



Canadian Netflix star of *Ginny & Georgia* speaks out against the perils of perfectionism and culture of comparison in lead up to Blue Monday

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Canadian celebrity Sara Waisglass (Netflix's hit show *Ginny & Georgia* , *Degrassi: The Next Generation* and *Degrassi: The Next Class*) speaks openly about the perils of social media-driven perfectionism in a new public service announcement (PSA) aimed at youth. The spot, an initiative of Unsinkable, a charity founded by Canadian Olympian Silken Laumann, will hit social media feeds supported by youth influencers in time for Blue Monday (January 15): the saddest day of the year. Waisglass lends her talent, celebrity, and personal experience to confront the mental health challenges facing young people today.

"It's really easy in this generation to think you're falling behind, just because you're constantly bombarded with everybody else's highlight reel and you're comparing it to your day to day," said Waisglass. "It's one of the biggest misconceptions that because my life looks perfect, it is perfect. It isn't." In the PSA, Waisglass takes aim at the endless stream of distorted social media content online and a growing culture of comparison that even celebrities like herself are not immune from. With an aim to reach youth, the PSA will be shared by a range of youth influencers who have agreed to share it alongside personal messages on why mental health matters to them.

According to a 2021 Statistics Canada report, around 1 in 8 social media users report feeling anxious or depressed, frustrated or angry, or envious of the lives of others. Around 20% of users under age 30 reported feeling anxious or depressed because of their social media use. Young people are frequently intensive users of social media. Recent statistics from Media Technology Monitor's MTM Jr. survey reports 82% of teenage social media users access it daily; 55% use it to view content posted by others.

"We hear young people tell us they're not good enough, smart enough, pretty enough. One culprit: social media and the artificial benchmark it sets for young people striving for perfectionism. Enough with 'not enough'. Unsinkable uses social media to amplify voices of young people, showcasing how much of a continuum mental health is," said Laumann. "So many people compare and shame themselves, working through the struggle silently. We're using this moment to invite storytellers at every stage to bring their authentic stories to Unsinkable's platform. By harnessing the power of storytelling, we can change perception, cultivate community and support each other on the journey, together."

Unsinkable hears stories about social media and the emotional hazards for young people everyday and through its youth-led programs helps youth recognize what they and others are experiencing and get on the path to mental well-being." I used to spend a lot of time feeling bad on social media, but now I've learned to tune other people's experiences out," says Nikita, a youth storyteller from Unsinkable Youth. "Everyone has different experiences, needs, priorities, and privileges. If this is something you struggle with, remember that the goal isn't to replace jealousy with happiness, but rather with amicable indifference." Unsinkable is a charitable organization founded in 2020 by Olympic hero and mental health advocate Silken Laumann. Unsinkable uses storytelling to help people #BridgetheGap between struggling with their mental health and taking steps towards mental well-being.