

Black Dog Ride

- TAS 2016 -

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TUESDAY 6th SEPTEMBER

Dogs Roar for Prevention of Suicide

Australian suicide prevention charity Black Dog Ride is using their mascot, a soft toy black dog named Winston, and dozens of two wheeled suicide prevention advocates to kickstart community conversations about mental health across Tasmania in October.

Black Dog Ride, now in its seventh year, is a national suicide prevention charity whose mission is to raise awareness of depression and suicide prevention. Every year Black Dog Ride organises a long distance motorcycle ride aimed at engaging community around mental health awareness. This year is the first year Tasmania has hosted a long distance Black Dog Ride in the Apple Isle.

Tasmanian Coordinator Betty Parsey says, “Depression and suicide is so prevalent in the community. So many families have been touched by it. Our Black Dog Riders starting conversations in communities brings hope and helps reduce the stigma around mental health, encouraging people to reach out for support.”

Black Dog Ride’s inaugural TAS 2016 Ride departs Hobart on 10th October and rides to Port Arthur, Bicheno, Beauty Point, Wynyard, and Strahan with a grand finale in New Norfolk.

Funds raised by Black Dog Riders during TAS 2016 will support Mental Health First Aid’s Teen Program training in Australian secondary schools, and continue to build the capacity of Lifeline’s online Crisis Support Chat service.

Registrations for the ride close on 10th September. People can find more information or donate to Black Dog Ride’s TAS 2016 via Black Dog Ride’s website: <http://www.blackdogride.com.au/tas2016> or contact Betty Parsey on tas@blackdogride.com.au or 0407-501-620

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KEY MESSAGING

General Messaging Points:

- The suicide rate in Australia equates to one death every three hours, or eight deaths per day
- More than twice as many people die from suicide in Australia than in road related deaths
- 75% of all Australians who die by suicide are men
- Suicide amongst men in regional communities is twice as high as men in metropolitan areas
- Unemployment, financial stress and isolation are risk factors for mental illness and suicide
- For every 100,000 people in Tasmania, 45 young people took their own lives, the highest per capita in Australia.
- The suicide rate in Tasmania is 38 per cent higher in regional areas than in the capital city
- Over one million Australian adults and 100,000 young people live with depression each year
- 1 in 5 people will experience depression in their lives; 1 in 4 females and 1 in 6 males
- Black Dog Ride is a national suicide prevention charity which has raised over \$2,200,000 for mental health services since 2009
- TAS 2016 is a week-long motorbike ride in Tasmania organised by Black Dog Ride to raise awareness and funds for depression and suicide prevention
- Fundraising from TAS 2016 benefits Lifeline Australia and Mental Health First Aid Australia
- Mental Health First Aid Australia will use the funds to continue the Black Dog Ride funded roll out of their MHFA Teen Program which has trained 714 adolescents since 2015
- Lifeline will be using the funds for building the capacity of their online Crisis Support Chat service which assists over 40,000 people experiencing suicide or a mental health crisis annually

For more information contact Betty Parssey on tas@blackdogride.com.au or 0407-501-620