



**Canadian Mental
Health Association**
Mental health for all

MEDIA RELEASE

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Update: Record-Breaking Shoppers Drug Mart Ride Don't Hide Raises \$1.36 Million for Mental Health Programs

A record 7160 riders of all ages took part in Canada's largest community bike ride to banish the stigma around mental illness – and had a great time



Photo caption: Greater Vancouver cyclists set out Sunday in Canada's largest community bike ride for mental health.

(Vancouver, BC) – A record 7160 riders across Canada took part in the **Ride Don't Hide** charity bike ride today, raising a record \$1.36 million for **Canadian Mental Health Association's (CMHA)** mental health programs and services. Organizers expect final numbers to increase, as riders and donations continue to come in.

Celebrating its fifth anniversary in BC, **Shoppers Drug Mart Ride Don't Hide** took place today in 9 rural and urban BC communities and 20 other communities across the country, making it Canada's largest community bike ride for mental health. All funds raised through the events in BC go toward CMHA's mental health programs supporting women and girls within the local communities.

Provincial title sponsor Shoppers Drug Mart has been a key driving force for the event, raising \$500,000 for mental health programs for women and their families. This four year partnership has been critical to strengthening the voice and momentum of the Ride Don't Hide movement in BC and across Canada.

"It is so inspiring to see Canadians coming out in the thousands to support mental health in their communities," said Dr. Patrick Smith, national CEO of CMHA. "Through our national and provincial sponsors and donors we have raised \$1.36 million to support the work of CMHA across Canada."

Shoppers Drug Mart Ride Don't Hide ambassadors and dignitaries, including Olympic cycling hero Gillian Carleton, former Canuck Geoff Courtnall, Coquitlam Mayor Richard Stewart, Victoria Mayor Lisa Helps, MLA Carol James, Parliamentary Secretary for Child Mental Health and Anti-Bullying Jane Thornthwaite, and Minister of Health Hon. Terry Lake championed their local rides – many bringing their own personal mental health story to the event.

“Mental health concerns affects many of us— our friends, neighbours, families,” said Health Minister Terry Lake. “With positive campaigns like Ride Don't Hide, we're taking the stigma of mental illness out of the shadows and showing our community that we accept, understand and support our loved ones facing the challenges of mental illness.”

For national ambassador and ride founder Michael Schratter, the groundswell of support for Shoppers Drug Mart Ride Don't Hide has been a dream come true.

“This ride for me has always been about empowering others to come out of the dark,” says Michael, Shoppers Drug Mart Ride Don't Hide national ambassador. “Never in my wildest dreams could I have imagined it would be what it is today. To see more than 7,000 people come out and ride, and show each other there's nothing to be ashamed of, that's what Shoppers Drug Mart Ride Don't Hide is all about.”

In any given year, one in five, or approximately seven million Canadians, experience a mental health problem or illness, but only one-third will seek help – often due to the discrimination and stigma around mental illness.

The tremendous growth of Shoppers Drug Mart Ride Don't Hide in just 5 years – from 560 riders in 2 BC events in 2012 to thousands across 5 provinces this year – demonstrates an appetite for change. And that change is happening.

Any communities and organizations interested in hosting Shoppers Drug Mart Ride Don't Hide events in their region next year should contact Megan Brown at megan.brown@cmha.bc.ca.

CMHA is still accepting donations online at www.ridedonthide.com.

About Shoppers Drug Mart Ride Don't Hide

The Ride Don't Hide movement began with Michael Schratter, a Canadian teacher living with bipolar disorder. In 2010-11, Michael cycled 40,000 km around the world to share his story and empower others to help break the stigma around mental illness, as he said, “one pedal at a time”. His historic journey touched people all over the world, and has become a national movement that is both raising funds for mental health programs and breaking the stigma around mental illness through annual Ride Don't Hide community events in support of the Canadian Mental Health Association. The Ride Don't Hide program is led nationally by CMHA BC. Shoppers Drug Mart is the title sponsor for the rides in BC.

About the Canadian Mental Health Association

Founded in 1918, the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) is a national charity that helps maintain and improve mental health for all Canadians. As the nation-wide leader and champion for mental health, CMHA helps people access the community resources they need to build resilience and support recovery from mental illness. Visit the CMHA website at www.cmha.ca today.

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For more photos of Sunday's Shoppers Drug Mart Ride Don't Hide and interviews with CMHA and local residents with personal mental health stories, please contact:

Jennifer Quan, Canadian Mental Health Association, BC Division 604-688-3234 or jennifer.quan@cmha.bc.ca

Ride Don't Hide Across Canada:

BC

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[Port Alberni](#)

[South Okanagan Similkameen](#)

[Greater Vancouver](#)

[Prince George](#)

[Vernon](#)

[Mid-Island- Nanaimo](#)

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