



# NCPG

NATIONAL COUNCIL  
ON PROBLEM GAMBLING



# ANNUAL REPORT 2011/12





Problem Gambling  
[knowtheline.sg](http://knowtheline.sg)

**Problem Gambling**  
hurts the whole family

**Know the Line**  
and take control

Before gambling becomes a problem to you and your family, know where to draw the line.

Help is available.

Call or log on for assistance and information today.



**1800 - 6 - 668 - 668**

# FOREWORD

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The National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) was appointed in August 2005 by the then Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS), as part of Singapore's national framework to address problem gambling.

## OUR ORGANISATION

The NCPG is a council comprising 13 members with expertise in areas such as psychiatry and psychology, social services, rehabilitative services, counselling, legal services and religious services. The Council's first two-year term began on 31 August 2005 and it is now into its fourth term.

### **The Council's main roles are:**


- To provide advice and feedback to the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) on social concerns related to gambling, gambling problems and problem gambling.
- To support and implement effective programmes with regard to:
  - Public education on problem gambling;
  - Public communication and consultation of stakeholders on gambling related issues;
  - Responsible gambling practices of legalised gambling operators;
  - Research on problem gambling; and
  - Prevention and treatment services for problem gamblers and their families.
- To execute casino exclusions in accordance with the Casino Control Act and within prevailing policies on casino social safeguards.

The Council currently has two sub-committees which focus on the areas of Casino Exclusions and Responsible Gambling respectively.

MSF provides secretariat support to the Council.

## OUR MISSION

Working with the community to reduce the impact of problem gambling on individuals, families and society.



WHEN LUCK DESERTED ME, SHE MADE THE CALL TO TURN OUR **LUCK** AROUND.

When someone has a problem controlling their gambling, it can negatively impact the whole family. If you are affected, take control of your situation and call the Problem Gambling Helpline. We'll provide valuable support including financial advice and casino exclusion orders. **KNOW THE LINE.**

TURN YOUR LUCK AROUND  
**1800-6-668-668**

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WHEN MY GAMBLING BECAME A PROBLEM, IT WAS **LUCKY** HE KNEW WHO TO CALL.

When someone has a problem controlling their gambling, it can negatively impact the whole family. If you are affected, it's never too late to change the luck of your family by seeking help. Call the Problem Gambling Helpline for advice and support including casino exclusion orders. **KNOW THE LINE.**

TURN YOUR LUCK AROUND  
**1800-6-668-668**

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# CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

**LIM HOCK SAN**

CHAIRMAN  
NATIONAL COUNCIL ON  
PROBLEM GAMBLING

It has been an eventful year for the Council as there were several noteworthy milestones, such as the sharing of the results of the 2011 NCPG Gambling Participation Survey; the strengthening of our social safeguards to expand the coverage of Third-Party Casino Exclusion; and the expansion of Help Services to three new Family Service Centres.

The 2011 Gambling Participation Survey revealed that while the problem gambling rates have remained largely unchanged, a particular group of probable pathological and problem gamblers were prone to have higher gambling frequency and lack of control in gambling, especially in horse racing, online and casino gambling. It is also increasingly evident that gambling addiction does not only affect the gambler, but also his family, friends and others around him. These are the people who often suffer the consequential ill effects of problem gambling, both emotionally and financially.

This is why the Council remains committed to improve public education on the harms of problem gambling, and in expanding Help Services to provide support and assistance to the families of those affected by problem gambling. NCPG's new "Turn Your Luck Around" Campaign urges families affected by problem gambling to seek help, with or without the cooperation of the gambler, with regard to financial and legal problems. To support this drive to encourage help-seeking behaviour, we recognise that our capabilities framework must be augmented to meet the demands of today. Many stakeholders are passionate about and have come forward to provide regular feedback and insights on tackling problem gambling. The Council greatly values public consultation sessions with the public and thank our stakeholders to be responsive to sentiments on the ground.

One of the suggestions received at the 2012 stakeholder consultation sessions was for the set up of a dialogue forum between gambling operators and community leaders to work towards improving responsible gambling practices. NCPG will work closely with the Ministry of Social and Family Development to explore the possibility of this platform. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our stakeholders for their candid and constructive feedback.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lim Hock San". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined.

IT WASN'T UNTIL I STOPPED GAMBLING THAT I REALISED HOW **LUCKY** I WAS.

If you have a problem controlling your gambling, don't wait to hit rock bottom before you seek help. Make a choice to turn your luck around now by calling the Problem Gambling Helpline. We'll provide valuable support including financial advice and casino exclusion orders. **KNOW THE LINE.**

TURN YOUR LUCK AROUND  
**1800-6-668-668**

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# THE NCPG AT A GLANCE



**Dr. Bibi Jan Mohd Ayyub**  
Council Member

President, Singapore Malay Teachers' Union



**Mr. Joachim Lee**  
Council Member

Director, Tampines Family Service Centre



**Dr. Lim Yun Chin**  
Council Member

Consultant Psychiatrist,  
Raffles Counseling Centre,  
Raffles Hospital



**Ven. Seck Kwang Phing**  
Council Member

Secretary-General,  
Singapore Buddhist Federation



**Mr. Lim Hock San**  
Chairman

President and CEO  
United Industrial Corporation Ltd



**A/P Long Foo Yee, Fred**  
Council Member

Adjunct Associate Professor,  
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Social Sciences, Nanyang  
Technological University



**Mr. Gerald Singham**  
Council Member

Partner, Rodyk & Davidson LLP



**Mr. Tan Kian Hoon**  
Chair

Responsible Gambling  
Sub-Committee

Chairman, National Crime  
Prevention Council



**Mr. Ng Seng Liang**  
Council Member

Training Consultant for  
Home Team School of  
Criminal Investigation,  
Singapore Police Force



**Mr. Tan Thiam Lye**  
Council Member

President, Taoist  
Federation Singapore



**Mr. Goh Joon Seng**  
Chair

Exclusions Sub-Committee

Consultant, Lee & Lee  
Advocates & Solicitors



**Professor David Chan**  
Council Member

Professor of Psychology  
and Director, Behavioural  
Sciences Institute,  
Singapore Management  
University



**Dr. Andrew Peh**  
Council Member

Senior Consultant,  
Department of  
Psychological Medicine,  
Changi General Hospital

## SECRETARIAT

**Ms. Ong Toon Hui**

Director-General

**Ms. Charlotte Beck /  
Yoganathan Ammayappan  
(from April 2012)**

Director

**Ms. Melissa Tan /  
Ms. Daphne Soo  
(from April 2012)**

1<sup>st</sup> Secretary

**Dr. Alexius  
Anthony Pereira**

2<sup>nd</sup> Secretary

**Ms. Angelina Yeo**

3<sup>rd</sup> Secretary

**Timothy Pak**

Assistant Secretary

# KEY MILESTONES 2005 - 2012

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- 2005** Formation of NCPG
- 2006** Public Consultation to streamline casino exclusion procedures  
Completion and sharing of NCPG's first survey on gambling issues  
Launch of public education campaign against excessive soccer gambling during the World Cup season
- 2007** Inaugural Singapore Problem Gambling Conference held and attended by over 500 international and local experts, practitioners and industry players  
Launch of NCPG's voluntary Responsible Gambling Code of Practice  
End of NCPG's first term
- 2008** Launch of "Excuses", an integrated media campaign  
Pilot training programme for frontline staff of gambling operators on responsible gambling measures  
NCPG "Excuses" campaign receives Bronze Award for Best Cause or Charity Campaign at the Promotion Marketing Awards of Asia (PMAA) 2008

- 2009** Launch of NCPG's Casino Exclusion Measures
- Second Singapore Problem Gambling Conference, focusing on youth gambling, held and attended by over 300 local and overseas participants
- Launch of "Know The Line", an integrated media campaign
- End of NCPG's second term
- 2010** Casinos open at Marina Bay Sands and Resorts World Sentosa
- Launch of NCPG's Corporate Partnership Programme
- Launch of World Cup "No Penalty" campaign
- 2011** Launch of foreigner Casino Self-Exclusion
- Application process for Casino Family Exclusion shortened from 6 weeks to 2 weeks
- Public Consultation on social impact of problem gambling in Singapore
- End of NCPG's third term
- 2012** Completion and sharing of NCPG's 2011 survey on gambling participation
- Launch of "Turn your Luck Around" media campaign
- Expansion of coverage of Third Party Casino Exclusion
- Stakeholder Consultation on the Casino Control Act (Amendment) Bill
- Start of NCPG's fourth term

# THE YEAR IN REVIEW

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## Casino Exclusions

In 2012, NCPG made a series of significant improvements to existing social safeguards to better protect Singaporeans from the harm of problem gambling.

In June 2012, Third-Party Exclusion was expanded to exclude a further 15,000 financially vulnerable locals from casino gambling. Under this expansion, about 12,000 ComCare short to medium term assistance recipients and 3,000 HDB rental flat tenants paying subsidised rents with rental arrears of six months or more have been automatically excluded. The number of Third-Party exclusions in force as at 31 August 2012 stands at 39,885.

Since Family Exclusion Orders (FEO) were first made available on 1 April 2009 to empower family members to exclude problem gamblers within their family from the casinos, 1,206 Family Exclusion Orders have been issued as at 31 August 2012.

While the current FEO system currently takes about two weeks between application and hearing to the issuance of the FEO, there have been cases where families are adversely affected by the actions of the gambler, even while waiting for their application to be heard.

To address this, the proposed amendments to the Casino Control Act would empower NCPG to issue provisional FEOs to prevent the gambler from entering the casino during the period between application and hearing. To further protect family members, NCPG would also be given the power to issue FEOs even if the respondent's whereabouts are unknown. The Act is expected to come into effect in early 2013.

As at 31 August 2012, some 118,426 persons were excluded from entering the local casinos. Of these, 77,335 were active self-exclusions, and foreigner self-exclusion numbered 68,052 of the total number of active self-exclusions.

## Research

In February 2012, NCPG released the findings from its nationwide study of "Gambling Participation among Singapore Residents 2011". This study is a follow up to the gambling prevalence studies previously done by the then-Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports in 2005 and 2008.

The study found that gambling participation rate for Singapore residents aged 18 years and above

had declined from 54% in 2008 to 47% in 2011. The probable pathological and problem gambling (PPG) rates for Singapore residents had remained largely unchanged at 1.4% as compared to 1.2% in 2008.

However, the study also uncovered emerging concerns including heavier gambling among a small group of low-income gamblers, frequent gamblers and poorer self-control in gambling among online, horse racing and casino gamblers.

The results of the study highlighted several focal areas for NCPG's work ahead, namely to help gamblers overcome their problem; intensify and improve public education on the dangers of problem gambling; and ensure the availability of help services in the community to support those affected by problem gambling.

## Public Consultation – Amendments to the Casino Control Act

In July 2012, NCPG conducted four consultation sessions on the Government's proposed enhancements to social safeguards in the draft Casino Control (Amendment) Bill. Participants included key representatives from community, grassroots, religious and social service organisations.

The proposed amendments included the introduction of visit limits targeted at financially vulnerable and frequent casino gamblers, as well as proposed improvements to the casino exclusion regime and responsible gambling measures.

Stakeholders provided useful suggestions on further improving measures to address the harm of gambling. In particular, stakeholders called for responsible gambling initiatives to be improved and for the provision of more comprehensive social safeguards for non-casino gambling venues. Many also expressed concern over the growing prevalence of online gambling, particularly among youth.

There was strong support from stakeholders for the introduction of a regular dialogue forum between gambling operators and community leaders. Such a forum would serve to foster mutual understanding and improve the standard of responsible gambling across all forms of gambling in Singapore.

Through the stakeholder consultation sessions, NCPG was able to obtain a good sense of the general sentiment from the ground on gambling related issues.



## Public Communications

In January 2012, NCPG launched its new integrated media campaign, as part of its overarching public education theme, “Hope for Change”. The campaign launch was timed to coincide with the Chinese New Year period, where gambling is known to intensify. The launch of the campaign also served as a reminder that even during the auspicious season, one should not rely on luck to better one’s situation.

The new campaign, titled “Turn Your Luck Around” (扭转命运), was a step away from previous NCPG campaigns which primarily targeted the problem gambler. This campaign focused on encouraging families affected by problem gambling to seek help, with or without the gambler’s cooperation. The campaign played on the concept of families taking proactive steps to ‘turn their luck around’ by seeking help to arrest the harm caused by problem gambling.

NCPG’s new commercial, ‘Lucky’, directed by award-winning Thai director Thanonchai, was an emotional piece that focused on the wife of a problem gambler as the pillar of strength in a family suffering under the husband’s gambling habits. Through it all, she remained steadfast and resolute in caring for her family and encouraging the gambler to seek help. In the end, he chooses to return home to his wife rather than gamble away his last coin.

NCPG also launched a radio jingle, ‘ATM’ which garnered positive responses from those who heard it. The jingle portrayed a housewife who was unable to pay for her groceries due to insufficient funds in her account. The tagline urges those affected by problem gambling to seek help before they end up in a similar situation.

The integrated campaign was broadcast over free-to-air television channels, radio, print, online and out-of-home media and garnered positive response from the public and the media.

NCPG recognises the important role that public education and outreach plays in heightening awareness and understanding of problem gambling in the community.

NCPG continues to invest heavily in this area, injecting an estimated \$3.5 million a year into public education initiatives for the community at large, targeted groups and the youth.



## Community Outreach

As the issue of problem gambling gains greater awareness in the community, many corporate organisations are beginning to approach NCPG to conduct problem gambling awareness talks to their workers, especially foreign workers. Heeding the call to educate them on the pitfalls of problem gambling, NCPG rolled out a series of talks between 2011 and 2012 to various companies mainly in the construction industry. NCPG was also invited by the Migrant Worker's Centre and Keppel Housing Pte Ltd to conduct talks to their foreign workers at their dormitories. To date, NCPG has reached out to some 5,000 workers / foreign workers through its outreach talks.

NCPG also actively participated in many community road shows, with the support of Senior Gambling Ambassadors from the Young-At-Heart (YAH) College, an outreach programme funded by the NCPG since 2009. YAH College provided road show booths, talks and community skits to spread gambling awareness messages. Most of the community road shows were very well attended and NCPG's gambling awareness messages were met with positive response.

NCPG continued to spread awareness of the National Problem Gambling Helpline (1 - 800 - 6 - 668 - 668) through its regular corporate partnership collaborations with stalwart partners such as Premier Taxi, Koufu, KBox and 888 Kopitiam, as well as through the sponsorship of cups, banners and stickers printed with the NCPG logo and helpline number. In the community, NCPG also worked with the Woodlands

Citizen's Consultative Committee to roll out a joint community outreach initiative to distribute plastic waterbottles with the NCPG logo/helpline to Woodlands residents.

The annual Getai outreach programme, in collaboration with Lex (S) Entertainment, continued to be one of the highlights of NCPG's annual outreach calendar. NCPG provided collateral support in the form of the popular NCPG plastic fans to some 30 getai locations across Singapore. Through this outreach initiative, NCPG was able to spread its "Know the Line" gambling awareness messages to an estimated 200,000 heartlanders in Singapore.



## Youth Outreach

NCPG's youth outreach this year was focused on strengthening existing youth programmes and initiatives in secondary schools and tertiary institutions through a series of drama skits, road shows and social activation initiatives.

NCPG conducted a gambling prevention skit titled, "Don't Dice with Life", which reached out to some 15,000 secondary school students between June and December 2011. The skit served to educate youth about the harms of gambling and advocate abstinence from gambling.

NCPG also supported "Beyond the Line", a youth initiative developed by students from the Singapore Management University AIESEC and supported by Central Youth Singapore. Some 4,500 students from the various tertiary institutions such as National University of Singapore, Singapore Management University and Nanyang Technological University attended the road show, which educated youth on the harms of problem gambling.

As part of its efforts to build up the youth outreach programmes, NCPG engaged MCYC Community Services Society in January 2012 to revive one of NCPG's pioneer youth gambling road shows, "Win Big Don't Gamble". The road show, which also includes a docudrama, a talk and interactive games, will roll out to some 20 primary and secondary schools over the next two years.

One of the highlights of NCPG's youth outreach for 2011 was the commissioning of "Gamble and your World Collapses", a three-day interactive art installation. A social responsibility project in collaboration with Kinetic Design and Advertising, the installation featured three pictures containing anti-gambling messages created from 24,000 dice. As part of the installation, every die picked up would result in the picture slowly collapsing until nothing remained. The project was captured on video and uploaded to NCPG's Youtube and Facebook pages as part of a continual online youth outreach initiative.





## Service Delivery

Managed by the National Addictions Management Service (NAMS) and Thye Hua Kwan Moral Society (THKMS), the 24-hour National Problem Gambling Helpline continues to be well-utilised. Thanks to the heightened awareness of problem gambling and the Helpline, there continued to be an increase in the number of gambling related calls in 2011 and 2012.

In February 2012, NCPG commissioned NAMS to conduct a training session on using co-morbid screening tools at intake level. This initiative was part of NCPG's efforts to increase the pool of counsellors trained in problem gambling counselling. A referral system was also implemented to ensure that clients assessed to have co-morbid diagnosis were referred to NAMS for further assessment and treatment.

In May 2012, NCPG launched a new initiative – Legal and Financial Advisory Services (LFAS), targeted primarily at family members of problem gamblers. Under this programme, family members affected financially or legally by problem gambling would be able to obtain the relevant knowledge and skills needed to minimise financial and legal harm from both heavy and problem gambling. The pilot LFAS programme was implemented at three agencies, namely Thye Hua Kwan Moral Society (Tanjong Pagar Family Service Centre), Ang Mo Kio Family Service Centre, and Hougang Sheng Hong Family Service Centre.

Youth services were also given a boost with the pilot training implementation of a Youth Gambling Prevention and Intervention Curriculum between April and May 2012. The curriculum was completed in August 2011 to provide youth workers/counsellors with the necessary material needed to conduct gambling prevention education to general youth and to equip them with the skills to intervene in youth identified with problem gambling.



# LOOKING AHEAD

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**T**he NCPG is committed to meeting the challenges of an ever-changing social landscape as we approach the end of the fourth term (2011-2013). With the proposed tightening of the Casino Control Act, NCPG will be tasked with greater responsibility in the areas of exclusion enforcement and responsible gambling. The Council's priority will be to intensify its public education and expand its network of help services to ensure that there are comprehensive avenues of help available to those affected by problem gambling. The Council will also look into areas of non-casino social safeguards in order to approach the issue of problem gambling in a more holistic fashion.

In the area of **casino exclusions**, casino exclusion application and revocation processes will be regularly assessed and streamlined to ensure simplicity and accessibility in application. As the Government moves to introduce casino visit limits that will complement the existing casino exclusion measures, NCPG will continue to provide feedback and recommendations to the Government on improving processes and social safeguards.

In the area of **responsible gambling**, the NCPG will explore the setup of a forum for gambling operators and community leaders to foster mutual understanding and to improve responsible gambling practices in Singapore across all forms of gambling. The Council will also work to improve the NCPG Responsible Gambling Code of Practice and encourage more gambling operators to adopt the Code.

In the area of **public communications and outreach**, NCPG recognises that there is a need for targeted messaging to reach out to different pockets of the community. Future programmes and outreach projects will be geared towards developing specific programmes for specific target groups. NCPG will also strive to build up and augment relationships with its partners and stakeholders in order to better extend public education to both the community, as well as corporate organisations.

In the area of **youth outreach**, NCPG intends to improve and intensify its outreach to the youth through the introduction of long-term, sustainable youth outreach projects aimed at engaging and encouraging youth to take a vested interest in being anti-gambling ambassadors to their peers. NCPG will continue to foster good working relationships with other youth organisations and agencies to leverage on existing youth platforms to spread gambling abstinence messages.

In the area of **service delivery**, NCPG will work closely with NAMS and THKMS to improve its existing Helpline and to develop a strong capability framework of help professionals and school counsellors equipped with the relevant skills needed to understand and handle the issues faced by problem gamblers and their families. NCPG will also explore the engagement of more community agencies to provide problem gambling intervention services.

# Our Partners

## NCPG Help Services and Partners

### National Addictions Management Service (NAMS)

Institute of Mental Health  
Buangkok Green Medical Park  
10 Buangkok View  
Singapore 539747

NAMS Specialist Outpatient Clinic C:  
Basement Block 9  
☎ : 1800-6668-668  
www.nams.org.sg

### THKMS@Tanjong Pagar Thye Hua Kwan Problem Gambling Recovery Centre

(formerly Thye Hua Kwan Moral Society  
/ Tanjong Pagar FSC)

133 New Bridge Road  
Chinatown Point #04-05  
Singapore 059413  
☎ : 6538-2406  
www.thkms.org.sg  
tpfsc@thkms.org.sg

## Family Service Centres with Legal and Financial Advisory Services

### The Ang Mo Kio Family Service Centres

#### Ang Mo Kio Branch

Blk 230 Ang Mo Kio Ave 3  
#01-1264  
Singapore 560230  
☎ : 6453 5349

#### Cheng San Branch

Blk 445 Ang Mo Kio Ave 10  
#01-1627  
Singapore 560445  
☎ : 6454 6678

#### Sengkang Branch

Blk 223D Compassvale Walk  
#01-673  
Singapore 544223  
☎ : 6312 8100

### Hougang Sheng Hong Family Service Centre

Blk 237 Hougang St 21  
#01-406  
Singapore 530237  
☎ : 6289 5022

### Thye Hua Kwan Problem Gambling Recovery Centre

(formerly Thye Hua Kwan Moral Society/Tanjong Pagar FSC)  
133 New Bridge Road  
Chinatown Point #04-05  
Singapore 059413  
☎ : 6538-2406

# Acknowledgements

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The National Council on Problem Gambling would like to thank the following organisations for their support and assistance in the past year:

- 888 Kopitiam Pte Ltd
- Ang Mo Kio Family Service Centre
- Casino Regulatory Authority
- D’Rama Arts Pte Ltd
- Dentsu Singapore Pte Ltd
- Hougang Sheng Hong Family Service Centre
- Housing Development Board
- Insolvency and Public Trustees Office
- Institute of Mental Health
- K Box Pte Ltd
- Keppel Housing Pte Ltd
- Kinetic Design and Advertising
- Koufu Pte Ltd
- LEX Entertainment (S) Pte Ltd
- MCYC Community Services Society
- MediaCorp Pte Ltd
- Migrant Worker Centre
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Home Affairs
- Ministry of Law
- Ministry of Manpower
- Ministry of Social and Family Development
- Nanyang Technological University
- National Addictions Management Services
- National University of Singapore
- Premier Taxi Pte Ltd
- Saatchi & Saatchi Pte Ltd
- Singapore Management University
- Singapore Police Force
- Singapore Pools
- Singapore Press Holdings Pte Ltd
- Singapore Turf Club
- The People’s Association
- The Voice Productions
- THKMS@Tanjong Pagar (formerly Thye Hua Kwan Moral Society)
- Woodlands Citizen’s Consultative Committee
- YAH College Pte Ltd (Marine Parade FSC)

## Contact Us

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