



# The Complete Ride Don't Hide Guide to **FUNDRAISING**





# WELCOME TO YOUR GUIDE TO ALL THINGS FUNDRAISING FOR RIDE DON'T HIDE.

We have created this guide to make fundraising simple, straightforward and fun for you. You will also find other tools, like this Fundraising Guide, at the [online Rider Centre](#).

## THE ONLINE VS TRADITIONAL EXPERIENCE

There are two basic ways to fundraise for **Ride Don't Hide**: the online experience and the traditional experience. One is by using your online Fundraising Dashboard. We highly recommend this way because everything is automated there and you can personalize to your heart's content. But you're not limited to this – take your fundraising offline and 'in real life.' We've got tools for that.

**Make friends with your Fundraising Dashboard. [Login](#). Take a good look around. Check out the online Rider Centre for other fundraising tips, tricks and tools, as well.**

**Then follow these 11 easy steps.**

### MIX AND MATCH

But say you'd like to run your fundraising campaign without using the Fundraising Dashboard, or social media, or any online or digital tools at all. Don't worry! Using the traditional, "tried and true" version of fundraising doesn't make you old-fashioned. Fundraising efforts were successful long before email and the Internet, and long before social media.

You can Mix and Match both the online experience and the traditional experience. So, for instance, if you don't want to use your Fundraising Dashboard at all, you can always send out emails from our own email account (if you use one). A Fundraising Page will be created for you automatically when you register; you don't have to use it and you can adjust your privacy settings if you like, but it does make it very easy for you to collect your donations, through the secure online credit card transactions. You can, however, still collect donations even if you don't use the online system. (See the [Collecting Donations by Cheque or Cash Tool](#) for instructions.)

# FUNDRAISING IN 11 EASY STEPS!

## 1. GO AHEAD AND START

Now go right ahead and...**be your first donor!**

Don't start at zero. It doesn't have to be a big amount, but you'll want to make it meaningful. Your donation will show your donors you're committed. And will inspire them to follow your lead.

## 2. SET A GOAL

Aim high but not out of reach. (Don't worry, you can always adjust your goal, up or down!) If you smash your goal, be sure to raise it and aim even higher.



Find "Change your goal" on the Settings tab halfway down your fundraising page.

It can help to set some internal or milestone goals as well – for instance, say you want to raise \$200 by two weeks, \$400 by four weeks, and so on. You can use these milestones later as a reason to follow up with your donors. For instance, you can say/write "I am just \$50 away from my weekly goal. Can you help put me over the top?" (You can also publicize having achieved your overall goal in your fundraising emails and on social media. But we'll get to that later in the guide.)



### 3. PERSONALIZE YOUR FUNDRAISING PAGE

Your Fundraising Dashboard makes it possible for you to personalize your own Fundraising page, with its own website address (URL), so you can send your sponsors directly there to make a donation.

The more personalized your page, the better your fundraising efforts will be. That's why we recommend posting a personal story (what we call your "Why I ride" story) and some photos.

#### Why write a "Why I Ride" Story for your fundraising page?

You will want to include a personal story about why you're riding (and not hiding). Here's why:

The media is full of misinformation about mental illness, and mental health struggles. Don't let the myths and negative stories stand: tell your own "Why I Ride" story. (Maybe you're riding for yourself. Maybe for someone else. Maybe for everybody's mental health. Tell your story!)

The fact is: riders who post a story about why they're riding **raise about five times more**. Adding a photo of yourself can also attract sponsors.

Here are some tips for finding your own "Why I ride".

Ask yourself:

- What does **Ride Don't Hide** make me feel?
- Why does mental health matter to me? Why is it my cause?
- What would the world be like if no one had to hide?
- Who are you riding for: yourself, a loved one, for the rights of all Canadians to thrive?

#### HOW TO

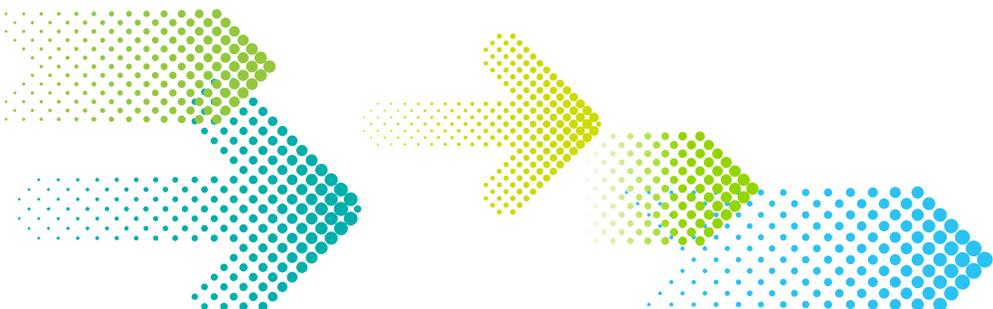
Instructions for personalizing the fundraising page:

1. Login at [www.ridedonthide.com](http://www.ridedonthide.com)
2. Click the 'Your Page' button at the top left
3. Scroll down to 'My Story', and look for the pencil icon to edit.



#### HINT

Check out the [Why I Ride Story Generator](#) at the online Rider Centre!



## 4. WHAT TO ASK – HOW TO TALK ABOUT RIDE DON'T HIDE

### Make it easy to explain. Craft a simple “elevator pitch”

An “elevator pitch” is a marketing term. It refers to the 30 seconds (or so) that you have to make your case – or sell something -- when you’re riding in an elevator with someone. This brief script will help you “sell” your ride. Use this pitch to tell others quickly and simply why it matters, and how they can help. This pitch will help you whether you’re sending emails, making telephone calls or approaching people in person.

Here’s some ready-to-use language for crafting your own elevator pitch. It’s a two-step script that includes 1. Explaining why you ride, and then 2. Asking for a donation.



## HOW TO CRAFT YOUR ELEVATOR PITCH

### 1. Explain your “why you ride”:

“I’m riding in **Ride Don’t Hide** in June because...”

- I’m raising funds for the Canadian Mental Health Association
- I am supporting work that will keep people out of crisis and keep people well.
- I am riding to bring mental health into the open.

**Add a personal “Why I ride” sentence (or longer) that sums up why you are riding.**

Here are some questions to ask yourself when explaining “Why I ride?”

- What does **Ride Don’t Hide** make me feel?
- Why does mental health matter to me? Why is it my cause?
- What would the world be like if no one had to hide?
- Who are you riding for: yourself, a loved one, for the rights of all Canadians to thrive?

### 2. Ask the person to sponsor you.

“You can help by sponsoring my ride.”

“Could you make a donation, either big or small?”

“Any amount will help.”

You now have your own “elevator pitch” and you’re ready to start asking!

## 5. MAKE YOUR LIST OF WHO TO ASK

The next step is to make a list of the people you will ask to sponsor you. This list will include all of your potential sponsors.

1. Start with your closest friends and family. The people closest to you will give to your ride simply because it's YOU who asked. They will give because you matter to them. And they will give because they see you're passionate about the cause.
2. The next group to add to your list are your co-workers and classmates. They are also likely to give because it's YOU who asked. You'll find through making this list that you know more people than you think. Don't forget members of your extended family and extended circle of friends.
3. Think about all the people who are part of your "community" – all the people you see, call or email. Gather names from your phone contact list, email account and social media connections. Dig into your address book, rolodex—if you're "old school" –holiday card list, wedding invite list, etc. These people will give because they care about the cause, and because they see the Canadian Mental Health Association as a leader for mental health in their community. Feel free to leave no stone unturned:
  - Parents of your children's classmates or teammates
  - Former classmates, teammates, roommates & neighbours
  - Former teachers & co- workers
  - People from your office
  - Professional associations, teams, the gym
  - Larger professional network
  - Members of clubs, neighbourhood or other community organizations
  - Grocer, coffee shop "barista", dry cleaner, hair dresser, manicurist, doctor, butcher, baker...

4. Think about all the people you're out of touch with. Fundraising for mental health could be the reason you get back in touch.
5. Expand your reach. Include a P.S. in your emails asking folks to forward your request to friends and family who might be interested in giving for mental health.

## 6. START TODAY. DON'T PUT IT OFF.

The earlier you start, the more you'll raise. It's as simple as that.



## 7. NOW, HERE WE GO: IT'S TIME TO ASK FOR YOUR FIRST DONATION.

Whether you're fundraising by email, or by more traditional means such as by telephone or in-person, here's how to get started.

### Want to make telephone calls?

Use your elevator pitch as a phone script, then take a practice run with someone – your closest friend, your spouse or a parent – on a pre-arranged call. Then go ahead and make your first “real” call. Choose an “easy” one – someone who is very likely to support you. You'll find that making phone calls to family and close friends is an effective way to fundraise.

### Want to ask people in person?

Asking in person is also an effective way to seek sponsors. Again, use your elevator pitch and practice with someone. The best way to accept donations is by sending the donor to your fundraising page. However, if a person doesn't want to donate online, you are able to collect donations in cash or by cheque. See our [Collecting Donations by Cash or Cheque](#) Tool at the online Rider Centre.

### Want to send emails?

Perhaps the easiest way to send out email is directly from your Fundraising Dashboard: just pick a message, enter the email address and press send! We have included a template email on the Fundraising Dashboard, and you should feel free to use these emails “as is.” Or better yet, add a personal touch.

Know that a personalized email will always get better results! When we write from the heart to someone specifically, we can spark their passion for the cause.

We have also included some sample emails at the very bottom of this guide, and you can send them – or personalized versions of them – from your own email account. If you have the time, send each potential sponsor their own email. Please note that impersonal mass emails are easy to ignore, and they can trigger the “bystander effect,” where people just assume someone else will step up. A hint: if you do choose to send out a mass email from your personal account, be sure to put the email addresses in the “bcc” field to protect the privacy of the people on your list.

### Tips for personalizing your emails

**Overall tip:** Bring your passion and don't hold back.

#### Specific tips:

- Use the person's name in the greeting. (e.g. Hi Peter! Hello Anita!)
- Explain the purpose of your email: “I'm fundraising for the Canadian Mental Health Association by participating in an event called **Ride Don't Hide**. It's a bike ride that brings mental health into the open. Too many people are still struggling on their own. With **Ride Don't Hide**, no one rides alone.”
- Copy and paste parts of your “Why I Ride” story (see above, **Writing Your “Why I Ride” story** or our [Why I Ride Story Generator](#) Tool)
- Tell them your goal and what you're asking. Be specific. “Will you help me reach \$XXXX for mental health by making a \$XX donation? Any amount will help.”
- Who doesn't love a P.S.? You can add an additional request in your P.S.: “Want to do more for mental health? There's room on my team – come ride beside me and **Ride Don't Hide!**”



## Now go ahead and send your first email!



See above for how to craft an email or use the sample emails at the end of this guide. You can also use (or personalize!) the emails we've created for you on the Fundraising Dashboard.

1. Login at [www.ridedonthide.com](http://www.ridedonthide.com)
2. Click on the 'Messages' button on the black menu at the top of your screen.
3. Go to 'Compose a Message'.
4. Select the message type you'd like to start with.
5. Add recipients – you can add your contacts' names and email addresses individually, or import them from Webmail or a CSV file.
6. Edit the subject and body of the email to your heart's content!
7. Save the draft or send the message!



### HINT

Be sure to always include a link to your fundraising page in your emails. If you're sending email from your Fundraising Dashboard, the link is included automatically. But if you're asking via your own email account, don't forget to add the link to your **Ride Don't Hide** fundraising page.

## 8. FOLLOW UP

Don't be shy.

If they haven't responded or donated after a week, follow up with a phone call or a personal email. Use your elevator pitch as a script. Remember: you're not bothering people by following up—you're just providing another opportunity for them to connect, and contribute to this important cause.

## 9. POST ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Post your ride and your fundraising page on social media.



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.

We have also created a tool called [Creating your social media posts](#) that you will find at the online Rider Centre. It provides pointers for crafting an effective social media post, whether you use Twitter, Facebook, Instagram or any other platform.

## 10. SAYING THANK YOU

The single most important thing you can do is to thank your donors. You can't say thank you too emphatically or too often—make it from the heart and don't hold back. You want them to feel like they're part of the mental health movement too. We'll be sending a thank you too, but a thank you from you will have more impact than any email we send.

*Thank them right away – it's so easy*

You can send a thank you right from your **Fundraising Dashboard**. You can use the email template there, or you can personalize your email to each donor.

**Here are some tips for personalizing your Thank You: (You will also find a sample Thank You email at the end of this guide)**

- Include their name in the greeting so that it feels personal.
- Thank them for their donation – don't be shy or vague about it. "Thank you for sponsoring me."
- Make them feel special; let them know the impact their donation has on you, and on the movement.
- Be polite AND personal. Nothing too formal.
- It doesn't have to be long. A few from-the-heart sentences is all it takes. You can refer them to the **Ride Don't Hide** website for more information about the cause ([www.ridedonthide.com](http://www.ridedonthide.com)). If you like, include a note about how their support will help you reach your goal – "Your donation puts me at XX% of my \$XXXX goal!"
- Make them feel like they're along for the ride: update your donors on your progress toward your goal.
- Are there any additional steps you'd like to take, or ask them to take?
- "I would love to have you over for dinner/take you for coffee to show my gratitude."

- "It would mean the world to me if you would come out on Ride Day and cheer me over the finish line."
- It would be great if you wanted to join my team, and ride with me on the day of **Ride Don't Hide** in June.

### Then...thank them again with flair

If you are feeling particularly moved by a sponsor's generosity, you may want to thank them again or thank them with extra flair!

- Send an actual letter. Write it by hand. Mail it with a stamp. Who doesn't love getting mail?
- Thank your donors on social media. Write a separate post (or Instagram story) for each one. Tag them so they receive a notification and so that their friends and followers see the post too.
- Pick up the phone, or send a text, for no other reason than to say thanks.
- Make a video message for each of your donors – especially if you can't say thanks in person. It's as simple as pressing record and speaking from the heart.
- Invite them on a bike ride with you – a leisurely Sunday ride around the neighbourhood or a training ride to test out your Ride Day route.
- Invite those special donors for coffee or over for dinner.
- Send a small gift or token. Nothing extravagant, just some small token of appreciation. Homemade baked goods rarely go uneaten...

Go ahead and do more than one thing on this list. It feels good to be thanked and thanked again. And it's good for the mental health movement.

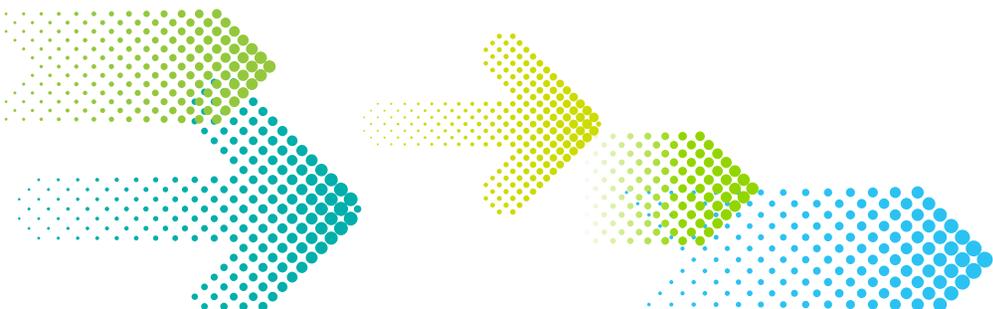


## 11. AFTER THE RIDE IS OVER:

- Make a social media post saying Thanks and announcing how much you raised and how it will help. Let your donors know how the day went and how important their donation was to your success.
- Post photos of you crossing the finish line.
- Shout out to your biggest donors, if that feels right.
- Know that donations can come in even after Ride Day!

### Finally... ask us for support. Anytime.

We are here for you! Feel free to reach out to us with your questions: [info@ridedonthide.com](mailto:info@ridedonthide.com). Or if you'd rather reach us by phone, you can reach out to your local CMHA branch. Find their contact information at [www.ridedonthide.com/locations](http://www.ridedonthide.com/locations).



## P.S. BELOW ARE THE SAMPLE EMAILS WE TOLD YOU ABOUT.

(YOU CAN ALSO FIND THEM AT THE ONLINE RIDER CENTRE, AND ON YOUR FUNDRAISING DASHBOARD.)

### 1. Email #1: Asking Family and Friends to sponsor you

Hi [name of family member or friend],

This June, I am riding in **Ride Don't Hide** and fundraising for the Canadian Mental Health Association. As you know, mental health is a cause close to my heart. I have a mental health concern [name the specific concern if you like] and it hasn't been an easy road. Without CMHA, it would have been that much harder.

**Ride Don't Hide** is an event that brings mental health into the open. It helps ensure that no one has to struggle alone, and reminds us that we all need love and support and we all deserve to feel well.

I'm asking everyone I know to stand up for mental health by sponsoring me. You are one of the first people I thought to ask. Will you help me reach my goal of raising \$ [the amount of your goal]?

It's easy to donate –

[if you are sending this email from your Fundraising Dashboard, you can add:] Click the button above to go straight to my fundraising page.

[If you are sending this email from your own email account, include the link here:] Click the link here to go straight to my fundraising page.

No amount is too big or too small. Every gift sends a message of hope.

Your support would mean so much. Thanks for reading, and for helping me fundraise for mental health.

Love,

[your name]

P.S. There's still room on my **Ride Don't Hide** team! (No one has to ride alone.) Just write me back if you're interested.

### Email #2: Asking Co-workers, classmates, and other connections to sponsor you

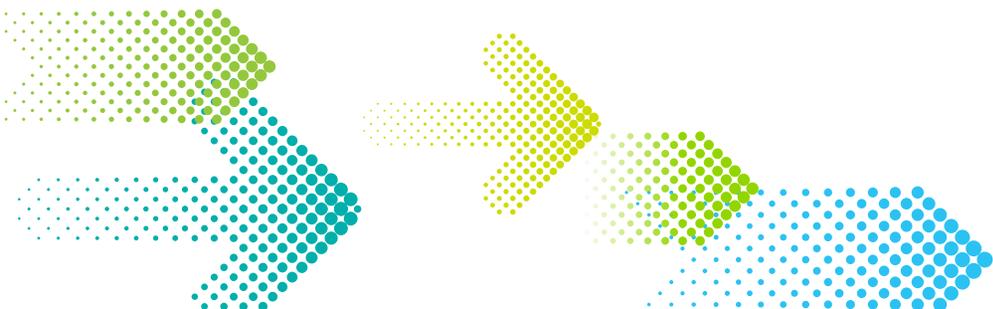
Dear [name of person]

I'm fundraising for my favourite charitable event – **Ride Don't Hide** – and for the Canadian Mental Health Association.

This extraordinary event is a movement, not a race. It's a movement to bring mental health into the open.

Some of us have a mental illness, and some of us don't. But we all have mental health. And we all need help and support sometimes.

[tell your personal story about why you're riding. See "**Why I ride**" above for some suggested questions to ask yourself when telling your story. For more in-depth suggestions for writing your story, go to [Why I Ride story generator](#) at the online Rider Centre.]



If you can, please make a donation to help me reach (and even surpass) my goal. I am hoping to raise \$ [your goal]. Anything you can give will help!

Thanks for your support!

[your name]

### Sample thank you email or letter

Hi [their name],

Wow. I am floored by your generosity. I can't tell you how much I appreciate your support.

Thank you for sponsoring me in **Ride Don't Hide**. Your donation puts me at just [\$ short of my goal/at my goal/over the top]. It means the world to me that you are part of this movement. If you're interested, you can learn more about this amazing event and the work of the Canadian Mental Health Association at [www.ridedonthide.com](http://www.ridedonthide.com).

With your donation, you are standing shoulder to shoulder with me and all the other Riders. It's saying to all of us who struggle: You are not alone.

From the bottom of my heart, thanks again!

[your name]

