

# Project to Help Young Immigrants with Gambling Addiction 2007–2009

*Project to Help Young Immigrants with Gambling Addiction* (MaPe) is a pilot project funded by RAY (Finnish Slot Machine Association). The project is targeted at young immigrants who have lost the control of their gambling or gaming. Not gambling alone cause addictive behaviour. Other types of games, such as mobile or internet games can be addictive too.

Unfortunately problem gambling is not always easy to identify. Our aims include increasing the awareness of the signs and risks of gambling among the young people - and encourage those affected to aim for recovery from gambling addiction.

## **What do we provide?**

We help people stuck in the cycle of gambling to get their lives back on track by individual counselling and group rehabilitation. All our services are free of charge and anonymous. Support is also available for problem gamblers' families and close friends.

## **Who is MaPe aimed at?**

Even though MaPe is primarily aimed at young people with immigrant background, we can provide individual support for all young people

with gambling problem and offer them the free spaces on the rehabilitation programme.

## **Why is MaPe needed?**

To date there have not been studies on how common gambling problems are among the young immigrants. However, it is known that there is a higher incidence of problem gambling amongst teenagers (in particular between ages of 15 and 17) than there is amongst adults. More and more studies are showing that adults with gambling problems started their gambling at an early age. In particular risk group to develop gambling addiction are the youngsters who have problems at school or in their relationships with parents or peers.

Young immigrants are at risk of becoming marginalised and it has been studied that they rarely seek support from the healthcare networks. We feel that rehabilitation aimed at a specific group is necessary as the already existing services for problem gamblers in Finland have proved insufficient and randomly produced.

We aim to deliver up-to-date information on dangers and consequences of gambling to schools and other professionals who work

with young people. This should help to prevent future problems as well as enable problem gamblers to seek help at an early stage.

## **Services available in three languages**

Our project operates in Helsinki and Vaasa regions. Our services are available in three languages (English, Finnish and Swedish). Interpreters can be used when required.

## **The rehabilitation method**

The Foundation of Social Pedagogy has 10 years' experience in treating gambling addictions. In *MaPe* project an existing rehabilitation model developed during an earlier project becomes merged with model of cognitive therapy (KBT), which has been used for years to treat gambling addicts in a therapy centre in Stockholm.

During the project we train peer counsellors who can carry out peer support in the future.

More info: [www.sosped.fi/gamecontrol](http://www.sosped.fi/gamecontrol)

MaPe



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