

May 2, 2017

Suggestions for Parents/Guardians regarding the Netflix series, *13 Reasons Why*

Many of you may have seen or read some of the recent commentary regarding the popular Netflix series, *13 Reasons Why*. This series depicts a student's suicide, along with the *reasons* that led her to make the choice that includes sexual assault, sex shaming, bullying and impaired driving.

The BC Ministry of Education, as well as mental health organizations internationally, have prepared advisements warning of the potential harm this series can have on young people who may be influenced by the romanticized nature in which the suicide is treated in the series.

In response to the growing controversy, Netflix has issued a statement that mental health experts were consulted during production of the series, "to show how these issues impact teens in real and dramatic ways." The consensus, however, is that the unrealistic dramatization of the effect the 13 tapes left behind by the teen that commits suicide can be a trigger factor for other teens potentially at risk for suicide.

It is important for parents and guardians to be aware of what their children are watching and to connect with them in conversation about what they see on screen. For some of you, rather than simply forbidding your child from watching the series, watch it with them. This may lead to discussion concerning issues that are sometimes difficult but necessary to talk about.

The **Suicide Awareness Voices of Education** (SAVE) has created a set of Talking Points as a guideline for talking with your children about *13 Reasons Why*. It contains information about the content of the series and why mental health organizations are encouraging parents to not have your child watch the series unsupported. The article can be found at <http://www.save.org/13-reasons-why/>

If parents have concerns, school counsellors can assist to support you in conversation about this or other difficult topics as well as providing you with resources and suggestions for preventing harmful behaviour.

Local and Provincial Resources:

- Chimo Crisis Line (8am – midnight) 604-279-7070
- 1-800-SUICIDE (1-800-784-2433)
- 310 Mental Health Support 310-6789 (no area code needed)
- HealthLink BC – call 8-1-1 or visit <http://www.healthlinkbc.ca>
- Kids Help Line 310-1234
- <http://www.youthinbc.com> (noon – 1:00am)