

# Responsible gambling public education campaign for Great Britain: A brief scoping review

Prepared for GambleAware, UK

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## Terms of reference

GambleAware has requested a brief report summarizing what public media responsible gambling advertisements/campaigns have been applied to counter and/or balance the influence of the growing amount of pro-gambling advertising shown on television and sporting venues. The report is designed to provide GambleAware with recommendation or suggestions that might guide the design and deliver of a public education campaign across Great Britain for the next two years. The intent is to provide information useful in briefing advertising agencies in developing public health education campaigns that are shaped by the latest empirical evidence and are founded in solid theoretical frameworks.

The aim of the report is to assist GambleAware in making recommendations and briefings to advertising agencies that result in a repetition of implementing approaches that have elsewhere been demonstrated to be unsuccessful or ineffective. What we must avoid is doing something that's clearly failed elsewhere.

## Executive summary

The literature suggests that the following points should be taken into consideration when formulating public health media campaigns for responsible gambling:

- Establishing clear objectives for the campaign is essential, that is, determining what are the outcomes that are being hoped to be achieved, and what metrics, if any, can be applied to assess success in the short and long-term.
- Campaigns should be based on a sound understanding of common biases that contribute to ongoing gambling and represent barriers to behavioural change.
- Campaigns should not foster stigma or negative perceptions of people with gambling-related problems.
- Campaigns should act to motivate and empower individuals to take specific actions to maintain responsible gambling behaviours.
- Campaigns should be tested prior to launch and evaluated to determine whether they achieved the intended impact and avoided unintended negative consequences.
- Targeted campaigns aim to communicate to a specific audience and are more likely to be perceived as relevant and motivate appropriate behavioural change.
- Targeting low-level gambling-related harms such as occasional excessive expenditure is likely to impact a larger cohort of the population than campaigns focused on severe gambling harms.
- Messages should promote specific positive behaviours with simple, easy to achieve steps accompanied by shifts in attitudes.
- Messages should prompt self-appraisal, rather than simply provide information.

## Background and scope

Responsible gambling advertisement campaigns can be considered as forming one element of an overall public health education strategy designed to achieve behavioural changes that result in improved wellbeing, mental and physical health, quality of life, and avoidance or reduction of gambling-related negative consequences for individual gamblers, their family and friends, and the broader community. Health education is operationally defined as incorporating any strategy designed to improve knowledge and skills, and influence beliefs, attitudes, and values conducive to improving health and promote actions that address social, economic and environments determinants of health<sup>1,2</sup>. Importantly, such strategies have long been recognised as needing to extend beyond the provision of information to also incorporate the objective of achieving or “*fostering the motivation, skills and confidence (self-efficacy) necessary to take action to improve health*”<sup>2(Pg.12)</sup>, that is, they must influence individuals to act on advice and information given<sup>3</sup>.

The intent of this report is not to cover all strategies and initiatives that are representative of the broad domain of responsible gambling programs given these are covered in depth elsewhere<sup>4,5</sup>. The scope of the current report, therefore, is limited to an assessment of, and suggestions for, public media advertising campaigns directly relevant to the promotion of responsible gambling. In this context, the report will not provide a review of the general effectiveness of public health education campaigns as applied to other lifestyles and health related behaviours. Rather, attention will be directed towards extracting key findings and recommendations that informs the development and implementation of responsible gambling media campaigns.

The research evidence supporting the effectiveness of public health media education campaigns in responsible gambling is limited at this stage given the difficulty in measuring shifts in population level behaviours and outcomes. One of the problems is the absence of clear criteria determining positive outcomes in response to responsible gambling media campaigns. Therefore, this report should be used only as a guide to inform GambleAware in its briefing material to advertising agencies. It is highly recommended that any media campaign be based on clearly articulated aims and implemented such that the outcomes are measured to enable the effectiveness to be evaluated.

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<sup>1</sup> Tones, K., & Tilford, S. (1994). *Health education: Effectiveness, efficiency and equity*. London: Chapman Hall. Cited in Tones, K. (1997). Health education: Evidence of effectiveness. *Archives of Disease in Childhood*, 77,189–195.

<sup>2</sup> World Health Organization (2012). *Health education: Theoretical concepts, effective strategies and core competencies*. World Health Organisation: Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean (P.12).

<sup>3</sup> Central Health Services Council and Scottish Health Services Council (1964). *Health education*. London: HMSO.

<sup>4</sup> Ladouceur, R., Shaffer, H.J., Blaszczynski, A., & Shaffer, P. (2017). Responsible gambling: A synthesis of the empirical evidence. *Addiction Research and Theory*, doi: 10.1080/16066359.2016.1245294.

<sup>5</sup> Williams, R.J., West, B.L., & Simpson, R.I. (2012). *Prevention of problem gambling: A comprehensive review of the evidence, and identified best practices*. Report prepared for the Ontario Problem Gambling Research Centre and the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

### Fundamental principles guiding advertisements

The general principles to be adhered to ideally in constructing an efficient and effective health education strategy delivered through a public media advertising campaign for responsible gambling include the following:

- Establishing *clear objectives* for the campaign is essential, that is, determining what are the outcomes that are being hoped to be achieved, and what metrics, if any, can be applied to assess success in the short and long-term; shifts in awareness, understanding, attitudes, gambling behaviour, use of responsible gambling strategies or resources, gambling disorder incidence, specific gambling-related harms, participation rates, social wellbeing, health, treatment seeking, etc.
- A basis in current empirical research findings and/or guided by theoretical and conceptual frameworks.
- An understanding of the psychological, social, and environmental determinants of healthy gambling attitudes, beliefs, and cognitions, and excessive (risk factors for) gambling behaviours, including *common biases and heuristics* that contribute to ongoing gambling. These may represent barriers that need to be overcome before behavioural change can be achieved.
- Consideration of the individual's point on the spectrum of gambling-related harms.
- An awareness of competing factors and pressures that act as a *barrier* to effective shifts towards responsible gambling behaviours.
- An awareness of factors that maintain shifts in behaviours and attitudes over the longer term.
- Avoidance of messages that foster existing negative perceptions of gambling, stigma, and problem gambling stereotypes.
- Act to *motivate and empower individuals to take specific actions* to maintain responsible gambling behaviours.

The Responsible Gambling Council, Ontario Canada, has described eight ways of engaging with creative agencies in developing public health campaigns<sup>6</sup>. In brief, these include ensuring that the client (GambleAware in this case) controls the message to be communicated, and that the strategy to be employed is strong and coherent. This entails building a relationship with the agency over time and *working out the language that is relevant and easily communicated to the target audience*, with *focus testing of concepts* prior to the introduction of the campaign to the intended audience. Importantly, efforts should be directed towards *promoting healthy choices* and identifying any negative or unintended interpretations of messages, or messages that are dismissed as irrelevant to the target audience, and any offence caused by, or negative reactions to, the advertisement. Finally, the suggestion is that one simple message is conveyed that over time builds to represent a persuasive argument and rationale for behavioural change and positive decision-making.

*Pre- and post-evaluation of marketing campaigns is critical* for numerous reasons. Given the investment of time and money, it is important to evaluate campaigns to determine if they achieved the desired aims. This step may be a small cost in relation to the cost of the overall campaign, but is essential as it will *drive the development of future campaigns*. It is also important to ensure that the campaign has *minimal unintended negative consequences*. For example, there is some research evidence that responsible gambling messages can increase

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.responsiblegambling.org/rg-news-research/perspective-working-with-a-creative-agency>

gambling among low-level gamblers<sup>7</sup>, potentially due to these acting as a reminder to gamble, or that others gamble more often, increasing the salience of gambling and the anchor point of 'normal' levels of gambling. Messages may inadvertently increase gambling-related stigma, be culturally inappropriate, or otherwise fail to achieve the target aim. Learning from previous campaigns is the best way to optimise outcomes from future campaigns.

### *Campaign objectives*

The first consideration in creating responsible gambling advertisements is to determine the objectives that are trying to be achieved in the short, medium, and long-term, and the metrics to measure outcomes. A range of broad population-level outcomes can be pursued that encompass one or more of the following objectives:

- Increased knowledge and understanding on the operation of respective forms of gambling
- Changes in attitudes fostering gambling as a recreational (for fun) rather than an income generating activity
- Greater understanding of comparative differences in costs of participation across different forms of gambling
- Increased awareness of the risk and impacts associated with excessive gambling at all levels along the gambling-harm spectrum
- Reducing stigma associated with problem gambling
- Encouraging at-risk and problem gamblers to access resources and treatment services early in their career trajectory
- Encouraging others harmed by an individual's gambling to access resources and help services
- Reduction in gambling participation among a specific group (e.g., youth, vulnerable individuals)
- Depicting steps and role-modelling skills in:
  - Managing budgets to restrict gambling within personally affordable levels
  - Setting and adhering to within and across session set limits
  - Seeking assistance from significant others and treatment services
  - Engaging in a range of social and recreational activities in addition to gambling
  - Behavioural steps that can be taken to enhance individual control over gambling

It is recommended that any responsible gambling campaign consist of a package of advertisements with each advertisement specifically targeting one or more of the above components.

### *Universal vs. targeted approaches*

According to Ladouceur and his colleagues, there are two potential approaches: *universal* population wide and *targeted* high-risk groups<sup>8</sup>. 'Universal' prevention programs are directed toward the general population irrespective of gambling status, risk or level of

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<sup>7</sup> Mizerski, R., Lee, A., Sadeque, S., Jolley, W., Wang, S., Jiang, J., & Osborne, C. (2012, January). Boomerang effects of gambling warnings exposed to non-problem gamblers. In *ANZMAC 2012: Proceedings of Australian & New Zealand Marketing Academy* (pp. 1-7). ANZMAC.

<sup>8</sup> Ladouceur, R., Ferland, F., & Fournier, P. (2003). Correction of erroneous perceptions among primary school students regarding the notions of chance and randomness in gambling. *American Journal of Health Education*, 34(5), 272–277.

involvement. The intent is to inform the full spectrum of community members of the nature of gambling, attendant risks associated with excessive gambling, provision of relevant information regarding odds and the operation of specific forms, advice on budget management to promote gambling within personally affordable limits, and taking steps to ensure that gambling remains a recreational activity. The focus of the content is not specifically on problem gambling or risk factors, but on shifting the general public's attitudes, cognitions, and motivations to engage in gambling as a recreational activity.

Focusing advertising messages on gambling in general, irrespective of an individual's gambling status, can be seen as effectively serving to distance the concept of recreational gambling from that of problem/disordered gambling. The construct of problem/disordered gambling has been shown to elicit strong negative reactions from the public, both in respect to public stigma (prejudice, perceived character flaw, irresponsible) and self-stigmatization (internalization of negative public perceptions and socially rejection)<sup>9,10</sup>. Accordingly, a universal approach should be neutral, focus on gambling as a recreational activity, provide relevant information, set out actions or steps to follow to maintain affordable levels of gambling, and ensure that the message resonates with the audience. The assumption is that individuals at the lower levels of gambling expenditure will not find these campaigns applicable and therefore remain unmotivated to change behaviours in response to messages that they believe have no personal relevance or applicable to their circumstances, or imply/infer gamblers are immature, impulsive, irrational or of weak moral character.

In contrast, targeted approaches are tailored toward specific subpopulations considered at higher risk of developing, or currently manifesting features indicative of, a gambling disorder. The content of the advertising messages is designed to reduce the likelihood of an individual transitioning to a gambling disorder by highlighting the types of risky behaviours or vulnerabilities that result in excessive losses. In this context, messages should contain information on the patterns of behaviours, cognitions, attitudes, and beliefs demonstrated to predict the onset of excessive gambling.

For those exhibiting features of a gambling disorder, the message is directed towards providing information on available resources, and encouraging motivations to take steps to access assistance. Agencies should be cautioned in focusing on highlighting or promoting aspects of problem gambling that might feed into existing pejorative stereotypes of problem gamblers as irresponsible, impulsive, self-centred, untrustworthy, anti-social or foolish<sup>9</sup>. Doing so will feed into a distancing of significant others from problem gambling perpetuating the notion that problem gamblers are morally degenerates, and will be denied or dismissed by problem gamblers as their not displaying those traits but rather suffering an addictive illness.

For both universal and targeted approaches, the language should be appropriate to the audience. Messages that contain descriptors or language that the audience does not relate to or understand clearly will be overlooked or ignored. How the audience interprets the concept of responsible gambling is important to understand. If the term responsible gambling is interpreted as synonymous with problem gambling, the message may miss its mark among recreational gamblers who dismiss it as not applicable to them. Hence, it is

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<sup>9</sup> Gavriel-Fried, B. & Rabayov, T. (2017). Similarities and differences between individuals seeking treatment for gambling problems vs. alcohol and substance use problems in relation to the progressive model of self-stigma. *Frontiers in Psychology*, doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2017.00957

<sup>10</sup> Hing, N., Russell, A., Nuske, E., & Gainsbury, S. (2015). *The stigma of problem gambling: Causes, characteristics and consequences*. Melbourne: Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation.

preferable to avoid use of ambiguous and poorly understood terms in preference to *specific messages that promote positive behaviours and strategies to maintain gambling as a recreational pursuit.*

It is therefore recommended that agencies avoid including concepts or terms related to 'responsible gambling' and 'problem gambling' within messages designed to promote specific behavioural strategies designed to minimise gambling-related harms. *The message should be positive with specific strategies* to assist gamblers conduct the various steps that they need to take to maintain appropriate gambling expenditure, such as managing budgets within a gambling environment, to enable them to sustain entertainment.

Where advertisements are targeted towards problem gamblers, *agencies should avoid focusing on the more serious impacts and consequences of problem gambling*, that is, domestic violence, bankruptcy, loss of home, and suicidality. The prevalence of these serious impacts is relatively low compared to *lesser level harms* such as stress, loss of savings, and worry. It is argued that problem gamblers do not identify with the image of a gambler suffering such serious consequences and, consequently, the message does not resonate with them. The individual will assume that as he/she does not fit the profile of such a problem gambler, as they have not experienced such impacts the message will be interpreted as not applying to him/her. The message will be lost and the campaign, ineffective in achieving intended outcomes. It is strongly recommended that the creative agency avoids portraying the problem gambler as an irresponsible, self-interest driven, impulsive or anti-social individual disinterested in the well-being of family members or significant others.

There is evidence that a significant proportion of individuals meeting criteria for a gambling disorder suffer comorbid psychiatric conditions; depression, substance dependence/abuse, anxiety<sup>11</sup>. Any effort to incorporate suggestions that a problem gambler may be gambling because of mental illness represents a double-edged sword. Although on the one hand it might encourage an individual seek help for their primary condition (and hence overcome their gambling), the risk is that it might stigmatize all problem gamblers as being mentally ill and therefore counterproductive. It is recommended that linking gambling and mental illness should be carefully constructed if not avoided as a primary focus of an advertisement. This applies to references to improving mental health as an outcome of responsible gambling. A preferred option is to focus on improvements to overall quality of life that extend to enhanced family relationships and available funds for recreational activities such as holidays.

A sub-set of targeted campaigns are individually-tailored. For example, providing data or information that allows an individual to compare their patterns of gambling to normative data allows the individual to gain an understanding to their risk level compared to similar others in the population. These are not discussed as they are not included in the scope of the current report.

### *Target audience & objectives*

Media campaigns should *consider the target audience*, as this will in part determine the message/content of the advertisement and the outcomes sought. In preparing a media advertising campaign, it is necessary to establish the target audience and understand the

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<sup>11</sup> Hartmann, M., & Blaszczynski, A. (2016). The longitudinal relationship between psychiatric disorders and gambling disorders. *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*, DOI: 10.1007/s11469-016-9705-z.

cultural, socio-demographic, and gambling environment in which they function. Accordingly, the general principle is to create advertisements that are specific to identified sub-populations being targeted.

It is recommended that advertising agencies are briefed to *tailor advertisements for specific community subgroups or sectors* as opposed to introducing a standardized and/or uniform program administered to the entire community. It is difficult to create messages that resonate with, are perceived relevant, and inspire cognitive and/or behavioural change in an entire population. This does not mean that broad-level means of communication should not be used, rather that it should not be expected that similar outcomes will be seen across all who view the advertisement.

Understanding the nature of the audience will dictate the type of *content and language* of advertisements. The format of the advertisement should be sufficiently attractive to gain the attention and interest of most of the intended audience. This can be achieved by including features that individuals within different targeted subpopulations and participating in different forms of gambling can relate to; adolescents, young adults, socially disadvantaged, elderly, and between those who use different types of gambling and gambling venues. This is relevant given particular factors influence gambling in one neighbourhood may be absent or different in other local communities. For example, messages promoting responsible gambling practices among gaming machine players will be perceived by those participating in other forms as personally irrelevant and therefore ignored or dismissed.

It is also essential to be mindful of the *types of gambling-related harms that are being targeted*, as well as the *intended behavioural change* to be achieved. Gambling-related harms occur along a spectrum; previously, public health campaigns have focused only on those experiencing serious harms, such as neglecting one's family, and not being able to pay major bills. However, individuals with serious gambling problems are least likely to change their behaviours based on an educational campaign given the entrenched nature of their problems. It is important to target harms that are experienced more commonly that are associated with lower-levels of gambling-related harms. Individuals at low- and moderate-risk of experiencing gambling problems may be able to enact behavioural strategies more readily as they have less entrenched cognitive biases. *Minimising low-level gambling problems are likely to have a broader impact on the community* as these are more common, affecting a greater proportion of the population<sup>12</sup>. These would mostly include those that are psychological or financial in nature, affecting general quality of life rather than the minority of serious critical incidents.

#### *Target changes in both information and attitudes*

One of the reported limitations of population-based advertisements emerges from studies that have evaluated a range of public health programs. Merzel and D'Afflitti<sup>13</sup> argue that

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<sup>12</sup> Langham, E., Thorne, H., Browne, M., Donaldson, P., Rose, J., & Rockloff, M. (2015). Understanding gambling related harm: A proposed definition, conceptual framework, and taxonomy of harms. *BMC public health*, 16(1), 80.

Browne, M., Langham, E., Rawat, V., Greer, N., Li, E., Rose, J., ... & Bryden, G. (2016). *Assessing gambling-related harm in Victoria: A public health perspective*. Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation.

Shannon, K., Anjoul, F., & Blaszczyński, A. (2017). Mapping the proportional distribution of gambling-related harms in a clinical and community sample. *International Gambling Studies*, 17(3), 366-385.

<sup>13</sup> Merzel, C., & D'Afflitti, J. (2003). Reconsidering community-based health promotion: Promise, performance, and potential. *American journal of public health*, 93(4), 557-574.



many campaigns based the content of their advertisements on findings derived from behavioural psychological theories with an individual level focus, and the provision of information/psycho-educational material. What was often overlooked was the contextual social and environmental variables that influence behaviours; for example, availability and access, community attitudes and acceptance, and competing pro-gambling messages. Here, messages directed towards modifying social norms, attitudes, and expectations via depictions of appropriate role modelling might be more effective than the simple provision of information. Providing information is insufficient to modify behavioural lifestyle practices unless it is accompanied by a shift in attitudes. There is a large body of evidence that gambling warning that simply provide information, such as about the probabilities of winning, have little to no impact on gambling cognitions and behaviours<sup>14</sup>.

It is recommended that advertisement attempt to *shift attitudes in manner by promoting non-judgmental messages about normative, behavioural patterns with positive suggestions for behaviour, attitudes, and expectations associated with recreational gambling*. The suggestion is that agencies create advertisements that role model positive gambling behaviours which gamblers should aspire to, that is, the gambler demonstrates how to gamble for fun and using behavioural strategies to control play to affordable levels. Within this context, positive skills depicting how such role models respectfully resist social pressures to participate to excess model actions that can be taken or emulated by the viewer in real life.

#### *Suggested message components and content*

As indicated previously, messages designed to inform or educate gamblers are generally ineffective. Research supports messages that encourage individuals to consider their own gambling through the provision of questions or statements that *prompt self-reflection and appraisal*. This allows individuals to self-generate arguments and conclusions that are more convincing than statements provided by external sources.

Messages are more likely to be persuasive if they *promote positive attitudes* towards the desired behaviour, which is particularly effective if this is mutually exclusive (e.g., setting deposit limits vs. having no limits). Motivation can be enhanced by reducing the 'cost' of compliance, increasing the perceived ability to perform a specific action, using a positively-framed message, and appealing to the individual's sense of value.

Making messages *specific* may increase their effectiveness in terms of user engagement. For example, messages should be *simple with one specific action suggested* and conveying a sense of urgency. Steps suggested for behavioural change should be easy to achieve, simple to accomplish, attractive to the individual, low-cost in terms of effort, as well as cognitive and emotional resources, and provided in a timely manner such that they are relevant to be conducted immediately.

Including social norms may enhance behavioural change. Gamblers are more likely to engage with responsible gambling resources if they believe that these resources are typically used by their peers, and those that they respect. Similar strategies have been used in other fields, such as to reduce energy consumption by including a comparison to typical household

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<sup>14</sup> Gainsbury, S. M., Aro, D., Ball, D., Tobar, C., & Russell, A. (2015). Optimal content for warning messages to enhance consumer decision making and reduce problem gambling. *Journal of Business Research*, 68(10), 2093-2101.

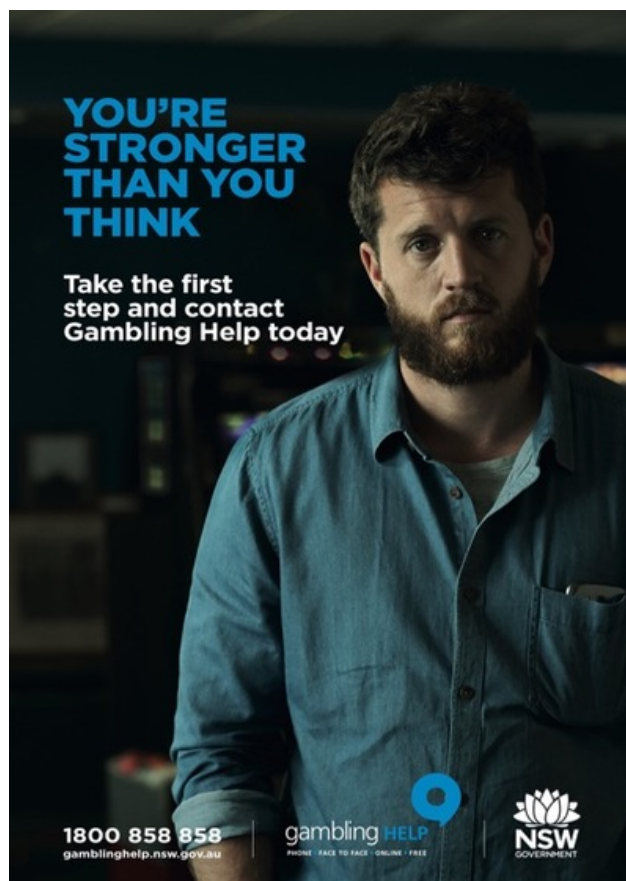
Monaghan, S., & Blaszczynski, A. (2009). Electronic gaming machine warning messages: Information versus self-evaluation. *The Journal of Psychology*, 144(1), 83-96.



energy use in the neighbourhood, and to increase on-time tax payments by including a statement that most people pay taxes on time on relevant notices. These are referred to as “nudge” strategies<sup>15</sup>. However, caution and testing are required when using social norms to avoid unintended negative consequences. For example, there is some evidence that individuals who are informed that they are currently below average levels may increase their consumption<sup>16</sup>. This may be offset by the inclusion of indicators to recognize and celebrate low levels of consumption.

### *Examples of past campaigns*

Examples of a positively received advertisements that promotes a positive attitude towards help seeking behaviour is the ‘Courage to Change’ video developed by the New South Wales Government in Australia in cooperation with the agency, LOUD<sup>17</sup>. This campaign adopted a positive motivational approach focusing on an individual’s capacity to recover from setbacks and to have inner strength and resilience. The campaign resulted in a 270% increase in take-up of Gambling Help self-help options, 15% increase in calls to the Helpline, and 19% increase in online counselling sessions<sup>18</sup>.



Similarly, the ‘Keep it in check. Keep it well played’ Victorian State commercial launched during Responsible Gambling Awareness week adopted a more light-hearted approach with

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<sup>15</sup> Sunstein, C. (2013). Behavioral Economics and Regulation. *Oxford Handbook of Behavioral Economics and the Law. Draft*, 2(16), 13.

<sup>16</sup> Schultz, P.W., Nolan, J.M., Cialdini, R.B., Goldstein, N.J., & Griskevicius, V. (2007). The constructive, destructive, and reconstructive power of social norms. *Psychological Science*, 18(5), 429–434.

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cVjO3rXvkg>

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.campaignbrief.com/2016/04/nsw-governments-responsible-ga.html>

a spin on balance and a positive aspect of gambling<sup>19</sup>. These are examples of public health advertisements that are mindful of avoiding stigmatising gambling problems and encouraging steps towards positive behavioural change.



An innovative approach implemented by the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation receiving a 2013 AdNews Media Campaign of the Year award depicted four gamblers taking control of their behaviour over 100 days and inviting the public to take up a similar challenge<sup>20</sup>.

The Canadian-based Responsible Gambling Council have run a series of targeted campaigns, for example, focusing on teens and seniors. Depicting the group of interest may increase relevance among the target audience and specific strategies to minimise gambling harms differ between populations. Therefore, the targeted strategies are likely to be more effective than a universal strategy would be with either group. Both campaigns use positive framed messages with action steps and have no judgemental language.



<sup>19</sup> <http://www.insidegambling.com.au/editions/9/feature/protecting-your-wallet-and-your-welfare-thats-well-played>

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.responsiblegambling.vic.gov.au/about-us/news/fight-for-you-wins-media-campaign-of-the-year>



An example of a poorly conceived responsible gambling advertisement is that of the commercial introduced by the Singaporean National Council on Problem Gambling during the 2014 world cup soccer tournament<sup>21</sup>. The commercial depicted two young children, one of who is bemoaning the fact that his father bet all his savings on Germany winning. That Germany won the tournament resulted in the commercial becoming a parody for the promotion of gambling. The attempt to inject 'realism' by referring to a participating team failed because the creators failed to consider the likelihood and consequences should the selected team win. This led to an attempt to revise the commercial to undo the damage done – whether successfully remains unknown. Failures such as these can only be potentially avoided by a series of conceptual and market testing before implementation.



<sup>21</sup> <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-07-15/an-singapore-anti-gambling-ad-kicks-own-goal-with-germany-win/5597114>

A series of advertisements by Ladbrokes featuring different characters were purported to be part of an effort to promote responsible gambling – the Mr. Brightside character depicted below is supposedly urging customers to keep their betting on the right side of fun. The outdoor campaign ads are regarded as harmful because the messages could adversely affect young adults, as well as those who are prone to think of gambling as part of a glamorous lifestyle. The advertisements include an offer of free credit and do not include any information about responsible gambling or warnings about gambling problems. This highlights a major problem with any campaign intended to support responsible gambling by gambling operators as including branding and any positive messages about gambling may promote the brand and undermine the responsible gambling message. Another ad within this campaign featured “The Professor” and carried the tag line “once is lucky, twice is talent”. This promotes a belief that gambling is controlled by the individual and based on skill, which may encourage ongoing gambling and misrepresents the roles of chance and skill in determining the outcome.

