

**Media contact:**  
Rennie Brown  
Communications  
& Public Affairs  
604-992-4119

## MEDIA RELEASE

May 3, 2010

For Immediate Release

### **Mental Health Week: No better time to learn about mental wellness as a key part of overall health**

VANCOUVER—We must pay attention to our mental health in the same way we do to our physical health says a local psychologist who specializes in mental health literacy.

“Being in good health means much more than feeling physically healthy. It also includes considering mental wellness and thinking about how mental and physical wellness impact each other. A great way to start working on this is through information and education, and, of course, action,” says Dr. Connie Coniglio, a registered psychologist and Director of Health Literacy for BC Mental Health & Addiction Services, an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority.

Depression and anxiety are common mental health problems experienced by many British Columbians, and these issues can be prevented or effectively managed by learning about mind-body fitness and attending to the mind, body, and spirit in a positive way. Understanding and using self-help resources, information, and supports can be an invaluable part of addressing these issues.

“Mental health literacy is all about being aware and becoming educated about the key ingredients of good mental health, similar to the knowledge we have about physical health factors, like exercise, nutrition, and sleep, for example,” says Dr. Coniglio.

Dr. Coniglio stresses that these prevention and coping strategies are appropriate for everyone but, in particular, they are helpful for those who suffer stress, anxiety, or depression.

“Virtually anyone can become depressed or anxious in the face of life’s stressful conditions,” says Coniglio. Depression and anxiety are the most prevalent, but also the most preventable mental health issues. Learning effective coping strategies, setting goals, getting into a routine for sleep, nutrition and exercise, and building a network of strong social supports are key strategies for mental health.

Learning how to find reliable information is key to mental health, and that’s where the Kelty Resource Centre and the Here To Help website come in. The Kelty Resource Centre was opened in 2008 with financial support from The Kelty Patrick Dennehy Foundation and provides information, resources, and referrals in all areas of mental health and substance use for children and youth and their families. Visit <http://www.bcmhas.ca/SupportCentre/Kelty/default.htm> for more information.

The Here To Help website ([www.heretohelp.ca](http://www.heretohelp.ca)) is a provincial mental health information resource for adults, developed and maintained by the BC Partners for Mental Health.

- 30 -

BC Mental Health & Addiction Services (BCMHAS) is an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA), providing a range of specialized provincial mental health services to people across the province. For more information visit: [www.bcmhas.ca](http://www.bcmhas.ca).