



# Gambling



Centre for Addiction and Mental Health  
Centre de toxicomanie et de santé mentale



Citizenship and  
Immigration Canada

Citoyenneté et  
Immigration Canada

# Mental illness and addictions are 24-hour-a-day problems.

*Now there's 24-hour-a-day help.*

## HOURS OF OPERATION

### *Visit us at:*

Suite 3B,  
219 Dufferin Street,  
Toronto

### *Walk-in:*

9 a.m. – 5 p.m.  
Monday – Friday

### *Support Line:*

*(Available in English only.)*

3 p.m. – 9 p.m.  
Monday – Friday

### *Information Line:*

Staff-assisted calls:

9 a.m. – 9 p.m.  
Monday – Friday

Recorded messages:

24 hours a day,  
7 days a week

**Ontario Toll-free  
Information and  
Support Line:**

1 800 463 6273

or

**in Toronto,  
416 595 6111**

### *Web site:*

[www.camh.net/McLaughlin](http://www.camh.net/McLaughlin)



*R. Samuel  
McLaughlin  
Addiction and  
Mental Health  
Information  
Centre*

If you need someone to talk to about mental health or addiction problems, or just have a question, we can help.

Simply pick up the phone, your mouse or drop by our location in Toronto.

Real people with reliable answers. Totally confidential.

Sometimes knowing *who* to ask for help is hard.

Now finding *where* to ask isn't.



**The R. Samuel McLaughlin Addiction and Mental Health  
Information Centre provides:**

*Up-to-date information on mental health and addiction problems, trends, facts, programs, treatments, and prevention strategies through a toll-free Information and Support Line, a Web site, recorded messages and storefront.*

*Confidential and anonymous telephone support.*

*Our recorded messages span a wide range of topics, including:*

- *facts on mental health, alcohol and drugs*
- *information guides*
- *help for families.*

*Information about prevention, support and treatment resources in Ontario.*



There is help. There is hope.

Information is available in English and French.  
Some services are available in a variety of other languages.



Dear Readers,

The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health is proud to publish this series of mental health and addiction stories in photographs. It is our hope that the stories - which describe drinking, gambling, depression, drugs, and post-traumatic stress - will dispel common misconceptions about these illnesses, infuse hope that help is available and also stimulate action to secure such support.

Throughout the duration of this project, we collaborated with diverse community organizations to better understand the needs of each group. We hope that each language version provides helpful and accurate addiction and mental health information to communities that may not have had full access to such materials.

We would like to thank the many dedicated individuals, and community partners, who have given their time to assist us with the best approaches in disseminating this material for their respective communities. We also thank the Ontario Region Settlement Branch of Citizenship and Immigration Canada, which generously funded this initiative.

My colleagues and I hope that these resources help you to meet your information needs in an effective and informative manner. We expect, however, that there is room for improvement. Please do not hesitate to suggest ways of improving these materials, or strengthening access to such information, if you feel that your community might be better served. Many thanks for your kind consideration.

Akwatu Khenti  
Director, International Health  
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health  
Telephone: 416 535-8501, Extension 6684  
E-mail: Akwatu\_Khenti@camh.net

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Colleen Tessier, Problem Gambling Project  
Norman Giesbrecht, Social, Prevention and Health Policy  
Research Department  
Norma Hannant, Project Coordinator - Office of International  
Health  
Nancy Valencia - Office of International Health  
Marianne Kobus-Matthews, Policy, Education & Health  
Promotion  
Dr. Pablo Diaz, Schizophrenia Program  
Claudia Tindell, Mood Disorders Clinic  
Cheryl Rolin Gilman, Women's Program

Vivian Del Valle, Addiction Treatment Program  
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Services (Toronto Western Hospital)  
Dr. Jose Silveira, Portuguese Mental Health and Addiction  
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## DESIGN, PHOTOGRAPHY, SCRIPTS, PRODUCTION

### **BITCASTERS**

Peter Gaull  
Alastair Smith  
Jonathan Sullivan  
Stephen Headley  
Danielle Carney  
Aurélië Resch  
Kirsten Sibert

## DEVELOPMENT

The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) managed the OASIS contract. The project manager was Antoine Dérose, Project Consultant for Central East Region, and Saroj Bains was the photo-novellas' Project Co-ordinator/Consultant. For the reprint and new translations, the project manager was Akwatu Khenti, Director of International Health, and Norma Hannant was the photo-novellas' Project Co-ordinator/Consultant.

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## CENTRE FOR ADDICTION AND MENTAL HEALTH PROJECT TEAM

Evelyne Barthès McDonald(CAMH)  
Norman Liu (CAMH)  
Francine Morissette (Community Representative)  
Annie Hart (CAMH)  
Christine Harris (CAMH)

## CAST

Binh – Ken Woon-A-Tai  
Bus Driver – Peter Cunningham  
Alenka – Mary Beth Wiederhold  
Binh's Father – Richard Tse  
Binh's Mother – Diandra Lee

END OF SCHOOL, BOARDING THE SCHOOL BUS



HEY, WHAT'S  
HAPPENED TO  
MR. NGUYEN?

I DON'T KNOW.  
GO TAKE YOUR  
SEAT AND WE CAN  
GET MOVIN'.

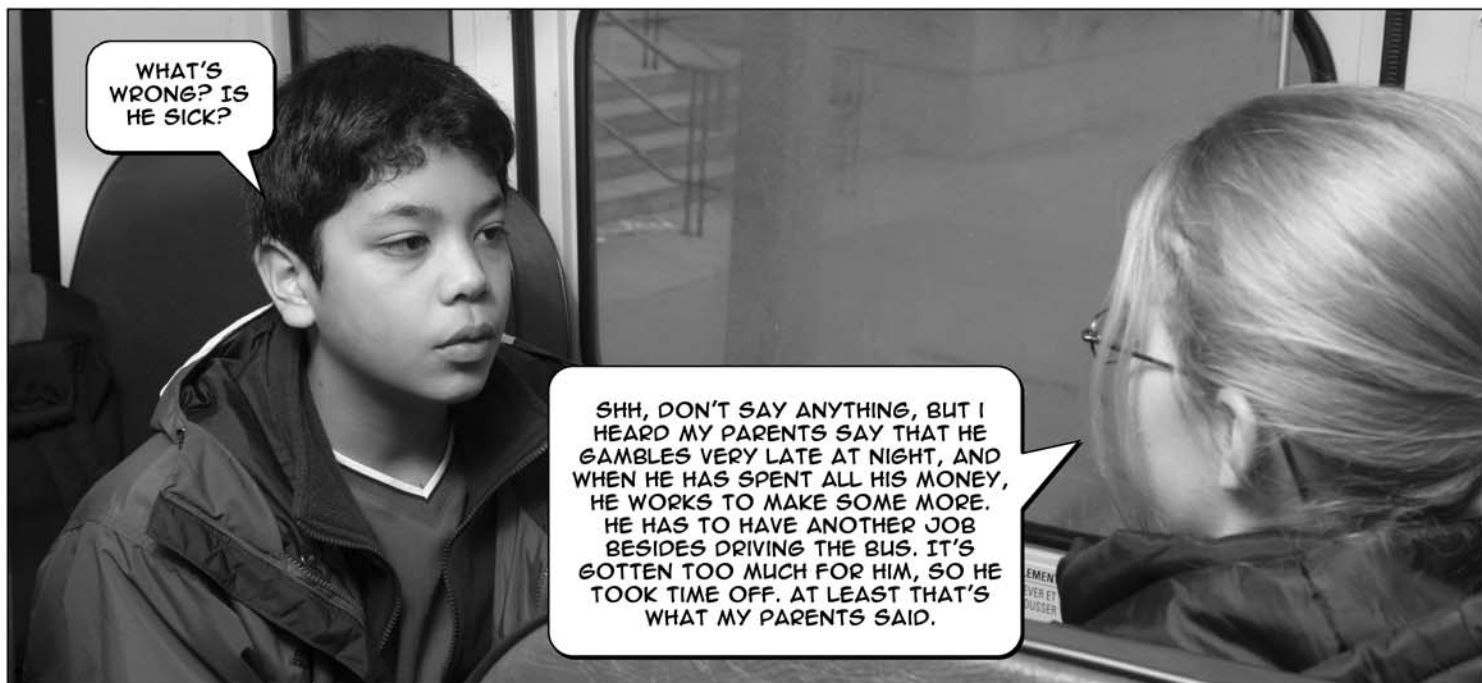


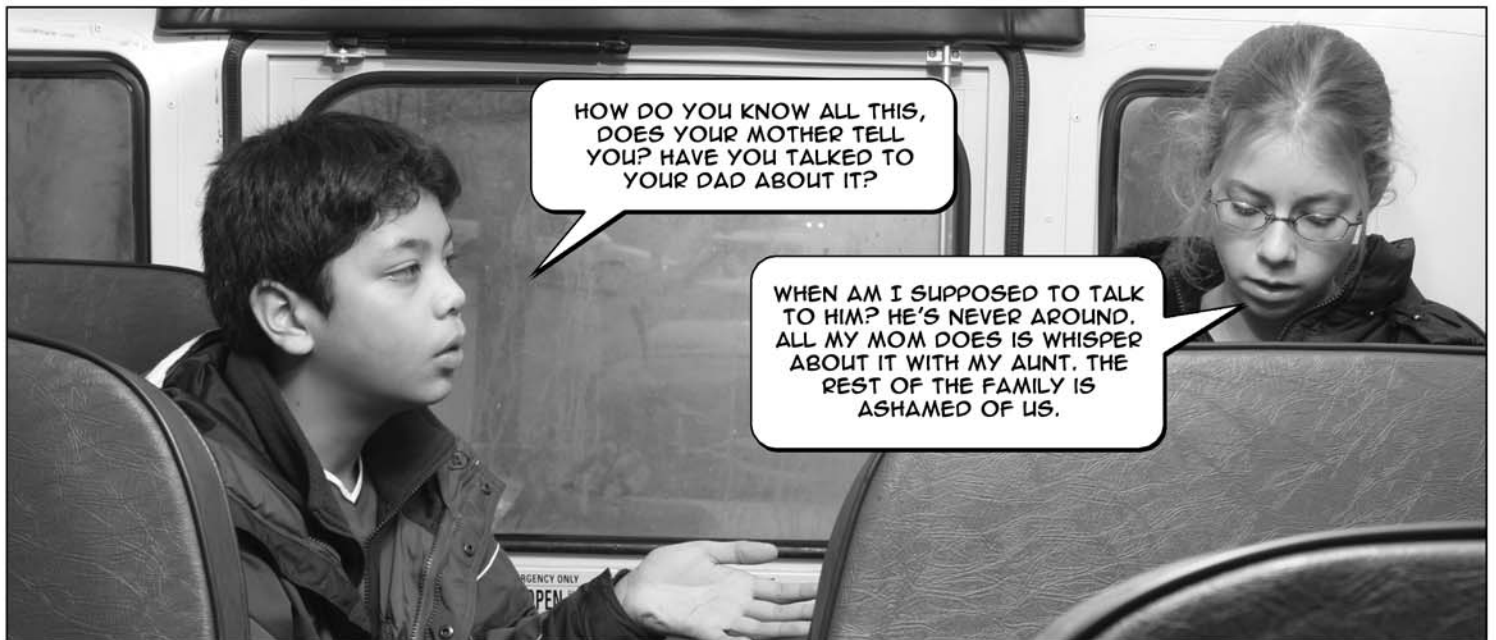
SO WHAT'S WITH THE NEW DRIVER?  
WHERE'S MR. NGUYEN?

I HEARD FROM  
MY PARENTS  
THAT MR. NGUYEN  
IS RESTING.

↑ EN CAS D'URGENCE SEULEMENT  
POUR OUVRIR LEVER ET  
POUSSER







BINH AND ALENKA LEAVE THE BUS AND  
HEAD TOWARD THE COMMUNITY HELP  
CENTRE.



ALL KINDS OF  
PEOPLE VISIT  
THE CENTRE.

YEAH, YOU'RE  
RIGHT.



COME ON,  
I'LL WALK  
YOU HOME.

IF MY PARENTS  
FIND OUT WE'VE  
BEEN HERE...  
PROMISE ME YOU  
WON'T TELL  
ANYONE.

I SWEAR.





BINH IS HAVING DINNER WITH HIS PARENTS LATER THAT EVENING.



WE HAD A  
NEW BUS  
DRIVER  
TODAY.



OH? WHAT  
HAPPENED TO  
MR. NGUYEN?

SOMEONE TOLD  
ME HE'S RESTING  
BECAUSE HE  
GAMBLES AND  
DOES EXTRA WORK  
BESIDES DRIVING  
THE SCHOOL BUS  
TO EARN MORE  
MONEY.



ARE YOU  
SERIOUS?

IT'S ALENKA WHO TOLD ME THAT. HER  
FATHER AND MR. NGUYEN GO TO A PLACE  
TO PLAY CARDS. HER DAD CAN'T STOP.  
THEY LOSE MORE THAN THEY WIN AND  
GET SECOND JOBS TO HAVE THE MONEY  
TO SPEND.





IT'S TRUE, BINH. THERE ARE SOME PEOPLE WHO RUIN THEIR LIVES LIKE THAT. IT OFTEN HAPPENS TO PEOPLE WHO ARE IN NEW SITUATIONS IN LIFE. I KNOW ALENKA'S DAD JUST LOST HIS JOB WHEN THE AUTO PLANT CLOSED DOWN.

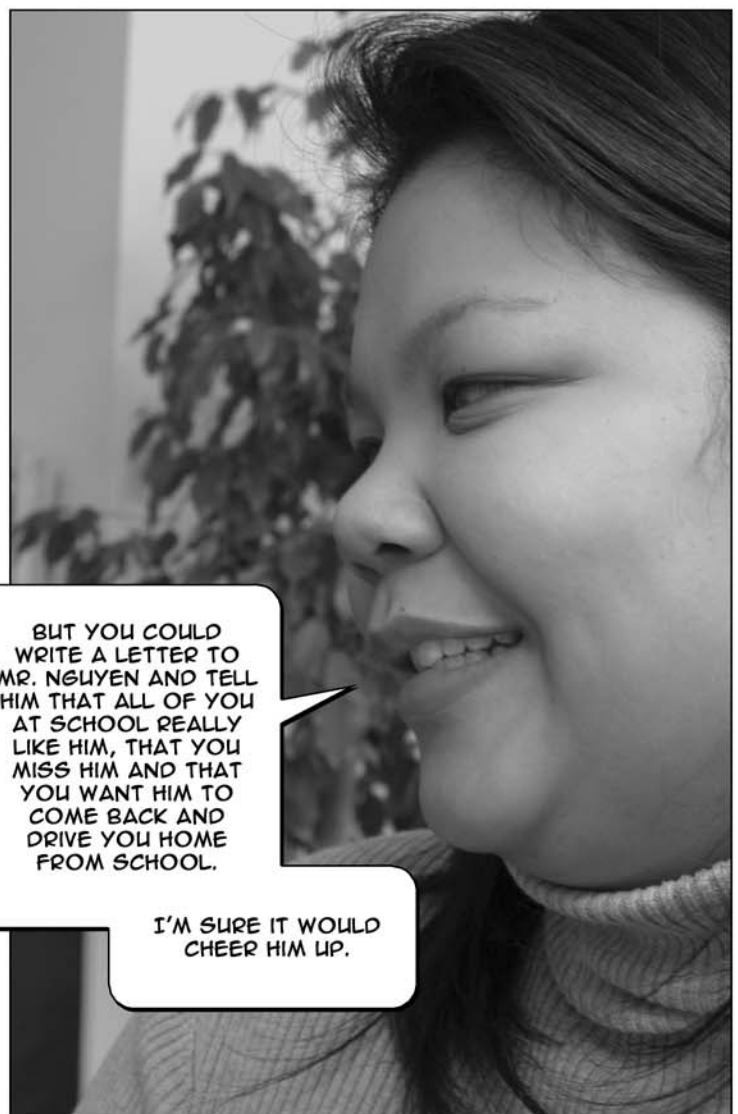
IT'S DIFFICULT FOR EVERYONE NOWADAYS. LOTS OF PEOPLE HAVE DIFFERENT WORRIES, AND GAMBLING, TO SOME, LOOKS LIKE A WAY TO MAKE EASY MONEY. BUT ONE CANNOT RELY ON LUCK TO SORT OUT ONE'S LIFE.



IT NEVER LEADS TO ANY GOOD. ARE YOU OKAY BINH?



I'M SAD FOR ALENKA. IT'S NO FUN FOR HER AT HOME. I'M ALSO WORRIED ABOUT MR. NGUYEN. I REALLY LIKE HIM. I WANT HIM TO DRIVE THE SCHOOL BUS AGAIN. I DON'T WANT HIM TO HAVE ANY PROBLEMS. I DON'T WANT ANYONE TO HAVE PROBLEMS.



BUT YOU COULD WRITE A LETTER TO MR. NGUYEN AND TELL HIM THAT ALL OF YOU AT SCHOOL REALLY LIKE HIM, THAT YOU MISS HIM AND THAT YOU WANT HIM TO COME BACK AND DRIVE YOU HOME FROM SCHOOL.

I'M SURE IT WOULD CHEER HIM UP.

A FEW WEEKS LATER AT THE  
BUS STOP TO SCHOOL

HEY  
ALENKA.

HEY  
BINH.

DID YOU BRING  
WHAT I ASKED  
YOU TO?

YES, I BROUGHT ALL  
THE PAMPHLETS MY  
MOTHER WAS KEEPING  
FOR MY FATHER.  
THERE ARE  
ADDRESSES OF HELP  
CENTRES AND  
THERAPY GROUPS,  
AND TELEPHONE  
NUMBERS.

MY MOM SAYS MY  
DAD IS GOING TO  
SPEND SOME TIME  
WITH HIS FAMILY TO  
GET BACK ON HIS  
FEET.

DO YOU  
CARE THAT  
HE'S MOVING  
OUT?

IT'S OKAY. MY MOM  
SEEMS MORE  
RELAXED AND NOT  
STRESSED. AND I'M  
TALKING MORE TO MY  
DAD THAN WHEN HE  
LIVED WITH US. HE  
CALLS ME EVERY  
COUPLE OF DAYS.

A FEW WEEKS LATER AT THE BUS STOP

HOW'S HE DOING?

HE'S GETTING BETTER. THE MOOD AT HOME IS BETTER. MOM'S NOT SO WORRIED AND I FEEL BETTER.

THAT'S GOOD NEWS. I HOPE THE CENTRE HELPS MR. NGUYEN AS WELL. I'VE WRITTEN TO TELL HIM THAT WE ALL LIKE HIM AND WE REALLY MISS HIM.

HE WROTE ME A THANK YOU LETTER.

I FEEL SO MUCH BETTER ABOUT MR. NGUYEN. I'M NOT AFRAID OF TALKING ABOUT STUFF ANY MORE.

YEAH! MAYBE IF MORE PEOPLE TALKED TOGETHER, THINGS WOULD BE BETTER...



## **WHAT IS GAMBLING?**

A person is gambling whenever he or she takes the chance of losing money or belongings, and when winning or losing is decided mostly by chance.

Gambling in Canada has grown at an unprecedented rate over the last decade and is an increasingly popular recreational activity. Gambling is now a multi-billion dollar industry in Canada, and its growth is likely to continue. While some may consider gambling to be associated only with casinos and racetracks, there are countless activities that are considered gambling.

A 2005 study found that 63% of Ontario adults said they had gambled at least once in the past year. People gamble for all kinds of reasons. Some people gamble knowing that the money goes to support charity, others hope to win a spectacular prize in a raffle or a million dollar lottery. They know their chances of winning are slim, but taking part is fun.

## **WHAT IS PROBLEM GAMBLING?**

Not all people who gamble excessively are alike, nor are the problems they face. People with gambling problems are found in all age groups, income groups, cultures and jobs. Some people develop gambling problems suddenly, others over many years.

There are many reasons why a gambling problem may develop. For example, some people develop problems when they try to win back money they have lost, or because they like to be “in the action.” Others have many life stresses that make gambling a welcome relief. The 2005 study found that about 332,000 (3.4%) people in Ontario had experienced problems as a result of their gambling. When you add family members and others who are affected by someone they know who is gambling, more than one million people in Ontario are negatively impacted.

Gambling is a problem when it:

- gets in the way of work, school or other activities
- harms your mental or physical health
- damages you financially
- damages your reputation
- causes problems with your family or friends.

## **WARNING SIGNS OF PROBLEM GAMBLING**

These questions may help you decide if compulsive gambling is a problem for you or someone you know. Most compulsive gamblers will answer “yes” to seven or more of these questions.

1. Do you lose time from work or school due to gambling?
2. Is gambling making your home life unhappy?
3. Is gambling affecting your reputation?
4. Have you ever felt remorse after gambling?
5. Do you ever gamble to get money to pay debts or solve other financial problems?
6. Does gambling make you less hard-working?
7. After losing, do you feel you must return soon and win back your losses?
8. After a win, do you have a strong urge to return and win more?
9. Do you often gamble until your last dollar is gone?
10. Do you ever borrow to finance your gambling?
11. Have you ever sold anything you own to finance gambling?
12. Do you try not to use your “gambling money” to pay for other things?
13. Does gambling make you careless of the welfare of your family?
14. Do you ever gamble longer than you had planned?
15. Do you ever gamble to escape worry or trouble?

16. Have you ever thought about or done something illegal to finance gambling?
17. Does gambling cause you to have trouble sleeping?
18. Do arguments, disappointments or frustrations make you feel like gambling?
19. Do you have an urge to celebrate any good fortune by a few hours of gambling?
20. Have you ever thought about killing yourself as a result of gambling?

There are many risk factors for problem gambling. Risk factors are things that make a person more likely to develop gambling problems. You are more at risk if:

- you had a “big win” early in your gambling history
- you have money problems
- you have had a recent loss or change, such as relationship problems, divorce, job loss, retirement or the death of a loved one
- you are gambling to cope with a health concern and/or physical pain
- you often feel lonely
- you have few interests and hobbies, or you feel your life lacks direction
- you often feel bored, take risks or act without thinking
- you use gambling, or alcohol or other drugs, to cope with bad feelings or events
- you often feel depressed or anxious
- you have been abused or traumatized
- you have (had) problems with alcohol or other drugs, gambling or overspending
- someone in your family has had problems with alcohol or other drugs, gambling or overspending
- you think you have a system or way of gambling that increases your odds of winning.

The more items in this list that are true for you, the more care you need to take in your gambling.

## WHERE TO GET HELP

Here are some places you can contact if you or someone you know needs help for problem gambling:

Ontario Problem Gambling Helpline

Interpretation is available in 140 languages. Service is available 24 a day.

Toll-free: 1 888 230-3505

Website: [www.opgh.on.ca/](http://www.opgh.on.ca/)

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, Problem Gambling Services

Toronto: 416 599-1322

Toll-free: 1 888 647-4414

Gamblers Anonymous

Website: [www.gamblersanonymous.org](http://www.gamblersanonymous.org)

Gam-Anon

Website: [www.gam-anon.org](http://www.gam-anon.org)

Ontario Association of Credit Counselling Services

Toll-free: 1 888 7-IN DEBT (1 888 746-3328)

Website: [www.oaccs.com/main.html](http://www.oaccs.com/main.html)

Niagara Multilingual Prevention/Education Problem Gambling Program

Website: [www.gamb-ling.com](http://www.gamb-ling.com)

Responsible Gambling Council of Ontario

Website: [www.responsiblegambling.org](http://www.responsiblegambling.org)

For information on addiction and mental health issues or other resources, please contact CAMH's  
R. Samuel McLaughlin Addiction and Mental Health Information Centre:

Ontario toll-free: 1 800 463-6273 • Toronto: 416 595-6111

To make a donation, please contact:  
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health Foundation  
Tel.: 416 979-6909 • E-mail: [foundation@camh.net](mailto:foundation@camh.net)

If you have questions, compliments or concerns about services at CAMH, please call our Client  
Relations Co-ordinator at:  
Tel.: 416 535-8501 ext. 2028.

Website: [www.camh.net](http://www.camh.net)



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