

Your Ride Don't Hide **TOOLKIT**

What you need to
get going



WELCOME to Ride Don't Hide!

Welcome to Ride Don't Hide. We're so glad you're here.

We're so pleased to be gathering together in person again in 2024. None of us can do this alone. Connecting and building community is one of the most powerful things we can do to safeguard and promote our mental health and care for each other.

Ride Don't Hide brings our friends, families and local community members together to say that mental health is more important than ever, and we need to take a stand to support each other.

It's a nationwide movement – a family – of people who share a passion to make sure no one has to struggle on their own.

And now, you are part of it!

So, what is Ride Don't Hide, and why does it matter?

Ride Don't Hide started with one person : Michael Schratter, a Vancouver teacher and journalist, who rode 40,000 kilometers, crossing six continents and 33 countries to bring mental health into the open. Today, Ride Don't Hide is a cross-Canada movement of more than 25,000 people every year and it has raised more \$11 million. All so no one has to go it alone.

This is your Ride Don't Hide Toolkit. It will help you make the most of your Ride Don't Hide experience.

So, here we go.





MOVE MORE



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GIVE BACK

Social connection can reduce stress and give one a sense of meaning, purpose and belonging. Supportive social ties can have a direct impact on our happiness and can reduce blood pressure, heart rate and stress hormones.

Ride Don't Hide is a reason to connect with your community. Here are four ways to get started.

SHARE YOUR STORY

Everyone deserves to be seen. As you raise funds to get one more person the help they need, you're showing your friends, family and loved ones that you care about their mental health. That you are on their side. That they are not alone. Here's how to create a social media post for Ride Don't Hide:



Get personal.

Post your personal reasons for riding. Write your own 'Why I Ride' story and share it.



Add in the basics.

Be clear about the cause, the event and what you're asking.



Add a visual.

Use a photo of yourself. Feel free to repost one of CMHA's Ride Don't Hide photos, social shareables or videos from [the Rider Centre](#).



Don't forget the link.

Don't forget to copy the link of your fundraising page into your post. This creates a fool-proof path to your fundraising page and gets your friends and family one step closer to donating.



Keep it up.

You can post again and again with a mix of personal stories and photos, updates on your progress towards your goal, and thank you posts to people who supported you.

START A TEAM

In Ride Don't Hide, #NoOneRidesAlone. That includes you. Here's how:

Recruit

Think about who you want by your side. Start by calling your inner circle – your closest friends and family. Then think bigger—your co-workers, classmates, and neighbours. Inspire them by explaining that Ride Don't Hide is a celebration of mental health and means that no one rides alone.

Inspire

As team captain, you are your team's biggest fan. Your energy and passion will inspire your teammates to come out for Ride Don't Hide. Along the way, be generous with thank yous, encouraging messages and updates.

Empower

Once you've built your team, come up with a joint goal. Make it ambitious (but doable), so your team members push a little past their comfort zone. When you smash your goal, reach a little higher!

Lead

It can be hard to picture returning to in person gatherings. As team captain, you can help with hints, tips, tricks and support.

Download the [Team Captain Toolkit here](#) for step-by-step instructions and more tips!



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RAISE FUNDS

Since the onset of the pandemic, 37%, or over 14 million, of Canadians reported a deterioration in their mental health. And yet, a third of Canadians can't get the mental health care they need and that rises to 75% for children.

Ride Don't Hide raises essential funds so the Canadian Mental Health Association can offer programs and services at no charge to get people the mental health help they need when they need it, wherever they are.

TIP 1: Donate to yourself even before you start fundraising. It will give you a head start and demonstrate your commitment to your sponsors.

TIP 2: Set a goal. Aim high. Know that you can change your goal at any time.

TIP 3: Include your own story – you will raise as much as five times more if you tell people why you're riding. Write a "Why I Ride" story and post it on your Fundraising Page. You can also use it as part of an "elevator pitch" or brief script when asking for donations.

HINT

Anything with a pencil icon can be customized.



TIP 4: Create your list of potential sponsors. You know more people than you think! Start with your friends, family, classmates and colleagues. And then go wider!

TIP 5: Start today. The earlier you start, the more you'll raise. It's as simple as that.

TIP 6: How to ask? Emails are the easiest way! There are many ways to ask for sponsors. One of the easiest ways is through email. You can send emails directly (and track them) from Your Fundraising Dashboard, using sample emails that you are more than welcome to personalize. You can also send emails from your own email account. And, of course, if you prefer, a simple phone call is a tried and true fundraising technique.

TIP 7: What to ask in three easy steps?

1. Explain your Ride. "I'm riding in Ride Don't Hide this June to raise funds for the Canadian Mental Health Association because..."
2. Ask for a Donation. Be direct. (Just ask!) "Help me bring mental health into the open by sponsoring me..."
3. Be specific. "Please consider donating \$X amount. Visit my Ride Don't Hide page here..."

TIP 8: Follow up. If they haven't responded or donated in a week, follow up with a phone call or a personal email. You're not bothering people by following up. Life gets busy. Sometimes people just need a reminder.

TIP 9: Social Media. If you're on social media, posting your fundraising page is a great way to spark donations!

TIP 10: Say thank you. When a friend or family member supports you, send a thank you note right from your fundraising page. Make it 'from the heart' and don't hold back. When it comes to thanks, there's no "too much."

HINT

Your fundraising efforts don't have to stop at the end of June when the Ride does. You can still accept donations until the end of July! Letting your sponsors know how you did can generate more donations that will count towards your goal.



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SHOW YOUR GRATITUDE

Saying thank you is anything but an afterthought.

In fact, it's the single most important thing you can do for your sponsors. Not to mention, for yourself. People who give to help others increase their self-esteem, and have fewer feelings of depression and lower stress levels.

Mental health may be the one of the most important causes of our times, but the real reason your sponsors give is because of YOU. They give because you care. So, a thank you from you will have more impact than any email we send them.

Say thank you right away.

Send a thank you right from your Fundraising Dashboard. You can use the email template there. Or, for that personal touch, you can write a personalized email to each person who sponsored you.



Make it personal.



Use their name. This needs to feel personal. You want each donor to feel like you're speaking directly to them.

Say thank you. Make your "thank you" clear and obvious– don't be shy or vague about it. "Thank you for sponsoring me."



Write about their impact. Include a note about how their support will help...

...you realize your goal – "Your donation puts me at 70% of my \$330 goal that gets one more person the help they need!"

...have a positive impact in your community – "And your donation has an even bigger reach. Your donation says: 'You are not alone' to people who are struggling."



And if you want to make a bigger 'thank you' splash, suggest next steps:

"I would love to invite you for dinner to show my gratitude."



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COPE BETTER.

There are many issues that grab our attention today. This can be very stressful and when current coping strategies are bankrupt, it will impact our well-being. So if your mental health is suffering, know that you are not alone.

Now more than ever, we have to prioritize our mental health.

As a Ride Don't Hide-er, you're part of a nationwide movement. It's a big family, and we've got your back. Because everyone deserves to feel well.

SOME IDEAS FOR TAKING CARE:

- Accept that it's okay to be worried; it's natural to feel some anxiety.
- Take breaks from following the news and social media.
- Lean on each other. Set up a buddy system with a friend and agree to check in on one another, help each other reach your Ride Don't Hide goals, and train together to get ready for Ride Day in June.
- Stay connected. Prioritize connecting with people you care about in new ways. Maybe it's time to take up the lost art of letter writing.
- Start a daily gratitude practice. Look for three good things you feel grateful for every day – the sunshine on your face, an email from a friend you miss, a particularly delicious muffin. Before bed, spend a few minutes remembering and even write them down.
- Declutter, organize or clean your space. Cultivate a peaceful and calming environment.
- Get outside. Run. Wiggle your bare toes in the grass. Sit still near some water. People watch.
- Help others if you can. Ask friends, family members, or neighbours if they need anything, such as groceries. Simply checking in by phone, text, or video call can make a big difference. Make it a regular thing.
- Make bread. Close your eyes while you knead it. Focus on your senses and the how it feels to make it..
- Try a brand-new activity with no pressure to succeed.
- Journal. Paint. Draw.
- Spend 10 minutes meditating.
- Enjoy a day without a to-do list or agenda.
- Take yourself on a date. Set aside a few hours to have an adventure.
- Tell your reflection in the mirror what you like about yourself, even if doing so makes you laugh.
- Talk to someone. Seek extra help or support if you need it. People feel anxious about the future at the best of times, and the pandemic is a first for us. We all need help sometimes.



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THANK YOU!

The climate crisis, the economy, the war, injustice, unrest, uncertainty – it's a lot to cope with and we can all use support.

None of us can do this alone. And thanks to the funds you raise through Ride Don't Hide, more people will be able to get the help and support they need. When they need it. Wherever they live.

Thank you for showing Canadians that mental health isn't something we need to hide, that our well-being is worth fighting for.

Thank you for being part of the Canadian Mental Health Association's Ride Don't Hide!

p.s. Be in touch with any questions! Email us at ridedonthide@cmhawpg.mb.ca

