

SEEK HELP FOR DEPRESSION

Contact your local community mental health service.

Call Lifeline on 13 11 14 (24 hours a day, 7 days per week in Australia) for confidential telephone counselling and referrals, or see www.lifeline.org.au

Call Mensline on 1300 789 978 (for 24-hour confidential telephone support for men) or see www.menslineaus.org.au Call

Kids Help Line on 1800 55 1800 (for 5-18 yrs) or see www.kidshelp.com.au



**CHRISTMAS MAY
NOT BE THE
SEASON TO BE
JOLLY!**



Prepared by the South Burnett Suicide Awareness Group with the assistance of Rural & Remote Mental Health Ltd, Centracare, Wesley Life Force, Stanwell, Jobmatch Employment, CTC and Seeds of Hope.

CHRISTMAS MAY NOT BE THE SEASON TO BE JOLLY!

Depression and the Festive Season

Christmas and the holiday season are traditionally times for celebrating with family and friends. However, for many people the festive season is a time of isolation, negative thoughts and increased feelings of stress, loneliness, anxiety and depression. There are several reasons why this period can increase the risk of depression for some people.

- ✓ Social Isolation
- ✓ Financial Difficulties
- ✓ Family conflict;

- ✓ Loss & Grief (Death, Relationships, etc.);
- ✓ Heightened feelings of loneliness;
- ✓ Excessive Alcohol consumption;
- ✓ Reduced amount of sleep;

Steps to care for your Mental Health

It is important to take steps to care for your mental health over this period.

These include -

- ✓ Preparing for difficult times,
- ✓ Avoid over eating and excessive alcohol consumption;

- ✓ Spend time with Friends;
- ✓ Recognising symptoms of depression and seeking help;
- ✓ Seek help. You do not have to face these problems alone;
- ✓ Plan an activity;
- ✓ Volunteer with a charity;
- ✓ Prepare a list of contact numbers you can call;
- ✓ Avoid unpleasant situations;
- ✓ Go for a walk.
- ✓ If religious attend a Christmas Service

Plan for financial difficulties

If times are tough financially, make a time to sit down as a family and plan a Christmas that is reasonable and realistic. Changes to gift giving and holiday plans may need to be made.

See a financial counsellor.

Recognise symptoms of depression

Some symptoms of depression are well known, such as a sad mood, tiredness, lack of enjoyment and loss of motivation. However, it can be helpful to also watch out for other signs of depression, such as appetite changes, being irritable or snappy, difficulty sleeping and concentrating, and reduced sex drive.

Look out for others

If you notice changes in the behaviour of somebody you care about,

- ✓ Let them know that you are there to listen.
- ✓ Encourage them to see a GP, counsellor or other health professional,
- ✓ Assist them in making the appointment.

Plan ahead for next Year

1. Start a Bank Account (\$20.00 a fortnight will give you about \$400.00)
2. Organise an Activity e.g. Lunch in a natural setting with friends,
3. Take a holiday,
 - . Book into a Motel by the Beach.
5. Spoil Yourself
6. Set Rules on gift giving and stick to them.

In the case of a crisis, or if you are having suicidal thoughts:

Call 000 (police, ambulance) or visit the emergency department of any hospital
Call **Lifeline** on **13 11 14**