



# GREEN ISLAND NEWSLETTER

Green Island

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## The Most Wonderful Time of the Year?

With the holiday season upon us, we may expect ourselves to be happy and celebrating with family and friends. We have so much to be thankful for and should have no reason to feel sad with gifts, good meals and great company, right? Contrary to popular thought, December has the highest instances of suicide and winter sees trends in higher levels of depression. There are many causes of depression during this time of year. Wanting to have a "perfect" holiday season, but being unable to provide financially can produce feelings of inadequacy. When family members aren't as close as desired, that dream of a "perfect" holiday can quickly fade away. Daily stress can play a major factor in depression, let alone stress felt during the holiday season<sup>2</sup>.

Symptoms of depression

during the holidays can include fatigue, hopelessness, social withdrawal, or anxiety<sup>1</sup>. Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is also a common factor of depression during the holidays and throughout the winter. This disorder hap-

pens usually during the late fall and winter, when days become shorter and there is less light during the day. A decreased exposure to light can influence our circadian rhythm, serotonin and melatonin levels, all of which can lead to feelings of depression if low enough<sup>1</sup>.

To combat feelings of depression, SAD induced or otherwise, try to get outside and take a walk. Prioritize shopping, parties and other events. Have a designated person to talk to when feeling down. If you feel your problems are greatly hindering your ability to live your everyday life, may want to consider speaking to a professional therapist who is trained to help you cope with negative feelings during the holiday season<sup>1</sup>.

(Copy and Paste Into Browser!)

<sup>1</sup> [http://counseling.suite101.com/article.cfm/christmas\\_depression](http://counseling.suite101.com/article.cfm/christmas_depression)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.professorshouse.com/family/holidays/christmas-depression.aspx?>



### Need more information?

*If you suspect your child has symptoms of depression, please visit our office for resources. Remember that these feelings must be taken seriously.*

*If someone discloses to you that they feel they may harm themselves, immediately seek emergency professional services.*



## World AIDS Day

World AIDS day will be recognized on Tuesday, December 1, 2009. Our middle school and high school students will be invited to hear a local woman who is HIV positive tell her story of living with the diagnosis. HIV can be spread

through sexual contact, sharing drug needles and from mother to child during child birth.

Currently, there is no cure for HIV, however treatment can help those diagnosed live a healthy life.



HIV and AIDS are not the same. HIV is a virus effecting the immune system. A person has AIDS when their immune system is so weak it can no longer fight off infections. For more information, please visit World AIDS Day.org.

### Contact Our Office!

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