



For immediate release

A record-setting Bell Let's Talk Day – an unprecedented national conversation about mental health

- On the third Bell Let's Talk Day Clara Hughes leads millions in talking about mental illness to end the stigma
- 96,266,266 calls, texts, tweets and Facebook shares by Canadians on Bell Let's Talk Day means an additional \$4,813,313.30 for mental health programs
- Bell has now committed a total of \$62,043,289.30 to Canadian mental health

MONTRÉAL, February 13, 2013 – Canadian mental health will see a further \$4,813,313.30 million investment from Bell thanks to an outstanding response by Canadians on Bell Let's Talk Day 2013. People with lived experience, friends, family and colleagues, teachers and students, soldiers, politicians, entertainers, sports teams and players, corporations and competitors, all joined Bell Let's Talk ambassador Clara Hughes in talking about mental health in order to end the stigma of mental illness.

Bell Let's Talk Day also drives new investment in mental health, with Bell committing additional funding based on the extent of conversation:

- Bell Let's Talk Day 2013 resulted in a total of 96,266,266 texts and long distance calls by Bell and Bell Aliant customers, tweets using #BellLetsTalk, and Facebook shares of the Bell Let's Talk Day image.
- With Bell donating 5 cents for each of these communications, that means \$4,813,313.30 in additional funding for Canadian mental health programs – a 23% increase over last year's Bell Let's Talk Day total.
- Bell Let's Talk 2013 really took off on Twitter, with 1,562,485 tweets and retweets. Bell Let's Talk was a top trend in both Canada and the U.S. on Twitter, with support from hundreds of thousands of Canadians, including Governor General David Johnston, Prime Minister Stephen Harper, federal members of Parliament, provincial premiers and ministers, the Canadian Armed Forces, sports teams and players, and Canadian entertainers including Justin Bieber and William Shatner.

"Wow Canada! What an incredible response to the call to help end the terrible stigma around mental illness. By talking so openly with family, friends, neighbours and colleagues about the real impact of mental illness, we're saying the time has come for this disease to come out of the shadows," said Ms. Hughes, Canada's six-time Olympic medalist. "The Bell Let's Talk conversation has grown significantly each year but the energy and scope of this year's campaign beat all expectations. On behalf of the untold numbers of Canadians whose lives will be improved by your participation, I truly thank everyone for making Bell Let's Talk 2013 such an incredible success!"

Fighting the stigma is the first step in moving Canadian mental health forward. Two out of 3 people with mental health issues still suffer in silence for fear of being judged or rejected because of the continuing stigma around the disease. One of the most pervasive yet misunderstood and underfunded of health issues, mental illness costs the Canadian economy more than \$52 billion a year.



“There’s no question now that mental health has momentum in Canada,” said George Cope, President and CEO of Bell and BCE. “The Bell Let’s Talk team is profoundly grateful for the depth of support for the cause from all corners of Canadian life. To everyone who talked about mental health yesterday, and will keep on talking until we end the stigma, thank you very much for your support.”

Bell launched the Bell Let’s Talk mental health initiative in September 2010 with an initial commitment of \$50 million over 5 years. Going into Bell Let’s Talk Day 2013, that figure had grown to \$57,229,976, thanks to the \$3,303,961.80 resulting from Bell Let’s Talk Day 2011 and \$3,926,014.20 from 2012.

With the results of Bell Let’s Talk Day 2013, Bell is now committed to investing a total of \$62,043,289.30 in Canadian mental health.

Bell Let’s Talk Day 2013 was supported by a major national promotional and education campaign featuring Clara and fellow Bell Let’s Talk ambassadors Stefie Shock, Michel Mpambara and Seamus O’Regan, with generous support from a vast range of Canadian media, sports and communications companies and countless community groups.

“We are thrilled with the participation from so many wonderful organizations in communities across the country,” said Mary Deacon, Chair of the Bell Let’s Talk mental health initiative. “Conversations are taking place every day in schools, community centres, health care facilities, military bases, and homes amongst friends and family. This is progress that will help lead to ending stigma and making it easier for those who suffer from mental illness to seek the help they need.”

Bell Let’s Talk in action

During the lead up to this year’s Bell Let’s Talk Day, Bell announced 3 new mental health partnerships. In Québec, Bell contributed \$500,000 to La Fondation du Centre hospitalier universitaire de Québec (CHUQ) to upgrade its acute psychiatric care unit, and another \$500,000 to Concordia University’s Department of Psychology to subsidize therapy and assessment at the university’s Applied Psychology Centre and Centre for Clinical Research in Health. On February 8 in Vancouver, Bell announced a \$500,000 gift to Brain Canada to help fund the \$1 million Bell Mental Health Research Training Awards supporting talented young Canadian mental health researchers.

These new gifts are in addition to previously announced contributions to the Royal Ottawa Hospital, the Douglas Mental Health University Institute, Hôpital Louis-H Lafontaine, the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), Queen’s University, the University of British Columbia and other leading institutions and organizations.

In January, Bell announced the 2013 Bell Let’s Talk Community Fund, the \$1-million annual fund that supports grassroots mental health organizations throughout Canada. In 2012, Bell Let’s Talk supported 60 mental health organizations in communities across the country with grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$50,000.

About Bell Let’s Talk



The Bell Let's Talk mental health initiative is a 5-year, multi-million charitable program based on 4 action pillars: Anti-stigma, care and access, research, and workplace best practices. To learn more about Bell Let's Talk, please visit Bell.ca/LetsTalk.

About Bell

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For media inquiries, please contact:

Jacqueline Michelis
Bell Media Relations
1 855-785-1427
jacqueline.michelis@bell.ca
[@Bell_News](#)