

CONTACT:

Beth Carls, OneSeventeen Media, PBC

P: (713) 854 - 8766

E: beth.carls@oneseventeenmedia.com

National Science Foundation Awards Competitive Grant to Groundbreaking Mental Health Companion for Kids

As Crisis Persists Among U.S. Students, R&D Will Enhance Early Detection Tool for Childhood Depression, Anxiety and Behavioral Needs

AUSTIN, TX - (August 15, 2022) - America's Seed Fund, a program activated by the [National Science Foundation](#), awarded OneSeventeen Media with a Phase I grant of \$256,000 to conduct research on its pioneering product reThinkIt!, an AI-driven, web-based platform resolving students' worsening mental health challenges.

Child and adolescent mental health has declined steadily since before the COVID-19 pandemic and is reaching crisis levels according to the U.S. Surgeon General as well as leading research and clinical institutions in childhood and adolescent psychiatry and health. An independent, national task force of health experts now officially recommends anxiety screenings for all U.S. children ages 8- through 18-years-old. Meanwhile, studies indicate that 75% of American kids who receive mental healthcare do so at school, but counselors on campus are severely overworked with caseloads nearly three times the recommended limit.

reThinkIt! steps in by eliciting six times more information from children and teens than shared in conversations with adults, digitally triaging students' expressed concerns, and then alerting educators and parents to trends in their students' mental wellness, bridging the gap between kids in need and the adults who care about them while minimizing the strain on schools' limited resources.

"Kids' mental health is a growing national emergency that demands our attention and resolve. reThinkIt! is nurturing happier kids into healthier adults, and this grant will enable us to ensure more students receive better, more immediate access to mental healthcare," shared OneSeventeen Media CEO Beth Carls.

Approved by the Institutional Review Board, the study will evaluate whether 6th-8th grade students are likely to need, understand and embrace the core features of reThinkIt!, which evaluates, learns and provides in-depth, real-time insights about the complexities of a student's mental and emotional states. A proven early detection tool, reThinkIt! has already prevented a potential school shooting and multiple teen suicides. As a result of this study, reThinkIt! will undergo refinements to further improve its use by and efficacy with U.S. middle schoolers.

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About America's Seed Fund: America's Seed Fund powered by the National Science Foundation (NSF) awards \$200 million annually to startups and small businesses, transforming scientific discovery into products and services with commercial and societal impact. Startups working across almost all areas of science and technology can receive up to \$2 million in non-dilutive funds to support research and development (R&D), helping de-risk technology for commercial success. America's Seed Fund is congressionally mandated through the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program. The NSF is an independent federal agency with a budget of about \$8.8 billion that supports fundamental research and education across all fields of science and engineering. For more information, visit seedfund.nsf.gov.

About OneSeventeen Media, PBC: OneSeventeen Media leads the charge in developing digital mental healthcare solutions for K12 schools that help educators improve outcome-based social emotional and mental health results. reThinkIt! for School™, their proven telemental health platform, helps make students emotionally healthier. Powered by machine learning, reThinkIt! leverages its unique combination of kid-smart, chatbot-driven conversations and a real-time self-guided Emotional Digital Triage™ Assessment paired with optional access to licensed live chat therapists and certified counselors. reThinkIt! automates the time-intensive parts of the mental health evaluation and triage process that bog down the more important – and essential – high-touch, people parts of nurturing healthy students and cultivating overall school wellness. OneSeventeen Media is headquartered in Austin, Texas and is funded in part by social impact investment from Southwest Angel Network (SWAN), Health Wildcatters, [National Science Foundation](#) and United Way of Metropolitan Dallas. Learn more at www.oneseventeenmedia.com.