



**YScreen** is the emotional health screen offered to all 9<sup>th</sup> grade students at the high schools in Fond du Lac County to identify risk factors for depression, anxiety and suicide.

### **March 2020 Shedding Light on Seasonal Sadness**

As the days get shorter, some people find themselves feeling sad. They may feel glum or gloomy around the winter holidays or get into a rut after the fun and festivities have ended. Some people have serious mood changes consistently year after year, lasting throughout the fall and winter when there is less natural sunlight. What is it about the darkening days that leave us feeling down and out or miserable? *Listed below are some things to discuss with youth to educate them on the topic of seasonal sadness and how to cope with the time of the year.*

#### **Common Causes:**

- Exposure to less sunlight
- Less serotonin (feel-good brain chemical)
- Social exclusion and withdrawal
- Less physical activity
- Worrying about money
- Too much family time
- Overeating fatty foods
- Nostalgia
- Overworking

#### **How to Fight the Winter Blues:**

- Exercise. Bundle up for a walk, swim indoors, or head to the gym
- Check your vitamin D levels
- Eat a healthy diet
- Light therapy
- Meditate
- Socialize with friends or family
- Maintain a regular sleep schedule
- Seek a healthcare professional

YScreen staff can help identify symptoms of stress in teens related to the winter blues and connect them and their families to the appropriate community resources that can address these concerns. YScreen is available to teens in Fond du Lac County. If you would like to request screening for your child or would like more information about YScreen, please contact us at **(920) 906-6571**.

The Fond du Lac Area YScreen Program is administered through Fond du Lac School District with guidance from the YScreen Advisory Board. The Fond du Lac Area YScreen program is proud to be supported in part by Agnesian HealthCare, a member of SSM Health and Fond du Lac Area United Way.