



Understanding Addiction and the Brain www.brainconnections.ca

Brain Connections is a series of educational tools designed to share current research about gambling and the brain.

These tools were developed by Dr. Iris Balodis (a cognitive neuroscientist at the Peter Boris Centre for Addictions Research) and Deirdre Querney (a registered social worker and problem gambling counsellor at Alcohol, Drug & Gambling Services) in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. This knowledge translation project was funded by two grants from Gambling Research Exchange Ontario (GREO).

Using plain language, compelling imagery and a person-centered approach, Brain Connections answers questions that people have about the neurobiology of gambling disorder. These questions are:

How is problem gambling like an addiction to alcohol or drugs from my brain's point of view?

Why do people keep gambling even when it's not fun anymore?

Why is it hard to say 'no' to an urge?

Since I've stopped gambling, why does nothing else feel fun?

Why do people sometimes switch from gambling to another addiction?

How do certain features on a slot machine affect the brain?

My loved one is gambling: why can't they stop?

Brain Connections offers three types of tools:

- Five clinical handouts that can be used to enhance individual or group treatment sessions with clients
- An engaging video featuring the driving metaphor to understand how gambling addiction occurs
- *BE Brief*: straightforward, evidence-based answers to these frequently-asked questions, designed for the public and/or responsible gambling settings

Brain Connections tools are free to download and use! Go to www.brainconnections.ca for more information or to try out this excellent resource. Dr. Balodis and Deirdre are happy to connect. Find them on Twitter @brain_connexion or via the website.