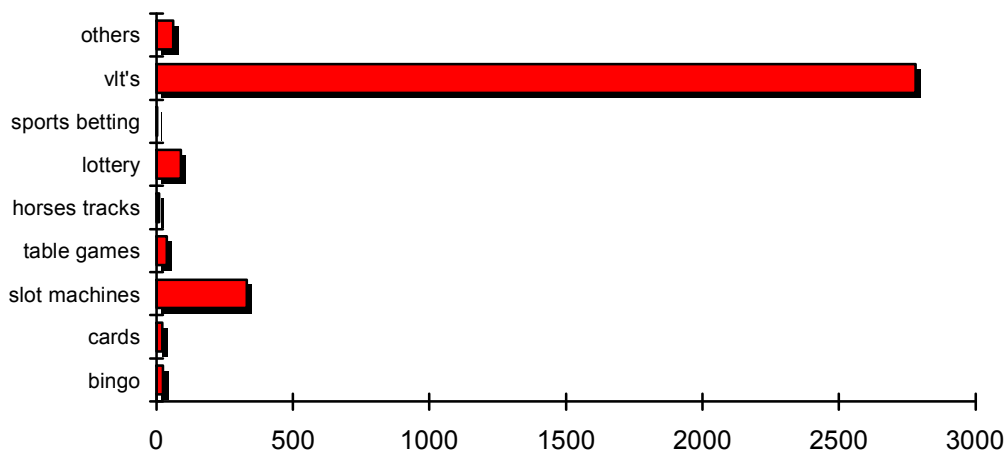
Types of callers

## *The requests for help*

Requests can be divided in three categories: requests on general information on compulsive gambling (22% of calls); requests for therapy, counselling, self-support groups, or other related requests as budgeting, help for problems related to violence in family, drug abuse or suicide (74% of calls); requests for listening and support for gamblers themselves, their spouses, their peers and parents (4% of calls).

## *The types of gambling*

Nearly 6,400 callers had problems with a specific game and the types of games more commonly named by these callers were video lotteries (74%), slot machines (13%), and lotteries (5%). The rise in importance in calls concerning bingos, casino slot machines, lotteries, spots betting, and video lotteries was noticed.



Numbers of calls

### Training program

We have established a continuing education program in order to respond to the needs of our counselors who face the emerging problem of compulsive gambling. In effect, we have benefited from training from the *Centre pour la prévention et le traitement du jeu*. Moreover, two lecturers had been invited to meet us: Dr. Robert J. Vallerand, Ph.D, of the Laboratory on the passion of gambling at UQAM, and Ms. Julie Polhus, psychologist from Suicide Action Montreal.

### Dynamic public relations

Concerning public relations activities, *Gambling: help and referral* participated in 43 activities, 19 of which were television or radio broadcasts.

The information booth was used at:

- The *Centre d'Écoute et référence Halte-Ami* for the compulsive gambling prevention week;
- The Week of the Bar of Montreal;
- *Les Journées de santé publique*;
- The *Centre Domrémy du KRTB* at the time of the national meeting "impulsive gambling: state of chance"
- Meeting on the games of chance organized by Montreal MNA Russell Williams.

Moreover, presentations were made to the following groups:

- the CEGEP of Saint-Jean
- the *Hôpital Rivière-des-Prairies*;
- the Chinese Family Service of Greater Montreal;

The service *Gambling: help and referral*, benefited from a promotional budget which allowed among other things, the production of advertising panels in bus shelters in the regions of Montreal, Quebec, Lower St. Lawrence, Charlevoix, Côte-Nord, Beauce, Trois-Rivières, Chicoutimi, Jonquière, Sherbrooke, Laval, Longueuil and Hull. Also, a web page was created and a web site will be developed by *Les Productions du Sixième* Inc in the weeks to come.

The telephone number of the service had been published many times by *La Presse* in a section entitled "Need Help? Call one of these emergency numbers ". Our number was listed on the page of emergency numbers in all the directories from Bell Canada and Quebec Telephone throughout Quebec. In all, *Gambling: help and referral* was mentioned 129 times in articles of newspapers and magazines.

### Conclusion

The media campaign and the agreement concluded with Loto-Quebec in order to promote *Gambling: help and referral* contributed to make the service the first contact resource for the population looking for help with gambling problems and the number of calls which increased each year seems to indicate a real potential for development.

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**GAMBLING: HELP AND REFERRAL  
STATISTICAL REPORT 2000-2001**

**SOURCE OF ENQUIRY**

Associations	3
Colleges, Schools, Universities	136
Communications Media	78
Industry, Commerces	131
Labor and Union	18
Para-public services	142
Private agencies	292
Professional persons	132
Public in general:	
Men	4 373
Women	2 953
Parents	265
Peers	689
Spouses	546
Public services	95
TOTAL	9 853

**GEOGRAPHIC REGION**

Region 01, Bas-Saint-Laurent	144
Region 02, Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean	237
Region 03, Québec	995
Region 04, Mauricie-Bois-Francs	380
Region 05, Estrie	270
Region 06, Montréal-Centre	4 347
Region 07, Outaouais	475
Region 08, Abitibi-Témiscamingue	137
Region 09, Côte-Nord	50
Region 10, Nord du Québec	18
Region 11, Gaspésie-Iles de la Madeleine	51
Region 12, Chaudière-Appalaches	108
Region 13, Laval	470
Region 14, Lanaudière	326
Region 15, Laurentides	447
Région 16, Montérégie	1 191
Other regions	207
TOTAL	9 853

**TYPE OF GAMBLING**

Arcades	4
Bingo	91
Card game	45
Casino:	
Slot machines	857
Black Jack, roulette, baccarat	49
Horse races	34
Lottery	309
Pool, Marbles	3
Pool betting on sports	28
Video-lottery, Video Poker	4 755
Others	221
TOTAL	6 396

**AGE CATEGORIES**

Adults	9 643
Children	10

Senior citizens	114
Teens	86
TOTAL	9 853

**TYPE OF ENQUIRIES**

Counselling	147
Listening and support	584
Support group:	
Gambler	4 550
Parents	106
Spouses and Peers	570
General Information:	
Gamblers' Profile	468
Gambling: help and referral	2 896
Self-Exclusion	42
Residential readaptation:	
Private services	1 151
Public services	50
Out-patient treatment:	
Private services	1 324
Public services	1 769
Individual after-care	2
Related requests:	
Budget counselling	357
Drug addiction	76
Legal services	14
Other requests	978
Suicide	103
Violence	19
Complaints against services	31
TOTAL	15 237

**TYPE OF REFERRALS**

Directed to appropriate resource	11 261
Referral calls by our staff	35
Short term service	3 941
TOTAL	15 237

**FOLLOW-UP CALLS**

Additional communication with client or other	266
Communication with services	717
TOTAL	983

**PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Information sessions	3
Meetings and seminars	21
Radio, TV	19
TOTAL	43

