

May 17, 2017

Dear Seymour Community School District Parents/Guardians,

As you may be aware, Netflix recently released "13 Reasons Why", a series based on a novel by Jay Asher. The series depicts the story of a high school student who dies by suicide, leaving behind 13 cassette recordings sharing the events she perceives led to her death. The series is graphic and may lead to vulnerable students misinterpreting its message.

Because this series is so popular and viewed on Netflix, which is easily accessible to students, we are reaching out to the families in our district. Please take a moment to find out if your child has read the book or viewed the series. If so, we encourage you to talk about some of the complicated issues and open the door to create a safe atmosphere for your child to discuss his or her feelings and emotions. A great resource to help generate conversation with your child from the National Association of School Psychologists: ["13 Reasons Why": Considerations for Educators](#).

There are also some social media groups that can encourage vulnerable teens to place themselves in danger or to kill themselves. Some names of possible groups are F57 or the Blue Whale Challenge. Please talk to your students about their social media accounts.

Our middle and high school students are taught to recognize signs of suicide. In the event that someone, including your child, tells you he/she is having suicidal thoughts, we urge you to get help immediately.

Contact the Crisis Center at 920-832-4646, or the National Suicide Hotline at 1-800-SUICIDE (784-2433). Always take warning signs seriously and know the warning signs such as:

- Suicide threats, both direct ("I am going to kill myself.") and indirect ("I wish I could fall asleep and never wake up."). Can be verbal, written or posted online.
- Suicide notes and planning, including online postings.
- Preoccupation with death in conversation, writing, drawing and social media.
- Changes in behavior, appearance/hygiene, thoughts and/or feelings.
- Emotional distress.

Know that we are here to assist you with any questions or concerns you may have. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kari Breitenfeldt, Tiffany Vogel, Mari Reinheimer, Amie Secor and Theresa VanDyke  
Seymour/Black Creek Middle School and High School Counselors