

Educational Work on Problem Gambling

A new programme, to encourage education about problem gambling in Britain's schools and youth clubs, will develop and promote new resources and training for teachers and youth workers.

The Responsibility in Gambling Trust, or RIGT, is an independent charitable body, funded by the UK gambling industry, which commissions treatment, education and research into problem gambling. The aim of the Trust is to make it less likely that people will become problem gamblers and more likely that those who do will be able to seek and to secure effective help.

Background

One of the three primary aims of RIGT (www.rigt.org.uk) is to commission education about the possible risk of problem gambling delivered to young people. After extensive review of what works in education for risky-behaviours, and extensive consultation with leading experts and the Department for Education and Skills, RIGT put a three part contract out to tender. The approach involves developing and promoting resources for use by teachers and youth workers with young people. After an extensive review process, a decision was made at the end of January 2006 to award all three parts of the contract to a single consortia provider. This contract will run for three years in the first instance.

TACADE & IGRU

RIGT is pleased to announce it has appointed TACADE, working in partnership with the Nottingham Trent University International Gaming Research Unit (IGRU), to be the provider of new work to encourage education about problem gambling in Britain's schools and youth clubs under contract to RIGT.

Speaking of the new contract, the RIGT Chairman, Sir David Durie, said:

"The Trust sees the education of young people about problem gambling as one of the key parts of its work. Up till now this has been an area the Trust has focused on far less, as it developed increasing treatment availability for problem gamblers. We are very pleased that with this contract, RIGT is now working with the leading body in education of this type, and is confident that this will lead to much more education about this serious social problem. In turn we hope this will reduce numbers of problem gamblers in the future."

This partnership brings together TACADE - www.tacade.com, the leading national provider of resources and training for health and risk behaviours in school and youth work settings, and IGRU, the UK's leading organisation for young people's gambling - www.gamingresearch.co.uk. Between them the two organisations are expert in education of teachers and youth workers, and in communication and research about problem gambling amongst young people. The partnership are commissioned to:

- Write new materials and resources for use in school and youth work settings to raise awareness of problem gambling and to enable young people to develop skills, knowledge and attitudes to resist problem gambling
- Promote these resources very actively to teachers and youth workers using every possible media
- Train teachers and youth workers to undertake education about problem gambling

In turn teachers and youth workers will carry out education about gambling as part of their work in Personal, Social and Health Education, Citizenship, and other areas of the school curricula and in informal youth work settings.

Outcomes

- Teachers and youth workers will be trained, motivated and supplied with brand new, professionally produced resources most likely to lead to positive behavioural change amongst young people
- Much greater volume of educational work in schools and youth work settings
- Greater awareness amongst young people of the risks of problem gambling

Martin Buczkiewicz

Martin Buczkiewicz, Chief Executive of TACADE, said:

"Tacade is delighted to be given the opportunity to work with RIGT to develop these much needed educational materials and disseminate them through seminars, training sessions and professional networks throughout the United Kingdom. Although for the majority of young people gambling does not present any major problems, Tacade and the IGRU recognise that materials are needed to prevent problem

gambling and that secondary schools and the youth service are ideally placed to enable this process to be effective".

Mark Griffiths

Professor Mark Griffiths (Director of IGRU) said:

"Strong user engagement is a key element of this project. Tacade and the IGRU will incorporate user perspectives by actively involving stakeholders throughout the project process including representatives from business, the voluntary sector, government, international policy makers, and practitioners. Wide ranging consultations will take place with young people and professionals (teachers/learning mentors/youth workers), plus a variety of stakeholder organisations.

In order that professionals working with the resources are fully informed about gambling issues, background papers will be included in both resources highlighting key facts such as incidence and extent of young people's gambling, issues around young people and gambling, support networks and information for parents/carers.

Feedback from the groups above via a variety of media (telephone and e-mail discussions, focus group discussions, questionnaires, and face to face meetings) will help to inform the structure and content of the resource including issues such as accessibility and appropriate methodologies. This will inform the development of the draft resources for trialling as appropriate in secondary schools, Pupil Referral Units (PRUs), schools for Emotional and Behavioural Disturbed (EBD) young people and other youth settings. The aims of the resources will be to enable young people to:

- Better manage their gambling
- Make informed appropriate and healthy choices about gambling by providing them with opportunities to develop the knowledge and understanding about the impact of gambling, the personal and social skills to make informed choices and the opportunity to explore attitudes and values relating to gambling
- Avoid the pitfalls of problem gambling, possibly through behaviour change
- Help others who may have problems with gambling