

It's like losing a jumbo jet full of young people in Canada every year.

It's their second leading cause of death.

It "kills" more than the victim.

And it's time we noticed.



Our Story

On February 14, 2005, Cameron (at 19) took his life.

He believed there was nothing to live for; his pain and despair were too great. He could not see the beautiful young man he was.

Even those who loved him most could not pull him back from the darkness.

He died not realizing the many reasons to live.

From that tragic event, David Harris, his father gathered together friends and mental health experts to develop what has become CameronHelps.

Our **goal**: To save one life at a time.

How You Can Help

- Get **educated**. Know the signs.
- **Talk** with a friend.
- **Donate** to us or one of our partners.
- **Volunteer**.
- **Contact us**.



Find more information and links at:

www.CameronHelps.ca

Email: info@cameronhelps.ca

We help raise awareness of teen suicide issues through programs, activities, and information.

We focus on how physical activity, such as running, exercise and sports can often reduce depression and improve mental health.

"Physical health for mental health".

Charity business number:
84858 7168 RR001



How Physical Activity Helps

From *Spark: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain*
by Dr. John J. Ratey, MD with Eric Hagerman

The elegance of exercise ...is that it works on both the body and the brain. Here's how:

1. It provides distraction. ...moving puts your mind on something else.
2. It reduces muscle tension. Exercise serves as a circuit breaker...interrupting the negative feedback loop from the body to the brain.
3. It builds brain resources. ...exercise increases serotonin and norepinephrine both in the moment and over the long term.
4. It teaches a different outcome. ...Think of it as a bait and switch—your mind is expecting a panic attack, (your heart rate and breathing pick up) but instead it ends up with a positive association with the symptoms.
5. It reroutes your circuits. ...you send information down a different pathway...improving alternate connections, actively learning an alternative reality.
6. It improves resilience. ...consciously making the decision to do something for yourself, you begin to realize that you can do something for yourself.

More of the Science...

- *Martin et al. (2009)* randomized control trial showed that higher doses of exercise were associated with larger improvements in mental and physical aspects of quality of life.
- *Crone and Guy (2008)* qualitative research supports that sports therapy as an acceptable and beneficial adjunct to usual treatment for some people with mental health problems.
- *Barbour et al. (2007)* Exercise effective as a treatment for depression and other psychiatric disorders.

The Stigma is... Depressing!

2008 Canadian Medical Association study:

- 46% believe mental illness is merely an "excuse for poor behavior and personal failings"
- 42% would no longer socialize with a friend diagnosed with mental illness.
- 55% would not marry someone with mental illness.
- 50% would not tell friends or coworkers that a family member was suffering from mental illness. But, 72% would discuss cancer and 68% diabetes.
- 50% think depression is not serious.

Facts on Teen Suicide

- *Statistics Canada survey (2002):* In Ontario, about 250,000 or 15% of all young adults aged 15-24 had suicidal thoughts that year.
 - Depression causes 75 - 90% of suicides among young people. **Depression can be treated.**
 - 80% of kids suffer in silence. Their condition is never identified or treated.
(the above two from Toronto Star "Tackling the Issue of Teen Suicide" by Carol Goar Feb. 11, 2005)
- The average **wait time** for psychiatric help for teens with depression is **six to eight months.**

Suicide ranks **200th** in health **funding**. Yet it is 2nd to motor vehicle accidents in deaths among young people.



Signs and Symptoms

From the CMHA Pamphlet Series

Suicidal youth rarely ask for help. But most will show warning signs; like these:

- Quick positive or negative behaviour change.
- Apathy, withdrawal.
- Change in eating patterns.
- Unusual preoccupation with death or dying.
- Giving away valued personal possessions.
- Moodiness, hopelessness.
- Previous suicide attempts.
- Recent suicide attempt or death by a friend or a family member.

What You Should Do If ...

From the CMHA Pamphlet Series

Warning signs are an invitation to communicate. A direct straightforward response is most effective.

- Ask if he or she is contemplating suicide.
- Try not to be judgmental, shocked or angry.
- Offer support and reassurance that suicidal feelings do not last forever.
- Seek the assistance of a trained professional as soon as possible.