

Ride Don't Hide, **VIRTUALLY**

Your
VIRTUAL RIDER
Toolkit



Welcome to Ride Don't Hide, *VIRTUALLY!*

We're so glad you're here.

We're in uncharted waters with COVID-19, but we're all in the same boat. The COVID-19 pandemic means that we can't be together this year for Ride Don't Hide.

But you are not alone.

We don't have to ride shoulder to shoulder to stand up together for mental health. Riders – and spinners, walkers, runners, yogis, kitchen dancers, meditators, and every other mental health champion – across Canada this spring are Riding Outside, Riding Inside, or Riding In Spirit to bring mental health into the open, wherever we are.

We can't be together, but in Ride Don't Hide, *Virtually*, no one rides alone. We may be at home, but together we're a movement for mental health.

By joining us for Ride Don't Hide, *Virtually*, you are showing the world that even though we're apart right now, we are not alone in dealing with our mental health.

Even in uncertain times – especially in uncertain times – we need our communities more than ever. Ride Don't Hide, *Virtually* aims to bring you a sense of agency, wellness, connection, contribution, community and belonging. Know that if you have any questions at all, please write to us info@ridedonthide.com.

Apart we can be strong, but together we're unstoppable. Especially with you on the team.

So, here we go.

YOUR RIDE, YOUR WAY

Ride Don't Hide, *Virtually* is your ride, your way. Ride outside, ride inside, or ride in spirit to bring mental health into the open, *wherever you are*.

SO WHAT IS A VIRTUAL RIDE, ANYWAY?

A virtual ride is a choose-your-own adventure. You decide how—and how much—to get involved.

Whether you choose to Ride Outside for a 100 km throughout June or simply go out for a “leisurely” Sunday ride.

Whether you commit to a rigorous 30 day spin challenge or casually pedal on a stationary bike through your next Netflix binge.

Whether you replicate your favourite cross fit regimen in your basement, do yoga once a week in the living room, take a brisk walk every morning before working from home or start a new mindfulness practice in the 10 minutes between home-schooling and starting dinner.

However you take care of yourself this spring – that's your Ride.

And sharing it with others – that's your 'Don't Hide.'

HOW TO RIDE, VIRTUALLY

WAYS TO RIDE

Set a challenge goal for yourself – a total number of kms to ride, a commitment to a new routine, or a 30 day challenge. Announce it on your personal fundraising page, work towards it throughout the spring, and celebrate your success.

RIDE OUTSIDE

Set a goal like 100km in June or 2 km each day.

RIDE INSIDE

Set a daily goal or a monthly challenge.

MOVE

Make it a daily activity challenge - Dance, yoga, do stairs, planks, run, walk, hike...

GROW

Create a new practice like meditation, mindfulness, or learning a new skill

CONNECT

Call your friends, host a virtual party, show people that they are not alone

REST

Do something everyday to take care of your mental health - a self-care challenge

Set a fundraising goal – use this to ask for donations or as the goal on your fundraising page.

- \$10 for every KM or minute
- \$25 for each day of a 30 day challenge
- \$500 to help provide 1 hour of crisis counseling
- \$1000 to provide online anxiety resources for thousands of people

WAYS TO NOT HIDE

- Livestream your ride, session or activity to your personal fundraising page. Learn how on the Ride Don't Hide [Rider Centre](#).
- Update your Personal Ride Don't Hide page with a notes about your rides, the yoga session, the stress baking, whatever your chosen activity.
- Post to social media. Use the hashtags **#RideDontHide** and **#NoOneRidesAlone** and tag us at @CMHA.ACSM.National on Facebook or @cmhanational on Instagram.
- Spread the word. Email your friends, family, coworkers and contacts to let them know how your virtual Ride is going and how they can get involved.

TAKE CARE OF YOUR PHYSICAL HEALTH TOO

The last thing anyone wants right now is to end up in the hospital after going over the handlebars. Be sure to warm up, tune up and take special care, especially if you're riding outside.

For your safety, please remember:

- Make sure your bike is tuned up and always wear a helmet.
- Practice safe physical distancing. Wear a mask, don't ride behind anyone you don't live with, and stay two meters apart.
- Be visible – wear bright colours, use reflective strips and lights.
- Follow the rules of the road.

And always, always follow the latest directives from your public health authorities. Keeping everyone healthy – mentally and physically—is the whole point, after all.



HOW TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

These are some strange and unsettling times, to say the least. But you are not alone. As a virtual Ride Don't Hide-er, you're part of a nationwide movement. It's a big family, and we've got your back.

In a time of unprecedented uncertainty, stress, anxiety and physical distancing, we all need connection to and support from our communities, now more than ever. Because everyone still deserves to feel well, even in a global pandemic.

A pandemic is a very stressful event for individuals and communities, so it's normal to feel some stress and anxiety. Know too that it's also common for people to display great resiliency during times of crisis.

Some tips for keeping well:

- Accept that it's okay to be worried; it's normal to feel some anxiety about a situation like this.
- Take breaks from following the news and social media regarding the outbreak. It's important to be informed, but there's evidence that hearing constantly about an upsetting event can worsen the stress and worry – beyond what's necessarily appropriate and proportionate. Could you limit your check-in to one reliable source, once a day?
- When you do follow the news, get your information from reliable sources, such as public health agencies and officials.
- Practice self-care. Get enough sleep, eat healthy, exercise (including by going outdoors while following public health directives) and do things you enjoy.

- This is absolutely the time to lean on each other. Even if we can't be close physically with one another, we need to stay close emotionally. Stay in touch with your social network and reach out for social support.
- One way to do this is to discuss a buddy system in which you agree to check in on each other and run essential errands if you become sick.
- Stay connected. Being apart doesn't have to mean feeling alone. Find ways to connect with people you care about in other ways. If you can't see someone in person, you can still reach out by phone, text, or video call.
- Help others if you can. Ask friends, family members, or neighbours if they need anything, such as groceries or other household needs. Simply checking in regularly by phone, text, or video call can make a big difference.
- Explore self-management strategies like mindfulness, yoga, meditation, art, or exercise to manage anxious thoughts.
- Seek extra help or support when you need it. People feel anxious about the future at the best of times, and many people have never encountered a pandemic like this before. It's okay if you need help.

For more information on COVID-19 and mental health, check out [CMHA resources](#) or find your [local CMHA branch here](#).

HOW TO CONNECT, WHILE PHYSICALLY DISTANT

We need physical distance to keep our bodies healthy, but we also require social connection to keep our minds and spirits well. Social connection is a protective factor for everyone's mental health: "In a crisis, community is everything"—Darby Allen, former Fort McMurray Fire Chief.

We may be riding apart, but we're still part of a movement. By joining Ride Don't Hide, *Virtually* you are helping to foster a sense of community and help people see and feel that they are not alone.

Here's some ways to make that real:

RECONNECT WITH FAMILY

Enjoy time at home with your family. All those things you've put off because there was never time can move from your wish list to a to-do list:

- Cook and eat dinner together.
- Blow the dust off games and puzzles.
- Plant a garden.

CONNECT DIGITALLY

Stop the scroll and use your time online to connect with meaning and intention. Use your favourite social media platform or videoconferencing like Facetime, Skype, Zoom or House Party to reach out to people you miss.

- Start the day with friends and coffee or host an end-of-the-day happy hour.
- Host a digital dinner party and include a virtual cooking lesson of the main dish.
- Read grandkids a bedtime story.

ATTEND A CLASS OR EVENT VIRTUALLY

Schools, gyms, yoga studios and local attractions such as zoos and museums are getting creative, offering opportunities to enjoy what they offer digitally. Even better, most are making these services, classes and attractions available for free.

Think globally, too. What better time to explore that famous and distant destination.

TAKE IT OUTSIDE

Social distancing doesn't mean total isolation. Driveways, yards and sidewalks make it easier to set boundaries while allowing neighbors to get outside and connect. Always follow the directives of your local public health authorities, of course.

Get the kids involved and let them connect too with these ideas:

- Create driveway art with sidewalk chalk and have a neighborhood "gallery walk."
- Use washable markers to draw or play tic-tac-toe with friends on each side of windows or storm doors.
- Start a neighborhood scavenger hunt, searching for a specific item like a flag, teddy bear or balloon somewhere visible from the sidewalk.

GO OLD SCHOOL

It may seem old fashioned, given all the digital options available now, but a spontaneous phone call or an unexpected piece of handwritten mail can brighten someone's whole day. Even if a call ends up being a voicemail or you're not there to see them check the mailbox, you've let someone know you were thinking about them, which is always good medicine.

BE A CAPTAIN

BUILD A TEAM

Ride Don't Hide, *Virtually* is a chance to bring our friends, families and local community members together to say that mental health is important, that supporting each other is key, and that we can make a difference when we work together for an important cause, even when we're physically distancing.

Because even in isolation, #NoOneRidesAlone.

Recruit

Think about who you want by your (virtual) side. Start by calling your closest friends and family, your inner circle. Then think bigger – your coworkers, classmates and neighbours. Inspire them by explaining that Ride Don't Hide, *Virtually* ensures 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, *Virtually*. Be generous with the thank yous, encouraging messages and updates along the way.

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 envision how a virtual ride works. As team captain, you can help with hints, tips, tricks and support. Hold virtual team pep rallies through a teleconferencing platform.

HOW TO

You can create a team through your Fundraising Dashboard.

1. Log in by clicking Account Login at www.ridedonthide.com
2. Go to the Dashboard page.
3. Click on 'Change Team Membership' on the right hand side, under Event Information.
4. From the drop down menu, choose **Create a new Team**, then enter your team name, team goal and team type.
5. This will make you the Team Captain and unlock new pages, emails and more within your Dashboard!



HOW TO HELP

We know that fundraising can be tough at the best of times. Right now it may seem impossible.

But the need has never been greater.

As we face an unprecedented physical health crisis due to COVID-19, we are also facing an unprecedented mental health crisis. Businesses are shutting down, offices are closing, people are working from home and others have lost their jobs. We are being asked to self-isolate when social connection and belonging are core to good mental health.

Everyone in Canada has the right to good mental health. But in times of crisis, the need and demand for mental health supports will increase. Funds are desperately needed not only to keep existing supports available, but also to respond to rising demand and the anticipated 'echo pandemic' of mental health issues caused by COVID-19, self-isolation and economic uncertainty.

Ride Don't Hide, *Virtually* raises essential funds for Canadian Mental Health Association programs and services that work to keep people out of crisis and support people of all ages with the mental health help they need, *when they need it, wherever we are.*

Every donation, no matter the size, is a hand reaching out saying you are not alone; we are not alone.

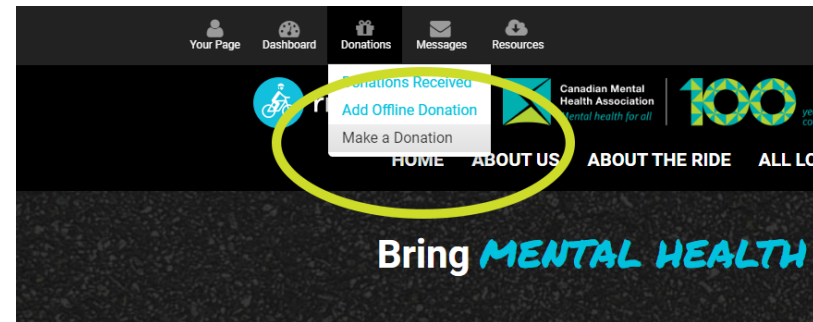
FUNDRAISING 101

Before you get going, know that we are here to help. Fundraising might feel daunting at first. But we've got your back, every step – and pedal – of the way.

We have created a comprehensive **Ride Don't Hide Fundraising Guide (The Guide)**, an easy to-read, how-to guide to raising funds for the cause. You can find the Guide, and other handy tools, in the online Rider Centre [at this link](#).

TOP TIPS FROM THE GUIDE:

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



How To:

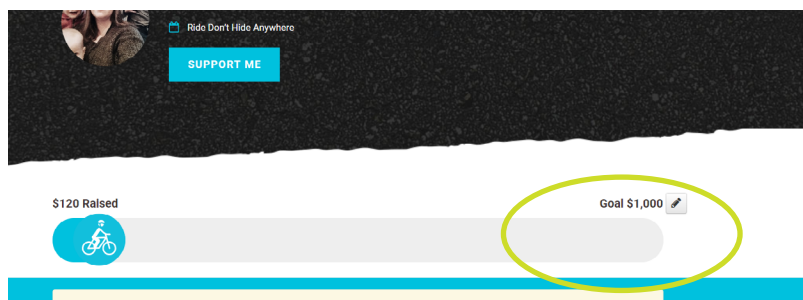
Login to the Fundraising Dashboard by clicking Account Login at www.ridedonthide.com. Click on Donations in the top menu, then Make a Donation.



This section of the Toolkit just provides an overview. You'll want to check out the comprehensive Ride Don't Hide Guide to Fundraising on the [online Rider Centre](#).



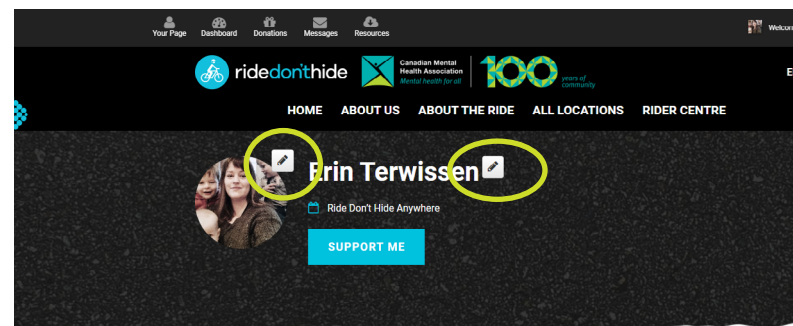
TIP #2: Set a goal. Aim high. Know that you can change your goal at any time.



How To:
Find Change your goal on the Settings tab halfway down your fundraising page.



TIP #3: Include your own story – you will raise on average five time more if you tell people why you're riding. Write a "Why I Ride" story and post it on your Fundraising Page (accessible from your Dashboard) or use it as part of an "elevator pitch" or brief script for making phone calls for donations or asking in person. Check out a complete step-by-step to writing your own "Why I Ride" story in The Guide.



How To:
On your **Fundraising Dashboard**, click on Your Page in the top menu. Anything with a pencil icon can be customized. Make your story personal and add a photo to make it more compelling and memorable.



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 welcome (encouraged!) to personalize. You can also send emails from your own email account. And, of course, if you prefer, asking by phone and in person are tried and true fundraising techniques.

HINT

See The Fundraising Guide for more!

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—you're just providing another opportunity for them to connect and contribute to this important cause. Life gets busy. Sometimes people just need a reminder.

HINT

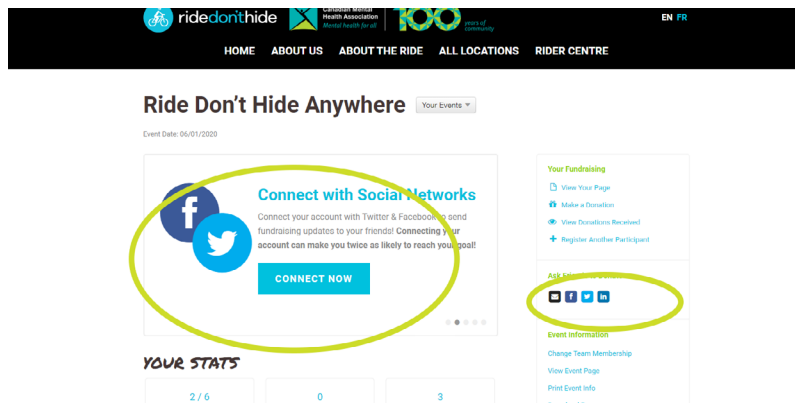
Check out The Guide and the Art of Asking Tool for more wording you can borrow!



TIP #9: Social Media.

If you're on social media, posting your fundraising page is a great way to spark donations!

And while you're there on your social media accounts, there is so much you can do to promote your ride. Check out *The Art of Fundraising on Social Media Tool* at the [online Rider Centre](#).)



How To:

Use the share link option on your **Fundraising Dashboard** or download a shareable image and sample posts from the [online Rider Centre](#). Or go ahead and write your own personalized messages and post your own photos.

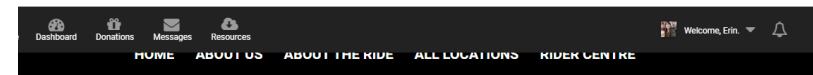


TIP #10: Say thank you.

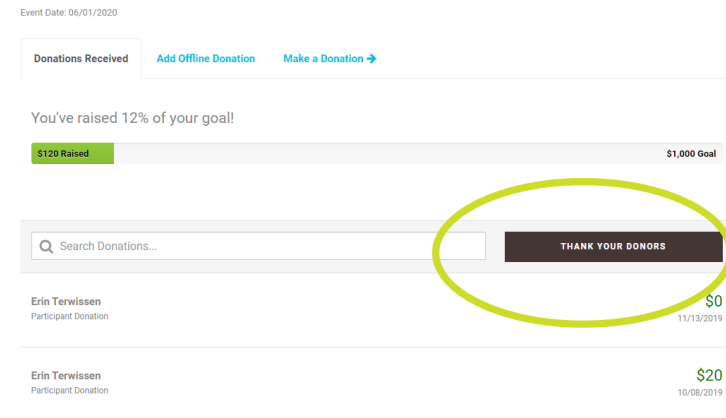
When a friend or family member supports you, send a thank you note (samples available!) right from your fundraising page. You can't say thank you too emphatically—make it 'from the heart' and don't hold back.



Check out our Gratitude Generator Tool at the online Rider Centre for an in-depth look at how to thank your sponsors.



Ride Don't Hide Anywhere



How To:

In your **Fundraising Dashboard**, click on the **Donations** Tab. On the **Donations Received** page, click **Thank Your Donors**. Use the standard message or, even better, customize it with a personal message for each donor.



TIP #1): Once the Ride is over:

- Let your donors know how your virtual ride went and how important their donation was to your success.
- You might also want to write a social media post saying Thanks and announcing how much you raised and how it will help.
- You can even give a shout out to your biggest donors, if that feels right.



HINT

Your fundraising efforts don't have to stop after the virtual Ride is over. You can still accept donations afterwards! Letting your sponsors know how you did can generate more donations that will count towards your goal!



NOW LET US THANK YOU!

As a virtual rider, you go beyond the expected and take action on your own to make a difference for mental health. You're not just a rider or a fundraiser, you're a champion for mental health. You're a torch bearer in the movement to make mental health seen as a vital part of what lets us thrive.

Your participation in Ride Don't Hide, *Virtually* brings mental health into the open. Your efforts in fundraising help people in your community access the support and service they need to take care of their mental health. Your courage, your commitment, your dedication to the cause is truly inspiring.

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

p.s. Be in touch with any questions! info@ridedonthide.com