

Community Connections

A MASSHOUSING COMMUNITY SERVICES UPDATE

TAP Turns 25



CONTENTS

Message from Tom Gleason

Congratulations TAP!

Tony on TAP

A Tribute to Tony Flaherty,
Founding Director of the Tenant
Assistance Program

TAP Training - 25 Years Later

TAP Memories 6

Sandra Blackman

John MacPhee

Ann Woodward

Ann Anderson

Jerry Jackson

Rev. Mary Ann E. Barry

Ben Sullivan

Timeline of Events 10

Substance Abuse - Older Adults 14

Prevention, Recognition and Help
Resources

Massachusetts Geriatric Substance
Abuse Task Force

General Alcohol Addiction 18

Assessing Substance Abuse
Problems with Deaf and Hard of
Hearing Students

Getting Help

If Someone Close...Has a Problem
with Alcohol or Other Drugs

Substance Abuse - Youth 22

Cushing House: Transitional
Residence for Substance Abusing
Youth

Recovery High Schools

Sober Softball

Recovery 24

A Community in Recovery

MassHousing and the Center for
Community Recovery Innovations
(CCRI) Announce New Sober
Housing

Sustaining Recovery: Counseling
for Sober Home Residents

Relapse Responsiveness: A
Growing Trend in Substance Abuse
Treatment

The Massachusetts Council on
Compulsive Gambling

TAP Today 29

Mediation and Substance Abuse

Membership in TAP

2008 TAP Supporters

Mediation and Substance Abuse

Mediation Works Incorporated (MWI) has worked with TAP/MassHousing in many situations involving alleged substance abuse where mediation has been effective and successful.

Substance abuse is mentioned in approximately 20% of the TAP/MassHousing conflicts that come to mediation. As illustrated below, mediation can provide an opportunity to create durable plans to move forward even in situations involving substance abuse:

1) Three couples (and former friends) in three units were accusing each other of property damage, noise and harassment. During the preparation for the mediation, one party mentioned that he had been involved in drugs in the past but was no longer using them. Other parties had commented that they were unsure about the current status of the drug use. The drug use was blamed as one factor in the friendships falling apart.

During the mediation, there was significant sharing and the parties moved from anger at each other to discussing how much they missed each other, why they had been friends and what they could do to rekindle the relationship. We also discussed how the drug issues had affected each of them. The parties worked out a plan involving how they would treat one another and one another's property. A month later, the parties reported that communication among all of them was significantly improved.

2) In a non-residential mediation, one party explained that he had an alcohol abuse problem. The mediator asked what affect it may have on the mediation. The party explained that it would have none if the mediation could be scheduled early in the day so that he could be an effective contributor to the process. The mediator contacted the second party to say that the first party had requested that the mediation be in the morning. The second party agreed. In the mediation, the parties worked out their issues and created a successful resolution.

Mediation is a voluntary and confidential process in which a professional neutral, the mediator, helps disputing parties clarify issues, develop options and work toward a mutually beneficial resolution. The mediator's role is to facilitate a process of assisted negotiation, not

to judge or advise the parties, or to diagnose substance abuse or investigate accusations. Because mediation is a voluntary process, if one party questions the ability or sobriety of the other party, either party may end the mediation at any time.

According to the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court Standing Committee on Dispute Resolution Ethical Standards, a mediator may withdraw from a mediation if "one or more of the parties is not acting in good faith..." Therefore, if a party appears to be impaired, the mediator, in addition to either of the parties, may end the mediation.

If there are concerns about violence due to drug or alcohol use, the mediator can adapt the process by starting in separate sessions so the parties are not in the same room, or conducting the mediation during office hours in a space that is private but with activity outside of the room so that there are other people nearby. If the mediator believes that the safety of the parties is in jeopardy, again by the Ethical Standards, he or she may end the mediation.

For more information about dispute resolution services, visit www.mwi.org/masshousing or contact Tad Mayer at 617.973.9739 x26 or tmayer@mwi.org, or Linda McMahan at 617.854.1084, lmcmahan@masshousing.com.



Tad Mayer, Mediation Works, Inc.

The Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling

The Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling is a private, nonprofit health agency dedicated to reducing the social, financial and emotional costs of problem gambling. The Council provides information, prevention, education, advocacy and referral services for problem gamblers, their loved ones and the greater community.

What is Problem Gambling?

Virtually anyone – men or women, young or old, from every religion, race and socio-economic background – can be at risk for developing a gambling problem.

Recent studies indicate that about 6% of Massachusetts' general adult population has experienced a gambling problem.

The most serious form of problem gambling is pathological gambling, the essential feature of which is "persistent and recurrent maladaptive behavior that disrupts personal, family or vocational pursuits." (American Psychiatric Association - DSM-IV)

Compulsive gambling can result in social, emotional and financial devastation, including loss of relationships, residence, emotional or physical health, and career or educational opportunities.

Some compulsive gamblers commit illegal acts to support their gambling or to pay off gambling-related debts. Some go to prison or are admitted to psychiatric institutions. It is not uncommon to hear about compulsive gamblers who attempt or commit suicide.

Problem Gambling and Substance Abuse

Often, problem gambling is accompanied by substance abuse. Research shows that about half of all compulsive gamblers have had alcohol or drug problems. Conversely, it is estimated that 25-35% of all people with alcohol and drug problems have also had gambling problems.

Compulsive gambling shares many characteristics with substance abuse:

- Preoccupation with the activity
- Its use to escape pain or uncomfortable feelings
- Intense cravings
- Need to increase the amount (of money spent gambling) over time to achieve the desired effect
- Inability to stop despite negative consequences

Compulsive gambling differs from substance abuse in that

- There is no substance ingested
- There are usually no visible signs

Hence, compulsive gambling has been called the "hidden addiction." Many addiction treatment professionals believe that compulsive gambling is extremely difficult to overcome because of the gambler's belief in the possibility – however slim – that the next bet can result in a big win.

Help for Families

Is gambling a problem for someone you know or love?

Many people consider gambling a harmless recreational activity. And, for many people, it is. However, for some individuals gambling is a serious problem, with social, financial and emotional costs that affect their lives and the lives of their loved ones.

If you are concerned about the impact gambling is having on someone you know, call the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling Referral / Helpline – We Understand the Problem. We Can Help. **1-800-426-1234**

Started in 1987, the Council Helpline provides live confidential caller responses 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. While we do not provide mental health counseling to callers, staff members can respond empathetically and offer information and referrals for self-help, treatment providers and other community resources to people experiencing a problem with their own or a loved one's gambling.