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NEWS RELEASE

VIDEO CONTEST CHALLENGES ONTARIO STUDENTS TO CHANGE THE VIEW OF MENTAL ILLNESS

Children's Mental Health Ontario (CMHO) is encouraging youth to take action against the stigma associated with mental health and addiction problems through in a video contest called **Change the View**.

Students are invited to make a short video that shows how we can all take the stigma out of kids' mental health issues like anxiety, depression, psychosis and attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD).

The *Change the View* contest is now in its fifth year. Prizes for the contest will be awarded for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place. The top prize winner will be awarded **\$1,500**.

Roughly 1 in 5 kids in Ontario has a diagnosable mental health issue. Studies show that most mental health problems emerge in childhood or adolescence.

A 2013 report commissioned by CMHO's Youth Action Committee found that **46% of youth identify stigma as a barrier** at their school that prevents them from seeking support for mental health and/or addiction issues. ([Read the full report: 'Building a Better School Environment for Youth'](#)).

Change The View invites youth to speak with their own voice about issues affecting them and their peers. A number of teachers have incorporated the contest into their curriculum to raise awareness and help reduce the stigma behind mental health issues.

The contest opens today and closes on April 10th, 2014.

Winners will be **publicly announced** during [Children's Mental Health Week](#) from May 4-10. (To [learn more about the contest, click here](#)).

Children's Mental Health Week focuses on increasing awareness of the signs of child and youth mental health problems, decreasing stigma and understanding that help is available and treatment works.

"Change the View provides us with the opportunity to engage young people on the topic of mental health and addictions," said Gordon Floyd, president and CEO of Children's Mental Health Ontario. "Each year we are blown away by the creativity, passion and insight of young people across Ontario."

"(Mental Health) is almost taboo to talk about, and I think that most people don't know how to talk about it. My story is only one of millions. The more people step up and share their story, the more awareness will be generated"
– Danielle Poirier, contest participant

"This contest gives youth a voice. It identifies what youth would like to see in their schools and communities so that they can learn strategies to deal with mental health and addiction issues."
– Mary-Anne Leahy, Youth Action Committee Co-Chair

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