



## Quick Reference Language Guide – May 2026

### Use people-first, harm-focused language

<b>DON'T USE</b>	<b>DO USE</b>
“problem gambler”, “gambling addict”, “responsible gambling”	people experiencing gambling harm; people affected by gambling issues

Avoid industry terms that place responsibility solely on individuals. Use language that reflects a public health approach.

### Avoid industry framing

<b>DON'T USE</b>	<b>DO USE</b>
gaming	gambling
sports betting	sports gambling
players / playing	users / using

Industry language normalises gambling and makes it sound harmless or recreational.

### Be clear about harm and responsibility

<b>DON'T USE</b>	<b>DO USE</b>
gambling expenditure	gambling losses / money taken
victims of poker machines	people targeted by poker machines

Use language that reflects the reality of harm and avoids disempowering or misleading terms.

### Use respectful, non-alienating language

<b>DON'T USE</b>	<b>DO USE</b>
poorest / most disadvantaged communities	most stressed communities
“anti-gambling” (to describe us)	gambling reform organisation / advocate

Avoid language that alienates people or misrepresents our position.

## **Our approach to language**

The Alliance avoids terms such as “problem gambler” or “gambling addict,” as these can place undue focus on the individual rather than the broader systems and practices that contribute to harm. Instead, we use language such as “people experiencing gambling harm” or “people affected by gambling issues,” which better reflects a public health approach.

At the same time, we recognise that individuals may choose to describe their own experiences using different terms, including “problem gambler” or “gambling addict.” We respect and support people to use the language they feel most comfortable with when sharing their experiences.

## **Include this information in ALL Gambling Harm stories**

**Gamblers Helpline 1800 858 858 | [gamblershelp.com.au](http://gamblershelp.com.au)**

When discussing gambling-related deaths by suicide, refer to [Mindframe’s Language Guide](#)