

Annual Report

Gambling: help and referral

April 1st 2001 to March 31st 2002

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, and is financed by the Quebec Ministry of Health and Social Services since April 2001. Loto-Québec provided the financing for the service between 1993 and 2001.

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 are resounding proof of this.

Statistics

Between 1993 and 2002, almost 47,000 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 15,478 calls in 2001-2002 a nearly 57% increase from last year.

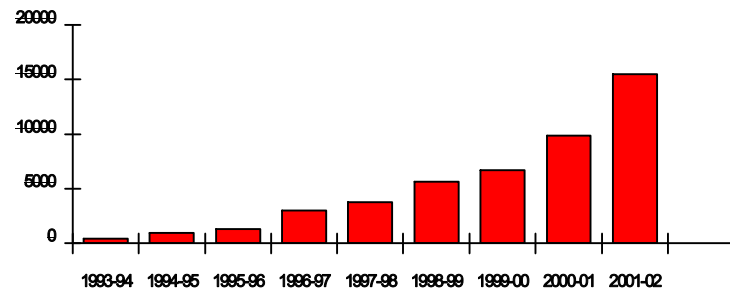
The major element for this increase in the amount of calls received is surely the promotional campaign of Loto-Québec in the spring of 2001. In fact, during almost four months, television messages hosted by well-known personalities (Rita Lafontaine and Marcel Sabourin) and printed advertising were broadly broadcasted throughout the province. This promotional campaign was accompanied by a billboard campaign in more than 450 places equipped with video-lottery terminals. During this information campaign, while we were receiving an average of 30 calls a day, these calls rapidly increased to more than 60 a day.

Loto-Québec also printed the phone number of the service on the back of the lottery tickets.

As for the geographic origin of the calls, 45% originate from Greater Montreal, 13% from *Montréal*, 9% from Quebec City, 4% from *Outaouais*, and 29% from the remaining

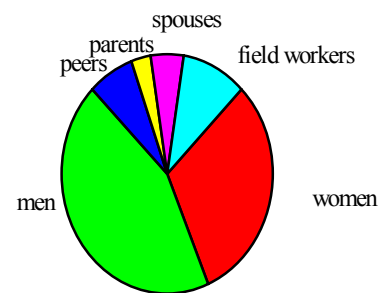
regions of Quebec. We would like to highlight an increase in the amount of calls received from all the regions except *Abitibi-Témiscamingue*.

Number of calls



The people seeking help

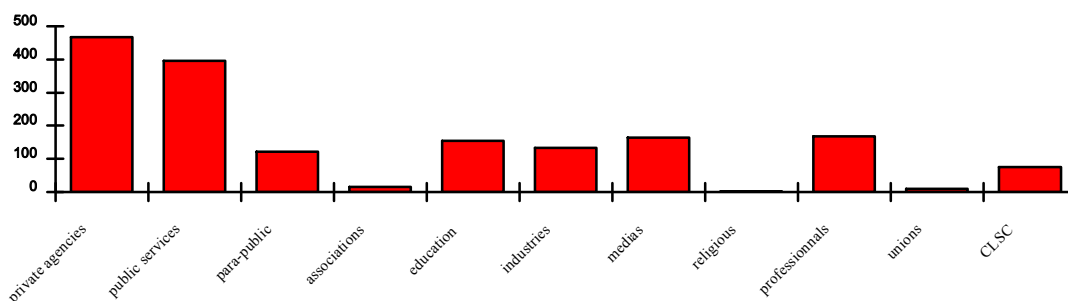
We can establish that 75% of the callers were worried about their gambling habits (31% were women and 44% were men). Among the other calls, 7% came from peers of a gambler (brother, sister, or friend); 5% were spouses; 3% parents; and 10% field workers.



The field workers

We have noted an increase in requests coming from the public services and from the medias.

Number of calls:



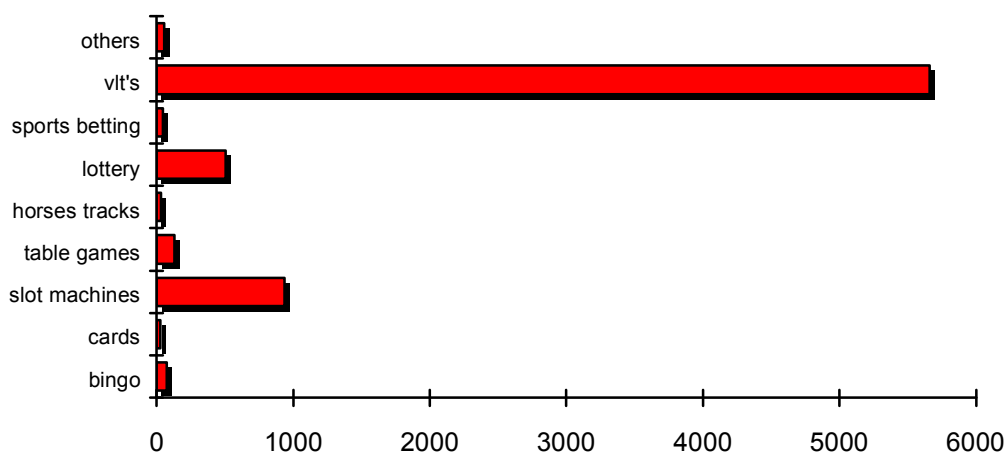
Types of callers

The requests for help

Requests can be divided in three categories: requests for 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 from gamblers themselves, their spouses, their peers and parents (4% of calls).

The types of gambling

Among the types of games mentioned the most often by callers were video-lotteries (76% of the mentions), the slot machines at the casinos (13%), and the lotteries (7%).



Numbers of calls

Training program

We have established a continuing education program in order to respond to the needs of our counsellors who face the emerging problem of compulsive sessions by gambling. We have benefited from training by the *Centre pour la prévention et le traitement du jeu*. And also by the participation of Mr. Claude Boutin, psychologist, who referred to a specific telephone approach towards the excessive gamblers, their ambivalence and their difficulty in asking for help. We would like also to thank Mr. Pierre L'Heureux, professor at the *Faculté de l'Éducation permanente de l'Université de Montréal*, who explained techniques to use with aggressive clients.

Dynamic public relations

Concerning public relations activities, ***Gambling: help and referral*** participated in 71 activities, 37 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;
- *Forum Jeunesse, Université de Montréal*.

Moreover, presentations were made to the following groups:

- *L'Institut national de la recherche scientifique*;
- *Parentrie de Montréal-Nord*;
- *Revue Autrement Dit*;
- *Direction de la Santé publique de Montréal Centre*;
- Ministry of Health and Social Services.

During the fall of 2001, the Ministry of Health and Social Services launched the campaign *Jeux Excessifs*, a series of five radio messages on the prevention of gambling. During the last session, the telephone number of our service was advertized. This campaign has received an Award by the radio industry.

The telephone number of the service has 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 total, ***Gambling: help and referral*** was the subject of nearly one hundred publications in the written media; our leaflet was also inserted in the magazine *L'infirmière du Québec* of the Order of Nurses of Québec. At the end of March 2002, Loto-Québec publicized our service under the name 1 866 SOS-JEUX.

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 Montréal, Québec, Lower St. Lawrence, Charlevoix, Côte-Nord, Beauce, Trois-Rivières, Chicoutimi, Jonquière, Sherbrooke, Laval, Longueuil, Hull, Thedford Mines, and Victoriaville. We would like to thank the company Viacom Affichage for their collaboration.

Also, a web page was created and will be developed by Les Productions du Sixième Inc.

The agreement concluded with the Ministry of Health and Social Services in order to promote ***Gambling: help and referral*** helped it to become the first contact resource in the

minds of the population. The number of calls which increased each year seems to indicate a real potential for development.

In 1993, The Information and Referral Centre of Greater Montreal accepted a major challenge: to put in place a 24/7 service on compulsive gambling, which would respond to the needs of individuals having a problem with compulsive gambling, as well as their family; to ensure that it would function within strict financial parameters; to establish a data bank which would be as extensive and reliable as possible, considering the lack of public and private resources; to ensure that the service would be publicized through gradual steadily increasing promotional efforts, as resources for help are put into place. By spring 2001, free services were being put in place for excessive gamblers for the first time in Quebec. We hope that soon, everyone will have access to these free services, notably spouses, people in distress, etc.

After nine years, we believe that we have attained our objectives again this year to offer a quality information, referral and listening service to the population of Québec. We will continue to do all we can to justify the trust of the public and of our sponsors who have supported us since 1993.

Lorraine Bilocq Lebeau
Executive Director

E-mail : crgm@info-reference.qc.ca

Monique Cantin

Communications Director (since April 2002)

E-mail : m.cantin@info-reference.qc.ca

Hélène Hamel

Coordinator (since April 2002)

E-mail : jar@info-reference.qc.ca

Web site : www.info-reference.qc.ca



Gambling : Help and Referral
c/o Information and Referral Centre of Greater
Montreal

801, Sherbrooke street East, Suite 401
Montreal H2L 1K7

Quebec

Telephone: (514) 527-0140

1 800 461 0140

Fax: (514) 527-9712

**GAMBLING: HELP AND REFERRAL
STATISTICAL REPORT 2001-2002**

SOURCE OF ENQUIRY

Associations	15
Colleges, Schools, Universities	154
Communications Media	164
Industry, Commerces	133
Labor and Union	10
Para-public services	121
CLSC	75
Private agencies	466
Professional persons	168
Public in general:	
Men	6 754
Women	4 735
Parents	447
Peers	1 051
Spouses	788
Public services	395
Religious organizations	2
TOTAL	15 478

GEOGRAPHIC REGION

Region 01, Bas-Saint-Laurent	186
Region 02, Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean	353
Region 03, Québec	1 423
Region 04, Mauricie-Bois-Francis	601
Region 05, Estrie	420
Region 06, Montréal-Centre	7 010
Region 07, Outaouais	549
Region 08, Abitibi-Témiscamingue	159
Region 09, Côte-Nord	100
Region 10, Nord du Québec	25
Region 11, Gaspésie-Iles de la Madeleine	90
Region 12, Chaudière-Appalaches	145
Region 13, Laval	768
Region 14, Lanaudière	533
Region 15, Laurentides	717
Région 16, Montérégie	2 067
Other regions	332
TOTAL	15 478

TYPE OF GAMBLING

Arcades	7
Bingo	74
Card game	28
Casino:	
Slot machines	938
Black Jack, roulette, baccarat	131
Horse races	31
Lottery	507
Pool , Marbles	3
Pool betting on sports	48
Video-lotteries	5 660
Others	56
TOTAL	7 483

AGE CATEGORIES

Adults	14 960
Children	8
Senior citizens	405
Teens	105
TOTAL	15 478

TYPE OF ENQUIRIES

Counselling	273
Listening and support	1 224
Support group:	
Gambler	4 887
Parents	168
Spouses and Peers	802
General Information:	
Gamblers' Profile	661
Gambling: help and referral	5 781
Self-Exclusion	73
Residential readaptation:	
Private services	1 290
Public services	64
Out-patient treatment:	
Private services	1 885
Public services	4 990
Related requests:	
Budget counselling	447
Drug addiction	142
Legal services	31
Other requests	1 042
Suicide	207
Violence	53
Complaints against services	99
TOTAL	24 119

TYPE OF REFERRALS

Directed to appropriate resource	16 353
Referral calls by our staff	42
Short term service	7 693
Services required insufficient	14
Services required unavailable	17
TOTAL	24 119

FOLLOW-UP CALLS

Additional communication with client or other	163
Communication with services	981
TOTAL	1 144

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Information sessions (attendance : 8 persons)	8
Meetings and seminars	26
Radio, TV	37
TOTAL	71

