



Chapter four: Sambath

synopsis

An unexpected win on the pokies causes Sambath to keep gambling until most of his pay cheque has gone. He spends the next week blaming himself and trying to find ways to make ends meet. He shares his worries with a friend, Raksmei, who has also lost money on gambling. Together they make a pact to protect themselves: they will only go to the pokies together, not alone; they will take a set amount of money with them; they will stay for a short time only; and they will leave their bank cards at home.

target audience

People of Cambodian backgrounds
Older men

objectives

- Identify responsible and irresponsible gambling practices
- Discuss problem gambling protective factors

1. What could Sambath have done to keep from losing so much money?

This question can help the audience identify irresponsible gambling practices, such as:

- putting winnings back into the machine
- staying at the venue for long periods of time
- chasing losses
- withdrawing extra money from an ATM
- gambling with Centrelink payments and money meant for bills and food

2. Do you think Sambath could have recovered his losses if he went back to the pokies the next day?

Explore the audience's understanding of pokies and how they operate. Explain the odds of winning (both large and small prizes) and why the odds are the same for each spin.

3. Is there anything you can do to increase your chance of winning on the pokies?

Use this question to identify and discuss any myths surrounding the pokies.

These may include:

- The machines will pay out at a certain time
- The machines will pay out after a certain number of games
- The machines will pay out after a certain amount of money has gone in
- Lucky colours, days, times to play

4. What steps could you and your friends take to avoid losing too much money when you go to the pokies?

This question enables you to discuss responsible gambling practices and protective factors. Examples include:

- Taking a set amount of money to the pokies, and expecting to lose it
- Setting a time limit
- Leaving bank and credit cards at home to avoid the temptation to spend more
- Discussing responsible gambling with friends
- Asking friends to help you stick to your limits
- Expecting to pay for entertainment, rather than win money

You can also talk about other protective factors, eg alternative options for recreation.



Further information

For more information, resources and training contact the **Multicultural Gambler's Help Program**.
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