

COMMUNITY COMING TOGETHER (CCT)

October, 2013

This month's theme is *Mental Health*



BE AWARE AND TAKE CARE OF YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

By Nicole O'Reilly

IMAGINE THIS: One day, you wake up with a sharp back pain. Typically, we wait a few days to see if things get worse or improve, then we might do some research on things we can do at home to relieve the pain. We usually talk to our friends and family for advice. If the problem still doesn't go away on its own, we typically go to the doctor to get it checked out so it doesn't get worse, and to find out what it is, what to do about it, and how to prevent it.

NOW IMAGINE THIS: One day, you wake up and realize that emotionally, you've been feeling different lately. You're not sure what it is but you (or others) notice that you're acting differently, feeling unlike yourself and having thoughts that bother you. Two months later, you still feel the same way—it's even getting worse—but you still haven't asked for help. You think it will go away on its own, that it's not serious, and that it's all in your head. The things you might try on your own don't seem to help. You maybe suspect what it could be, and you're scared of what family or friends would say. So you keep it to yourself and just try to get by day to day, hoping it will change.

Why do we treat our mental health so differently from our physical health? (CMHA, 2012)

MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS WEEK OCTOBER 6-12, 2013

Youth are in a unique time of their lives; a time when they may be faced with a number changes and challenges like never before. Whether its school becoming increasingly overwhelming, the accumulating stress with friends, or the intense rainbow of emotions that emerge, youth are left to deal with a lot. Without having sound mental health, the ability to cope with these situations and emotions can feel completely unmanageable and

Mental illness affects more than six million - or one in five - Canadians. Of the 10 leading causes of disability worldwide, five are mental disorders.



unbearable. Often, this is the point we begin to avoid our struggles or try to deny what is truly going on for us. This can frequently be seen through changes in attitude, refusal to go to school, beginning to use alcohol, drugs and tobacco, or engaging in high risk activities. By enhancing our mental health, we are essentially improving the way in which we feel about ourselves, our environment and those around us. We're able to overcome challenges and cope with emotions, rather than feeling as though they are overcoming us.

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Have patience with all things but first with yourself. Never confuse your mistakes with your value as a human being. You're a perfectly valuable, creative, worthwhile person simply because you exist. And no amount of triumphs and tribulations can ever change that. Unconditional self-acceptance is the core of a peaceful mind.

St. Francis de Sales



Upcoming Events

Family Night: All families from St. Mary's, NDA, & McCoy are invited to join us for some pumpkin carving/decorating on **Tuesday, Oct. 29 at McCoy High School** (in the Lounge) from 6:30-7:30 pm. Pumpkins and tools will be provided but feel free to bring along your own patterns for some awesome Halloween decorations! Costumes are optional but encouraged! Please call 403-580-0147 or email patti.wagman@mhcbce.ab.ca to RSVP (to ensure we have enough pumpkins). Look forward to seeing you there!

HOW CAN WE STRENGTHEN OUR MENTAL HEALTH?

Here are some ideas for maintaining or improving our state-of-mind:

- Exercise
- Be aware of negative thoughts; replace them with more helpful ones
- Remember times you have experienced positive emotional moments
- Set attainable goals for yourself
- Exercise
- Find a hobby you enjoy
- Set aside time each day to take care of yourself. Do something you enjoy, something that relaxes you, or makes you feel happy.

If you become concerned about yourself, or someone you know; You're never alone. Ask for help!

- Your 'Community Coming Together' Team (CCT)
- Mental Health and/or Addictions Counsellor
- Principal or Teacher
- Family Doctor
- Crisis Lines: Kids Help Phone (Youth): 1-800-668-6868 or Mental Health Help Line: 1-877-303-2642

For more information on mental health and mental illness, visit www.cmha.ca