



**MIND
YOUR
HEAD**

**GO
CYCLING**

**CYCLING REDUCES
STRESS AND ANXIETY,
CAN PREVENT BURNOUT
AND CAN HELP FIGHT
DEPRESSION**

go-cycling.org

Embargo: Monday 8th October

Campaign calls on businesses to ‘Go Cycling’ for mental health

A new campaign called Go Cycling, connecting cycling with good mental health and business success, is launching today in Amsterdam’s international business district, Zuidas. The campaign will run initially from 8 - 12 October to coincide with World Mental Health Day taking place on Wednesday 10 October.

The campaign builds on the fact that 1 in 4 people suffer from mental health problems each year, with many more of us suffering from stress and anxiety on a daily basis. Go Cycling aims to educate people to the wide-ranging mental health benefits of cycling and make it easier for more people to get on their bike.

Nine in ten people working in the Netherlands report that they struggle to cope with the psychological demands of work. A number of leading studies have proven that cycling can reduce stress and anxiety, prevent burnout and help fight depression. In addition, four in five workers take sick days, higher than the European average. Cycling to work is proven to reduce sickness absence and prevent long term leave from mental ill health. Employees who cycle are found to be more engaged, effective and energised.

Go Cycling launches with a website - www.go-cycling.org - (in Dutch and English) that provides employees with simple tips for how to start cycling. This includes information on incentives for cyclists, local routes, and options for buying, leasing or sharing bicycles and e-bikes. The site also provides advice for employers on how to make it easier to foster a cycling culture in their workplace. Businesses can share costs for a number of operations that facilitate cycling, such as installing parking and shower facilities, from Hello Zuidas.

The campaign is a collaboration between Hello Zuidas, Zuidasdok and BYCS.

Maud de Vries, co-founder of BYCS said: “Cycling is more than transportation, it is transformation. Too many people are suffering from poor mental health but we know that cycling can improve this if it becomes part of your daily commute. Whilst numbers of cycling are higher in Amsterdam than many cities, it is still too low amongst business professionals getting to work here. With Zuidas aiming to become a leading example of progressive international business approaches, increasing cycling is essential to achieving this, and we hope every business joins the movement.”

On World Mental Health Day (10th October), BYCS will be hosting a free public breakfast event from its cultural events series ‘SHIFT’ at Circl, the ABN AMRO pavilion. The event will explore the topics raised by the Go Cycling campaign with international experts and speakers on mental health, urban planning and business. For more information and registration, head to www.go-cycling.org.

One of the speakers at the SHIFT event is Ione Avila-Palencia of the Institute for Global Health. The Institute’s recent report concluded that people who cycled in cities were found to have better self-perceived general health, better mental health, greater vitality, lower self-perceived stress and fewer feelings of loneliness.

Christiaan Huijg, Managing Director at World Trade Centre Amsterdam, which is supporting Go Cycling, said:

“Cycling regularly between home and work has countless benefits. I have been doing so for many years and can truly say that I feel physically and mentally fitter than ever! An additional benefit is the positive impact cycling has on CO2 reduction and the environmental footprint. These reasons alone should be enough to just give it a try.”

Throughout the week, a large ‘pledge wall’ will be touring Zuidas. Everyone is encouraged to sign the wall and make a pledge to take steps to improving their own mental health.

For more information on Go Cycling, head to www.go-cycling.org

Notes to editors

Photo opportunity:

Business leaders and mental health experts will be signing a giant pledge wall, committing to ‘Go Cycling’ outside Circl, the ABN AMRO Pavilion.

9.30am, Wednesday 10th October

Press contacts:

Adam Stones, BYCS: adam@bycs.org | 0614552430

Data: Information on mental health provided by the Dutch Institute of Psychology, Volksgezondheidszorg.info and ISGlobal.

About BYCS:

BYCS is an Amsterdam-based social enterprise driven by the belief that bicycles transform cities and cities transform the world. Our mission is called 50by30: 50% of all trips by bicycle by 2030. It demands the brightest ideas and the most determined action. And we believe it will lead to a fundamental increase in health, happiness and prosperity for all. We work towards 50by30 through initiating, testing and scaling breakthrough ideas around cycling. We invest our profits into managing the global Bicycle Mayor program. In all our work, we always ask - ‘where can the bicycle take us?’

www.bycs.org

ABOUT BYCS

BYCS sees a world where 50% of all city trips are by bicycle by 2030. We call this global vision 50by30. This ambitious goal demands the brightest ideas and the most determined action. We believe it will lead to fundamentally healthier, happier and more prosperous cities.

BYCS acts as a catalyst for breakthrough solutions around cycling. We create and accelerate ideas, and we kick start collaborations. We're pursuing our bold 50by30 goal by launching innovative programs that can scale and engage people globally.

To realise 50by30, we work with others who share our vision. If you'd like to contribute to one of our programs or have a suggestion for a way we could collaborate, we'd love to hear from you.

The logo for BYCS, featuring the letters 'BYCS' in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The letters are slightly slanted to the right and have a thick, blocky appearance.

BYCSnewsroom