



P R E S S R E L E A S E

Suggestions for editorial staff on responsible reporting on the death of Linkin Park singer Chester Bennington

Leipzig, July 25, 2017 - The European Alliance Against Depression (EAAD) deeply regrets the death of Linkin Park singer Chester Bennington. It has been established that he died by suicide. Reporting on suicide is associated with particular responsibility because of the danger of the so-called "Werther effect", the triggering of copycat suicides.

This risk can be decreased if

- local help lines and help contacts are provided, please see international help addresses here: eaad.net/help
- expert statements are reported
- alternative coping strategies and positive examples of managing a crisis are shown
- suicidal behavior is shown as a consequence of a psychiatric disorder (e.g. depression) that could have been treated successfully
- background information on the disorder is provided

Majority of suicides occurs in the context of a psychiatric disorder

Globally, it is estimated that 800 000 persons die from suicide each year. In western countries, more than 90% of suicides and attempted suicides occur in the context of a psychiatric disorder, of which the majority are depressive disorders.

"Depression is associated with great suffering and deep hopelessness. During a depression, existing problems are perceived in an increased way and the hope is always lost that this painful condition can ever be improved. Within their despair people then see in suicide, the only way to escape this intolerable state", says Prof. Ulrich Hegerl, psychiatrist and president of the EAAD. Professional treatment of depression is the most important measure to prevent suicide. "The vast majority of people with depression can be helped with medication and psychotherapy. Therefore, as with any other disease, it is crucial to seek professional help quickly, that is, to see your family doctor (or doctor) or go directly to a psychiatrist, "says Hegerl.

In their guide on responsible media reporting of suicide, the EAAD summarized the most important suggestions for journalists.

You can find the guidelines here: http://www.eaad.net/uploads/media/Mediaguide_2014_01.pdf

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