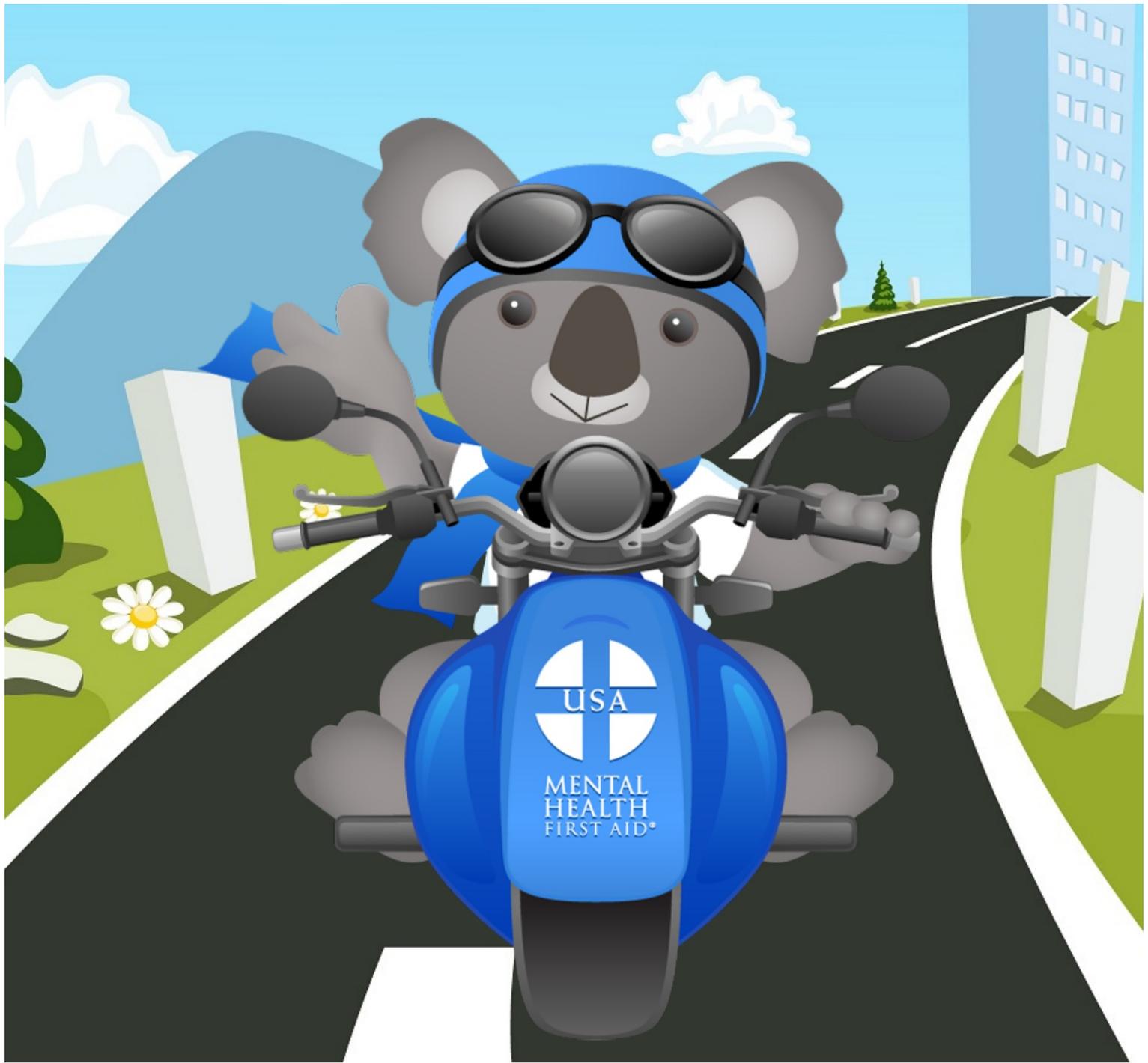


# BLACK DOG RIDE ACROSS AMERICA 2015



## Mental Health First Aid Instructor Toolkit

## Black Dog Ride

### About the Ride

Black Dog Ride began in Australia in 2009 as one man's mission to raise awareness of depression and suicide. It has since developed into a national suicide prevention charity involving thousands of motorcycle riders who have raised over \$1,700,000 for mental health services in Australia, fostering mental health awareness around the country.

This year, Black Dog Ride comes to the United States for the first time to support Mental Health First Aid USA. The Black Dog Riders will traverse the country over 21 days and 4,350 miles to raise mental health awareness and funds to support more Mental Health First Aid USA training for first responders and veteran populations, and those who work with veterans, service members and their families.

Learn more at [www.blackdogride.com](http://www.blackdogride.com) or [www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/cs/black-dog-ride](http://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/cs/black-dog-ride)

### Itinerary

The inaugural Black Dog Ride across America will begin its journey in New York City, heading west over 21 days. Throughout those action-packed days, 65 Black Dog Riders will meet up with community members and organizations, building awareness of depression and suicide prevention across the USA, through local events in each city.

- Day 1 – Sunday, Sept. 13 – New York City to York, Pennsylvania 189 miles
- Day 2 – Monday, Sept. 14 – York to Front Royal, Virginia 134 miles
- Day 3 – Tuesday, Sept. 15 – Front Royal to Roanoke, Virginia 220 miles
- Day 4 – Wednesday, Sept. 16 – Roanoke to Hickory, North Carolina 190 miles
- Day 5 – Thursday, Sept. 17 – Hickory to Gatlinburg, Tennessee 217 miles
- Day 6 – Friday, Sept. 18 – Gatlinburg to Chattanooga, Tennessee 214 miles
- Day 7 – Saturday, Sept. 19 – Chattanooga to Memphis, Tennessee 187 miles
- Day 8 – Sunday, Sept. 20 – Rest Day
- Day 9 – Monday, Sept. 21 – Memphis to Hot Springs, Arkansas 244 miles
- Day 10 – Tuesday, Sept. 22 – Hot Springs to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 311 miles
- Day 11 – Wednesday, Sept. 23 – Oklahoma City to Amarillo, Texas 258 miles
- Day 12 – Thursday, Sept. 24 – Amarillo to Santa Fe, New Mexico 287 miles
- Day 13 – Friday, Sept. 25 – Santa Fe to Durango, Colorado 275 miles
- Day 14 – Saturday, Sept. 26 – Rest Day
- Day 15 – Sunday, Sept. 27 – Durango to Bluff, Utah 298 miles
- Day 16 – Monday, Sept. 28 – Bluff to Grand Canyon National Park, 227 miles
- Day 17 – Tuesday, Sept. 29 – Grand Canyon to Kingman, Arizona 188 miles
- Day 18 – Wednesday, Sept. 30 – Kingman to Las Vegas, Nevada 171 miles
- Day 19 – Thursday, Oct. 1 – Rest Day
- Day 20 – Friday, Oct. 2 – Las Vegas to Lake Arrowhead, California 237 miles
- Day 21 – Saturday, Oct. 3 – Lake Arrowhead to Los Angeles, California 258 miles



**Donation Information:**

Individuals can donate to Mental Health First Aid USA by following this URL: <https://blackdogride.everydayhero.com/us/team-blackdogride>

<b>\$20 =</b> 	<b>Give \$20 = Give a manual</b> Your donation will cover the cost of one training manual to be used to train a First Aider.
<b>\$75 =</b> 	<b>Give \$75 = Give supplies</b> Your donation will cover the cost of program supplies for one Mental Health First Aid course.
<b>\$170 =</b> 	<b>Give \$170 = Train a First Aider</b> Your donation will cover the cost of training one First Aider.
<b>\$1,800 =</b> 	<b>Give \$1,800 = Train an instructor</b> Your donation will cover the cost of training one Mental Health First Aid instructor. Each instructor goes on to train hundreds of people in life-saving Mental Health First Aid skills.



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
**Month XX, 2015**

**Contact:**  
**Local: NAME, PHONE, EMAIL**

**National:** Heather Cobb, 202.684.3720  
[HeatherC@thenationalcouncil.org](mailto:HeatherC@thenationalcouncil.org)

## **Motorcyclist Group Promotes Awareness of Depression, Suicide in City**

*Black Dog Ride partners with Mental Health First Aid USA for first-ever cross-country tour of the U.S.*

**CITY, St.** — On **Day, Date**, a band of **65** motorcyclists will roll into **City** on their first-ever “[Black Dog Ride](#)” across the United States. The group, which has completed five previous tours in Australia, is raising mental health awareness and funds to support trainings in [Mental Health First Aid](#) for first responders and people working with veterans.

On **[DATE]**, the Black Dog Riders and **[ORGANIZATION]** will hold an **[EVENT TYPE]** at **[LOCATION]**, where they invite community members to join them in supporting the millions of Americans who have been affected by depression and suicide.

“We’re so pleased to bring the Black Dog Ride to **[City]** in support of Mental Health First Aid USA,” said Steve Andrews, founder of the Black Dog Ride. “We’ve been able to help so many people in Australia, and we’re excited to have the opportunity to do the same for those who struggle with mental health challenges in the United States.”

Andrews founded the Black Dog Ride in Australia in 2009 following the sudden deaths of his mother and his best friend’s wife by suicide. Since then, the Black Dog Ride has raised over \$1.7 million for mental health providers in Australia. This year, the group is raising money for Mental Health First Aid USA.

“We’ve trained more than 450,000 people in Mental Health First Aid in the U.S.,” said Linda Rosenberg, President and CEO of the [National Council for Behavioral Health](#), which operates Mental Health First Aid. “We hope that the money raised in partnership with the Black Dog Ride will enable us to train many more.”

Mental Health First Aid is an eight-hour course that gives people the tools to identify when someone might be struggling with a mental health or substance use problem and to connect them with appropriate support and resources when necessary.

“Mental Health First Aid increases peoples’ noticing skills and encourages them to reach out to those who may not be comfortable asking for help,” said **[Local Spokesperson]**. “That is powerful. The simple act of reaching out can save lives. We’ve seen it firsthand in **CITY**, where we’ve trained **XX** people”

###

To learn more about Mental Health First Aid USA, visit [www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org](http://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org).  
To learn more about the Black Dog Ride, visit [www.blackdogride.com](http://www.blackdogride.com).

*The National Council for Behavioral Health is the unifying voice of America’s community mental health and addictions treatment organizations. Together with 2,300 member organizations, it serves more than*



MENTAL  
HEALTH  
FIRST AID

*eight million adults and children living with mental illnesses and addiction disorders. The organization is committed to ensuring all Americans have access to comprehensive, high-quality care that affords every opportunity for recovery and full participation in community life. The National Council, the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, and the Missouri Department of Mental Health pioneered Mental Health First Aid in the U.S. and have trained 450,000 individuals to connect youth and adults in need to mental health and addictions care in their communities. To learn more about the National Council, visit [www.TheNationalCouncil.org](http://www.TheNationalCouncil.org).*



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
Month **XX**, 2015

**Contact:**  
**Local:** Name, phone, email

**National:** Heather Cobb, 202.684.3720  
[HeatherC@thenationalcouncil.org](mailto:HeatherC@thenationalcouncil.org)

## MEDIA ALERT

### Black Dog Ride Comes to **[City]** in Support of Mental Health First Aid USA

**WHAT:** The Black Dog Ride, a cross-country motorcycle tour to promote awareness of depression and suicide, is stopping in **[CITY]** as part of their first-ever tour of the United States. The Riders and **[Organization]** will hold an **[event type]** to talk about mental health to raise awareness and raise funds to support more trainings in Mental Health First Aid for first responders and people working with veterans.

**WHEN:** **Date; Time**  
*Provide best time for photos, if applicable*

**WHERE:** **Address, location of event and parking directions**

**WHO:** Steve Andrews, founder of Black Dog Ride; **[Local spokesperson(s)]**; More than 60 motorcyclists taking part in the cross-country tour.

**WHO SHOULD ATTEND:** Community members, media, veterans, first responders, providers of mental health services and other health care providers, people living with mental illnesses and/or addictions and their family members.

**ABOUT:** The Black Dog Ride was founded by Steve Andrews in 2009 following the sudden and tragic suicides of his mother and his best friend's wife, Anna Michael, who silently struggled with depression for years leading up to her death. Since then, the Black Dog Ride has completed 5 tours in Australia and has raised more than \$1.7 million for mental health and suicide prevention services in Australia. This year, the Black Dog Ride is completing its first-ever tour of the United States to raise funds for Mental Health First Aid USA—an eight-hour training designed to help people notice when someone may be struggling with a mental health issue, and give them the tools they need to reach out and offer support and resources. For more information on the Black Dog Ride Across America, visit [www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/cs/black-dog-ride](http://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/cs/black-dog-ride). For more information on Mental Health First Aid, visit [www.MentalHealthFirstAid.org](http://www.MentalHealthFirstAid.org).

## Black Dog Ride Social Media Engagement

### Links to accounts:

- Mental Health First Aid USA Twitter (@MHFirstAidUSA):  
<https://twitter.com/MHFirstAidUSA>
- Mental Health First Aid USA Facebook:  
<https://www.facebook.com/MentalHealthFirstAidUSA>
- Black Dog Ride Twitter (@blackdogride):  
<https://twitter.com/blackdogride>
- Black Dog Ride Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BlackDogRide>

### Sample Tweets:

- Rev your engines! [@blackdogride](#) is coming to the USA in support of [@MHFirstAidUSA](#). Learn more: <http://bit.ly/1HL9Tty>
- What do motorcycles and [@MHFirstAidUSA](#) have in common? More than you think. [@blackdogride](#) comes to the USA on 9/13. <http://bit.ly/1HL9Tty>
- Help [@MHFirstAidUSA](#) train more #veterans and first responders. Support [@blackdogride](#) as they traverse the USA. <http://bit.ly/1LzFdcV>
- 65 Australian motorcyclists are raising funds, awareness for [@MHFirstAidUSA](#). Help [@blackdogride](#) reach their goal. <http://bit.ly/1LzFdcV>

### Sample Facebook Posts:

- What do 65 Australians on motorcycles and [Mental Health First Aid USA \[tag\]](#) have in common? More than you think. On Sept. 13, [Black Dog Ride \[tag\]](#) comes to the USA to raise awareness and funds to offer more trainings in Mental Health First Aid for first responders and people working with veterans. Learn more about the Ride and find out if the Black Dog Riders will be rolling through your town! <http://bit.ly/1HL9Tty>
- Since 2009, [Black Dog Ride \[tag\]](#) has worked tirelessly to raise awareness and funds for suicide prevention programs across Australia. This year, they're coming to the USA in support of [Mental Health First Aid USA \[tag\]](#). Learn more about the Ride and help the Riders reach their goal by donating here: <http://bit.ly/1LzFdcV>
- Veterans and first responders are in a unique position to help people who may be facing mental health challenges. Help [Mental Health First Aid USA \[tag\]](#) train more veterans and first responders by supporting [Black Dog Ride \[tag\]](#) as they traverse the United States raising awareness and funds to provide Mental Health First Aid training scholarships to these critical populations. <http://bit.ly/1LzFdcV>

**NOTE:** Use [www.bitly.com](http://www.bitly.com) to shorten all URLs when tweeting/posting to Facebook

## Black Dog Ride Local Event Ideas

**Objective:** The objective of these events is to welcome the Black Dog Riders to your town while engaging the community in Mental Health First Aid USA's message and mission. Ideally, these events will promote mental health awareness, attract local media and community attention for Mental Health First Aid USA and generate donations to Mental Health First Aid USA.

**Incentive:** To incentivize community attendance at your events, the National Council for Behavioral Health will send instructors who organize events t-shirts and other items that you can distribute to the first several people who show up to your event. If you plan an event and would like t-shirts and other promotional items, please contact Tramaine El-Amin at [TramaineE@thenationalcouncil.org](mailto:TramaineE@thenationalcouncil.org).

### **Event Ideas:**

- 1) Partner with your local police/fire department to plan a community BBQ to welcome the Black Dog Riders. Invite First Aiders, community members and media to attend. Plan to give a brief overview of Mental Health First Aid, including information on why it is so valuable, how people can sign up for a local training and how people can donate to Black Dog Ride. Also, plan for one of the Black Dog Riders to share information about the Black Dog Ride.
- 2) Partner with your local/regional Lions Club chapter ([www.lionsclubs.org/EN/index.php](http://www.lionsclubs.org/EN/index.php)) to plan a community "block party" at a local park or other public space. Invite First Aiders, community members and media to join you and the Black Dog Riders for refreshments, yard games and mingling. Plan to give a brief overview of Mental Health First Aid, including information on why it is so valuable, how people can sign up for a local training and how people can donate to Black Dog Ride. Also, plan for one of the Black Dog Riders to share information about the Black Dog Ride.
- 3) Schedule a Mental Health First Aid training during the Black Dog Ride's visit to your town. Invite a few of the Black Dog Riders and members of the media to join for at least a portion of the training, if not the full eight hours.
- 4) Plan a "Mental Health Trivia Night" at a local restaurant. Invite community members to team up and answer a series of trivia questions about mental health. Disperse the Black Dog Riders among the teams to facilitate mingling. The team who answers the most questions correctly after five, five-question rounds will win a prize.
  - a) Ideas for prizes include:
    - i. A donation from the restaurant in that team's name to Mental Health First Aid USA (this would have to be negotiated with the venue)
    - ii. ALGEE stuffed animals
    - iii. A free Mental Health First Aid training for each 18+ year old member of the team
    - iv. Promotional items that we will send

### **Be creative!**

The ideas above are only a few ways you can engage your community around the Black Dog Ride and Mental Health First Aid USA. Feel free to get creative when planning events. To brainstorm more ideas, or for help planning your event, please contact Tramaine El-Amin at [TramaineE@thenationalcouncil.org](mailto:TramaineE@thenationalcouncil.org).

## **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
- Men in certain regional locations experience much higher rates of suicide than the national average
- 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 \$1.7 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 [www.blackdogride.com](http://www.blackdogride.com).

### **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
- Andrews 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
- Andrews 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
- Andrews 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](http://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org)

# DEPRESSION IS A BLACK DOG.

## BLACK DOG RIDE ACROSS AMERICA

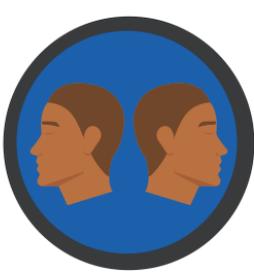


Early identification.  
Early treatment.  
Better outcomes.

## AN INVISIBLE ILLNESS

Unlike physical illnesses like the flu, symptoms of depression can be masked with a well-crafted smile, making it hard to recognize.

## WHEN LEFT UNTREATED...



### Untreated depression can lead to:

difficulty in relationships, impaired performance at work and, in some cases, suicide.

## BLACK DOG RIDE: A BRIEF HISTORY

The Black Dog Ride is a cross-country motorcycle tour whose goal is to raise awareness and funds for depression and suicide prevention programs.



Started by Steve Andrews in Australia in 2009 following the sudden death by suicide of his best friend's wife, Anna Michael.



Has since raised almost \$1.8 million for suicide prevention programs in Australia.



Is coming to the United States for the first time on 9/13/15 to raise awareness and funds for more Mental Health First Aid USA training for veterans and first responders.

## MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID USA



Mental Health First Aid USA is an 8-hour training that gives people the tools they need to identify and reach out to someone who may be developing a mental health problem or experiencing a crisis.

### WHY VETERANS AND FIRST RESPONDERS?



22 veterans die by suicide each day



Can help first responders safely de-escalate a mental health crisis



Teaches people ways to better serve those who serve us

## LEARN MORE





MENTAL  
HEALTH  
FIRST AID™

9.13.15

#BLACKDOGRIDE



MENTAL  
HEALTH  
FIRST AID™

**Black Dog Ride** (raising awareness of depression & suicide prevention)  
- across America 2015 -



18 CITIES. 65 MOTORCYCLISTS. 1 CAUSE:  
**PREVENT SUICIDE + DEPRESSION.**

**BLACK DOG RIDE.**



MENTAL  
HEALTH  
FIRST AID™

The tour kicks off September 13, 2015. Learn more at: <http://bit.ly/BlackDogRide15>

NATIONAL COUNCIL  
FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH  
MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

Web: [www.MentalHealthFirstAid.org](http://www.MentalHealthFirstAid.org)

Email: [info@MentalHealthFirstAid.org](mailto:info@MentalHealthFirstAid.org)



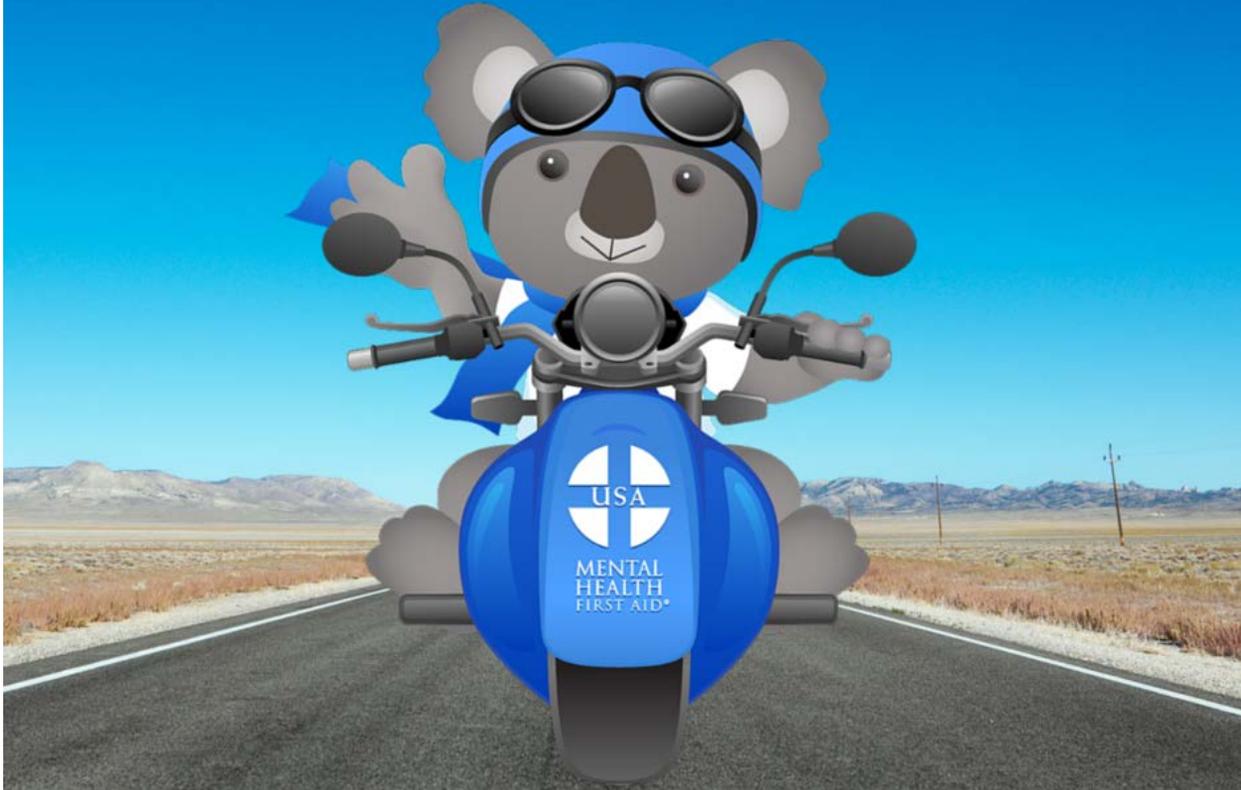
MENTAL  
HEALTH  
FIRST AID™

# Join the Ride.

Learn more at [bit.ly/BlackDogRide15](http://bit.ly/BlackDogRide15)

**Black Dog Ride** ( RAISING  
AWARENESS  
OF DEPRESSION  
AND SUICIDE  
PREVENTION )

- across America 2015 -



## Black Dog Ride

### Important Contact Information

#### Black Dog Ride:

- 1) Steve Andrews – Founder, Black Dog Ride  
[steve@blackdogride.com.au](mailto:steve@blackdogride.com.au)
- 2) Steve Schippers – Director, Black Dog Ride across America  
[steve@gamct.com](mailto:steve@gamct.com)

#### Mental Health First Aid USA

- 1) Dani Poole – Communications Specialist, National Council for Behavioral Health,  
[DaniP@thenationalcouncil.org](mailto:DaniP@thenationalcouncil.org), 202-774-1665
- 2) Betsy Schwartz – VP of Public Education and Special Initiatives, National Council for Behavioral Health, [BetsyS@thenationalcouncil.org](mailto:BetsyS@thenationalcouncil.org)
- 3) Tramaine El-Amin – [TramaineE@thenationalcouncil.org](mailto:TramaineE@thenationalcouncil.org).