

Minnesota Department of **Human Services**
TREATMENT WORKS

Tips for Talking to a Friend About Problem Gambling

Tell them you're concerned. Express to them that their friendship is of value to you and that you want them to get help for their problem gambling.

Example: _____, I need to talk to you about something serious. I've noticed recently that you haven't been your usual self, and I'm concerned. I treasure our friendship, and I don't want anything to damage our relationship. I want to know if we can talk about what might be going on?

Be specific about your concerns. Tell them how their gambling interferes with their career, social life and relationship with you. Let them know how it is negatively affecting your friendship.

Example: I'm concerned about the extent to which gambling has become a part of your life and how it's affecting our relationship. Your relationship is very important to me.

Don't judge, instead listen. If you want them to hear you out, you need to give them the same courtesy. Allow them to speak their mind, and let them know you heard what they have to say.

Example: _____, I hear what you have to say and want to help you find a solution before the situation becomes worse.

Say what you want them to do. The point of talking to them in the first place is so they know they need help. Be upfront and honest. Don't accuse, but state what you want them to do. Ask them to seek counseling or enroll in a gambling recovery group.

Example: I'd like to help you find a way to fix this. I know of a 24-hour, confidential hotline you could call (800-333-HOPE) and a few gambling recovery programs. I'd like you to call one of these services.

Offer to help; explain why you care. Let them know that you are approaching them because you care and offer to be an aid in their recovery. From making the phone call for help to attending meetings with them, there are a variety of ways to help them – from easy to involved.

Example: I want you to know that I am here to help in any way I can. I wouldn't have come to you if I didn't value our friendship so much. If you need support, you have someone you can count on.

Keep the door open for future talks. There is a difference between being aggressive and being firm. You can be direct without alienating your friend. If you engage them in a hostile way, they will most likely shut down and ignore your attempts to help. Handle the subject with care so they feel like you are a resource in their recovery.

Example: _____, you are a good person. You're human. Let's deal with this together. Take it one step at a time.