

# Newslink

## Problem Gambling News & Information

A source of news, views and trends



Canadian Foundation On  
Compulsive Gambling  
(Ontario)

Winter Issue 2000

## Catching the Wave

### FEATURE ARTICLE

By Angela Shulman

One click on the keyboard to buy a stock, another click to sell it. Boom, money in the bank. It seems simple, doesn't it? Some knowledge of the stock market, some insight, some time and a person could make a lot of money. That's the life of a day trader. They make their money buying and selling quickly to lock in gains and cut losses. The computer is always on – for checking the up-to-the-second stock markets reports. Information is filtering in from all directions on how stocks are performing. It's a very fast-paced industry where speed and knowledge are crucial in surviving.

Day trading is becoming more popular and attractive and Peter Beck says his company gets 30 new recruits taking the day trading crash course every month. Beck is part owner of Swift Trade Securities Inc., located in Toronto. He says, "day trading is fast becoming a trendy profession because about 80% succeed at making a very good living."



Those who don't, get out early. Beck says, a trader must possess a few very basic traits to be successful – money, discipline, knowledge and insight. "You must follow the rules and base your trades on information. It's a profession and you must love it."

Jack fell in love with it, and fast. Jack is a wiped-out day trader who lost control and money.

Traditionally, he was a very conservative investor, focusing on GICs, but his friends convinced him he could get better returns. So Jack moved his money over to individual stocks and "that's when I realized how great they were." He explains the scenario like this: "Working full-time allows you to earn say...\$50 an hour, but in trading, you could make \$50 in 5 seconds." Being employed seemed like such a waste of time to him. He made far more money trading and it was far more exciting. It also gave him more free time, so he decided to go back to school.

It didn't take long for things to start changing for Jack. He started to notice a certain pattern

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### BRIDGING THE GAP CONFERENCE 2000

Registered yet?

Early registration  
deadline March 13

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# InfoSource

## Need information on responsible and problem gambling?

InfoSource can help. CFCG(O) gathers information about a full range of gambling and prevention issues and organizes it for easy use.

### Who uses InfoSource?

Anyone interested in responsible and problem gambling topics such as:

- Counsellors and other health care professionals preparing for a community presentation
- People in the gaming industry looking for responsible gambling programs
- Journalists, students and teachers looking for background information or working on a gambling-related project

### What does InfoSource cover?

- Problem gambling information
- Awareness and prevention programs
- What is being reported in the press and journals
- Where to find experts
- Links to useful websites

InfoSource makes it easy for you to find information, research special issues and gather background material. And we deliver it to you. Just pick up the phone and call!

In the Toronto area (416) 499-9800 Ext. 41

Outside Toronto 1-888-391-1111

[infosource@cfcg.org](mailto:infosource@cfcg.org)

[www.responsiblegambling.org](http://www.responsiblegambling.org)

## From the Executive Director

When I read reports like Newslink's lead article "Catching the Wave" it becomes readily apparent that stock market trading can be a potent vehicle for gambling.

To listen to Jack talk about his feelings is not unlike listening to the words any compulsive gambler might use in describing his/her experience. Borrowing to gamble, trying to win back losses and preoccupation – all classic behaviours. In addition, the rush of the 'action' is clear.

But, from the perspective of one trying to prevent gambling problems, these behaviour patterns may be deceptive. The feelings the gambler gets may be similar across different forms of gambling. Yet, the effectiveness of prevention strategies may depend more on the differences among gamblers than their similarities. Problem or compulsive gamblers who use the stock market may behave in many ways like those who frequent casinos, bingo halls, card rooms, or other venues. But gamblers of different stripes think of themselves quite differently. Each has their own set of biases, terminology, social arrangements, surroundings, etc.

A critical key to effective social marketing, and marketing generally, is speaking with the

audience in ways that fit their experience. At some level the audience must identify with the messages. Prevention-based

advertising, posters, pamphlets, and other materials need to target specific types of gamblers and present images and words that are familiar in order to attract attention.

It may be useful, then, to present general awareness messages using general public images such as professionals, parents, workers, etc. The more

the individual is involved with gambling, the more, it may be useful to use gambling images such as racetracks, casino settings, etc. The racetrack gambler needs to see images that reflect his/her experience. The same holds true of other forms of gambling.

The stock market gambler needs to see images and words reflecting the market. This means taking care to approach the Jacks of this world in formats that fit with the stock markets. In this area, the term gambling itself may meet heavy resistance. It is undoubtedly better to talk about responsible trading rather than responsible gambling.



Jon E. Kelly, Ph.D.

## Fast facts:

According to the Ontario Lottery Corporation, Ontario lottery players closely reflect the make-up of the adult population. Here are some other interesting OLC facts and figures:

- 87% of adults have played lottery games
- 95% of players have completed high school or have a post secondary education
- the average current player spent \$7.03 in the past four weeks

## Continued from page 1

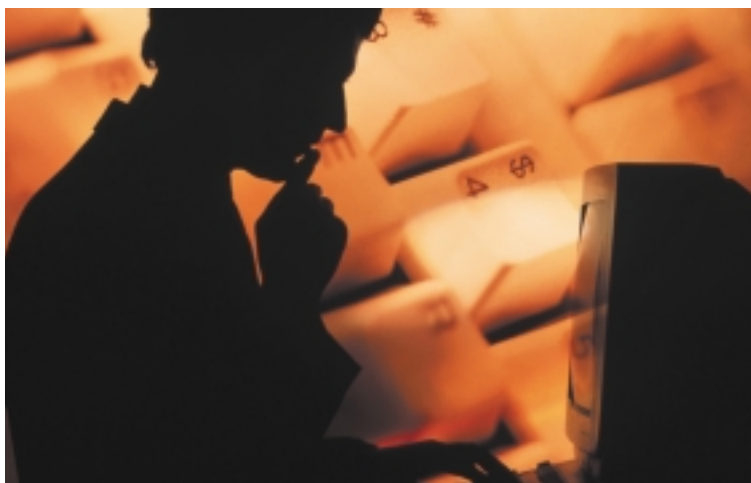
developing in his day, both in his schedule and his behaviour. His early mornings began with reading the newspapers and checking out the markets on the Internet to see how they performed overnight. He perceived the markets had a certain pattern. They would open in the morning and start to go up and then peak. In the afternoon, they would slowly ease their way down again. Jack felt it was very important to get as much information as possible before the Nasdaq opened so he could make profitable trades before heading to his classes. This hunger for more and more information started consuming his every waking moment. He began to skip his first class and then his second. Just when he thought he was in control, the tide would sweep him away again. It became insidious. The progression from casual trades to full blown gambling to addiction did not take long. In less than a month, Jack knew he was addicted to day trading. He just couldn't stop thinking about the money and how he could make back what he lost. But he also couldn't stop thinking about the excitement and how great it felt making trades. He started getting more and more information on different securities. Facts started filtering in from everywhere. He started getting very confused by all the information. He started losing sleep and neglecting his family and friends and his health. Trading became his number one priority and everything else became secondary. He would sit up nights feeling like a surfer scouring around trying to catch the best wave in a vast ocean of potential high rides. His mind never stopped rolling.

Jack knew he was gambling regardless of all the market information he was absorbing. His bank account started getting smaller and smaller. But in his mind the amount was just a figure on a monthly statement. There

was just no way that Jack could control his obsessive thoughts about making more trades. He knew he was out of control.

Peter Beck says there is no way to control the day trading industry. Swift Trade tries to reduce risk by strongly discouraging trades based on rumour and speculation. But, Beck concedes, they can't get into the minds of their traders and hope they will not become addicts.

Beck believes it's not gambling, but Jack certainly has another view. "It's gambling 100%. There's no denying it. You are betting on events of uncertain outcome. You hope and



pray that your information is correct and you come out on top, but that's not always the case."

Beck says, you must recognize when you have made a mistake and sell fast. That takes discipline and a lot of it. But Jack found that very difficult. Even though one of his stocks was performing well, he was always on the lookout to see if another stock was performing better. His mind, as always, was searching for the best wave.

Jack used a broker to make his trades. He relied on the broker to keep track of his funds and trades. He trusted him with his many wheels and deals. "But never once did the broker give me any advice; that I was getting out of control and trading too much, too fast. Despite the friendly and helpful relationship, my broker was not out for my best interest."

Jack's rude awakening came when his bank made an error. It deposited a large amount of money in his trading account and then wanted it back. Initially Jack didn't notice the error. He just figured he had made some very lucrative trades. Jack knew he was in trouble when he realized he had lost his money and also the bank's money. At the end of it all, it took Jack 10 weeks to lose fifty thousand dollars – and he still owed the bank its money.

Jack got himself some help. He says he doesn't even check on the markets anymore for fear that the big waves will lure him in again.

"It's amazing," Jack wonders aloud, "how many people don't realize how dangerous and high-risk day trading can be. Many people are trading and getting into trouble."

Much the wiser for his experience, Jack now says, "I never would have thought of myself as a gambler or at risk. Had I known the waves would get so big, I would have worn a wet suit and stayed in safer waters. I would have put on a life

jacket, stuck to a budget and not gambled away all my savings." 

## Stock Market Study

A research study on stock market gamblers is looking for participants. The study examines demographics, financial, intellectual and psychological variables. Participants will be mailed questionnaires that require two to three hours for completion. No financial compensation is available but participants can receive personal results and interpretive feedback of their tests from the author. Call (415)346-0607, email [paulrgood@aol.com](mailto:paulrgood@aol.com), or write Paul Good, Ph.D. Gamblers Recovery Program, 1738 Union Street, Suite 300, San Francisco, CA 94123

# Internet Gambling

## Countries Move in Different Directions

By Morri Behrmann

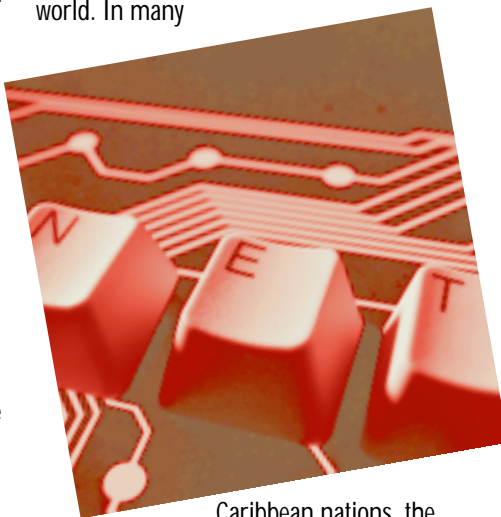
When we last reported on the development of Internet gambling, much of it was based on anecdotal evidence of its scope and growth; now there is some good data available. The River City Group (Publisher of Interactive Gaming News) and Christiansen Capital Advisors have both done studies that point to the continued growth and development of Internet gambling.

While this is not unexpected, it is interesting to note that their research shows that 47 government jurisdictions now sanction some form of Internet gambling.

Australia leads the pack, where seven of its states and territories license sites. Other countries in the South Pacific like New Zealand, the Cook Islands and Vanuatu have joined too.

More than a dozen European countries allow gambling providers to offer online services to their own residents. Apparently it's only a matter of time before the European Union allows cross-border on-line wagering. Already some European nations like autonomous parts of the U.K. (Alderney, the Isle of Man

and Gibraltar) are home to the largest sports books, taking action from all parts of the world. In many




Caribbean nations, the Internet betting business remains brisk.

Many new government-regulated challengers for supremacy and branding have appeared. Countries like Russia and former East-Bloc members are licensing operators at a blistering pace. Most notable is South Africa, which has accepted a recommendation from its gaming board to regulate Internet gambling on a national level. The suggested win tax: 30%. This is a clear challenge to Australia, which has a win tax of 50%.

However, Canada and the United States have moved in the opposite direction. Both countries have taken clear steps to outlaw and clamp down on Internet gambling.

In the U.S., there have been several prosecutions and convictions under various statutes. The Senate recently passed the Kyl Bill, known as the Internet Gambling Prohibition Act. A similar Bill was passed in the House last summer. There is no opposition to this legislation to speak of and it's only a matter of time before the Bill becomes law.

In Canada, after many months of undercover investigation, the combined forces of several Canadian and U.S. police services raided the offices of one of the world's leading internet casino software companies, sending a clear message to those who believe that Canadian law is unclear about providing Internet gambling here. In another move, the federal Finance Minister's office swiftly rejected a proposal by the Kahnawake Mohawks near Quebec to establish an "offshore" tax haven on their territory.

Is an irresistible force bearing down on an immovable object? What happens next? Stay tuned. 

## News Articles for the Asking

The Foundation has been collecting news stories since 1983. Some of them are fascinating stories about people whose lives have changed forever through gambling. Many are compelling stories of individuals and families enriched or devastated by gambling.

There are items about new research and counselling. Some gaming company and government announcements are routine and boring, others are controversial. There

are stories about crime, social impact, all forms of gambling and a host of other topics.

Over the years, these articles have been collected systematically. People sent them to the Foundation from all over the world. The pace of collection quickened when we began Newscan a year ago. It was further enhanced when we went digital in November. Our collection, storage, search and information dissemination capability is extensive.

We want to share these stories with you. In some ways we already do – Newscan subscribers receive a weekly selection of abridged news articles from around the world. We send articles by fax, e-mail and snail mail. Soon all will be available online for the asking.

For now however, if you call InfoSource (1-888-391-1111) we can provide the articles to you by fax or e-mail.



# Shifting Sands of Time

By Angela Shulman and Morri Behrmann

Sands shift back and forth – so do opinions. This is especially true with attitudes towards gambling, drug use and smoking. One hundred and twenty-five years ago, heroin was invented and widely accepted. So much so, that people purchased heroin and other hard-core drugs such as opium and morphine at the corner drug store.

At the time, narcotics were not seen as evil substances. Instead, lawmakers focused on cigarettes and gambling. Cigarettes were viewed as dangerous and selling lottery tickets was morally repugnant and illegal.

The same could be said about attitudes towards gambling, smoking and narcotics in Canada. The use of narcotics was widely accepted. Diacetylmorphine, known as heroin, was added to cough syrups and until 1903, cocaine was added to Coca-Cola. But, for the most part, gambling was illegal and frowned upon.

During the early 1900's, changes to the Criminal Code both restricted and expanded gambling opportunities. While on-track wagering at horse races and games of chance at annual fairs were allowed, dice games, shell games and punchboard were outlawed. By the mid 1920's, alcohol and

drugs, particularly heroin were seen as addictive and banned. But buying, selling and smoking cigarettes however, were legal. By the 1950's, more than half of men and one-third of women smoked cigarettes. Then attitudes towards smoking began to change again as more and more people learned of the problems associated with smoking.

Today governments spend millions of dollars warning people about the dangers of smoking while at the same time encourage them to gamble.

For the first 50 years of the 20th century, all forms of gambling were illegal in Canada except for horse racing, raffles and bingo. By 1949, Canadians could travel to Las Vegas and gamble legally.


Gambling had become accepted in Canada and was gaining in popularity. Junkets to Las Vegas and later Atlantic City became a regular get-away for many.

This greater acceptance of gambling allowed for the changes to the Criminal Code made in 1969 and 1985. The first amendment gave the government the option to run lotteries and expand charity gambling. The second amendment not only handed exclusive control of gambling to the provinces but also allowed them to provide gambling through computers, videos and slot machines. Since

1993, there has been a very large increase in gambling opportunities in Ontario and elsewhere in Canada and the US.

Today, gambling in North America is widely accepted. More people are gambling and wagering higher amounts than ever before. Records are being broken. Foxwoods Resort in Connecticut is the biggest casino in the world with more than 192,000 square feet, 3,854 slot machines 234 gaming tables and seats for 3,500 bingo players. The Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto held the record for the largest-ever house in a bingo session with 15,756 people in August 1983. The Massachusetts Lottery sold \$525 per capita in tickets in 1998 – the top lottery in the world in terms of ticket sales per person. The biggest-ever slot machine jackpot was \$34.9 million, won by a Las Vegas woman on a Megabucks machine at the Desert Inn in Las Vegas, Nevada, this past January. In total, it is estimated that last year, more than 60 billion dollars was wagered in legalized gambling facilities in Canada and more than ten times that amount in the United States.

Today, using Opiates, for the most part, is illegal. Smoking is banned more and more.


Opinions towards gambling in Canada have shifted dramatically. Will they shift again? 

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## Vote for Responsibility

A Bingo Task Force was set up by the City of Toronto last summer to make recommendations to Council on several thorny issues facing the bingo industry. The task force, chaired by Councillor Frances Nunciata, met several times, heard from experts and held five public meetings in the second half of last year.

Responsible gambling was one of the issues discussed by the task force – what could bingo hall owners do to ensure their players had access to relevant information. Morri Behrmann, the Foundation's Director of Information Services, stressed the need for accurate and useful information in all bingo halls.

In their final meeting on February 11, the task force voted unanimously to recommend that Council require and encourage bingo halls to prominently display information about Problem and Responsible Gambling and where people can get help. 

# Suicide - some Facts and Myths

By Laurie Bell

Studies suggest the rate of suicide attempts among compulsive gamblers is higher than within the general population. Suicide is a highly complex behaviour and is frequently associated with many contributing factors. It can be misleading when any one factor is considered in isolation.

Life's setbacks in combination with other strong risk factors such as mental health issues or substance abuse disorders and impulsivity, may lead to suicide. However, suicide and suicidal behaviour are not normal responses to the stresses experienced by most people. Many people experience one or more risk factors and are not suicidal.

The topic of suicide is perplexing and disturbing for most people. It is also clouded by myths and statistics that do not cross provincial and national borders. This article is not intended to provide an in-depth look at the complexities associated with suicidal behaviours, but will address some commonly held misconceptions and offer some basics in how we can help.

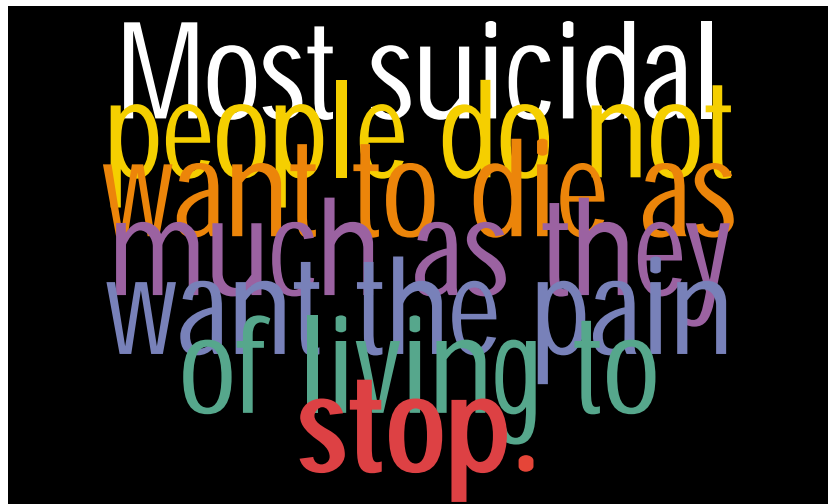
**MYTH:** The elderly are at greatest risk of completing a suicide in Ontario.

**FACT:** Across the States one's risk for completing a suicide increases with age, with the elderly male being at highest risk. In Ontario, the high-risk group is comprised of single males between the ages of thirty and forty.

**MYTH:** Suicide is increasing in Ontario.

**FACT:** Actually, Ontario is one of the few provinces, along with Manitoba and B.C., which has shown a steady decrease in suicide

rates in recent decades. Ontario remained above the national rate in the 1950's, '60s and '70s but has shown a significant reduction in the '80s and '90s to well below the overall Canadian rate. In fact in reports compiled from Ontario's Chief Coroner for Metropolitan Toronto in 1996 (the most recent year for which such reports are



available) we see the lowest suicides figures observed in more than fifteen years.

**MYTH:** In Ontario, suicide occurs more often in February and December than in other months.

**FACT:** The number of suicides remains consistent across all twelve months.

**MYTH:** If a person is determined to kill him/herself, nothing is going to stop him/her.

**FACT:** A suicidal person's ambivalence is often one of the most helpful tools in suicide prevention. Most suicidal people do not want to die as much as they want the pain of living to stop. A completed suicide is the result of an increasingly narrowed focus of options for reducing pain.

**MYTH:** Talking about suicide or asking someone if they are feeling suicidal will encourage someone to take their life.

**FACT:** Actually, gently and directly asking the person if they are feeling suicidal is the most important thing we can do to help. This provides the opportunity for the suicidal individual to unburden him/herself by sharing their feelings. Not asking the question when someone is using suicidal language leaves a person alone with his/her frightening

thoughts. Once the person has had ample opportunity to express these feelings, exploration of whether there is a plan, how specific it is, and if there are means available, can be assessed.

Carefully managing this sort of situation of course requires specific training in suicide prevention. However, being willing to empathetically and respectfully listen to a

person in crisis can certainly open the door for a continuum of help and support being accepted. ♦

Laurie Bell is the Professional Development Coordinator with CFCG(O). Before joining the Foundation she worked for eight years in the field of suicide prevention.

## Selected Resources

Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention (CASP)  
#201 - 1615 10th Ave. SW  
Calgary, Alberta T3C 0J7

### Texts

Jacobs, D., & Brown, H. (1989). Suicide - understanding and responding: Harvard Medical School Perspectives. Madison, Conn.: International Universities Press.

Quinnet, PG. (1997). Suicide - the forever decision: For those thinking about suicide and for those who know, love, or counsel them (2nd ed.) New York: Crossroad.

# Cultural Differences May Affect Counselling Relationship

A good counselling relationship may depend on how counsellors address factors that arise from cultural differences between them and their clients. Counsellors put much time and effort into ensuring that a client feels comfortable, respected and heard. Yet, even the most skilled counsellors may have experienced the letdown of a client not coming back after the first session.

Forming a good counselling relationship from the beginning is crucial, but this may be hindered by some cultural differences. These differences may lead to alienation and/or interfere with the development of trust and rapport, which in turn may account for an early termination of treatment.(1)

In a study conducted on Third World clients, S. Sue and Associates (1) found that half the clients who identified themselves as "Asian Americans, Blacks, Chicanos, and Native Americans" terminated counselling after only one contact. Compare this to the 30% rate for "Anglo" clients – a significant

difference. The investigators suggested that the inappropriateness of interpersonal interactions would account for the premature termination.

A similar investigation was conducted (2) at the Problem Gambling Service, Centre for Addictions and Mental Health, in Toronto. A random sample of 128 clients was drawn. This sample was composed of 54 clients who had identified themselves as belonging to an ethno-cultural group, and 54 clients who had identified themselves as Canadians only. It was found that 34.18% of clients from the first group had not returned after the initial evaluation interview. But only 12.96% of those who had identified themselves as Canadians did not return – again, a significant difference.

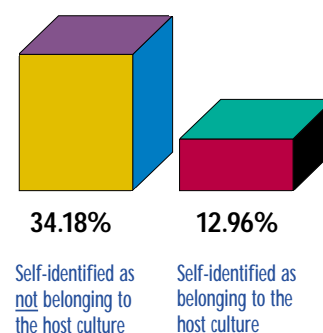
But what does this difference mean? Do we know enough about why this discrepancy exists? Do counsellors need to be more sensitive to cultural differences?

Without additional investigation, this data would not support the need for greater

cross-cultural sensitivity. However, they do raise relevant questions in regards to the services provided to culturally diverse clients. In addition, the data is significant enough to support the need for further investigation. 🎲

Sue, D.W. and Sue, D. (1977) Barriers to effective cross-cultural counselling. *Journal of Counselling Psychology*, 24, pp.420-429.  
Gannam, V.

## Percentage of clients who do not return after the initial approach



# Commission 👍 vs 👎 Commission

What do you do if you disagree with the methodology and results of a commission? Appoint your own commission. That's just what the National Council of Legislators from 14 Gaming States did in response to the \$5 million (US), two-year federal study released last June. They appointed a commission called the Public Sector Gaming Study Commission, (PSGSC).

The National Gambling Impact Study Commission (NGISC) had recommended controversial new restrictions on gambling, ranging from a ban on slot machines at racetracks and convenience stores to tougher advertising standards on state lotteries. The

NGISC had also urged communities to consider a moratorium on new gambling operations.

The PSGSC has now made its own recommendations in a draft report released in January. These range from conducting objective longitudinal studies (to more accurately determine the relationship between legalized gambling and problem gambling, crime and bankruptcy rates and family issues such as divorce,) to calling on the states and care providers to work together to develop more educational and training opportunities for treatment professionals. Others include, removing ATM's from casinos floors, and more studies on youth, seniors and

community impacts.

In contrast to the NGISC, the PSGSC found that there is no solid basis for concluding that the wider legalization of gambling has caused an increase in pathological gambling. Also, it found that pathological gambling is quite rare within the general population, does not appear to be increasing in frequency and is not associated with lotteries. It suggests that much of what has been thought to be pathological gambling may stem from other emotional problems. It therefore calls for more longitudinal studies to be done. The final report will be released in mid-March. 🎲



# Enhancing Information Services

Last November the Foundation began a process of enhancing its information services including:

- expanding access to information through a toll free number (1-888-391-1111),
- implementing a new on-line electronic library (currently being tested)
- providing direct e-mail links to care provider agencies for visitors to the CFCG(O) website
- publishing on-line editions of Newslink and Newscan, and
- hiring two highly skilled information specialists, John Sawicki and Angela Shulman.


John D. Sawicki M.L.I.S. comes to the Foundation as its first Special Librarian. He

is responsible for the CFCG(O) web site, and organizing, cataloguing, and indexing information resources for a new electronic information storage/retrieval system. This system will bring together, for the first time, a definitive collection of information relating to problem gambling.

In the past, John has done extensive redesign work on Industry Canada's business web site, Strategis, as well as creating full-scale database applications for Baxter Corporation and Tridel Corporation.

John developed a strong interest in social marketing while completing his Master's degree in Library and Information Science at the University of Western Ontario and a Master of Arts degree in Theory and Criticism. This is what brought him to the Foundation.

Angela Shulman - Information Specialist, joined the Foundation as the primary InfoSource contact person. Angela is available to help callers clarify their information needs, find materials, documents or sources and search out new information. Angela also assists in the writing and editing of CFCG's quarterly newsletter, Newslink.

In her career background, Angela most recently worked in the private sector as an Information Resource Co-ordinator. She brings to the Foundation extensive experience in locating information and materials from all around the world. Angela's educational background is in journalism where she spent several years in both radio and television as a reporter, editor, researcher and announcer. 

## "A Taste of Niagara"

It's the place to be in Spring 2000. Meet new people in the field. Discover new ideas, new research and new treatment methods. You will not want to miss the "Bridging the Gap" conference on May 1 and 2, 2000 in Niagara Falls, Ontario. People like Ron Barbaro, Chair of the Ontario Casino Corporation, Dr. Mark Griffiths and Dr. Sue Fisher (UK), Dr. Toon de Vos (The Netherlands), Dr. Gerhard Meyer (Germany) and a host of others from North America will be sharing new perspectives and ways of thinking about problem and responsible gambling issues. Make new connections. Share ideas. Don't miss this get together in Niagara Falls. For only \$195, you can enjoy a welcome reception, two breakfasts, two lunches and a "Taste of Niagara" gala dinner. Not to mention the opportunity to walk away energized! For more information: [www.responsiblegambling.org](http://www.responsiblegambling.org).



## Write for Newslink

Do you have any new ideas, projects or research you would like to share? We would love to hear from you. Newslink is distributed internationally to over 2000 care-providers, politicians, researchers and gaming industry people. It is read by thousands more on our website. You can contribute. Contact us.

CFCG gratefully thanks our sponsors:  
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(Ministry of Health and Long Time Care),  
Casino Niagara, Casino Rama and  
Casino Windsor.

## Newslink

Published four times per year by:  
The Canadian Foundation on  
Compulsive Gambling (Ontario)

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