

2011 Codes of Practice Review

3.29 Mandatory breaks in play (pop up messaging)

Mandatory breaks in play will definitely be of great benefit to the people with gambling problems. It will allow the gambler to stop and hopefully think about their behaviour. It will allow them to stop - go to the toilet have a drink or eat, during this time they may re consider and hopefully leave the venue to stop the damage they may be creating in their lives. As an ex pokie addict I know this would have helped me as it would have forced me to snap out of the addiction for a moment at least. I think this will help some people and that is positive.

The pop up messages will be of great benefit too as this will trigger people to have a think about the message and as there will be different messages not just the "gamble responsibly" message of which is good however people have become immune to. Some of the message can read:

DO YOU HAVE FOOD

DO YOU HAVE ENOUGH PETROL

DID YOU PICK UP THE CHILDREN

ARE YOUR BILLS DUE

HAVE YOU PAID THE MORTGAGE

REACH OUT FOR HELP CALL 1800 060 757

DID YOU PAY THE RENT

Not everyone will benefit from these ideas but many people will benefit and this is also positive to help people out of this horrific addiction. I believe this would have helped me.

3.2.12 Children's play areas

I believe that if there are children's play areas in a venue then the entrance to the pokies should be outside at a location completely separate and not connected to the eating area either. The pokies must be out of the view of the children and dining patrons, I find it distracting if I go to a pub with pokies and you can hear them going off in the background. I have witnessed many times parents take it in turns looking after the children while one goes in and plays. It creates tension instead of a relaxed social family experience. I see people constantly going in and out changing coins whilst eating and the loud clunking coins dropping in the cups is annoying. As the pokies are irresistible to an addict, I'm sure it would be very easy for a parent who is hooked on the pokies to leave their child on the games whilst they go and gamble. It would be best if the pokies could not be seen and had a separate entrance from outside. I have seen one pub with the games just outside the door to the pokies and a glass wall separating the dining area and the games. At another venue there is a small partition surrounding one pokie machine which is situated in an area where people eat and can play snooker the border is a low ledge and the machine is in full view.

3.2.14 Obligation for staff welfare

It came to me during the review that perhaps if staff were allowed to gamble in venues where they work then they can be monitored. It would be easy to see if a staff member had a problem and because they know each other they will feel comfortable to speak to someone and someone will find it easier to approach them.

I played the pokies for ten years I was and am a single mother with three beautiful children I lost so much time and money and our family home, today I am glad I did not take my own life like many others who think they can't stop playing the pokies. I have not played now for seven years and my life is so wonderful, it is still challenging as because of my past horrific life I can't seem to get ahead in all the time I lost I could have been working or studying. Today I run groups to help others like myself stop playing the pokies. Pokies Anonymous now has four meetings they are in Brighton, Brompton, Salisbury North and Mile End. I would like to invite anyone from the board to come along to one of our meetings and listen to real stories of disaster to relief and success, thank you.

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