

Lifeline offers support, warns of gambling risks at Cup time

As the spring racing carnival gathers pace ahead of this year's Melbourne Cup, a Lifeline Gambling Help counsellor has warned of inherent dangers for problem gamblers—and even for occasional punters.

“High profile events like the Melbourne Cup can expose people to the risk of either starting—or worsening—a problem gambling habit,” said Jeanette Svehla, from Lifeline's Harbour to Hawkesbury centre at Gordon.

“As we get closer to cup day, with all the pre-cup events and commentary, it's hard to avoid the hype and, unfortunately, increased sports betting advertising,” Ms Svehla said.

This week, Lifeline is launching another of its six-week Gambling Help support groups, held on Wednesday nights from 7 pm to 9 pm, starting on 26 October.

An estimated 400 suicides a year are attributed to problem gambling so it's an issue that closely aligns with Lifeline's purpose to support communities to be resilient and suicide safe.

Lifeline also offers face-to-face Gambling Help counselling and financial counselling for habitual gamblers and concerned family members.

“Having a flutter can be innocent enough, but we're encouraging friends and family to use the carnival as an opportunity to start a conversation with someone who might be at risk of problem gambling,” said Jeanette Svehla.

Initiating a potentially difficult discussion has become easier with Gambling Help's new, personalised Talkward program that provides free e-cards—at talkward.com.au—to make breaking the ice less awkward.

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Lifeline Telephone Crisis Support 13 11 14



Gambling Help NSW

If you or somebody you know needs free and confidential gambling help in the Harbour to Hawkesbury area, please contact Lifeline on 9498 8805, or email appointments@lifelineh2h.org.au. You can also call the Gambling Help Line on 1800 858 858, or visit gamblinghelp.nsw.gov.au