

### Mental Health

For the next several newsletters we would like to spend time on Your Mental Health. Mental health can affect people of any age, race or gender. There are several types of mental disorders that need our attention, including Seasonal Affect Disorder and Depression. Signs to watch for in Seasonal Affect Disorder are many and varied. Watch for

- changes in appetite, especially a craving for sweets and starchy foods
- weight gain
- decreased energy
- fatigue
- difficulty in concentrating
- irritability
- avoidance of social situations
- feelings of despair.

Another mental health disorder that we would like to draw your attention to is Depression. Again the symptoms are many and need your attention. Watch for

- poor performance in school
- withdrawal from friends and activities
- sadness and hopelessness
- lack of enthusiasm, energy, motivation
- anger, rage
- over reacting to criticism
- poor self esteem
- guilt feelings
- indecision, lack of concentration
- restlessness and agitation
- changes in eating or sleeping patterns
- substance abuse

If you or your children experience several of these symptoms for longer than a few weeks, look for help. Help is available at 403-320-1212 or [www.cmha.ab.ca](http://www.cmha.ab.ca)