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Rory Butler, Founder, Your Life Counts  
Published Tuesday, February 5, 2013 10:53AM EST  
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After decades of sweeping mental illness under our societal carpet, we're talking today. Bell and community supporters have started the conversation, and that's a great thing. But, it's a long road ahead, and only by working together will we make a difference.

In the second year of the five-year Let's Talk campaign, Bell is making progress. The pillars of the Let's Talk campaign are anti-stigma, care and access, mental health research, and best practices in the workplace. It is good that the Mental Health Commission of Canada has recently released a [national standard for mental health in the workplace](#).

In the backdrop of the conversation today, on December 14, 2012, Canada saw the enactment of Bill C-300, an act respecting a Federal Framework for Suicide Prevention. Your Life Counts is honoured to have led the push for this bill. Our focus today is timely.

## PHOTOS



In unforeseen crisis, a healthy individual can be overwhelmed to the point of pondering suicide or following through with suicide. Mental illness is causative in 60% to

## WATCH: LET'S TALK ON CTVNEWS.CA



CTV National News: Drop in and get help



ETalk: Bell Let's Talk – George Chuvalo



ETalk: Bell Let's Talk – Serena Ryder





Jen Withrow, mother to 17-year-old Andrew Mulville who died by suicide in March, holds a rose as she hugs a family friend after a 5k Run/Walk to benefit programs to educate about depression and suicide in Minneapolis on Aug. 11, 2012. (AP Photo/Pioneer Press, Ben Garvin)

90% of suicides. This is a serious issue and the more we talk about it, the more we as a society will open up, and we will understand that we all have a responsibility to help save lives.

Across Canada there are families feeling disconnected and bruised, because mental illness and suicide has affected their lives. This is where stigma hurts and alienates, and we all have it within us to help these families feel accepted in our communities.

As someone who has been to the very edge of life, I know what it is like to lose all hope. The lifesaving difference for me was someone reaching out, taking me seriously, and

listening. I'm living proof that intervention works.

I encourage you to not give up and to persevere, there is always someone who will listen. There is help, there are capable people in a variety of areas in your neighbourhood.

Every person in the CTV studio, every person donating by texting today, and those of us on the chat-line, care.

If you need to reach out, as a partner organization with Bell, [www.yourlifecounts.org](http://www.yourlifecounts.org) is here. Let's talk.



**Your Life Counts**

Rory Butler is Founder of Your Life Counts (est. 2000) – a nationally registered charitable organization which helps youth and families to nurture, sustain and protect their will to live.

Contact: [rbutler@yourlifecounts.org](mailto:rbutler@yourlifecounts.org)

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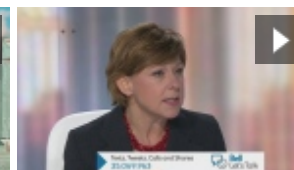
**Power Play: Dealing with mental health at work**



**CTV News Channel: 'I had to face my illness'**



**CTV News Channel: Healthy workplaces**



**CTV News Channel: 1 in 5 kids has mental illness**



**CTV News Channel: Removing the stigma**



**CTV News Channel: Telling the whole story**



**CTV News Channel: Breaking down walls**



**Extended: Return to mind, body, spirit philosophy**

**LET'S TALK ON FACEBOOK**

**Bell Let's Talk**  
36,535

**Bell Let's Talk**  
The results are in! Thanks to your participation across Canada - a record-setting Bell Let's Talk

**Rose**

Feb. 12, 2013

11:56 PM

 Abuse

One day 2 years ago, I started crying and couldn't stop. I left work and called my company's employee assistance program. They were of no help. So I called a local crisis line. No answer. I went to CAMH website which referred me to Telehealth Ontario. The operator at Telehealth said he'd have someone call me in about an hour -- they were busy -- unless I was suicidal. True story. I finally got the idea, in my confused state, to call my fam. physician. He saw me within 2 hours. It was so frustrating trying to get help for what turned out to be a severe depression. Now I know to contact local COAST if needed. But never having experienced this before, I didn't know and couldn't find help wherever I turned. Thank God for my family dr. who got me to go to emerg for help until I could get in with regular psychiatrist and counsellor. All okay now, but I still can't believe how difficult it was to get help. Maybe everyone needs to talk about how to quickly access help.

**Rebecca**

Feb. 12, 2013

6:20 PM

 Abuse

I have been struggling with an Eating Disorder and Anxiety for 16 years. I sought treatment twice and was "treated" with medications because the local psychiatrists were too busy and the waiting lists were too long. I have always been able to hide my eating disorder. I was able to maintain a "normal life" . In the day light, I have always been a strong confident successful women. In the private I was being consumed by my self-hatred, low self-esteem, and anxiety. About two years ago, my anxiety and eating disorder began to gain momentum and surface. In a year, a probably did more damage to my body through my repetative vomitting, starvation, alcohol use etc than I had in the past 14. I sought help through walk in clinics, crisis line and my family md. But all my request were put aside. This past Dec. every body system is affected, I am unable to work, my weigh is the lowest is has been and I was borderline suicidal. Finally my referral to a treatemtn center got answered. The hospital eating disorder treatment centre called me and I had an appointment. I finally started seeeing the light. I will get a intensive hospital treatment. However, even as sick as I am and after waiting for the referral for five moenth, I still have to wait one to two months before I can start the tretment. What do I do until then? all is wait makes me wonder what if I had not lasted this long? The government funded reatment centers are sooo strained they can not meet the needs of the patients. There are people dying, suffereing wanting help but none is there none is available to hear their pleas.


 January 29 at 12:06pm
**Bell Let's Talk**

THANK YOU! Bell Let's Talk Day 2014 is across Canada and around the world joining our community very soon. Until then, thank

 Facebook social plugin

[Tweets by @Bell\\_LetsTalk](#)

**Lillian**

Feb. 12, 2013

8:22 AM

[Abuse](#)

I have been dealing with this forever it seems. Pills do not work for me when I have been on them I got worse, talking with someone does not work for me due to I cannot afford to pay to talk to a professional and the one I do get to see under OHIP sits and watches her clock which makes me feel like I am bothering her and need to get out of there. I am older and out of work and alone which makes this worse I would love to be at work and have to deal with this..When I have tried to share with others they back off...how do I ask for help and want to move forward when so alone

**Marie**

Feb. 11, 2013

11:57 PM

[Abuse](#)

Talking about mental health once a year isn't enough. Sure, for a while, the hype and news coverage makes it look like things are changing, but they're not. As soon as it's out of the limelight, mental health reverts to it's painful norm. I've been struggling with depression for ten years, unable to work, hopeless, suicidal, and sometimes unable to even leave the house. I've been put down, ignored and cruelly treated by doctors, nurses and supposed 'professionals' alike. I've been turned away from emergency rooms, been ignored by the Royal Ottawa (both in person, on the phone, and by doctor's referral). I've been told I'm untreatable, that I'm faking, that I have nothing to be depressed about, or that I'm just trying to get attention. This, from the people who are supposed to be 'helping' those with mental health issues. Honestly, I know I'm far past the point of being able to be helped, but other people might have a chance at life if things would just CHANGE. This treatment or lack thereof is killing people. How many have to die before things change?

**Been There**

Feb. 11, 2013

5:13 AM

[Abuse](#)

Perhaps the saddest commentary on the whole issue of mental health is how those in the medical profession treat those who struggle with depression. All too many times, people are passed off as being immature, seeking attention, everything but being ill. When ill, my body didn't produce enough serotonin and it caused lack of sleep, depressed thoughts. The longer it goes, the more it spirals downward. If you are feeling hopeless, if life doesn't make sense, if you are questioning if the struggle is all worthwhile, I can only offer one piece of advice - don't give up on trying to get help. After a lot of false starts and my mental health issues being dismissed, I persisted and found an amazing doctor who helped me turn my life around. It's not a perfect life - never will be - but I've

learned coping skills to help me through the rough patches and able to function in society at a much higher level. In many ways, I owe that doctor my life - because without that caring professional, I well may not be here to write this. Reach out - please - because you ARE worth it!

**Susan Eckert**

Feb. 7, 2013

3:01 PM

Abuse

It's all fine and good to talk about it but in the meantime our sons and daughters are killing themselves. There are young children who are falling deeper and deeper into a depression, not realizing that they have a disease. Their caregivers have no idea of how to handle these children. What must be such a total heartbreaking situation to deal with on their own without help is not going to get solved by talking. Most of these people have talked till they are blue in the face. They need ACTION and they need it today, yesterday, a year ago, ten years ago. Tomorrow to them is a long long time. Walk in their shoes for just a day and I'm sure you will realize just how hard and frustrating it is for them. Windsor is a big city and our parents, grandparents, teachers etc should not have to hope they will get that one out of six chance for their child to get some help. Get these suffering families a center here! Get them trained staff that will not only help their children but help them too! Train teachers to spot the signs and give them an avenue to help these kids and not just push them through the system. No money you say....Come on!!!! We find it to help other countries, we find it for research, we spend billions on roads we really don't need as much as we need help for our children, we spend mega dollars talking about another bridge when our children are falling apart. How many more tragedies have to happen before we realize that if our children had gotten the help they need when they were young that these terrible things would not be daily news. Find a way PLEASE, before we lose any more of our precious children. Their only hope is in your hands.



January 28  
[bell.ca/letstalk](http://bell.ca/letstalk)



EXCLUSIVE

## Not in Peloso's nature to complain or ask for help: Smitherman

Less than a month after his husband Christopher Peloso was found dead, former Ont. health minister and Toronto mayoral candidate George Smitherman is encouraging those living with people affected by mental illness to speak out. □1



Are you looking for help? Here are some resources



Bell Let's Talk 2014 campaign: End the Stigma

THE LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL:  
FOUR PROMISING DEPRESSION THERAPIES



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MORE STORIES



**Mental health crisis support clinic offers hope for troubled youth**

A new walk-in clinic for youth in a mental health crisis is giving hope to dozens of young patients in Ontario. The Renfrew County Crisis Support Centre for Youth and Families is run by Tom Sidney, a youth counsellor who saw many young patients wait for months to get psychiatric help. [🗨️](#) [🗨️50](#)



**Bell's 'Let's Talk' day raises nearly \$5.5M for mental health initiatives**

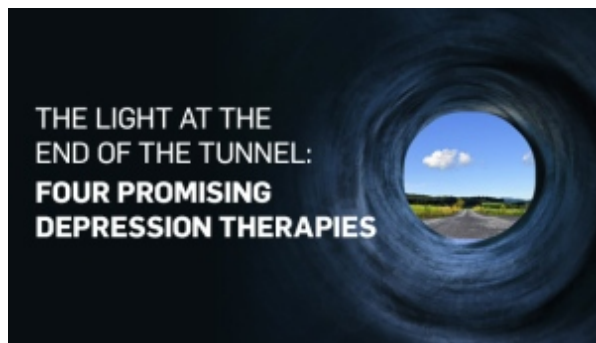
Bell's fourth annual 'Let's Talk' day saw tens of thousands of Canadians and others around the world take part in a conversation aimed at raising awareness about mental health issues. [🗨️16](#)



**'Listen, help': Gov. Gen. David Johnston, wife speak out about mental illness**

Gov. Gen. David Johnston says “there is much hope” for Canadians dealing with mental illness, but we all must learn to listen and talk openly about mental health. [🗨️19](#)

[🗨️2](#)



### Canadian research teams lead charge in companion depression treatments

Canadian research teams have been leading the way in "adjunct therapies" to treat depression. Here are four companion treatments that can be used to boost the effectiveness of medication and psychotherapy, or to help patients who have moved off their meds to stay well.

🗨️9



### A mother's story of mental illness: One woman's struggle to get her daughter help

Barbara's 15-year-old daughter, Ann, experiences severe anxiety. Here, in her own words, the Toronto-area mother discusses her family's struggles with getting a diagnosis and the treatment options available for teens facing a mental-health issue. 🗨️4



### Children with mental illness facing long wait times for diagnosis, care

Children suffering from mental illness are facing prolonged delays in receiving care in Canada, as demand for publicly funded treatment increases across the country. 🗨️21 🗨️1



### DND asks soldiers to share stories of mental health issues, care in videos

The Department of National Defence is asking members of the Canadian Armed Forces to share their stories about receiving care for mental health issues in a series of video segments, CTV News has learned. 🗨️27 🗨️2





### **Recent soldier deaths shouldn't be considered suicides: expert**

An Ontario psychologist says soldiers who take their own lives after returning from combat should be considered victims of a deployment-related fatality, not suicide. [🗨️34](#) [🗨️1](#)



### **Nunavut coroner calls special inquiry after record suicide numbers**

Nunavut's chief coroner is calling a special inquiry in response to a record number of suicides in the territory last year. [🗨️3](#)



### **New research project to assess business uptake of mental health guidelines**

The Mental Health Commission of Canada is partnering with more than 25 Canadian employers to study how well businesses are using a year-old federal program meant to give companies the tools they need to encourage and support better mental health in the workplace. [🗨️4](#) [🗨️3](#)

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