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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
INTERVIEW AVAILABILITY**

Distress Centres Annual B.A.D. Ride

Bikers Are Riding to Answer the Call

Toronto ON – May 12, 2014 – On Sunday, May 25, 2014, the Distress Centres of Toronto are hosting the 17th annual B.A.D. Ride (Bikers Against Despair Ride – www.thebadride.com).

All the money raised by B.A.D Ride participants support the ongoing services and new initiatives provided by the Distress Centres that build both individual and community resiliency. Every rider, passenger and child who registers for the event must raise a minimum of \$75 to participate.

Start: Dave & Buster's - Hwy. 400 & Hwy. 7 (East of 400, South of 7)
8:00a.m. Registration
9:45a.m. Ride start

Finish: Markham Fairgrounds - Elgin Mills Road and McCowan Ave.
1:30p.m. Post-Event Party

Who: Karen Letofsky, Executive Director, Toronto Distress Centres
Celebrity Endorsers present at the event will include:

Andy Frost, Legendary Q107 DJ and the voice of the Toronto Maple Leafs
Darcy Tucker, Toronto Maple Leaf Alumni
Marc Thuet, Celebrity Chef and Television Personality
Mike Bullard, Radio Personality and Comedian
Jane Dayus-Hinch, Celebrity Event Planner and Television Personality
Bill 'Toff' Toffan, Morning Ride Host on KX94.7
Tom Brown, Toronto's foremost weather anchor on CTV

QUOTES:

"Since we started it in 1997, the B.A.D. Ride has been [one of] our biggest fund raiser[s]. We are so grateful to all the riders and their families for all they do to support us," said Karen Letofsky, Executive Director of Distress Centres. "Some of our riders have been with us since the first ride. It really demonstrates their loyalty and passion for what we are doing, and they should know that, without them, we would not have been able to add so many of the services we now provide to the community."

"In 2013, the Distress Centre received more than 120,000 calls across the GTA," continued Karen Letofsky. "We are available 24/7 to ensure anyone in distress knows they are not alone. Every life is precious and every problem is important, no matter how big or small, and we want to help them find their way out of the darkness."

QUICK FACTS: [NTD: please verify numbers are current]

- 60 minutes – average length of a "crisis call" from someone who is suicidal
- 60 per cent of callers reach out after hours
- 15 per cent of all calls received are from people considering suicide
- 151 – number of languages that Distress Centres are capable of answering, through a language interpreter service
- 600 – number of volunteers annually across three centres in Toronto
- 64 – number of TTC subway stations with a Crisis Link phone providing a direct line to Distress Centre support and emergency services



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- 416-408-HELP- Toronto Distress Centres' phone number

About Distress Centres

As the country's oldest helpline, Distress Centres has built an infrastructure of programs and services that are responsive in delivering immediate and compassionate help 24-hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days of the year. Established in 1967, when making a suicide attempt was still illegal, the agency annually has 600 specially trained crisis responders. Through its integrated, community-based partnerships network, Distress Centres provide multiple channels of support, making a meaningful difference to those who are vulnerable and at-risk.

Distress Centres provide an emotional safety net in the City of Toronto for those citizens in need.

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MEDIA CONTACT

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