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Gambling Alert - January 3, 2023



Experts warn of dangers associated with sports betting as Ohio gets set to legalize the practice

CLEVELAND — Sunday marks the **largest expansion of gaming in Ohio's history**, but addiction experts are worried that the availability to place wagers on sporting events could negatively impact Ohioans.

"It's at our fingertips," Michael Buzzelli, associate director of **Problem Gambling Network of Ohio**, said. "People will be negatively impacted."

Buzzelli and Dr. Trent Hall from the Ohio State University tell 3News that they're concerned with how available sports betting will be in Ohio.

On Sunday, more than 750 retail locations across the state will have a sports betting kiosk inside their businesses. There will also be 16 mobile or online operators as well as 12 retail sportsbooks for Ohioans to place bets 24/7.

"For a gambling disorder, we really believe that the biggest risk factor is actually availability," Hall explained, "and that's one thing that has us concerned as addiction treatment providers." According to Buzzelli, Ohio has some of the top addiction treatment providers in the region, with 50 specialists in the Buckeye State.

"We feel we're prepared," Buzzelli said. "We have doubled in the last year the number of addiction counselors in the state who have an endorsement or a specialty to treat gambling addiction." Buzzelli told 3News that gambling addiction has unique signs. Some signs to look out for are irritability, restlessness, mood swings, and borrowing money.

"Those who develop problems with sports betting will develop them quicker because it's so quick and easy to make a bet," Buzzelli added. "You can kind of maybe lose track of how much and how often you are betting." [READ](#)

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