

## 2 What Factors Can Put You at Greater Risk for Problems?

There are known risk factors that can lead to developing gambling problems or make it more difficult to stop. The more of the following risk factors that apply to your situation, the more caution you may need to take in your gambling:

- a big win early in your gambling history
- money problems
- recent loss such as divorce, death, job loss or retirement
- loneliness and chronic boredom
- lack of direction in your life or limited hobbies
- a pattern of risk taking or impulsive behaviour
- using gambling or drugs to avoid or cope with negative feelings or events
- mental health problems, particularly depression and anxiety
- experience of abuse or trauma
- a personal history of or current problems with alcohol, other drugs, gambling or overspending
- a family history of problems with alcohol, other drugs, gambling or overspending
- mistaken beliefs about the odds of winning at gambling
- your preferred form of gambling is easily available and accessible
- not monitoring your wins and losses.

Counselling can help you resolve problems caused by gambling and consider ways to lower your risk by stopping, reducing or modifying your gambling.

Contact **Ontario Problem Gambling Helpline** for information on problem gambling counselling and related resources in your community at 1 888 230-3505. Services are free, open to anyone affected by gambling and available in many languages.

Contact the **Centre for Addiction and Mental Health**—Problem Gambling Project for a free copy of *Problem Gambling: The Issues, the Options* and *Problem Gambling: A Guide for Families*. Call 1 888 647-4414.