

May 2, 2017

Dear Parents or Guardians,

The Netflix series, *13 Reasons Why*, debuted on March 31, 2017, and is trending nationally and locally. It is a 13-hour series depicting themes of bullying, sexual assault, drug use and other social issues. If you have not watched or heard about this series, it follows a high schooler who has received 13 cassette tapes made by a classmate before she died by suicide. The tapes explain her 13 reasons for killing herself, essentially uncovering dark secrets that caused her suicide.

This show is being watched and talked about by many young people in our schools and has generated a lot of discussion about the impact the series may have on our youth. It is rated MA (mature audiences) and some mental health experts are concerned that the show does not address alternatives to suicide when teens are dealing with stressful situations. As recommendations,

- We encourage you to obtain information about the series.
- If your teenager is watching the series, take time to have conversations about the content. Start with an open conversation: Ask your child, "Have you heard of this show? Have you watched it? How did it affect you?" And really listen because it might provide a window into some of their own thoughts and feelings and which themes they gravitated toward the most.
- Watch with your child - watch it together every few days and talk about it while watching it.
- Review talking points that have been created specifically for this series by mental health experts from Suicide Awareness Voices of Education(SAVE) and the JED Foundation; which can be found at: www.jedfoundation.org/13-reasons-why-talking-points/
- Educate yourself on suicide prevention: It's helpful to know basic facts and how to approach a conversation about suicide. [Learning the warning signs](#) is one of the most obvious things that any parent can do.

If you feel that your child needs support in this area, please reach out to a campus counselor. They are all very willing and available to meet with your children.

Sincerely,



Gayle Stinson, Ed.D.
Superintendent

