



USING PAUSE BEFORE YOU PLAY ACROSS CSAP STRATEGIES

The [Pause Before You Play campaign](#) is designed to support comprehensive gambling disorder prevention efforts through targeted messaging, educational materials, and community outreach tools.

In prevention practice, materials are most effective when used as part of a broader prevention approach rather than as standalone awareness efforts. Prevention professionals commonly use [Center for Substance Abuse Prevention \(CSAP\)](#) strategies to guide prevention planning, implementation, and community engagement efforts.

Pause Before You Play primarily supports Prevention Education and Environmental Strategies by helping reinforce knowledge, influence community environments, and promote informed decision-making. The following CSAP strategies can further strengthen implementation efforts when used intentionally alongside education and environmental approaches.

CSAP STRATEGY	PURPOSE	EXAMPLES OF CAMPAIGN USE
Prevention Education (page 3)	Builds knowledge and strengthens decision-making skills	Presentations, trainings, educational handouts, workshops
Environmental Strategies (page 4)	Influence environments, systems, and community norms	Placement strategies, healthcare settings, workplace wellness messaging
Information Dissemination (page 5)	Increase awareness through one-way communication	Posters, digital outreach, social media, billboards, rack cards
Community-Based Processes (page 7)	Strengthen partnerships and coordinated prevention efforts	Coalition discussions, partner outreach, shared messaging
Problem Identification and Referral (page 8)	Promote early recognition and connection to support	Problem Gambling Helpline promotion, Rate Your Risk quiz, referral materials
Alternative Activities (page 9)	Support healthy engagement and recreation	Community wellness events, non-gambling recreation messaging



PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS FOR LOCAL PREVENTION EFFORTS

Before selecting or distributing materials, consider how the campaign aligns with your prevention goals, audience, and community setting.

#1 DETERMINE YOUR AUDIENCE

Consider who you are trying to reach, such as:

- ☐ Adults
- ☐ Sports bettors
- ☐ Lottery players
- ☐ Behavioral health providers
- ☐ Workplace wellness programs
- ☐ Faith communities
- ☐ Community organizations

Different audiences may require different messaging approaches, placement strategies, and levels of engagement.



#2 IDENTIFY THE GOAL OF YOUR OUTREACH

Determine whether the goal is to:

- ☐ Increase awareness
- ☐ Support prevention education
- ☐ Encourage reflection and informed decision-making
- ☐ Promote help-seeking
- ☐ Increase visibility of local resources
- ☐ Reinforce prevention messaging over time



#3 CONSIDER TIMING AND PLACEMENT

Materials are often most effective when they appear:

- ☐ Before or during gambling decision points
- ☐ During periods of increased gambling activity
- ☐ During March, Problem Gambling Awareness Month
- ☐ In settings where individuals already engage with health, wellness, or community supports

Strategic placement can help interrupt automatic or habitual behaviors while reinforcing prevention messaging in everyday environments.

#4 USE DATA TO INFORM IMPLEMENTATION

Local and statewide data can help guide where and how materials are used. Consider:

- ☐ Populations experiencing higher exposure to gambling
- ☐ Settings where gambling access is common
- ☐ Gaps in awareness, prevention messaging, or help-seeking
- ☐ Communities or populations experiencing elevated risk

Data-informed implementation helps ensure materials are reaching the audiences and environments where they can have the greatest impact.

CHANGE THE GAME OHIO

Please Note: *Pause Before You Play* is intended to support adult audiences and should not be used as a youth prevention campaign. Visit [ChangeTheGameOhio.com](https://www.changethegameohio.com) for information about the youth-oriented gambling prevention campaign.





UNDERSTANDING YOUR PREVENTION GOALS

Every audience requires an approach that fits into their specific interests and behaviors. For an in-depth guide to campaign audiences, view the [Campaign Advertising and Outreach Overview](#) document and use the [Communications Plan](#) worksheet for additional help determining an advertising and outreach strategy that works best for your audience and prevention goals.

USING CSAP STRATEGIES

PREVENTION EDUCATION

Prevention Education supports learning through two-way engagement designed to increase understanding of prevention concepts, strengthen awareness of risk and protective factors, and support informed community decision-making.

USING PAUSE BEFORE YOU PLAY WITHIN PREVENTION EDUCATION

Pause Before You Play materials can support prevention education efforts by helping prevention professionals, organizations, and community partners better understand the purpose of prevention messaging and how campaign materials can be implemented within community settings.

Examples include:

- Introducing community partners, businesses, healthcare organizations, or behavioral health providers to the purpose and goals of the campaign before materials are implemented within their setting.
- Educating organizations on how prevention messaging can support informed decision-making and increase visibility of local prevention resources.
- Providing guidance on strategic placement of materials within community settings such as casinos, racinos, bars and restaurants, healthcare settings, convenience stores, or workplace environments.
- Supporting discussions with partners about how gambling-related harm can impact overall community health, financial wellness, mental health, and help-seeking behaviors.
- Helping partners recognize how repeated exposure to gambling advertising and promotions may influence perceptions and normalize gambling behavior, and increase the importance of visible prevention messaging within community environments.
- Reinforcing the role of prevention messaging within broader public health and wellness efforts.



PREVENTION EDUCATION (CONT.)

USING PAUSE BEFORE YOU PLAY WITHIN PREVENTION EDUCATION (CONT.)

For prevention professionals, the campaign may also support conversations related to:

- Media literacy and the influence of gambling advertising, promotions, and sports betting culture.
- Community health approaches that recognize how gambling-related harm can affect individuals, families, workplaces, and community systems.
- Protective factors such as help-seeking, informed decision-making, financial awareness, and community connectedness, *Pause Before You Play* materials should complement prevention education efforts by reinforcing prevention messaging within community environments rather than serving as standalone educational interventions.

ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES

Environmental Strategies focus on influencing the environments, systems, and community conditions that impact decision-making and behavior.

USING PAUSE BEFORE YOU PLAY WITHIN ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES

Pause Before You Play materials can help increase visibility of prevention messaging, normalize conversations about gambling-related harm, and integrate prevention into community settings and organizational practices.

Examples include:

- Standard placement of materials in high-exposure settings such as convenience stores, bars, restaurants, and lottery retailers.
- Incorporating prevention messaging into workplace wellness initiatives or Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs).
- Integrating gambling prevention messaging into healthcare, behavioral health, and community wellness settings.
- Including campaign messaging within community communication channels, waiting areas, digital displays, or public-facing environments.
- Reinforcing help-seeking and prevention messaging in spaces where individuals already access support services.

Environmental approaches are most effective when prevention messaging becomes consistently visible, accessible, and integrated into everyday environments.



INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

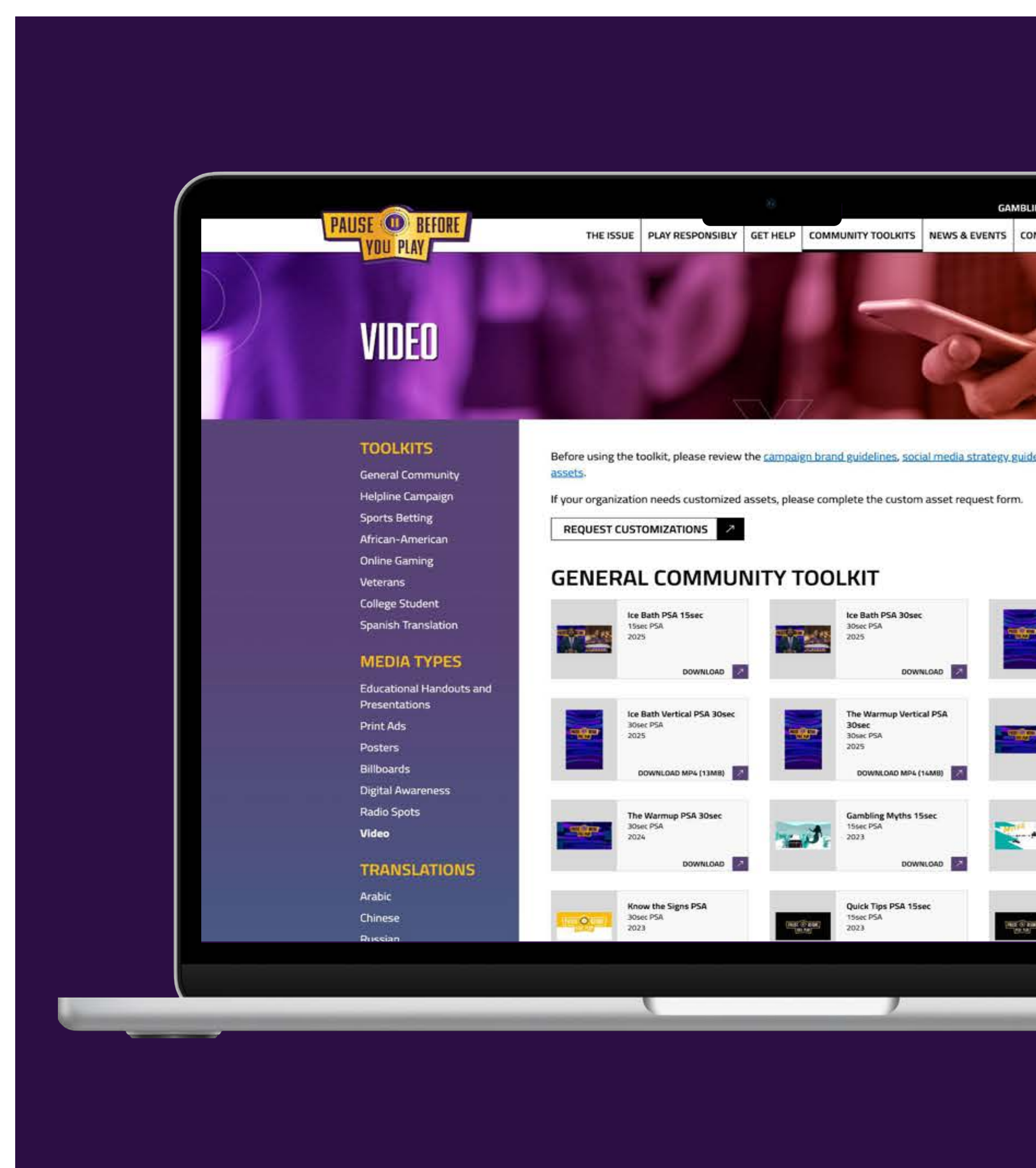
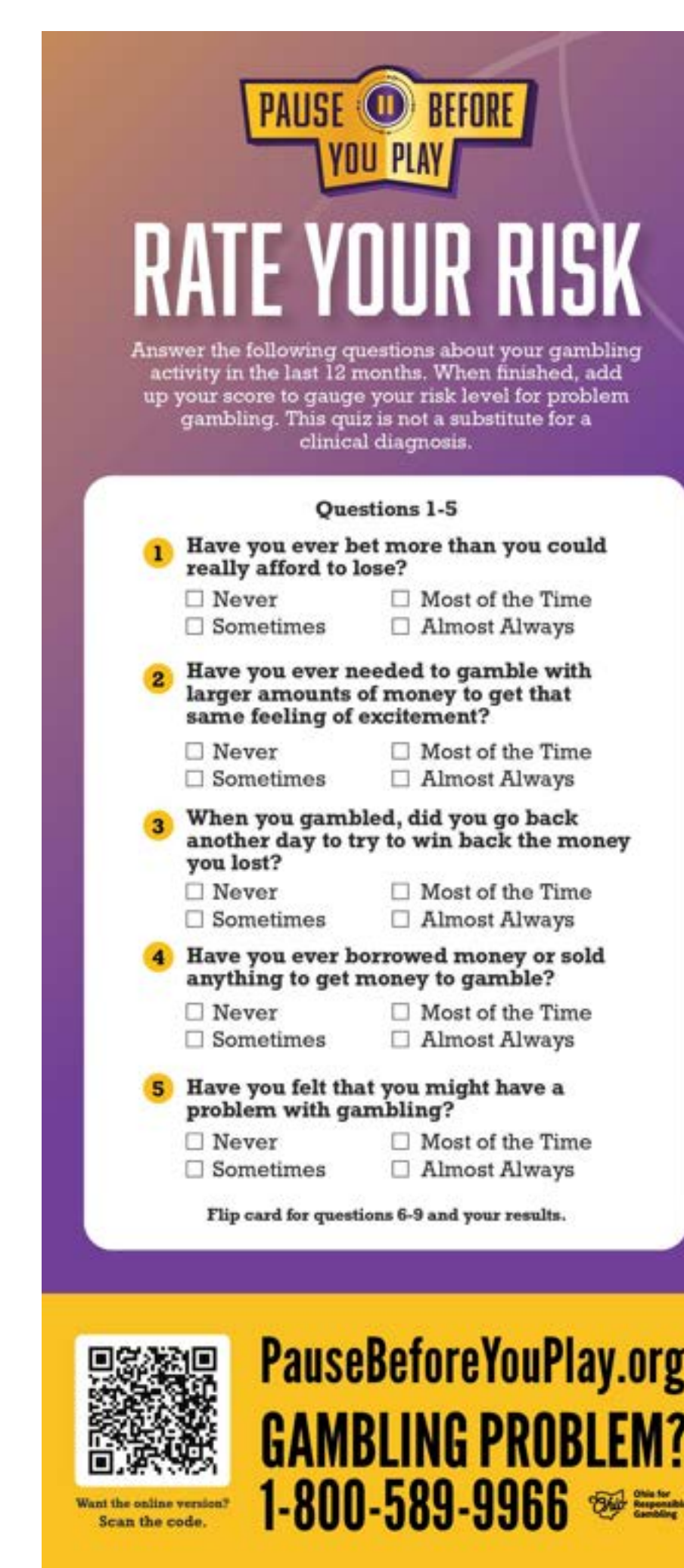
Information Dissemination provides awareness and prevention messaging through one-way communication intended to increase knowledge, visibility of prevention resources, and awareness of gambling-related harm.

USING PAUSE BEFORE YOU PLAY WITHIN INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

Pause Before You Play materials can help increase visibility of prevention messaging and reinforce awareness efforts across a variety of community and public-facing settings.

Examples of broad awareness efforts include:

- Social media campaigns
- Digital advertisements
- Posters and signage
- Billboards
- Rack cards
- Streaming, radio, or audio advertisements
- Community newsletters or websites
- Digital displays or community screens



INFORMATION DISSEMINATION (CONT.)

Localized implementation efforts may include strategically placing materials in settings where individuals may already encounter gambling-related messaging, opportunities, or decision points. For example:

STRATEGY/CAMPAIGN MATERIALS	EXAMPLE LOCATIONS	PURPOSE
Coaster Campaign	Sports-focused bars and restaurants; locations selling lottery products	Prompt reflection during gambling-related activity and increase visibility of prevention messaging
Sticker Campaign	Restaurants and take-out businesses	Reinforce prevention messaging through repeated exposure in everyday community settings
Gas Pump Toppers	Gas stations and convenience stores selling lottery products	Increase visibility during routine decision-making moments before potential gambling activity
Posters and Signage	Casinos, bars, restaurants, break rooms, behavioral health agencies, healthcare settings	Increase awareness of prevention messaging and available support resources
Rack / Info Cards	Community organizations, healthcare providers, behavioral health agencies, convenience stores	Provide discreet access to prevention messaging and support information
Digital Graphics and Social Media	Community partner pages, prevention campaigns, organizational social media accounts	Expand reach of prevention messaging and increase awareness through digital engagement
Digital Displays or Community Screens	Waiting rooms, transportation hubs, recreation centers, community facilities	Reinforce prevention messaging in high-visibility public settings

Printed and digital materials are often most effective when they are strategically placed, easy to access, and reinforced through repeated exposure over time. Explore the [community toolkits](#) for ready-to-use examples.

COMMUNITY-BASED PROCESSES

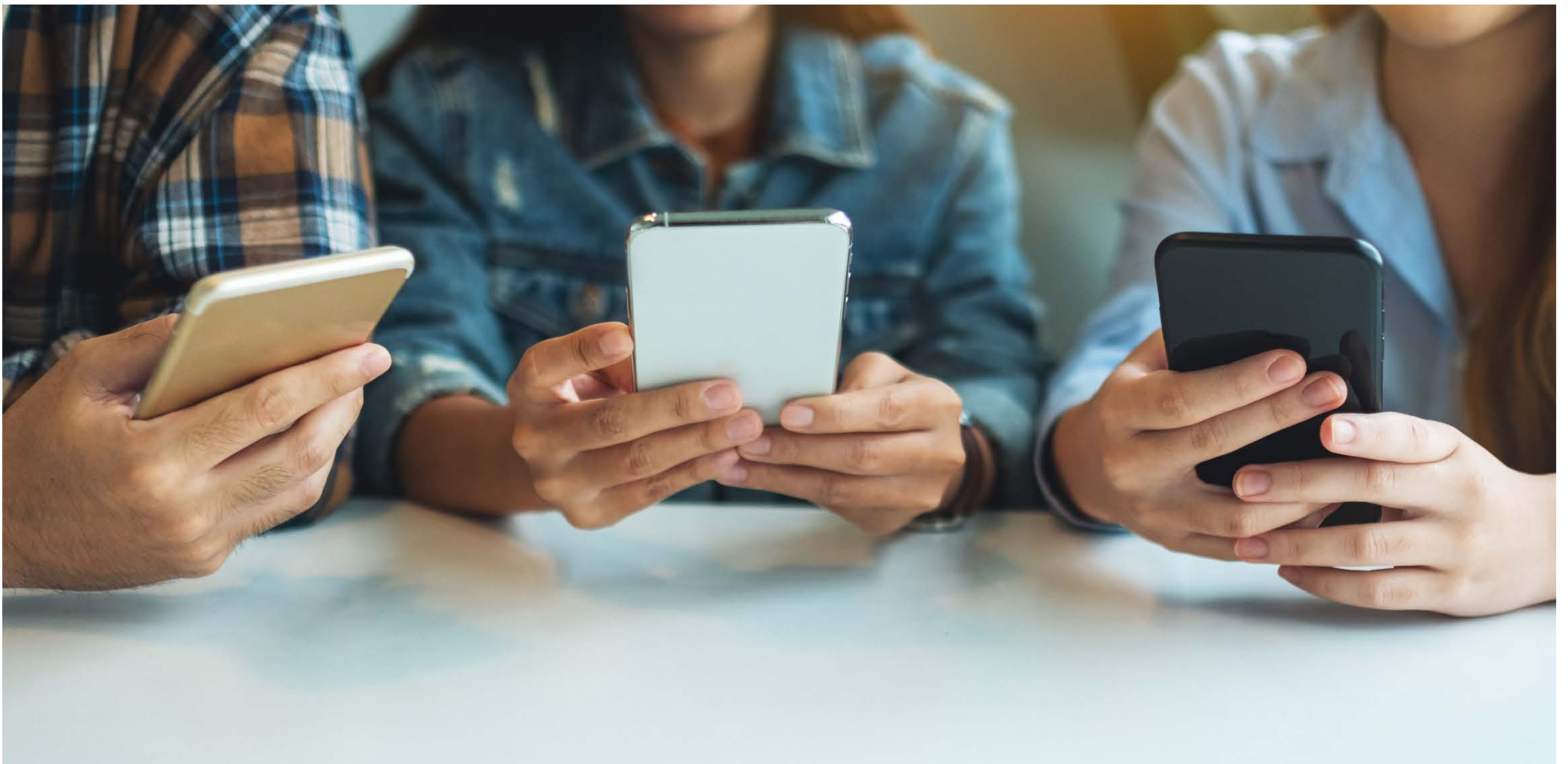
Community-Based Processes strengthen prevention efforts through collaboration, partnership development, and coordinated community engagement.

USING PAUSE BEFORE YOU PLAY WITHIN COMMUNITY-BASED PROCESSES

Campaign materials and data can support community conversations, coalition-building efforts, and coordinated prevention planning.

Examples include:

- Sharing campaign statistics and prevalence data during coalition meetings or trainings.
- Supporting discussions around risk and protective factors.
- Identifying priority populations or service gaps through community conversations.
- Aligning campaign efforts with existing mental health, prevention, or wellness initiatives.
- Engaging businesses, community organizations, healthcare systems, and behavioral health providers in prevention efforts.
- Using campaign messaging to support shared prevention language across partners.





PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION AND REFERRAL

Problem Identification and Referral supports early recognition of gambling-related concerns and helps connect individuals to appropriate support and treatment resources when needed.

USING PAUSE BEFORE YOU PLAY WITHIN PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION AND REFERRAL

Pause Before You Play materials can help prevention professionals and community partners increase awareness of gambling-related harm, encourage personal reflection, and strengthen access to referral pathways and support resources.

Within prevention settings, the goal is not to assess, diagnose, or treat gambling disorder. Instead, prevention professionals can help create opportunities for awareness, conversation, and connection to appropriate treatment and support services when concerns arise.

Examples include:

- Sharing local and statewide treatment and support resources alongside campaign materials.
- Increasing visibility of referral information within healthcare, behavioral health, workplace wellness, or community settings.
- Using prevention messaging to encourage reflection around gambling behaviors, risk, and decision-making.
- Supporting awareness efforts during initiatives such as Gambling Screening Day observed annually on the second Tuesday in March.
- Promoting tools such as the ["Rate Your Risk" quiz](#) to encourage individuals to reflect on gambling behaviors and consider whether additional support or conversation may be helpful.
 - The "Rate Your Risk" quiz is intended to support self-reflection and awareness and is NOT meant to serve as a clinical assessment or diagnostic tool. Prevention professionals can use these types of resources to help normalize conversations around gambling-related harm and increase awareness of available support options.

Having local and statewide treatment resources readily available can help strengthen referral pathways, increase access to care, and reduce barriers to help-seeking when individuals are ready for additional support.

Pause Before You Play materials are most effective when paired with clear referral information and collaborative relationships with treatment providers, behavioral health organizations, and other community support systems.



ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITIES

Alternative Activities provide opportunities for healthy recreation, social connection, and community engagement that do not center around gambling or other risk-related behaviors.

RELATIONSHIP TO PAUSE BEFORE YOU PLAY

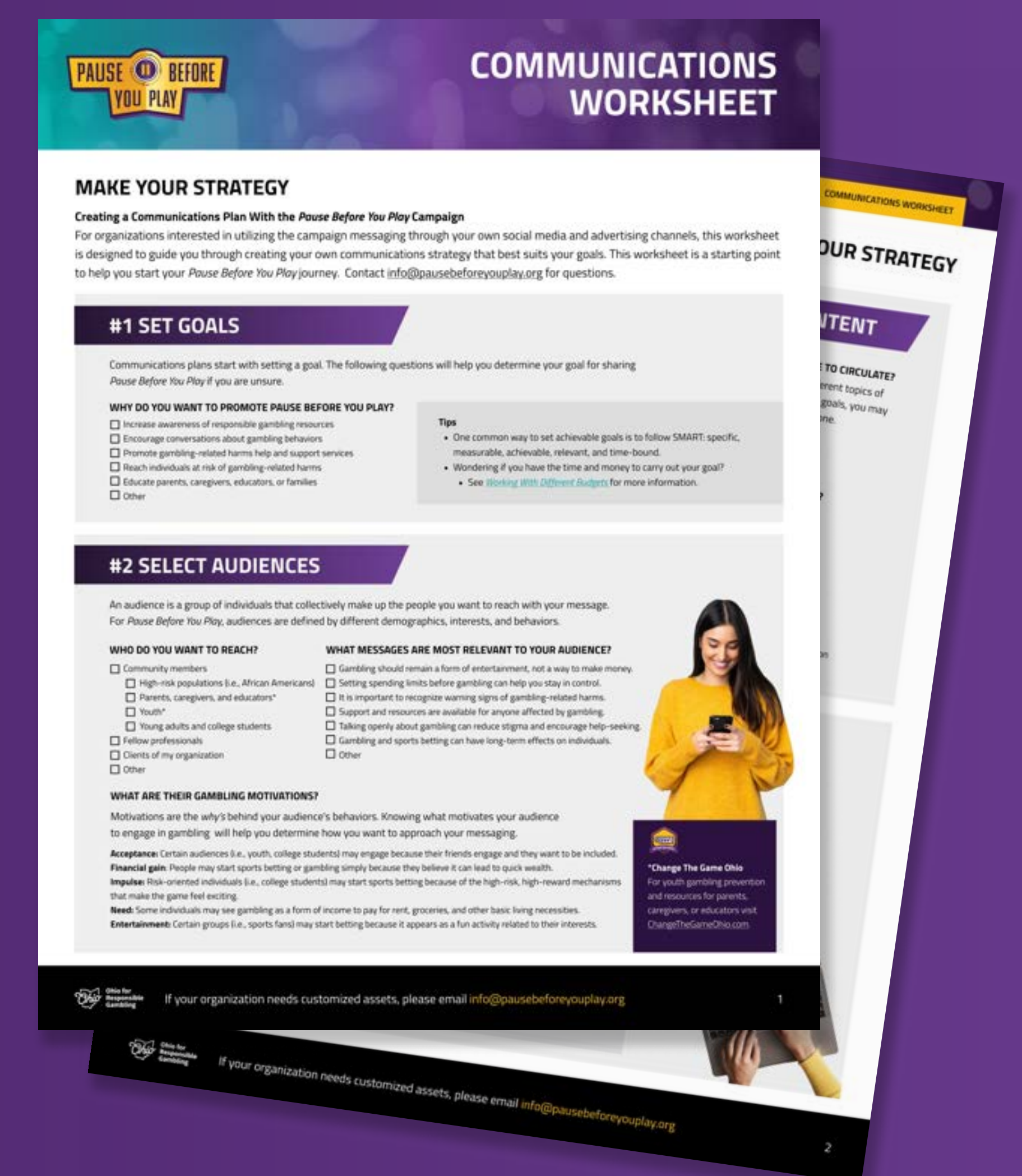
Pause Before You Play materials are not primarily designed as an Alternative Activities strategy. The campaign is intended to increase awareness, support prevention messaging, and encourage informed decision-making within environments where gambling exposure or opportunities may already exist.

Because Alternative Activities focus on providing activities or environments that serve as alternatives to gambling participation, *Pause Before You Play* materials may not always be appropriate or necessary within those settings.

Pause Before You Play materials are most effective when used intentionally as part of a comprehensive prevention approach. Strategic implementation includes considering audience, setting, timing, community partnerships, and prevention goals rather than relying on material distribution alone.

When integrated thoughtfully across prevention strategies, campaign materials can help strengthen awareness, reinforce prevention messaging, support informed decision-making, and increase visibility of prevention resources across community settings.

Use the [Communications Plan](#) worksheet for help getting started.



CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

Pause Before You Play offers advertisements and outreach materials you can use at no charge. Explore the [community toolkits](#) and select the assets that work best for your goals.

Not sure what materials to use? View the [Guide to Advertising and Outreach](#) to help you get started and the [Best Practices Guide](#) for tips on effective advertising.



CAMPAIGN MATERIALS (CONT.)



Please Note: Advertisements and outreach material can be customized for your organization.
Email info@pausebeforeyouplay.org to request custom assets.

NEEDING ADDITIONAL SUPPORT?

Email info@pausebeforeyouplay.org with questions or request a **no-cost consultation** to discuss your goals, budget, and campaign needs.