

DATE OF ISSUE: 06/01/2006

MEDIA RELEASE

**NATIONAL COUNCIL ON PROBLEM GAMBLING ROLLS OUT
2006 PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAMME WITH TWO NEW INITIATIVES
AND APPLAUDS COMMUNITY INITIATIVES**

*Info-Educational TV Series
Funding for Community Education
Community Initiated Gambling Hotline*

The National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) today announced two new public education initiatives for 2006, as part of its continuing effort to raise awareness on problem gambling and the help services available. It also acknowledged good community support in tackling problem gambling.

It is unveiling the launch of a new info-educational TV series, starting tomorrow on 7 January 2006. In addition, it is setting aside up to \$150,000 to fund voluntary and non-profit groups that come forward with public education initiatives in the community.

Titled "Bet Your Life" or <生命赌注> in Chinese, the 5-parter info-educational series will first be screened on MediaCorp TV8 on Saturday nights (9.30 – 10.00pm), from 7 January to 11 February. It will then be followed by an English screening on MediaCorp TV5 on Tuesday nights (7.30 – 8.00pm), from 14 February to 7 March. The series aims to educate the public about the harms of problem gambling and the help services available for those in need. Please see synopsis at [Annex 1](#).

NCPG is also inviting Voluntary Welfare Organisations (VWOs), Not-For-Profit Organisations and other eligible self-help groups to submit their proposals for community-based public education initiatives. These could include talks, plays and exhibitions to raise awareness of problem gambling and help services for problem gamblers. Please see [Annex 2](#) for more information on the fund. As this is the first invitation by NCPG, the Council has set a closing date for application on 28 February 2006. The Council will open up other rounds of invitation as needed in 2006.

Said Mrs Mildred Tan, chairman of the NCPG Public Education Sub-Committee: "The Council is committed on all fronts to raise public awareness on problem gambling issues. Members of the public can look forward to a sustained programme throughout the year - whether via TV, radio or ground activities. We certainly hope that through these efforts, Singaporeans will be more mindful of the consequences of gambling addiction. We also hope that more Singaporeans will know where to seek help if required."



Mrs Tan also commended the support shown by the community sector: “The Council is very pleased with the initiative and support of the community sector in working with the Council to tackle problem gambling. In fact, next week, on 14 Jan 06, a new hotline, 1800-X-Gamble (or 1800-9-426253) will be launched. The hotline will be operated by Thye Hua Kwan Moral Society. It is indeed a most timely initiative to help individuals and families with gambling problems.” See Annex 3 for more information on the hotline.

In the last three months, the NCPG has published a series of informative articles through the Lianhe Wanbao and rolled out its website which contains a wealth of information on problem or addictive gambling. For more information on NCPG, please visit www.ncpg.org.sg.

Issued by:

National Council on Problem Gambling

ANNEX 1:

SYNOPSIS OF BET YOUR LIFE <生命赌注>

This half-hour Info-Educational TV series consists of 5 episodes which feature case studies with interviews and re-enactments. Experts from various organisations such as Institute of Mental Health and One Hope Centre have been invited to express their views.

- Episode 1 highlights three case studies - profiling a 16-year old youth addicted to 4D/TOTO, an addict of soccer betting and a gaming machine addict.
- Episode 2 focuses on the effects and impact a gambler can have on his family - broken homes, family violence, insecure children. Several gamblers will share their stories.
- Episode 3 is on 'professional' gamblers
- Episode 4 has some celebrities explain their problems with gambling
- Episode 5 will recap the key messages of the series

ANNEX 2:

INITIATIVES TO RAISE AWARENESS ON PROBLEM GAMBLING AND PROBLEM GAMBLING HELP SERVICES

Objective

NCPG aims to raise community awareness of problem gambling behaviour as well as help services available to persons with gambling problems by funding education, preventive and developmental programmes.

Scope

Community organisations are encouraged to come up with proposals for community education initiatives, preventive and developmental programmes on problem gambling. Coverage of initiatives include:

1. Public education initiatives on problem gambling targeted at general public
2. Public education initiatives that help raise awareness among specific target groups of potential problems and warning signs related to excessive gambling, and help services available
3. Preventive and developmental programmes that help reduce prevalence and risks associated with problem gambling targeted at persons with gambling problems and their families

Who Can Apply

Family Service Centres (FSCs), Voluntary Welfare Organisations (VWOs), self-help groups, not-for-profit organizations and other organisations approved by NCPG.

General Funding Principle

Generally up to 75% of the project cost unless the NCPG decides specifically to fund up to 100%.

Closing Date

First round of applications ends 28 February 2006.

How To Apply

For application guidelines and forms, interested parties can contact the NCPG Secretariat:

Ms Verlencia TAN
Assistant Manager/Public Education
MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, YOUTH AND SPORTS
Tel: 6354-9846
verlencia_tan@mcys.gov.sg



Ms Cynthia LEE

Manager/Public Education

MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, YOUTH AND SPORTS

Tel: 6354-9850

lee_poh_lian@mcys.gov.sg

ANNEX 3:

Thye Hua Kwan Moral Society's Gambling Hotline

Thye Hua Kwan will launch a gambling hotline next week on 14 Jan 06 for people experiencing problems related to gambling. Gamblers and their families often have to struggle with financial and debt management problems as well as guilt, anxiety and even, depression.

The hotline hopes to help by providing a listening ear to gamblers and their families. The hotline will also provide information and assistance on how to get help for their problems. The hotline will link callers with one of Thye Hua Kwan's family service centres or a family service centre in their own community.

Callers can ring the hotline 1800-X-GAMBLE or 1800-9-426253 from 9am-6.30pm on Mondays and Fridays, 9am-9pm on Tuesdays to Thursdays, and 9am-6pm on Saturdays. The hotline is funded by Thye Hua Kwan Moral Society.