# Chapter 7



Course PRS-5203-1 Preventing Dependency on Gambling Secondary V

**Duration: 25 hours** 

# 7.1 Introduction

The course *Preventing Dependency on Gambling* is aimed at encouraging adult learners to reflect on the phenomenon of dependency in order to prevent the onset and development of problems. As part of a preventive approach, it guides adult learners' reflections to help them acquire, activate or maintain healthy lifestyle habits and responsible behaviours.

This course deals with the phenomenon of dependency by focusing on the personal environment, spheres of influence, the consequences of dependency for the individual, loved ones and society in general, and the role of public, private and community resources and their preventive actions.

# 7.2 Subject-Specific Competencies

This course targets the development of all three subject-specific competencies.

# Overview of the Subject-Specific Competencies, Key Features and Manifestations

Competency 1	Competency 2	Competency 3
Explores the phenomenon of dependency	Interprets the phenomenon of dependency	Takes a critical look at the prevention of dependency
Describes the phenomenon of dependency     Distinguishes habits and behaviours based on typical profiles of user or gamblers, the desired effects and the risk of dependency     States the aim of the related laws and regulations     Explores the interests of the state, pressure and opinion groups and citizens with respect to the prevention of dependency      Explains the phenomenon of dependency using the law of cause and effect     Makes connections between the elements of the law of cause and effect      Explains the dependency development process using the cycle of dependency     Makes connections between the elements of the cycle and the possible reversal of the development of dependency	Determines the influence of risk factors and protection factors in an individual's personal, immediate and sociocultural environments     Considers the influence of myths, beliefs, perceptions and values on an individual's opinions and judgment     Explains the role of risk factors in dependency development     Explains the mitigating role of protection factors in preventing dependency     Recognizes the role of personal resources conducive to the adoption of responsible and preventive behaviours  Indicates possible consequences of dependency for the individual, loved ones and society in general     Recognizes psychosocial consequences of dependency     Recognizes economic consequences of dependency     Names public, private and community resources that could prove useful in a dependency situation     Chooses the appropriate services, depending on the circumstances	Explains his or her position on the prevention of dependency     Establishes the effectiveness of different preventive approaches to dependency     Considers the role and actions of support resources in his or her environment     Evaluates the effectiveness of the dependency prevention measures made available to the public

#### 7.3 Reflective Process

The reflective process is divided into four steps. It starts with the adult learner's life experience. Then the adult learner is encouraged to reflect in order to assimilate and integrate knowledge, and prepare to transfer his or her learning to authentic life situations. These steps are related and complementary. They require the adult learner to perform different tasks that are not necessarily sequential. The adult can always return to a previous task.

A diagram of the reflective process is presented in Appendix 2.

## 7.4 Cross-Curricular Competencies

Although, to varying degrees, the course *Preventing Dependency on Gambling* involves all of the cross-curricular competencies in the Diversified Basic Education Program, it is important to identify those that best meet the requirements of the tasks to be carried out in each of the learning situations developed by the teacher.

For example, the learning situation *Roxanne's Future* in section 7.8 makes use of three cross-curricular competencies: *Uses information, Achieves his/her potential* and *Communicates appropriately*.

Adult learners use information when they research dependency on gambling and make sure their sources are credible. They compare and assess the pertinence of the information, then organize it to produce a coherent message. Thus, they systematize their information-gathering process, gather information and put it to use.

When adult learners achieve their potential, they recognize their own personal characteristics, justify their choices, take their place among others and use their resources to adopt and maintain preventive behaviours.

Finally, when they *communicate appropriately*, adult learners express ideas, emotions and intuitions, raise questions, reason and argue their position on the issue of preventing dependency on gambling. They use the appropriate vocabulary, rules, conventions and codes. Managing the communication process, becoming familiar with various modes of communication and using the most appropriate mode in a given situation are assets in building relationships with others.

# 7.5 Subject-Specific Content

The subject-specific content of this course enables adult learners to study the phenomenon of dependency on gambling. It includes five categories of knowledge and related content, as well as examples of cultural references.

The prescribed elements are: the subject-specific competencies, key features and manifestations; the categories of knowledge and related content; the families of learning situations; and the cultural references. Although the use of cultural references is compulsory, the examples provided in the course are not.

#### Categories of Knowledge

The categories of knowledge in this course are:

- 1) Dependency and prevention
- 2) Personal environment
- 3) Spheres of influence
- 4) Consequences for oneself and others
- 5) Support resources

The categories of knowledge can be addressed in any order.

The following pages contain a detailed list of the categories of knowledge and related content.

#### Categories of Knowledge

### 1) Dependency and prevention

#### Preventive approaches

- · Responsible gambling (harm reduction)
- Abstinence

#### **Preventive actions**

- Provincial awareness, information and education campaigns
- · Local and regional initiatives

#### Types of gambling

- State-run gambling
- Organized bingo games
- Online bingo
- Horseracing
- Types of lotteries (weekly, daily, instant)
- Video lottery
- Casino
- Private gambling
- Types of sports betting (between individuals, pools, bookies)
- · Cards (family, friends)
- Cards (tournaments)
- Drawings
- Games of skill (golf, billiards, darts, etc.)
- Internet (virtual casino)
- Stock market
- Sweepstakes

#### Typical gambler profiles

- · Recreational or social gambler
- · Compulsive gambler
- Problem (pathological) gambler

#### Scope of the phenomenon

- Statistics
- Research
- Life situations

#### Differences between men and women

- Motivations
- · Types of activities
- Limits

#### Reasons for gambling

- Entertainment
- Self-esteem
- Pleasure
- Self-fulfillment
- Thrill
- Socialization
- Greed

#### Laws and regulations

- Law prohibiting the sale of lottery products to minors (under 18 years) (consumer protection)
- Act respecting the Société des loteries du Québec (c. S-13.1) and its regulations
- Code of advertising standards for Loto-Québec

#### Pressure and opinion groups

- Union des tenanciers de bars du Québec
- Association des établissements de divertissements

#### Government agencies

- Régie des alcools, des courses et des jeux
- Société des loteries vidéo du Québec (SLVQ)
- Société des bingos du Québec (SBQ)
- Société des casinos du Québec (SCQ)
- Société des salons de jeux du Québec (SSJQ)

# Ministries involved in the implementation of the Plan d'action gouvernemental sur le jeu pathologique 2002-2005 (ongoing)

- Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux
- Ministère de la Sécurité publique
- Ministère des Finances

#### 2) Personal environment

#### Law of cause and effect

- Individual
- Game (activity and the desired effect)
- Context

#### Cycle of dependency

- Circular process
  - Life problems
  - Stress, anxiety, feelings of helplessness
  - Search for adaptive or compensatory responses (outlets)
  - Actions on oneself and the environment or temporary relief and dissatisfaction
- Potential reversal of the process

#### Categories of Knowledge

# 3) Spheres of influence

#### Concepts

- Perception
- Belief
- Value
- Prejudice
- Pleasure
- Importance of gain
- · Risk factor
- Protection factor

#### Myths and beliefs

- Origin
- Bases
- Discernment between fact and fiction

#### **Risk factors**

- · Personal factors
  - Magical thinking and superstition
  - Competitiveness
  - Desire for pleasure, novelty and excitement
  - Substance dependency
  - Impulsiveness
  - Depression
  - Desire for immediate gratification
  - Situational crisis
  - Significant importance of gain
- Family and intergenerational factors
  - Problem-gambling parent
  - Substance-abusing parent
  - Financial difficulties
  - Family values
  - Standards for success
- · Educational and occupational factors
  - Failure at school
  - Job loss
- Social and cultural factors
  - Peer pressure
  - Organized trips to casinos

- Financial factors
  - Friend or family member's gain
  - Easy credit
  - Poor financial organization
- · Political and economic factors
  - Accessibility
  - Government approval
  - Promotion of gambling

#### **Protection factors**

- · Personal factors
  - Critical judgment
  - Knowledge about games of chance and money in general, and about problem gambling
- Family and intergenerational factors
  - Conflict-resolution ability
  - Positive (healthy) parental model
  - Standards for success
  - Family values
- School-related and occupational factors
  - Personal involvement in the community
  - Peer support
- Social and cultural factors
  - Sense of belonging to a group
- · Political and economic factors
  - Prevention campaigns
  - Restrictive measures

#### Categories of Knowledge

## 4) Consequences for oneself and others

#### Psychosocial consequences

- · Psychological distress
- Depression
- · Suicide and attempted suicide
- Accidents, death and involuntary injuries
- Conjugal and family violence
- Sexual abuse
- Interpersonal conflict
- Dropping out of school
- Behavioural difficulties at school
- Learning difficulties
- Parental negligence
- Intergenerational transmission of gambling problems
- Propagation of infectious diseases (HIV, hepatitis, STIs)
- Problems at work
- Unsafe sexual behaviours

#### **Economic consequences**

- Direct costs
  - Health care
  - Law enforcement
  - Road accidents
  - Debt
- Indirect costs
  - Loss of productivity
  - Loss of meaning in life
  - Absenteeism

# 5) Support resources

#### Public, private and community resources

- Health and social services centres (CSSS)
- Rehabilitation centres
- Loto-Québec
- Self-exclusion programs
- Fondation Mise sur toi
- Community organizations and self-help groups
- Local and regional initiatives to prevent dependency on gambling
- Help lines
- · Crisis centre
- · Gambling: Help and Referral
- Web site:
  - http://gambling.psy.ulaval.ca/

#### **School-related resources**

Student support services

#### Cultural References

The examples of cultural references focus adult learners' attention on the social issues related to dependency on gambling. They address different problems, involve a variety of characters in different contexts, and make reference to myths and beliefs in order to get learners to think about the situation, help them understand the issues in question and encourage them to acquire, activate or maintain healthy lifestyle habits and responsible behaviours.

The cultural references provided in this course are:

- Gambling and Guilt
- Family Life
- Social Reintegration and Influences
- Career Plans and Gambling

The examples are fictional, which allows learners to address them in an impersonal manner. They will be able to transfer their learning and apply it in real-life situations.

Although the use of cultural references is compulsory, the examples provided in this course are not.

#### Example of a cultural reference: Gambling and Guilt

Karen is nervous. She checks all of her pockets, empties out her wallet, looks in her hiding place: she has no money left! Yet when she got to the bar she had money for the entire week. She tries to convince a few acquaintances to lend her a few dollars. "It's for my daughter. She needs winter boots and a coat and I don't have any money. I could get by with \$150." However, since Karen never pays back her loans, no one trusts her.

Long gone are the days when Karen had fun with her friends. She played sports and hadn't a care in the world because her parents took care of everything. People considered her an active and happy person. Since CEGEP, however, her life has really changed. She moved, had a baby, and her financial difficulties increased her level of stress. One day, she discovered that she enjoyed playing video lottery games. It gave her an adrenaline rush.

Day in, day out, Karen no longer knows where the time goes. In front of the video lottery terminal (VLT), she feels like she is in another world, hypnotized. Once she won \$750 in a few minutes! She imagined herself on vacation with her daughter on the beach. After a series of small wins and losses, Karen is now having bouts of serious depression and her stress level is at its maximum. She tries to concentrate on the VLT. Usually she has better luck when she thinks about her uncle Henry. She has the rabbit's foot he gave her. Before every bet, she holds it in her left hand.

Karen is spending more and more time looking for money. Gambling has become an obsession and she is beginning to neglect her daughter. She feels like a bad mother and has pangs of guilt. However, she cannot stop playing now, she has too much invested. She can only think of one thing: winning her money back. She has difficulty sleeping. She also sometimes goes an entire day without eating and suffers from stomach aches. Her debts are piling up and she feels increasingly depressed. She does not see a way out of her financial problems. She has dark thoughts and wonders whether suicide is the only solution. Her daughter would get a small inheritance, and her own personal problems would be solved.

What else can she do?

#### Example of a cultural reference: Family Life

George is a young father and entrepreneur proud of his successful new business. He is trying to balance his work and family life and makes it a point to be home for dinner. He is usually home by 5 o'clock. Lately, however, he says he needs to meet clients and can only do so in the evening. He no longer notifies his wife Melanie. He is regularly absent at mealtime and sometimes acts irritated and impatient with his wife and their son Oliver. Melanie attributes George's mood swings to overwork. She also notices that he seems to be preoccupied about their financial situation. He has borrowed money from her without ever really explaining why. Melanie is concerned about the changes in his behaviour: "Does he have a mistress? Drug problems? Has he made bad investments?"

George is spending less and less time at home. Melanie now takes care of all their family obligations, and she finds it difficult to pay the bills on her secretary's salary. Like her mother before her, she tends to be secretive about her situation. She sees some resemblance to her father's drinking problem, but cannot put her finger on the cause of George's behaviour. He doesn't exhibit any outward signs like her father did. Nevertheless, his repeated absences, financial difficulties and lies have caused her to mistrust him. Melanie begins examining every clue. After doing some research, she thinks her husband may have a gambling problem. George denies it. It is a very emotional time.

Melanie withdraws and fails to take control of the situation. Gradually, her health begins to suffer: insomnia, frequent headaches, increased stress. The couple often argues about George's gambling and she begins thinking about leaving him. The situation also has an impact on Oliver. He has become difficult and has trouble concentrating. He is not doing as well at school and his relationships with his classmates are suffering. Although Melanie wants to protect him from any negative consequences, she is less attentive to her son's affective and emotional needs.

Gambling causes family problems, not only because of financial stress and negative consequences, but also because of the deterioration of the trust the family had until then enjoyed. Melanie feels exhausted, powerless and angry. She is unable to see a way out alone.

#### Example of a cultural reference: Social Reintegration and Influences

Recently found guilty of possession of cannabis and of possession for purposes of trafficking, Kevin will be released on probation in a month. After participating in the prison's social integration program, he discovered that he enjoys working with his hands. He now wants to change and take control of his life. This requires that he change his behaviour, leave his home town and move away from his sister, with whom he gets along. He must also cut all ties with his former friends. They are too much of a bad influence.

The day has finally come and Kevin moves to a new town. After two months, however, he begins to feel lonely, far from family and friends. Employers are unwilling to give him a chance to prove himself and demonstrate his ability. To pass the time, he takes regular walks downtown. One day, without thinking, he enters a bar and orders a coffee. He is careful not to drink any alcohol, because he is unable to control himself when he does. Suddenly he is distracted by a woman's screams. She has just won \$500 after betting \$20 at a video lottery terminal (VLT). Impressed by her easy winnings, Kevin wonders whether he, too, could be lucky and get a chance to improve his living conditions. So he bets the only \$20 bill he has on him. After half an hour, he has won \$350. Lady Luck is smiling on him. He thinks he has found the solution to his money problems. He returns home happy.

In the weeks that follow, Kevin regularly returns to the bar and feels less lonely. At first he is lucky, but then wins and losses alternate. "It's a bad streak. I'll get my money back soon," he thinks. In order to be able to continue playing, he pawns his watch and television.

During a meeting with his probation officer, Kevin mentions his difficulties. He says he feels a little depressed and has gradually stopped looking for work. He knows why: he has been losing. He is afraid to tell his probation officer about the gambling, however, because he is not supposed to be going to bars.

The 28-year-old feels he is reliving the same feelings of shame and guilt that led him to prison. This image snaps him back to reality and he decides to talk about his problem. "That's enough. I need help."

#### Example of a cultural reference: Career Plans and Gambling

Roxanne is enrolled part-time in a vocational training program to become a hairdresser. She feels she needs to go back to school to get a better job. Despite the requirements of the work-study approach, she is confident about her future. She likes to spend evenings at home playing cards with her uncle Paul and she sometimes buys Loto 6/49 tickets. Lately she has begun having a drink and playing on a video lottery terminal (VLT) with a friend. Roxanne doesn't think her new interest in VLTs is a problem, because she plays for fun. Her winnings last week, however, led her to believe that she is lucky. Since she wants to stay lucky, she now plays more often to improve her performance. "Practice makes perfect," she tells herself.

Roxanne now goes alone to the bar and plays regularly. She is more and more preoccupied, no longer has lunch at school with her friends, and doesn't talk anymore about how much fun she is having. She has difficulty concentrating and failed the last couple of English tests. Her employer has noticed new behaviours: she gets to work late and makes up all sorts of reasons to borrow money. Some coworkers even suspect her of stealing out of the petty cash. She can get cash advances on her credit card, but she is only making minimum monthly payments. While trying to win her money back, she has lost all her savings, including the \$2000 she had set aside to buy a car.

Sometimes Roxanne thinks about quitting. She has managed to stay away from the VLT for two weeks at a time. It is difficult, however, and she always goes back. She wins just enough to keep playing. At a recent prevention activity at school, she was struck by a message: "If gambling is no longer a game, you may need help." Without really knowing why, she decides to take down the telephone number.

Looking in the mirror, Roxanne no longer sees the determined young woman who wanted a career. "I've got to stop. This can't go on." She finds the number and calls for help.

This cultural reference is used in the suggested learning situation presented in section 7.8.

# 7.6 Families of Learning Situations

Learning situations that are related to each other or share common characteristics are grouped together into families, which present contexts that give meaning to adults' learning. This course involves the family *dependency on gambling*.

## 7.7 Broad Areas of Learning

To varying degrees, the course *Preventing Dependency on Gambling* has connections with all five broad areas of learning in the program. Each broad area of learning raises questions that can be used to develop learning situations.

The learning situation *Roxanne's Future* is related to the educational aim of the broad area of learning Environmental Awareness and Consumer Rights and Responsibilities: To encourage adult learners to develop an active relationship with their environment while maintaining a critical attitude toward consumption and the exploitation of the environment. The focus of development *Responsible use of goods and services* enables adult learners to think about their responsibilities, desires and priorities and to take a critical look at how gambling can affect their career plans.

# 7.8 Example of a Learning Situation

Learning situations place adult learners at the heart of the action and help them develop competencies, construct knowledge and mobilize a wide variety of resources. Each situation is based on a pedagogical aim that is connected to different elements of the program and course.

The learning situation below includes:

- 1) a reference to the elements of the program and course
- 2) the context: initial situation and situational problem
- 3) the pedagogical aim, activities and connection with the subject-specific competencies

This learning situation is entitled *Roxanne's Future*.

Reference to the elements of the program and the <i>Preventing Dependency on Gambling</i> course		
Broad area of learning	Environmental Awareness and Consumer Rights and Responsibilities	
Cross-curricular competencies	<ul><li>Uses information</li><li>Achieves his/her potential</li><li>Communicates appropriately</li></ul>	
Family of learning situations	Dependency on gambling	
Subject-specific competencies	<ul> <li>Explores the phenomenon of dependency</li> <li>Interprets the phenomenon of dependency</li> <li>Takes a critical look at the prevention of dependency</li> </ul>	
Categories of knowledge	<ul> <li>Dependency and prevention</li> <li>Personal environment</li> <li>Spheres of influence</li> <li>Consequences for oneself and others</li> <li>Support resources</li> </ul>	
Cultural reference	Career Plans and Gambling	

### 2) Context: initial situation and situational problem

Roxanne is enrolled part-time in a vocational training program to become a hairdresser. She feels she needs to go back to school to get a better job. Despite the requirements of the work-study approach, she is confident about her future. She likes to spend evenings at home playing cards with her uncle Paul and she sometimes buys Loto 6/49 tickets. Lately she has begun having a drink and playing on a video lottery terminal (VLT) with a friend. Roxanne doesn't think her new interest in VLTs is a problem, because she plays for fun. Her winnings last week, however, led her to believe that she is lucky. Since she wants to stay lucky, she now plays more often to improve her performance. "Practice makes perfect," she tells herself.

Roxanne now goes alone to the bar and plays regularly. She is more and more preoccupied, no longer has lunch at school with her friends, and doesn't talk anymore about how much fun she is having. She has difficulty concentrating and failed the last couple of English tests. Her employer has noticed new behaviours: she gets to work late and makes up all sorts of reasons to borrow money. Some coworkers even suspect her of stealing out of the petty cash. She can get cash advances on her credit card, but she is only making minimum monthly payments. While trying to win her money back, she has lost all her savings, including the \$2000 she had set aside to buy a car.

Sometimes Roxanne thinks about quitting. She has managed to stay away from the VLT for two weeks at a time. It is difficult, however, and she always goes back. She wins just enough to keep playing. At a recent prevention activity at school, she was struck by a message: "If gambling is no longer a game, you may need help." Without really knowing why, she decides to take down the telephone number.

Looking in the mirror, Roxanne no longer sees the determined young woman who wanted a career. "I've got to stop. This can't go on." She finds the number and calls for help.

# 3) Pedagogical aim, activities and connection with the subject-specific competencies

# Pedagogical aim: Help adult learners understand how dependency on gambling develops

Activities	Subject-Specific Competencies
In order to understand Roxanne's situation, the adult learner describes a situation of dependency on gambling, refers to the process by which dependency on gambling develops and defines the phenomenon and its progression. To do so, he or she:  • gathers information about the phenomenon of dependency • reads a variety of relevant and credible documents • prepares an oral or written presentation of the situation: questions and critical argumentation • describes Roxanne's gambler profile: table • represents Roxanne's situation using the law of cause and effect and the cycle of dependency	Explores the phenomenon of dependency
By further exploring Roxanne's situation, the adult learner identifies the influence of the risk factors and protection factors involved, the possible consequences and the support resources that could help in this context. To do so, he or she:  • lists the myths, beliefs, perceptions and values involved and describes their influence on Roxanne's opinions and judgment  • looks for additional credible information about dependency: risk factors and protection factors  • explains the role of risk factors and protection factors in Roxanne's situation  • identifies the economic and other consequences of Roxanne's dependency  • recognizes the personal resources conducive to Roxanne's responsible and preventive behaviour  • lists support resources that could help in Roxanne's situation  • compares Roxanne's situation with another situation  • formulates a critical point of view on dependency	Interprets the phenomenon of dependency
Lastly, the adult learner takes a critical look at the prevention of dependency on gambling. To do so, he or she:  • takes a personal position on the effectiveness of preventive approaches  • lists support resources in his or her community: roles and services offered  • prepares an oral or written presentation on the effectiveness of the dependency prevention measures made available to the public  • takes stock of his or her learning  • recognizes situations in which he/she could transfer his or her learning	Takes a critical look at the prevention of dependency

#### 7.9 End-of-Course Outcomes

In developing the competency *Explores the phenomenon of dependency,* adult learners describe a situation of dependency on gambling and become familiar with the law of cause and effect and the cycle of dependency. This stimulates their interest, curiosity and intellectual rigour. They learn how dependencies develop and about the effectiveness of preventive approaches. By using information, they observe that the phenomenon is complex, that it can rarely be easily explained and that, in order to understand it, they must explore its many aspects.

In developing the competency *Interprets the phenomenon of dependency,* adult learners answer the questions they raised in their exploration by applying a rigorous process and using credible information. They base their interpretation on the influence of risk factors and protection factors, the consequences of dependency for the individual, loved ones and society in general, and significant support resources. They qualify their interpretation using critical argumentation, keeping a certain distance from their own representations and avoiding hasty conclusions.

In developing the competency *Takes a critical look at the prevention of dependency,* adult learners explain the process they used to explore the phenomenon and construct their interpretation. They reflect on the effectiveness of actions aimed at preventing the occurrence or recurrence of problems. They explain their position on preventive intervention in cases of dependency on gambling. Using information, they establish the effectiveness of the approaches used by support resources and consider the role and actions of these resources by evaluating the effectiveness of the dependency prevention measures made available to the public. Adult learners take a critical look at the prevention of dependency, show good judgment and achieve their potential, in particular by implementing their ideas.

# 7.10 Evaluation Criteria

To support the learning of adult learners and evaluate subject-specific competencies at the end of the course, the teacher bases his or her judgment on the evaluation criteria.

Competencies	Evaluation Criteria	
Explores the phenomenon of dependency	Adequate use of information gathered on dependency on gambling	
Interprets the phenomenon of dependency	Careful analysis of the risk factors and protection factors at play in a situation of dependency on gambling	
Takes a critical look at the prevention of dependency	Relevant and coherent arguments concerning the prevention of dependency on gambling based on a variety of credible sources	

