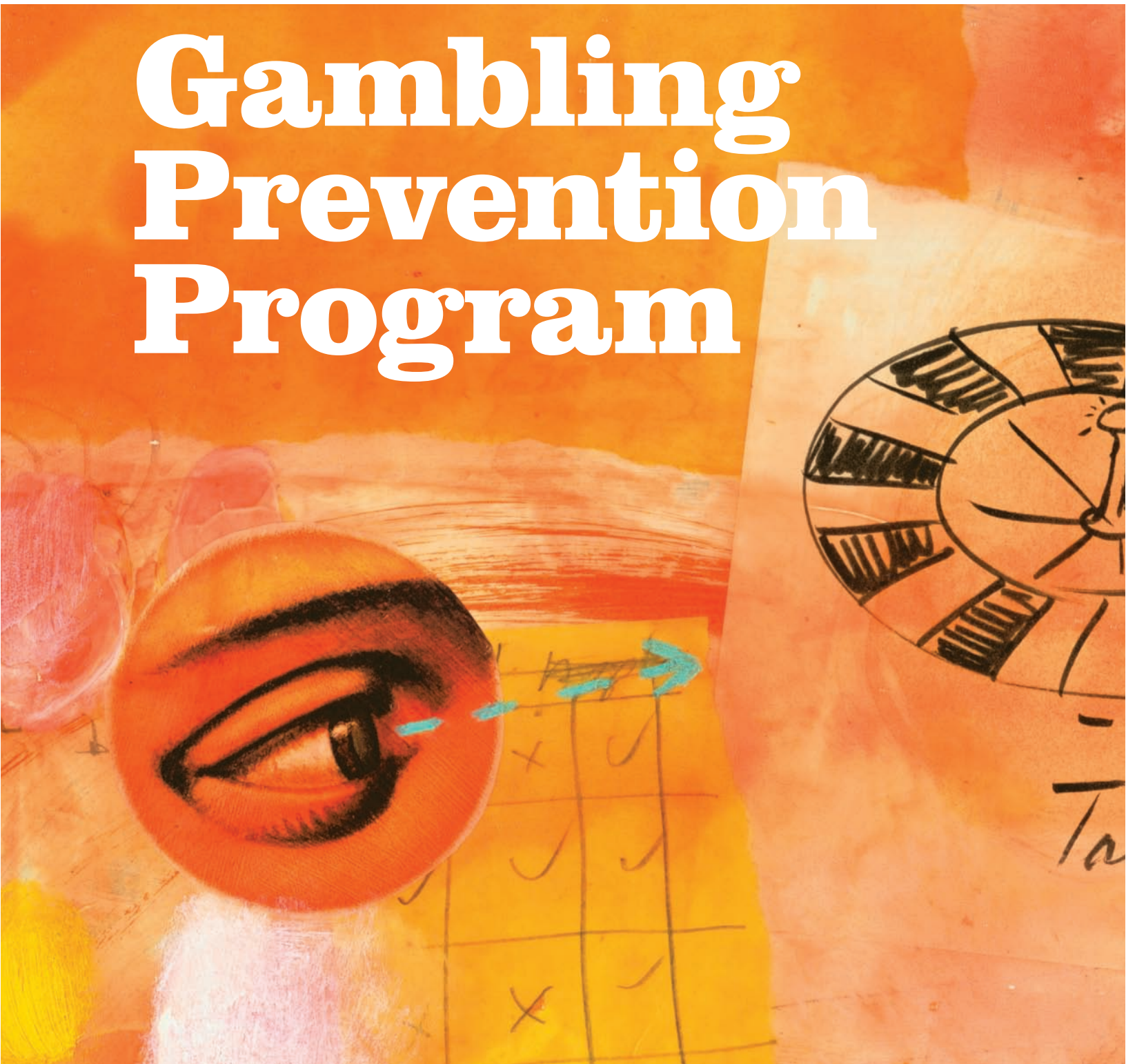


**Youth Making Choices:**

# **Gambling Prevention Program**



---

## **YOUTH MAKING CHOICES: GAMBLING PREVENTION PROGRAM**

**Nigel Turner, PhD**  
**John MacDonald, MA**  
**Bruce Ballon, MD, FRCPC**  
**Chantal Dubois, BA, CPGC**

ISBN: 978-1-77052-668-6 (PRINT)  
ISBN: 978-1-77052-669-3 (PDF)  
ISBN: 978-1-77052-670-9 (HTML)  
ISBN: 978-1-77052-671-6 (ePUB)  
PY012

Printed in Canada  
Copyright © 2010 Centre for Addiction and Mental Health

Any or all parts of this publication may be reproduced or copied with acknowledgment, without permission of the publisher. However, this publication may not be reproduced and distributed for a fee without the specific, written authorization of the publisher.

**A reproducible copy of this publication is available on the Internet at:**  
[www.ProblemGambling.ca](http://www.ProblemGambling.ca)

**For information about alternate formats or to place an order, please contact:**

Problem Gambling Institute of Ontario  
Education and community resources  
Phone: 416-535-8501 x4253  
Fax: 416-260-4185  
E-mail: [PGEducation@camh.net](mailto:PGEducation@camh.net)  
Website: [www.problemgambling.ca](http://www.problemgambling.ca) and [www.camh.net](http://www.camh.net)

**This curriculum program manual was produced by:**

Development and co-ordination: Colleen Tessier, BSW (CAMH)  
Curriculum consultants: Edie Kaus, BEd, MSc, Ed, Counselling; Maure Kentner, BPHE, BEd  
Editorial: Jacquelyn Waller-Vintar (CAMH); Marie-Lynn Hammond  
Design: Hambly & Woolley Inc.



# Introduction

Gambling in Ontario is more popular than ever before. Youth today are the first generation to be inundated with glamorized portrayals of the benefits and fun of gambling. They see it everywhere—television, the Internet, poker parties among their friends. While most people gamble without developing problems, a certain percentage do experience problems as a result of their gambling, and youth are not immune.

Problem gambling research reports that most adults with gambling problems developed these problems during their youth, and that youth who gamble regularly are more likely to develop a problem with gambling than adults who gamble regularly. The problems youth can develop are as serious as the problems that confront young people when they abuse alcohol or drugs. In fact a recent CAMH study (2009) found that a quarter of the youth with gambling problems reported a suicide attempt in the past year, and they were about 18 times more likely to report a suicide attempt than other students.

Despite these research results, there are very few gambling prevention programs for youth. Clinicians and researchers at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) are familiar with the issues of young people and problem gambling, and they have developed a curriculum-based gambling prevention program in response to this need.

The Youth Making Choices: Gambling Prevention Program comprises 10 lessons that fit well with the published expectations of several intermediate and senior level courses in mathematics, social sciences and humanities, English, and health and physical education.

*The program's objectives are:*

- to enhance students' coping skills
- to develop students' knowledge of randomness and probability
- to improve students' ability to recognize and avoid problematic behaviours associated with gambling.

While the Youth Making Choices: Gambling Prevention Program has been developed to increase students' understanding of problem gambling and to reduce the likelihood of youth developing difficulties, the content is broadly applicable to a number of life areas that affect adolescents and their development.

## Introduction

---

Unfortunately, we all can easily picture the following: teenagers cyber-bullying on Facebook, adolescents posting semi-nude pictures of themselves on YouTube, 12-year-old girls making “friends” in chat rooms and MySpace, young adults battling demons through the night with other cyber gamers in the World of Warcraft, and university students glued to online casino sites gambling the last of their student loan money. We can also see youth falling into experimentation with drugs, shopping and sex as well.

However, most youth are actually well-adjusted individuals who need to experience life in a normative fashion, taking healthy risks that allow the development and growth of decision making, conflict resolution and social skills. It is experiential learning—going through different situations—that is often the most powerful and educational factor in helping a youth negotiate the tasks of being a youth.

Many youth engage in a number of behaviours that involve risk-taking activities, such as drinking and gambling. Most do not go on to develop problems with these behaviours, but some do. For example, many youth do use substances, but most do not end up abusing substances. CAMH's 2009 Ontario Student Drug Use Survey (OSDUS) and other studies have confirmed that around 80 per cent of youth are experimenting with alcohol, 40 to 50 per cent are using marijuana and 5 per cent are using rave drugs. Another set of research shows that most adolescents, despite all this, are well-adjusted individuals who get along with their parents, do their homework and have good friends. Together, these statistics suggest

that youth are using substances but not in a way that is adversely affecting their lives. Gambling has been normalized in our society—and as a result many youth will engage in this activity. Engaging in the activity, though, does not necessarily result in a young person developing a problem. The key is prevention: youth must be sufficiently informed so they can decide on appropriate levels of involvement and identify behaviour that is becoming problematic. Equipped with these lessons, teachers can provide students with the information needed to make sound decisions about gambling and to better understand the potential risks.

**The key is prevention: youth must be sufficiently informed so they can decide on appropriate levels of involvement and identify behaviour that is becoming problematic.**

# References

---

Turner, N., Macdonald, J., Bartoshuk, M. & Zangeneh, M. (2008a). Adolescent gambling behaviour, attitudes, and gambling problems. *International Journal of Mental Health & Addiction*, 6 (2), 223–237. doi:10.1007/s11469-007-9117-1

Turner, N., Macdonald, J., Bartoshuk, M. & Zangeneh, M. (2008b). The evaluation of a one-hour prevention program for problem gambling. *International Journal of Mental Health & Addiction*, 6 (2), 238–243. doi:10.1007/s11469-007-9121-5

Turner, N.E., Macdonald, J. & Somerset, M. (in press) Life Skills, Mathematical Reasoning and Critical Thinking: A Curriculum for the Prevention of Problem Gambling. *Journal of gambling studies*. doi:101007/s10899-007-9085-1

Paglia-Boak, A., Mann, R.E., Adlaf, E.M. & Rehm, J. (2009). Drug use among Ontario students, 1977–2009: OSDUHS highlights. (CAMH Research Document Series No. 28). Toronto, ON: Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. [www.camh.net/Research/Areas\\_of\\_research/Population\\_Life\\_Course\\_Studies/OSDUS/Highlights\\_DrugReport\\_2009OSDUHS\\_Final\\_Web.pdf](http://www.camh.net/Research/Areas_of_research/Population_Life_Course_Studies/OSDUS/Highlights_DrugReport_2009OSDUHS_Final_Web.pdf)

# Overview of Program

---

The lessons are designed using the principles of differentiated instruction. Differentiated instruction is based on the idea that because students differ significantly in their interests, learning styles, abilities and experiences, teaching strategies and pace should vary accordingly. In Ontario, teachers are being encouraged to use this type of instruction, and many lessons are now being written following this format. Further information about differentiated instruction can be found at:

Ontario Ministry of Education

[www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teachers/buildingfutures/files/pdf/differentiated7and8.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teachers/buildingfutures/files/pdf/differentiated7and8.pdf)

EDU GAINS

[www.edugains.ca](http://www.edugains.ca)

It is best to teach the 10 lessons as a package, although each lesson is not necessarily dependent on the others and can therefore be taught as a stand-alone. Within each lesson there is flexibility to add, remove or combine content and resources depending on class needs. A glossary is also included as a resource for teachers to use in the development of a word wall.

Additional information is suggested and can be accessed in most cases through the Internet.

1

## Risk and Reward

**Objectives:**

Understand that youth make decisions about risky behaviours based on a number of factors and there are rewards and consequences for every risk taken

2

## What Is Gambling?

**Objectives:**

Understand what gambling is

3

## Probability

**Objectives:**

Learn about how the probability of winning can be calculated for games of chance

4

## What Is Problem Gambling?

**Objectives:**

Understand when a behaviour or an activity becomes “problematic”

5

## Effects of Gambling on the Individual, Family and Community

**Objectives:**

Understand the impact of problem gambling on the individual, his or her family and on the community

6

## Moving to Change

**Objectives:**

Investigate how a person moves toward change and seeking help

7

## Reducing Risk

**Objectives:**

To be introduced to the biological, psychological, social, cultural and spiritual aspects that influence us all

8

## Planning Responses to Problems

**Objectives:**

Learn about decision-making skills and coping skills

9

## Getting Help

**Objectives:**

Learn about how to live a healthy life. Learn about where to go for help

10

## Where Do You Go from Here?

**Objectives:**

Summary of learning and future planning

# Glossary of Terminology

---

**3 RS OF REFLECTION (RETELL, RELATE AND REFLECT):** retell the story, make personal connections, draw conclusions.

**ABUSE:** to use wrongly or improperly.

**ADDICTION:** habitual psychological and physiological dependence on a substance or practice beyond one's voluntary control.

**ATTENDING SKILLS:** paying attention to someone in a conversation; your ears, your eyes, your body and your feelings are all focused on that person at one time.

**AVERAGE:** a typical amount, rate, degree, etc.; norm.

**BIOLOGICAL FACTORS:** an individual's pre-disposition to an illness because of his or her biological makeup, making his or her risk of suffering from a condition much greater than those who do not share these risk factors.

**BULLY:** intimidate or domineer.

**CHARACTERISTIC:** a distinguishing feature or quality.

**CLARIFYING QUESTIONS:** gathering information needed to understand the situation.

**COMMONALITIES:** a sharing of features or characteristics that occur frequently.

**CONSEQUENCES:** the effect, result or outcome of something occurring earlier.

**CONTEXT:** the set of circumstances or facts that surround a particular event, situation.

**CROSSING THE LINE:** involvement in an activity that has become problematic.

**DECONSTRUCT:** to break down into constituent parts; dissect; dismantle.

**DEPENDENCE:** the state of being psychologically or physiologically dependent on a drug after a prolonged period of use.

**DEVELOPMENTAL AGE:** a measure of a child's development (in body size or motor skill or psychological function) expressed in terms of age norms.

**DOCUDRAMA:** a fictionalized drama based primarily on actual events.

**EQUALITY:** the state of being as great as; the same as (equal to).

**EXISTENTIAL ISSUES:** are issues that have to do with the plight of human existence, with the meaning of life, and what meaning, if any, our lives have.

**FACILITATE:** to assist the student and or group in a discussion to better understand important points.

**FOCUSING SKILLS:** attending to selected pieces of information and ignoring others.

**FORETHOUGHT:** a thinking of something beforehand.

## Glossary of Terminology

---

**GALLERY WALK:** is a discussion technique that gets students out of their chairs and into a mode of active engagement. It provides an opportunity for students to share thoughts in a more intimate, supportive setting rather than a larger, anonymous class. It can be done with computers, with pieces of paper on tables, or with posted chart paper.

(source: Taylor, P. 2001. Gallery Walk [www.nwp.org/cs/public/download/nwp\\_file/13853/Gallery\\_Walk.pdf?x-r=pcfile\\_d](http://www.nwp.org/cs/public/download/nwp_file/13853/Gallery_Walk.pdf?x-r=pcfile_d))

**GENERALIZE:** to infer (a general principle, trend, etc.) from particular facts, statistics.

**GUARANTEE:** something that assures a particular outcome or condition.

**HARMFUL INVOLVEMENT:** Continuing involvement in an activity or behaviour despite repeated or persistent problems, in one or more life areas, which are caused by or made worse as a result of the involvement.

**I STATEMENT:** a statement that begins with the word "I." It is frequently used in an attempt to be assertive without putting the listener on the defensive.

**IMMUNE:** exempt or protected.

**IMPACT:** influence; effect.

**IMPULSIVE:** the influence of a particular feeling, mental state, prompting a person to action.

**INEQUALITY:** the state of not being as great as or the same as.

**INFERENCES:** the process of arriving at some conclusion that, though it is not logically derivable from the assumed premises, possesses some degree of probability relative to the premises.

**INFLUENCE:** the action or process of producing effects on the actions, behavior, opinions, etc., of another or others.

**INTERVENE:** to come between disputing people, groups, etc.; intercede; mediate.

**INVULNERABLE:** incapable of being wounded, hurt, or damaged.

**LOBBYIST:** a person who tries to influence legislation on behalf of a special interest.

**LOW RISK GAMBLING:** gambling casually, buying the occasional raffle or lottery ticket or occasionally visiting a casino for entertainment.

**MAGICAL THINKING:** the ability to draw conclusions that are based on a person's desire for what reality should be, not necessarily upon what reality actually is. People simply believe things that have no connection to logical thinking.

**METACOGNITION:** refers to awareness and control of one's thinking, including commitment, attitudes and attention.

**MIRROR FEELINGS:** paying attention to the emotions and feelings of the speaker.

**MISUSE:** to use wrongly or improperly.

**MOTIVATE:** to provide a reason for a person to act in a certain way, do a certain thing.

**NEGATIVE OUTCOME:** an unfavorable result or conclusion through a process of logical thinking.

**NON-VERBAL RESPONSE:** includes facial expressions, eye contact, tone of voice, body posture and motions, and positioning within groups.

**PARAPHRASING:** repeating the main thoughts and ideas the speaker has expressed in one's own words to check for understanding.

## Glossary of Terminology

---

**PATHOLOGICAL GAMBLING:** for a small but significant number of people, gambling seriously harms all aspects of their lives. People with gambling problems this severe are unable to control the urge to gamble, despite the harm it causes.

**PEER PRESSURE:** social pressure by members of one's peer group to take a certain action, adopt certain values, or otherwise conform in order to be accepted.

**PERSONAL VALUES:** deeply held beliefs by an individual that guide behaviors and decisions.

**POSITIVE OUTCOME:** a favorable result or conclusion through a process of logical thinking.

**PREVALENCE:** widespread; of wide extent or occurrence; in general use or acceptance.

**PROBABILITY:** a strong likelihood or chance of something, the relative possibility that an event will occur, as expressed by the ratio of the number of actual occurrences to the total number of possible occurrences.

**QUALITY:** a personality or character trait.

**RANDOMNESS:** relating to an event in which all outcomes are equally likely.

**RATIONALIZE:** to ascribe (one's acts, opinions, etc.) to causes that superficially seem reasonable and valid but that actually are unrelated to the true, possibly unconscious and often less creditable or agreeable causes.

**RECREATIONAL USE:** the use of a drug, usually psychoactive, with the intention of creating or enhancing recreational experience.

**REDUCTIONISM:** the practice of simplifying a complex idea, issue, condition, or the like, especially to the point of minimizing, obscuring, or distorting it.

**REFLECTION STRIPS:** used to describe a response to a particular activity. Often the strips are narrow in width but a full page in length. The strips may have specific sentence starters or phrases to guide the students in their personal reflection of the task or of their calibre of work.

**RELAPSE:** a process that begins when a person starts slipping back into old behaviour patterns.

**RESPONSE JOURNALS:** a written form of reflection in which students consider their experience in light of specific issues, such as those contained in course content. Students can examine their thoughts and experiences through journals, and further the learning they have done.

**RISK ASSESSMENT:** an estimate of the likelihood of aversive effects that may result from exposure to certain health hazards, or involvement in certain behaviours.

**RISK FACTORS:** variables associated with an increased chance of illness or infection or in this case problem gambling.

**RISK TAKING:** a positive tool in an adolescent's life for discovering, developing, and consolidating his or her identity. Risk-taking can be practiced and learned in healthy, supportive situations.

**SCHEMATIC FORM:** a diagram, plan, or drawing.

**SCENARIO:** an outline of a situation or story, giving particulars as to the scenes, characters, situations, etc.

**SELF EFFICACY:** the belief that one is capable of performing in a certain manner to attain certain goals.

**SIGNS AND INDICATORS:** something that suggests the presence or existence of a fact, condition, or quality; the objective evidence of an illness.

## Glossary of Terminology

---

**SOCIETAL EXPECTATIONS:** beliefs, awareness and apprehension of how others will react to our behavior, and how we react to their behaviour.

**STARTER SENTENCE:** creative writing prompts used mainly as a way to inspire the writer to get started writing a story, poem or other piece of creative writing.

**STEREOTYPES:** an often oversimplified or biased mental picture held to characterize the typical individual of a group.

**SUMMARIZING:** pulling together all the information by paraphrasing and mirroring to help the speaker determine whether anything is missing.

**TEMPERAMENT:** the combination of mental, physical and emotional traits of a person; natural predisposition.

**THERAPEUTIC:** of or pertaining to the treating or curing of disease; curative.

**TRAIT:** a distinguishing characteristic or quality.

**UNBIASED RESEARCHER:** research that is not affected by any extraneous factors, conflated variables, or selectivity that influence its distribution; it is fair or impartial.

**VULNERABLE:** open to moral attack, criticism, temptation, etc.

In compiling this glossary, we borrowed liberally from the glossary at [problemgambling.ca](http://problemgambling.ca), from CAMH sources, from TheFreeDictionary by Farlex and Dictionary.com. If we have forgotten to acknowledge any other source, please notify us and we will amend this list. Thank you.