

Black Dog Ride Key Talking Points

General Messages

- One in five Americans will experience mental illness every year
- Mental illness is the leading cause of disability in the U.S.
- Mental Health First Aid teaches strategies to better equip the public to help those experiencing mental illnesses and addictions

Suicide Messages

- 40,600 suicides were reported in 2012, making suicide the 10th leading cause of death in America
- It is estimated that there is a suicide attempt every 13 minutes in the U.S.
- Men complete 78 percent of all suicides in America
- Depressive disorders are the most common identifiable risk factor for suicide

Veterans Messages

- Thirty percent of active duty and reserve military personnel deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan have a mental health problem requiring treatment – approximately 730,000 men and women
- The Department of Veterans Affairs reports that approximately 22 veterans die by suicide every day
- Mental Health First Aid for Veterans tailors the training to address military culture and to be more appropriate for this population

First Responder/Public Safety Messages

- Mental Health First Aid provides first responders with effective response options to deescalate incidents involving people with mental illness without compromising safety
- Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training is an excellent 40-hour intensive training program that has been widely adopted by police departments across the country. Mental Health First Aid is a good compliment to CIT training for public safety officials—a one-day course for the 75 percent of officers who are not yet trained in CIT or may never be trained due to time constraints, lack of resources or other barriers.

Black Dog Ride

- Black Dog Ride Australia is an independent, not-for-profit organization founded by Steve Andrews in 2009. Its mission is to raise awareness of depression and suicide prevention through organized motorcycle rides
- Since April 2010, Black Dog Ride has conducted one day rides, Rides to the Red Centre and a Ride around Australia, to amplify awareness of depression and suicide prevention in local communities across Australia
- This year, 65 Black Dog Riders are riding across America to further develop their legacy and share their awareness-raising mission with the world
- The 2015 Black Dog Ride across America will commence in New York City on September 13 and conclude in Los Angeles on Sunday, October 4



- The journey from the East to West coast is approximately 4,328 miles
- All funds raised go to Mental Health First Aid USA to train more veterans, their families and friends, and other members of the military community, as well as public safety officials and first responders.
- Black Dog Ride has raised over \$2 million for mental health and suicide prevention services in Australia since its inception in 2009, raising nearly \$600,000 last year alone

For more information on the Black Dog Ride, see <http://www.blackdogride.com.au>

Steve Andrews

- Steve Andrews completed the first Black Dog Ride around Australia in 2009 by himself following the suicide of his mother and best friend's wife
- His aim is to generate community awareness around depression and suicide prevention and start conversations that can ultimately lead more people to seek help when they need it
- Steve is the recipient of several awards, including the Pride of Australia for Community Service and Suicide Prevention Australia's LIFE award for his work with Black Dog Ride
- Steve was announced as a State Finalist in the 2014 Australian of the Year Award, and was featured on the cover of the Perth residential White Pages® for his dedication to raising awareness of depression
- Steve has experienced depression and suicide in family members, and while he doesn't suffer from a mental illness himself, he sees the need for something to be done about this silent illness

Mental Health First Aid USA

- Founded in Australia, Mental Health First Aid was brought to the U.S. in 2008 by the National Council for Behavioral Health, in partnership with the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the Missouri Department of Mental Health
- Since its inception, more than 450,000 Americans have been trained in Mental Health First Aid
- Mental Health First Aid courses are open to everyone
- Mental Health First Aid offers both:
 - Evidence-based eight-hour courses that teach strategies to identify mental health problems and help people connect with care, when appropriate
 - Instructor trainings that train and accredit suitable individuals to deliver the eight-hour Mental Health First Aid course
- There are a number of Mental Health First Aid curriculum supplements that tailor the course material to address the unique needs of particular populations, including:
 - Veterans
 - Public Safety Officials
 - Higher Education
 - Older Adults
- Mental Health First Aid fully supports and encourages the Black Dog Ride's efforts
- All of the money raised by the Black Dog Ride across America benefits Mental Health First Aid USA
- More information about depression and the services offered by Mental Health First Aid can be found at www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org

