

## **Session 1**

**Title: Overview of Gambling, Screening/Assessment & the CT Landscape**

**Date: 10/8/2024**

9am-12pm

**Presenters: Kaitlin Brown LPC, LADC, ICGC II, IGDC, BACC and Valerie Tebbetts ICGC II**

### **Description:**

The normative and pervasive nature of gambling behaviors in the United States can desensitize us to the problems that can occur when a person's view of gambling shifts from entertainment to fixation. Reassigned in the DSM 5 from an impulse control disorder to a behavioral addiction, problem gambling disorder affects 2-5% of adults and twice as many adolescents. Confounding the issues of problem identification, referral, and treatment is a lack of awareness on the part of service providers, clients, family members and the public that, for some people, gambling can become an addiction, with devastating impacts, like problematic alcohol or other drug use. As state governments turn more to legalized gambling as a source of revenue, studies indicate that vulnerable populations: lower socio-economic status, disenfranchised, and people in recovery from mental health and substance use disorders, are disproportionately impacted in harmful ways. This training will address the social and environmental factors which influence gambling; gender and race considerations; and how our biology creates conditions conducive to the pursuit of risk and reward. This training will also help to raise awareness about gambling for providers and encourage staff to include gambling in the conversation when discussing mental health and substance use disorders.

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Describe the progression of gambling from recreational to disordered gambling.
2. Discuss two (2) features in gaming that resemble gambling.
3. Identify three (3) resources in my community that are gambling informed.

Presenter Bios:

### **Valerie Tebbetts, RSS, ICGC II Bio:**

Valerie Tebbetts has been in recovery from disordered gambling for over 10 years. She has been a trainer in the State of Connecticut with the staff of Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) Problem Gambling Services and has presented at the National Council on Problem Gambling's (NCPG) convention on "Mindfulness Based Recovery"

and “Financial Issues and Problem Gambling”. She is an Internationally Certified Gambling Counselor and holds certifications as a CCAR Recovery Coach and a DMHAS Recovery Support Specialist. Valerie previously worked as a Peer Counselor for the Bettor Choice treatment program and is currently the Helpline Coordinator for the Connecticut Council on Problem Gambling. She also works as a Recovery Coach in a medication assisted treatment program for opioid dependent individuals at UCFS Healthcare in Norwich, CT.

**Kaitlin Brown LPC, LADC, ICGC II, IGDC, BACC Bio:**

Kaitlin has been in the field of gambling related harm and Co-occurring disorders for over 15 years. She brings enthusiasm and commitment to her work of helping individuals affected by Gambling Disorder and increasing community awareness. As a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), Licensed Drug and Alcohol Counselor (LADC), Internationally Certified Gambling Counselor (ICGC II), Internationally Certified in Gaming Disorder (IGDC), and Board Approved Clinical Consultant (BACC) with the International Gambling Counselor Certification Board (IGCCB), Kaitlin possesses a wealth of knowledge in providing counseling and supervision. Her role as the Senior Director of Programs and Services for the Connecticut Council on Problem Gambling (CCPG) showcases her leadership and organizational skills in overseeing statewide helpline services, developing prevention programs and educational opportunities. Additionally, her involvement as an Adjunct Professor at Fairfield University, underscores her dedication to educating future generations of counselors and professionals in the field. Kaitlin's contributions extend beyond direct counseling services as she actively shares her knowledge and experiences through presentations at the state, regional, and national level. Her involvement on the Executive Team for the National Council on Problem Gambling's Prevention Committee and positions held as Co-chair of both the NCPG's Prevention and Helpline Committees, further exemplify her commitment to advancing problem gambling efforts on a broader scale.

Her role as the Senior Director of Programs and Services for the Connecticut Council on Problem Gambling (CCPG) showcases her leadership and organizational skills in overseeing statewide helpline services, developing prevention programs and educational opportunities. Additionally, her involvement as an Adjunct Professor at Fairfield University, underscores her dedication to educating future generations of counselors and professionals in the field. Kaitlin's contributions extend beyond direct counseling services as she actively shares her knowledge and experiences through presentations at the state, regional, and national level. Her involvement on the Executive Team for the National Council on Problem Gambling's Prevention Committee and positions held as Co-chair of both the NCPG's Prevention and Helpline Committees, further exemplify her commitment to advancing problem gambling efforts on a broader scale.

Recognition of Kaitlin's efforts, such as receiving the NCPG's Annual Jim Wuelfing Prevention Award and the Coalition Sector All Star Award with the Connecticut Association of Prevention

Professionals, speaks to the impact she has made on the field and the positive outcomes she's achieved through her innovative initiatives. Kaitlin is a mother to two girls, making her passion for prevention and education even stronger to reduce risks for young people.