

# Toiora - Healthy Lifestyles

Provider of Problem Gambling Services—Taranaki

*Providing Help / Advice / Support - Phone (06) 769-9188*

## Did You Know

- Every Day in New Zealand:
- \$35 million is gambled.
- \$5.5 million is Lost (on all forms of gambling)
- 118 Food Banks are accessed by families.
- There are 14 convictions related to Problem Gambling.

*(Information provided by Problem Gambling Foundation of New Zealand—Feb 2006 Newsletter)*

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## What Lies Beyond ?

Gambling is regarded as a 'national pastime.' Its something that for many has become a part of us, part of our culture, part of our community.

Sadly, lurking within the world of Gambling is a darker, sadder side. It's a side of peoples lives that is not openly talked about, but many, many people have a sad tale to tell. One doesn't have to search very far to find a story of despair, a story which may include family breakup, loss of huge amounts of money or property.

The cold hard reality is that lurking within the world of Gambling are some nasty situations that we all should note and take on the responsibility of making sure we do our very best of helping each other.

Interestingly enough, very few people know how pokie machines actually work. Often player blindly feed money into these machines—thinking a gentle stroke, a friendly pat will influence the outcome.

The fact is that pokie machines are designed and programmed to pay out less money than what is put into them. Pokie machines have no memory at all—it doesn't know who is playing, it



Serene or Suspect ?

can't remember any result of any previous games played; each outcome of each game is randomly selected - meaning the outcome of each game has no link to any previous game.

Knowing what lies beyond the face/screen of a pokie machine could be the best investment you could make.

FACT: *Machines* are designed to Win - Not the Player.

FACT: *Machines pay out less* than what is put into them.

## Is Taranaki Getting a Fair Deal ??

Presently within the region of Taranaki there are 630 pokie machines. GamblingWatch, a nationally recognized voice pertaining to gambling issues, claims that one pokie machine potentially causes a loss of \$41,000 per machine per year.

For Taranaki that means a potential loss of \$25 million per year. A loss is defined as the amount of money put into a machine excluding

the winnings a player may receive. To offset that loss it's true that Trusts return money back to the community. One question is how much money is returned to Taranaki? - it appears nowhere near the amount of money that is lost.

One venue which had 7 machines for a 3 month period returned \$671.19 to the community. There was just one successful application and 23 applications were declined.

## Community Appointments to National Trusts



The Hikoi 2005 - Taranaki having their say.

Recent media report announced the appointment of two prominent Taranaki sports personalities to a National Gaming Trust. Those appointed were Mr Neil Wolfe and Mr Howie Tamati, both who also hold New Plymouth District Council Councilor responsibilities.

One could express a view that these appointments will serve the needs of Taranaki by this particular national trust. This announcement may be something to be supported.

What also is known, Sports receive the largest portion of money that this Trust returns back to the community - 50% of money returned to the community goes to the sporting sector.

Its obvious many other 'needy' sectors for example, Education, Maori.....get very minimal fund-

ing contribution—so perhaps national Gambling Trusts should consider equal representation of all sectors, and not just the biggest benefactor.

Which raises another matter—why not have an established Community body (similar to COGS) that is locally elected and makes representation on behalf of the whole community for all national Trusts of the allocation of gambling profits back to its community.

That allows for local people to administer a local solution for local needs.

## Professional Sport / Gambling - is there a link !!!

*"If I don't get control of my gambling, its going to flat out ruin me" John Daly - American Professional Golfer.*

The introduction of professional sport presents another possible challenge not previously considered. With high physical demands, tough mental commitment in the endeavor to achieve sporting success, 'downtime' is vital for successful sportspeople to maintain ongoing participation.

'Downtime' for the casual sportsperson often includes "socializing" and Monday to Friday its 'back to work.' For the professional sportsperson—Monday to Sunday, are their days of work, and alcohol consumption is playing a lesser role in their lives.

But Gambling could be. It can be seen as relaxing, quiet and a way of 'getting away from it all.'

Time, Money and Access are key influences that entice people to play pokie machines. Professional sportspeople have all those at their finger-tips.

With increasing opportunities to participate in the professional sporting arena means Coaches, Managers, Administrators, all should realize that for the active sportsperson the temptations and 'trappings' associated with Gambling may threaten someone's sporting career. Be alert - be aware - get help early.



## Know How Pokie Machine Works ?

People think—too spend big on a pokie machine, you will win big.....not so (machines are designed to win, not the players !!)

Machines are programmed to pay out less money than what is put into them.

Patting, stroking having a 'friendly / intimate relationships with a machine—means absolutely nothing to the machine.....machines have no heart—its only job—take money from you.

Machines are designed too attract you for one purpose - so you put money into them.

Some machines play a new game every 5 seconds. That's potentially 12 spins a minute which equals 720 spins an hour. If you bet \$2.00 per spin in an hour at that rate of \$2.00 per spin = \$1,440:00.

Its likely you will win some of your money back—machines are programmed to let you win some money. The machine wants you too keep playing,

Remember machines are designed to make profit—you the player allow that to happen.

## Rangatahi—Hui

Recently over 200 rangatahi from throughout Taranaki gathered in Waitara and took part in a day of activities. Coordinated by staff from the Health Promotion Unit, a wide variety of activities was focused towards catering for youth.

Kapahaka, sports activities, Hip Hop music and performances, impromptu sports contests were all inclusive allowing the opportunity for rangatahi to be rangatahi.

Toiora supported the occasion and seized the opportunity to ask rangatahi for their views towards gambling, with some interesting and informative feedback (see below.)

Information that was gathered has proven valuable in establishing ongoing programmes / resources and activities that will focus towards

the needs of rangatahi.

Following from that hui was another hui facilitated by Te Tihi Hauora PHO and held over three days at Puniho marae. Participation from rangatahi from Te Phipinga Mai Kakano I Rangiatea added to the valuable sharing and learning that was enjoyed by all.

Again for Toiora the experience was invaluable for staff to determine how best to deliver information to rangatahi. Nga mihi mahana nga kaimahi no te roopu i Te Tihi Hauora PHO me te Health Promotion Unit.

Any rangatahi clubs, community groups or secondary schools / Kura Kaupapa interested in programmes that discuss the kaupapa of Gambling—contact Brendon. (see back page.)



Gathering at C Fusion—Waitara

## What the Youth Said:

During the recent C Fusion Rangatahi hui the following comments were made about Gambling:

“Don’t Gamble,” “Gambling is for Bad People,” “Its no good at all—it’s a waste of money,” “I think gambling is like smoking, waste of putea,” “Mou mou putea,” “Dnt do it becoz it will stuff ur life up \$ life,” “Koretake...”

Note: of the 80 rangatahi no-one provided any positive comment about gambling.

Of the 80 rangatahi 49 knew of someone who they believed needed some help because of their gambling habits.

Of the 80 rangatahi interviewed 27 had some previous experience of gambling—most popular form were pokies, cards and horses.

What can be done about the Gambling Problem for Rangatahi? — “More promotion, more adds, more talks” were some suggestions provided.

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*“Its so hard to tell my mum not to do it ” - a 19 year old.*

## Help is Available

Some websites:

[www.gamblingwatch.org.nz](http://www.gamblingwatch.org.nz) (provides statistics and information of gambling issues.)

[www.pgfnz.co.nz](http://www.pgfnz.co.nz) (provides updated information, seminars / conferences and statistics.)

[www.acts.co.nz](http://www.acts.co.nz) (in depth information and copies of research data available.)

[www.inyaface.co.nz](http://www.inyaface.co.nz) (for rangatahi)

[www.gamblingproblem.co.nz](http://www.gamblingproblem.co.nz) (national contacts)

Taranaki Phone Book—Yellow Pages—refer pages (Counselling / Community Groups).

0800 654-655 National Gambling Helpline (Available: 10am to 10 pm.) Provides specific services for Maori, Pacific Island, Youth and Budgeting plus legal advice.



Like our Maunga - may not always be seen, but we always know he's there.



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46 Vivian Street  
New Plymouth  
Phone: (06) 769-9188  
Fax: (06) 769-9178  
Email: admin@toiora.net.nz

### **Promoting Healthy Living**

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Web Site - to try:  
[www.gamblingwatch.org.nz](http://www.gamblingwatch.org.nz)

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*Toiora—Healthy Lifestyles have been providing services to assist people with Gambling problems since 2001. Now established in well-appointed premises on the corner of Robe and Vivian Street New Plymouth, Toiora also have the ability to travel and meet people in the South Taranaki area.*

*In raising the awareness of Gambling issues and the impact of those issues on Taranaki, staff from Toiora are available to meet and speak to any community group / organisation within Taranaki. If this opportunity interests you—ring the office 769-9188 to make the necessary arrangements.*

*Likewise Toiora is planning to involve Youth / Rangatahi by increasing their awareness about Gambling. Not unlike sex education and alcohol responsibilities, there is a need for awareness of gambling to be shared with youth in an educational way. Any inquiries about Youth Education Gambling programmes contact Toiora office.*

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## **New Staff—Brendon Watt**

Ko Brendon Ngarino Watt taku ingoa. Ko Waikato raua ko Ngati Ranginui oku iwi. Waikato Taniwharau he piko he taniwha. Ki Tauranga Moana karanga te ao. Tihei Mauriora.

Having moved to Taranaki from Wellington to further my Rugby career, have taken the opportunity to work with Toiora - Healthy Lifestyles as a Health Promoter. My work focus is Problem Gambling and am keen to push the messages that will reduce the harm that gambling creates within our community.

With a professional sports background and still appreciating and understanding the needs of our rangatahi I intend to focus on helping those particular groups.

Fortunately my sporting career to date has allowed me to travel overseas playing both Rugby and Touch. I have seen many incidents where help, advice and guidance could have helped people in the professional sporting world. I intend to make that help available.

Shifting to Taranaki last year not only provided me with improving my rugby opportunities, but we (my partner Meryl and I) have totally enjoyed the people and lifestyle that Taranaki offers.

With an educational background that began at the Kohanga and moved into the Kura Kaupapa environment my ability to korero te reo Maori has been invaluable. My move into a general Secondary School environment (Wellington College) was a decision my parents choose that would allow me to develop other aspects of my life—my sporting career being one.

Now settling into the Taranaki way of life and making many friends I am hopeful of offering any form of assistance that you / your whanau / your club or organization may require that will address the problems associated with gambling. No reira nga tangata hui noa i te maunga Taranaki. Tena koutou, tena tatau.

