

**The Catholic Women's League of Canada  
Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council**

**CHRISTIAN FAMILY LIFE**

**Communiqué # 7**

*Inspired by the Spirit...Women Respond to God's Call*

Date:	October 8, 2018
To:	Diocesan Chairpersons of Christian Family Life
CC:	Provincial Executive (for information) National Chairperson of Christian Family Life (for information)
From:	Carol Schlachter, Provincial Chairperson of Christian Family Life

Greetings:

Mental Health is a major topic in the newspapers and on TV these days and for good reason. It is a major health problem and through awareness, many people are able to speak out whether it is a problem in their own lives or that of a family member or friend. This is a good thing! Education is of prime importance as we read alarming stats on mental issues.

From the Weekend Regional October 4, 2018, Submitted by the Brooks Bulletin –  
“Over half of Canadians consider anxiety and depression to be ‘epidemic’ in Canada, with that perception spiking amongst younger people, according to a new survey commissioned by the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA).” The article states that Canadian Mental Health Association calls for new legislation to bring mental health in balance with physical health. If you access <http://www.cmha.ca> you can read the information in its entirety as news provided by Canadian Mental Health Association.

The Calgary Herald Sun, October 7, 2018 published an article headed “Mental Issues in Kids on Rise – how do we protect our children’s well-being?” This article states the following Common Mental Health Issues Affecting the Young: Depression, Self-Harm, Generalized anxiety disorder, Post-traumatic stress disorder, ADHD, Eating disorders –Mentalhealth.org.

A third article from Global Voices, The Calgary Herald, October 2, 2018 was a very interesting read called ‘It’s About Listening’ written by Craig and Marc Kielburger suggesting “Start a mental health dialogue with loved ones.” “Mental health is finally a real conversation, slowly losing stigma with raised awareness and more sensitive media coverage.”

The Canadian Mental Health Association has listed common symptoms in people who have a mental illness.

- Withdrawal from society
- Chronic fatigue
- Confused or distorted thinking
- Inappropriate expression of emotions
- Loss of touch with reality
- Inability to maintain good inter-personal relationships
- Inability to cope with problems
- Inability to take care of one's personal needs
- Negative self-image and outlook
- Violence towards self or others
- Delusions and/or hallucinations

The purpose of this communiqué is to start a little more conversation about mental health and the issues of mental illness. Obviously, this being a health issue, our Education and Health standing committees will be offering much more information and suggestions on what we, as members can bring to the table.

**Action** – address your questions and concerns in letters to the Health Minister and other government officials.

Please find attached the National Resolution 2015.01 and take particular note of the Action Plan.

## **2015.01 Increased Early Intervention and Access to Children and Youth Mental Health Issues**

**Whereas,** An estimated 1.2 to 2 million children and youth in Canada suffer from mental illness, yet less than 20% receive access to appropriate supports, treatment or care due to long wait periods; and

**Whereas,** This lack of services may contribute to suicide, the leading cause of non-accidental death among youth, which could be decreased through early intervention; and

**Whereas,** Child and youth mental health is an area of shared federal and provincial/territorial jurisdiction; therefore, be it

**Resolved,** That national council of The Catholic Women's League of Canada, in 95<sup>th</sup> annual national convention assembled, urge the federal government, in collaboration with provincial/territorial governments, to provide increased early intervention and access to children and youth mental-health programs; and be it further

**Resolved,** That this resolution be forwarded through the national executive to the other ten provincial councils, encouraging them to become aware of this issue as it pertains to their province/territory, and to act on it, as deemed necessary/prudent.

### **Action Plan:**

1. Write letters to the prime minister, minister of health and local members of parliament, urging the federal government to invest in pan-Canadian efforts to provide early intervention and access to youth suicide prevention initiatives and programs.
2. Write letters to provincial and territorial governments urging them to increase access to appropriate supports, treatment and care for youth mental health services in their province/territory.
3. Provide information and resources to members and the public regarding the need for youth mental health services, including early intervention and youth suicide prevention initiatives and programs.

