



## MEDIA RELEASE

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# Ride Don't Hide Makes Strides in the Fight Against Stigma

*Recent Stats Show More Canadians Than Ever Before Are Talking About Their Mental Health*

**Vancouver, B.C.** – On June 25, ten thousand Canadians from Newfoundland to British Columbia will get on their bikes and join friends, family, colleagues, classmates and other community members to pedal towards the ultimate goal of ending the stigma of mental illness. They will be taking part in the Canadian Mental Health Association's 6th annual Ride Don't Hide event, Canada's largest mental health bike ride.

Spending a day biking and talking about mental health may not seem like a remedy for mental illness, but it might be exactly what Canada needs more of.

The recent [3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Canadian Mental Health Check-Up](#) by Ipsos Public Affairs found that almost half (48%) of those surveyed reported being more comfortable talking about mental health issues compared to two years ago.

Furthermore, the proportion of Canadians who say they have talked with someone about mental health continues to increase with 42% saying they opened up to someone (most likely a friend, family member or a family doctor) about their mental health in the past year. This is up 7% from last year.

Ride Don't Hide is a community event and a fundraiser for the CMHA. It gives communities a chance to come together to talk about an issue that affects everyone. Sharing stories and talking about recovery is the key to breaking the stigma that has kept mental illness in the shadows.

"National awareness raising events such as Ride Don't Hide play an important role in changing the public's perceptions and in eliminating the stigma surrounding mental illness" says Dr. Patrick Smith, national CEO, CMHA. "This latest Ipsos index is very encouraging as it shows that our work is making a difference in changing people's behaviours around accessing support.

At the same time, we know we are not there yet. The Ipsos data also shows a growing number of Canadians experiencing mental illness. To stem this increase, we need all Canadians to take part in this national conversation so we can better support those who are struggling. Prevention and recovery are both possible if we prioritize education, early intervention and access to timely treatment".

Dr. Smith continues: "We are asking Canadians from across the country to ride with us. Mental health for all is our vision, but the process of change happens one pedal at a time."

Rides will take place on June 25 in nine communities across British Columbia:

Greater Vancouver  
Victoria  
Mid-Island (Nanaimo)  
Port Alberni  
Kamloops

Prince George  
Shuswap-Revelstoke (Salmon Arm)  
South Okanagan-Similkameen (Penticton)  
Vernon

Ride Don't Hide is open to cyclists of all ages and skill levels. Individuals, families and teams can register online at [www.ridedon'thide.com](http://www.ridedon'thide.com).

For more information on Ride Don't Hide and its evolution click [here](#).

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### **About Ride Don't Hide**

Ride Don't Hide is an annual fundraiser hosted by the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) in celebration and support of mental health for all, with the goal of ending the stigma around mental illness. First launched with Michael Schratter's 40,000 km ride around the globe in 2010, Ride Don't Hide is a growing national movement with community bike rides in more than 30 communities across BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario and Newfoundland and Labrador. This year CMHA aims to engage more than 10,000 participants and raise \$1,700,000 for mental health programs. Join the movement and find your local community ride at [www.ridedonthide.com](http://www.ridedonthide.com).

**Facebook:** @RideDontHide

**Twitter:** @ridedonthide / #RideDontHide / #EndStigma

**Instagram:** RideDontHide

### **About the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA)**

Founded in 1918, the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) is the most established, most extensive community mental health organization in Canada. Through a presence in hundreds of neighbourhoods across every province, CMHA provides advocacy and resources that help to prevent mental health problems and illnesses, support recovery and resilience, and enable all Canadians to flourish and thrive. Visit the CMHA website at [www.cmha.ca](http://www.cmha.ca).

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