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**CONTACT: Noah Cornman
(212)414-9696 X201
noah@SAY.org**

New York, NY – July 12, 2019: SAY: THE STUTTERING ASSOCIATION FOR THE YOUNG ANNOUNCES THE LAUNCH OF SAY: AUSTRALIA

SAY: The Stuttering Association For The Young is thrilled to announce the launch of its first international arm, [SAY: Australia](#). Founded in 2001 by Taro Alexander in New York City, **SAY** is a non-profit organization that provides innovative and life-changing programs for young people who stutter. **SAY: Australia** is bringing these programs to Melbourne, AU in July 2019.

SAY developed its ground-breaking **Confident Voices** After-School and Weekend Program to help young people who stutter cultivate the self-confidence, lasting friendships and supportive community they need to live out of courage and follow their dreams. Speech pathologists Rich Stephens and Dr. Elaina Kefalianos have applied that model to **SAY: Australia**, utilizing the arts and creative expression to empower, educate, and champion children and teens who stutter, ages 8-17. The organization's first FREE **Confident Voices: Australia Series** will commence with the **Melbourne My Share 10-Week Project** in September 2019.

Sessions for the **Melbourne My Share Project** will be held at the Victorian College of the Arts (VCA), during which participants will be paired with adult mentors (some of whom stutter) to work on their own creative projects - this may include raps, songs, poems, dance pieces, magic shows, movie trailers, visual arts pieces and more. Each creative project will then be presented to an audience of supportive family and friends at a Gala Performance on December 7th, 2019, held at the VCA's famous Space 28 Theatre.

President of **SAY: Australia**, Rich Stephens, says, "Ever since I first volunteered with **SAY** in the USA in 2015, I've witnessed first-hand the revolutionary experience young people who stutter have through their involvement in **SAY's** creative programs. For some, it's the first time they have ever met or another person who stutters! Often lifelong friendships are forged and the confidence they build transfers directly into these young people's classrooms and everyday lives."

Executive Director of **SAY**, Noah Cornman, adds, "We are thrilled and honoured to welcome **SAY: Australia** into the **SAY** Family. Our **Confident Voices** Program is an exceptional, collaborative and transformative experience that allows young people who stutter to truly express themselves, many for the first time. This is the first organization of its kind in Australia and we know that Rich, Elaina and their team will have a profound impact on so many lives with **SAY: Australia**."

Across the world, over 70 million people stutter on a daily basis, including 5% of all children. Young people who stutter often face unimaginable fear and cruelty from a world that doesn't understand them. Over time, they may recoil from the world, silencing themselves to hide their stutter, embarrassment and shame. Young people who stutter may also feel incredibly isolated and alone, and many face daily ridicule, teasing and bullying.

Like **SAY: The Stuttering Association for the Young**, **SAY: Australia** holds firmly to the belief that every voice matters and deserves to be heard. Committed to providing a unique forum of empathy, acceptance and support, **SAY: Australia** aims to empower and inspire kids who stutter to speak their truth, open their hearts and be themselves.

Registration is now open for all **SAY: Australia** 2019/2020 programs. Visit sayaustralia.org.au or contact Rich Stephens via info@sayaustralia.org.au for more information.