

## SAD Awareness Campaign Abstract

SAD stands for Seasonal Affective Disorder. It is very common in areas that have long winters and get little sunlight, and it is estimated that 20% of people living in northern climates are susceptible to the condition. Unfortunately, because it has only been recognized as a disorder relatively recently, very few people have knowledge about the consequences it can have on their lives. UVM students are at a high risk for developing this disorder, given the length and severity of the Vermont winters. An awareness campaign implemented in the Spring of 2011, using the Social Marketing methodology, will inform UVM students about SAD and teach them how to treat it.

In order to reach a subset of students, posters and other highly visible messages will be distributed in popularly traveled areas around campus. The posters will bring awareness to the disorder and provide action steps they can take to reduce their risk. One of the key goals is to increase awareness about the benefits of physical activity for students that have this disorder, as well as inform about “happy lights,” which are the number one treatment method. Effectiveness of the campaign will be measured by pre- and post- surveys. Creating awareness about this disorder will help students understand why the winter blues can have such a negative effect on many areas of their lives, including academic performance.