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INTERNATIONAL COALITION OF EXPERTS ISSUES AN ALERT REGARDING RELEASE OF *13 REASONS WHY*, SEASON 2

May 16, 2018. In 2017 Netflix released *13 Reasons Why* to a global audience and extensive concern on the part of experts. A study published in *The Journal of the American Medical Association* found a significant increase in internet searches on suicide following the release of season 1. As a result and in preparation for the release of season 2 on May 18, 2018, an international coalition of leading experts in education, mental health and suicide prevention have released concerns and recommendations to youth, parents, educators and clinicians/professionals.

“We want to make sure the public is aware and prepared for the release of season 2 so that they can be informed and available to youth who want to talk about the issues in the series, as well as for those youth who struggle with the content,” said Dr. Dan Reidenberg, Executive Director of SAVE who lead the coalition. “While we hope that the series will encourage important conversations and more positive, healthy behaviors, we also are concerned that the series could have negative outcomes for some youth.”

The coalition of nonprofits, educational and research institutions, membership organizations, advocacy groups and professionals issued the statement urging adults to make an effort to watch the series with youth and to talk with them about the issues raised in the show. The full statement can be found at www.13reasonswhytoolkit.org.

Research demonstrates that depictions of violence and self-harm can increase the likelihood of copycat behaviors. Adolescents are a vulnerable group and are highly impressionable, frequently copying others’ behaviors or reacting in response to things they have seen. Such copycat and harmful behaviors displayed on television and/or in film can lead to harmful outcomes. “Season 1 included detailed portrayal of suicide, violence and it represented adults and professionals in a non-caring manner,” according to Dr. Murad Khan, President of the International Association for Suicide Prevention. “By creating a toolkit for young people, adults and professionals, we can demonstrate constructive and positive coping skills and encourage recovery and hope.”

In order to help reduce the risk of suicide contagion, the coalition implores media covering this story to be cautious and follow international messaging recommendations when reporting on the topic of suicide:

- <http://www.reportingonsuicide.org>
- http://www.who.int/mental_health/suicide-prevention/resource_booklet_2017/en/
- <http://www.bloggingsuicide.org>

In all media reports, it is important to include factual information on suicide rates, warning signs of youth suicide (www.youthsuicidewarningsigns.org), as well as information on helplines and support services for adolescents and concerned parents.

When reporting on mass shootings, media are encouraged to follow recommendations found at:

- <http://www.reportingonmassshootings.org>

An overview of helplines and support services for people in distress in different countries, can be accessed via: https://www.iasp.info/resources/Crisis_Centres

International Coalition Partners

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
American Association of Suicidology
American Psychiatric Association
Australian Institute for Suicide Research and Prevention
British Psychological Society
Danish Research Institute for Suicide Prevention
International Association for Suicide Prevention
International Academy for Suicide Research
Medical University of Vienna, Center for Public Health, Dept of Social and Preventive Medicine
Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand
National Association of School Psychologists
National Council for Behavioral Health
National Suicide Research Foundation, Ireland
Orygen, The National Centre of Excellence in Youth Mental Health, Australia
Samaritans/Befriender's Worldwide
Stanford Psychiatry's Center for Youth Mental Health and Wellbeing
School of Public Health, University College Cork, Ireland
Society for the Prevention of Teen Suicide
Suicidal Behaviour Research Laboratory, University of Glasgow, Scotland
Suicide Awareness Voices of Education
The Jason Foundation
The Jed Foundation (JED)
The Lancet Psychiatry
The Trevor Project

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