Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling

We understand the problem. We can help.

One Step Ahead: Teen Leadership as a Prevention Model

Background on the Mass. Council on Compulsive Gambling

- Founded in 1983 by Tom Cummings.
- Private, non-profit health agency dedicated to providing leadership to reduce the social, financial, and emotional costs of problem gambling.
- Promote a continuum of prevention, intervention, and recovery support strategies.

One Step Ahead- Teen Leadership as a Prevention Model
What is Teen Leadership?

Why is Teen Leadership Important?
- Teens learn work ethic
- Achieve a feeling of importance and acceptance
- They become a role model to others and must accept the responsibilities of being looked up to by others

Who is a Leader?
- Many youth do not see themselves as leaders.
- Traditional Leaders
- Non-traditional leaders
Who is the Non-Traditional Leader?

- Haven’t taken intentional steps to be recognized as leaders
- May have informal leadership in their own group of friends.
- Often viewed by adults and peers as at-risk youth

When developing a Teen Leader/Mentor program, it is very important to look at all of the youth involved in your program as having the potential to be leaders/mentors.

How do you start a Leadership/Mentoring Program?

- It’s easy.
- Talk to the youth involved in your program.
- Informally or formally, get their input into the activities you offer, new activities they would like to see offered.
- You’ve started the process.
Essential Elements of a Successful Leadership/Mentoring Program

- Develop meaningful leadership experiences
- Involve at-risk youth in leadership roles
- Be realistic—What control do you want to give to the teen leaders
- Adult Role Models

Empower Youth

- Allow youth to take on significant responsibilities and leadership roles
- Don’t expect perfection
- Everything takes time and even though mistakes will be made, leadership learning is still occurring.

Encourage Youth

- Respect the power of pre-adolescent and adolescent experiences
- Help youth relate their experiences to their roles and responsibilities as leaders/role models
Know the Youth You Work With

- Create an opportunity that fits the person's capability
- Help them be successful
- Feel challenged

Talk to the Teens

- Help them reach outside of their comfort zone
- Help them develop high expectations for themselves
- As they realize their potential, they'll stay motivated

How Does T.A.G. Fit In?
Our Vision

- We envision a Massachusetts where all teens are empowered to make responsible gambling decisions thus reducing the negative consequences to themselves, their families, and the community.

Mission Statement

- Raising awareness about problem gambling
- Providing information and skill development that supports responsible decision making
- Providing resource information
- Empowering other teen groups to do the same

Why is Teen Leadership Important to T.A.G.?

- Need to be willing to step out of your comfort zone
- Be willing to take initiative and communicate well
- Be willing to work hard
- You need to be reliable and responsible!
Let’s Talk T.A.G.-
What does T.A.G. do?

- Inform teens about gambling through:
  - Presentations
  - Videos
  - The creation of curriculum
  - The creation of opportunities for teen awareness

Playing It Smart

Gambling –
Facts vs. Illusions
The C.A.P.S. curriculum seeks to prevent problem gambling by:

- Lowering the risk factor of a belief that skill is involved by helping participants develop a better understanding of probability and statistics
- Increasing the protective factor of school and community cohesion
- Increasing the protective factor of having an opportunity to contribute and be seen as a resource

C.A.P.S.

- Movement-oriented
- Hands-on
- Provides knowledge and skills needed to attain critical thinking skills
Program Overview

- 12-week curriculum
- Focus on mathematics curriculum areas of:
  - Statistics
  - Probability
  - Number sense
  - Ratios
  - Percentages
  - Problem solving
  - Connection to reducing problem gambling risk

The Curriculum Guide:

- Tells the user what supplies are needed
- Provides a description of the activity
- Has complete directions including the best location
- Provides discussion topics
- In most cases, provides a picture of the activity being played
- Provides a sample of all materials needed
- In many cases provides reproducible materials to be used in the activity
- Matches activities to Massachusetts Mathematics Curriculum Standards
- Includes a fact connection to the prevention of problem gambling

The Math Connection

- Each activity is accompanied by a Math Connections page.
- This page is to be given to the students following the session.
- Explains the math terms that were reinforced during the game.
Basketball Court Cover-up

Let’s Recap!
- Teen Leadership as Means of Prevention
- Integration of Non-Traditional Leaders
- Incorporating CAPS and MOLES
- How TAG worked for us and in our community
- Maximizing the Protective Factor

Thank you!
- Any further questions or comments?
Contact Information

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Connect with Us

- You can connect with the Council through: