

## **GAMBLING: HELP AND REFERRAL** **ANNUAL REPORT 2003-2004**

*Gambling: help and referral* is born from the need to make people aware of the fact that, for some of them, gambling is not a game anymore. In the fall of 1993, at the time the Québec 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 Montréal, and was financed by Loto-Québec between 1993 and 2001. Since 2001, the service has been financed by the *ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux*.

*Gambling: help and referral* is a telephone service for information and referral concerning compulsive gambling, open 24 hours, 7 days a week, throughout Québec. The personnel responds to several types of demands and needs: relevant reflections on the caller's gambling habits, support and empathy in moments of great distress, stabilization of callers before their referral to resources specialized in crisis situations.

Since November 15<sup>th</sup>, 1993, more than 77 000 people turned to *Gambling: help and referral* for help or information. 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 gradually increased. We would also like to mention that the number of Anglophones who used *Gambling : help and referral* regularly accounts for more than 12% of the callers.

During the year 2003-2004, according to its mandate of referring to the appropriate service, *Gambling : help and referral* has directed 32 people with a complaint against an organization or establishment to the appropriate authorities. *Gambling : help and referral* treated two complaints concerning its services in accordance with its existing protocol.

Of the 13 442 calls in 2003-2004, 78% of the callers were worried about their gambling habits (32% were women and 46 % were men). Among the other calls, 7% came from peers of a gambler (brother, sister, or friend); 5% were spouses; 2% were parents; and 8% were field workers. Adults accounted for 95% of the calls, 4% were from elderly people and 1% came from teenagers and children.

Requests can be divided in three categories:

- Requests for general information on compulsive gambling (28% 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 (69% of calls);
- requests for listening and support from gamblers themselves, their spouses, their peers and parents (3% of calls).

Among the types of games mentioned the most often by callers were video-lotteries (82% of the mentions), the slot machines at the casinos (9%), and the lotteries (3%).

As for the geographic origin of the calls, 47% originate from Greater Montréal, 11% from *Montérégie*, 10% from Québec area, 5% from *Outaouais*, and 27% from the other regions of Québec.

The continuing training program responds to different needs of the personnel regarding the many faces of compulsive gambling. *Gambling: help and referral* benefited this year from a presentation by Mrs. Diane Borgia, Director of CAFAT, who came to discuss the characteristics of people associated with gamblers and their codependency behaviours. Furthermore, Mrs. Magali Dufour, psychologist and Head of the *Certificat en toxicomanie de l'Université de Montréal*, has shared her experience of crisis intervention with the clients of the Casino of Montréal.

Concerning public relations activities, *Gambling: help and referral* participated in 34 activities, 9 of which were television or radio broadcasts. In total, *Gambling: help and referral* was the subject of 76 publications in the media.

### **Participation in special events:**

- European Foundation of Drug Helplines, First Conference of Associated Services, Milan, Italy, Workshop presentation by Mrs. Monique Cantin on *Gambling : help and referral*, April 4<sup>th</sup> 2003;
- Week of the Bar of Montréal, April 2003;
- Participation to the *Journée sur le Jeu pathologique* by the *Institut national de Santé publique*, September 2003;
- XXXI<sup>st</sup> Congress of *l'Association des Intervenants en toxicomanie du Québec*, October 2003;
- Congress of *l'Ordre des Infirmières et Infirmiers du Québec*, November 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, 2003;

- The *Centre d'Écoute et référence Halte-Ami* for Mental Health Week, January 2004, and Compulsive Gambling Week, February 2004;
- Collège Jean-Eudes, *Semaine de la santé*, January 2004.

#### Publicity:

- *Les 7<sup>èmes</sup> Journées Annuelles de la Santé publique*, December 2003 ;
- Magazine *L'Intervenant*, 2003-2004, on alcoholism and addiction (4 editions) ;
- Congress of *l'Association des CLSC et CHSLD*, May 2003;
- Magazine *Autrement Dit* (4 numbers) ;
- *L'Itinéraire*, 100<sup>th</sup> edition ;
- *L'Infirmière du Québec* ;
- Publicity Upstat at Universities Concordia and UQAM and also at Cegeps Vieux-Montréal and Maisonneuve ;
- *Magazine du Regroupement des Policiers de Laval*;
- *Zoom sur les Jeunes, Magazine du Forum Jeunesse de l'île de Montréal*;
- *L'Agenda Scolaire, les éditions Le Point*;
- *Le Médecin du Québec*;
- *L'Express et La Parole*, Drummondville;
- *Magazine Le Point*, Montréal, Québec and Trois-Rivières;
- Bulletin *Le Point de Repère*, Lévis;
- Bulletin of *L'Association des Infirmières en Info-Santé*;
- Bell Directories, Yellow Pages and Intranet;
- More than twenty Agendas of different groups and weeklies ;
- *Le Journal de Québec*, winter 2004.

#### Promotional Campaigns :

- *Alstom Télécity Inc.*, in the Montréal metro between June 2003 and March 2004;
- *MétroMédiaPlus* with advertising in buses of four targeted regions (*Lanaudière, Chaudière-Appalaches, Laurentides, Montérégie*), fall of 2003 and winter of 2004;
- Viacom with advertising at bus shelters and billboards in the largest cities of the Province.

The French version of the web site can now be visited at [www.jeu-aidereference.qc.ca](http://www.jeu-aidereference.qc.ca) and the English version is currently under construction. We

wish to thank the *Productions du Sixième Inc.* for the design and production of this web site.

In 1993, the Information and Referral Centre of Greater Montréal accepted a major challenge: to put in place a 24/7 service on compulsive gambling which would respond to the needs of people having a problem with compulsive gambling as well as their relatives. Today in 2004, the Centre still insures that it functions within strict financial parameters. The Centre also established a data bank and keeps it updated and as extensive and reliable as possible, considering the development of public and private resources for people having problems with compulsive gambling. In the spring of 2001, free services were made available for gamblers for the first time in Québec; today, these services are well set in place throughout the Province and the Centre makes sure that they are known through its service ***Gambling : help and referral.***

For more than ten years, we have pursued this objective : to offer a reliable and quality service of information, referral and support to the Québec population. 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.

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Since March 2002, a large number of citizens, organizations and the media have been persuaded that there are two distinct telephone services helping gamblers, of which one is under Loto-Québec.

We cannot end this report without mentioning that again this year, Loto-Québec publicizes ***Gambling: help and referral*** under another name and with another telephone number (1 866 SOS-JEUX). An unprecedented media campaign is still under way, associating our service with the sale of Loto-Québec products and incorrectly associating us with the *Fondation Mise sur toi*. The Centre requested in 2002 the intervention of the Minister responsible for the dossier at that time, without results until now, two years later.

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**GAMBLING: HELP AND REFERRAL STATISTICAL REPORT 2003-2004**

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**SOURCE OF ENQUIRIES**

Associations	18
Colleges, Schools, Universities	117
Communications Media	58
Industry, Commerces	174
Labor and Unions	3
Parapublic services	70
CLSC	32
Private agencies	317
Professional persons	161
Public in general:	
Men	6 163
Women	4 345
Parents	316
Peers	949
Spouses	625
Public services	93
Religious organizations	1

**TOTAL** 13 442

**GEOGRAPHIC REGION**

Region 01, Bas Saint-Laurent	152
Region 02, Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean	287
Region 03, Québec	1 366
Region 04, Mauricie-Centre du Québec	511
Region 05, Estrie	338
Region 06, Montréal-Centre	6 291
Region 07, Outaouais	690
Region 08, Abitibi-Témiscamingue	119
Region 09, Côte-Nord	75
Region 10, Nord du Québec	19
Region 11, Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine	58
Region 12, Chaudière-Appalaches	173
Region 13, Laval	612
Region 14, Lanaudière	394
Region 15, Laurentides	589
Region 16, Montérégie	1 493
Other regions	275

**TOTAL** 13 442

**TYPE OF GAMBLING**

Arcades	5
Bingo	32
Card games	16
Casino:	
Slot machines	491
Black Jack, roulette, baccarat	93

Craps games	1
Games and pool	1
Horse races	10
Lottery	175
Pool betting on sports	44
Video-lotteries	4 395
Others	41

**TOTAL** 5 304

**AGE CATEGORIES**

Adults	12 744
Children	7
Senior citizens	578
Teens	113

**TOTAL** 13 442

**TYPE OF ENQUIRIES**

Counselling	53
Listening and support	601
Support group:	
Gamblers	2 503
Parents	135
Spouses and Peers	695
General Information:	
Gamblers' Profile	502
Gambling: help and referral	5 288
Prevention	75
Self-Exclusion	49
Residential readaptation:	
Private services	751
Parapublic services	134
Out-patient treatment:	
Private services	1 393
Parapublic services	3 736
Social reintegration	17
Related requests:	
Budget counselling	194
Drug addiction	156
Legal services	12
Other requests	4 405
Suicide	206
Violence	53
Complaints against services	32

**TOTAL** 20 990

**TYPE OF REFERRALS**

Directed to appropriate resource	13 234
Referral calls by our staff	309
Short term service	7 437
Services required insufficient	6
Services required unavailable	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20 990</b>

**FOLLOW-UP CALLS**

Additional communication with client or other	18
Communication with services	345
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>363</b>

**PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Information sessions (attendance : 21 persons)	4
Meetings and seminars	21
Radio, TV	9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>34</b>

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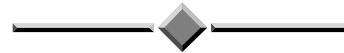
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