

# PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **GO GAMBLE-FREE FOR PUBLIC HEALTH ON WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1<sup>ST</sup>!**

The Nova Scotia Gaming Foundation (NSGF) invites all Nova Scotians to participate in its Gamble-Free Day on Wednesday, September 1, 2010.

Started five years ago by the Problem Gambling Foundation of New Zealand, Gamble-Free Day enables participants to demonstrate their concern for gambling harm. By choosing not to buy, play, or participate in gambling activities for the duration of the day, Gamble-Free Day supporters envision a future free from gambling harm.

“Gamble-Free Day is not an anti-gambling initiative; rather, it is an opportunity for individuals and communities to reflect on gambling harm,” says recently appointed NSGF staff member and gambling expert Dr. Kerry Chambers. “Participants of Gamble-Free Day stand in solidarity with the roughly 120,000 Nova Scotians who are adversely affected by gambling.”

“Problem gambling is a community concern,” says Celeste Gotell, Executive Director of the NSGF. “It has devastating effects on public health, and that means it is everyone’s issue.”

Potential physical, mental, social, and financial public health impacts of problem gambling include family breakdown, poverty, increased stress-related physical and mental health issues, increased criminal behaviour including fraud, reduced productivity and absenteeism in the workplace, and strains on social programs and the justice system.

On Wednesday, rather than participating in gambling activities, treat your family to dinner, take yourself to a movie, walk the dog, or enjoy a trip to the beach! Participate in Gamble-Free Day – because a future without problem gambling can start today.

The **Nova Scotia Gaming Foundation** is a not-for-profit, arms-length government organization that encourages and supports an independent response to problem gambling in Nova Scotia. This is accomplished, in part, through funding to community groups and researchers to help address problem gambling.

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