

## CMHA revamps Mental Health in Motion to help address urgent needs in community



Demand for mental health support continues to grow in York Region and South Simcoe, and indeed across the country and the local branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association is urging residents to lace up in support vital care services close to home.

After a year's hiatus, the Canadian Mental Health Association of York Region & South Simcoe (CMHA-YRSS) is set to re-launch a re-vamped version of their popular fundraiser, Mental Health in Motion.

Set for Sunday, September 13, at Newmarket's Tom Taylor Trail and AOK Park, the CMHA-YRSS has set a fundraising target of \$100,000 while making it easier than ever before to take part.

A recent poll conducted by Mental Health Research Canada found that youth and equity-deserving groups are more likely to use artificial intelligence tools for mental health support, underscoring ongoing gaps in access to care, says Catherine Matzig, Senior Director of Philanthropy, at the CMHA-YRSS. The need for community mental health supports that bridge those gaps is profound. That's why we're proud to reintroduce Mental Health in Motion to our community with no registration fee. Every step the community takes, and every dollar fundraised, reinforces that we don't want anybody left behind when they need the care the most.

CMHA-YRSS meets youth, adults, families, and caregivers right where they are to provide immediate, compassionate, person-centred support. Funds raised will go towards CMHA programs that need it the most, such as the Mobile Youth Walk-In Clinic and MOBYSS.

Mental Health in Motion is first and foremost a fundraiser and this year our goal is to raise \$100,000 for mental health services in York Region and South Simcoe. By making registration free and the event accessible, we are hoping that what we're doing is inviting more people to get involved, to fundraise, and to help us reach that goal, says Matzig. Everybody who participates represents an opportunity to make a difference in the conversation around mental health and about reducing the stigma that still, unfortunately, can surround mental health.

We're hoping that literally hundreds of people will join us, that when they register, they will create their own fundraising pages, that they will rally their friends, family, and co-workers to support them financially, but also hopefully come out and participate themselves.

We're hoping that this event raises funds so that our community can access mental health supports when they need it. We want to create connection. We also know that being outside, being together, creating community, and having conversations around mental health is incredibly important. We know that that all creates senses of wellbeing, of community, and we hope this walk gives people

the opportunity to experience those benefits while supporting mental health in our community.?

While the event is, again, a fundraiser first, she adds it's also about promoting ?healthy habits,? of ?encouraging people to take small steps that support their own wellbeing ? and what easier way than walking??

?Mental health doesn't improve in isolation. It only improves when communities come together, when people come together, and that's what Mental Health in Motion is all about,? says Matzig. ?It may look a little different than it has in years past, but there is an amazing energy and synergy when literally hundreds of people walk together and send a message throughout our community that mental health matters.

?I really encourage people to participate if it's their first time, and if they've done it a lot in the past, just come out and be part of that incredible energy. I hope people leave feeling connected ? connected to their community, connected to their own well-being, and connected to the idea that support for mental health is available. If people walk away knowing that they're not alone, and that we can all make mental health a priority, then I think we have achieved everything we set out to do.?

The CMHA-YRSS' 2026 Mental Health in Motion 5K Walk will take place at Newmarket's Tom Taylor Trail, AOK Park, on Sunday, September 13, starting at 10 a.m. The day will include a tour of the MOBYSS bus, guest speakers, light refreshments, and a Kids Zone. For more information, to register, or to sponsor a participant, visit [cmhainmotion.ca](http://cmhainmotion.ca).

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