

Dear Parents,

We would like to make you aware of a television show that some of our students may be watching. The show is available on Netflix and is called "13 Reasons Why," which is based upon the book, *Thirteen Reasons Why* by Jay Asher. "13 Reasons Why" contains very mature subject matter, including graphic depiction of suicide and rape, as well as references to drunk driving and bullying. The series also highlights the consequences of teenagers witnessing assaults and bullying and not doing anything, as well as an adult neglecting a child's needs in school. In light of this show, and in light of other recent high profile suicides, we find it necessary to reach out and inform you of this situation and resources available at Fairfield Ludlowe High School.

While many youth are resilient and capable of differentiating between a TV drama and real life, engaging in thoughtful conversations with them about the show is vital. Doing so presents an opportunity to help them process the issues addressed, consider the consequences of certain choices, and reinforce the message that suicide is not a solution to problems and that help is available. This is particularly important for adolescents who are isolated, struggling, or vulnerable to suggestive images and storylines. Research shows that exposure to another person's suicide, or to graphic or sensationalized accounts of death, can be one of the many risk factors that youth struggling with mental health conditions cite as a reason they contemplate or attempt suicide.

As suicide is an irreversible choice to a temporary problem, the need to be aware of risk factors and resources cannot be understated. If you or your child suspects a FLHS student to be suicidal, you may access anonymous TIPS reporting on our website, [www.fairfieldschools.org](http://www.fairfieldschools.org). School staff receive immediate emails regarding TIPS reporting, and a trained school based mental health professional will follow up on each report. Also, a suicide prevention hotline can be accessed at 1-800-273-TALK (8255), or text START to 741741.

Several schools have sent similar notices out to parents and the following links may be helpful in talking to your adolescent about this show and the sensitive topics it portrays.

<https://jedfoundation.org/13-reasons-why-talking-points/>

<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/tv/reviews/13-reasons-why>.

<http://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/school-safety-and-crisis/preventing-youth-suicide/save-a-friend-tips-for-teens-to-prevent-suicide>

American Association of Suicidology, [www.suicidology.org](http://www.suicidology.org)

Suicide Awareness Voices of Education, [www.save.org](http://www.save.org)

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, <https://afsp.org>

The FLHS Counseling Center is available to speak to students and parents about these important issues. Please feel free to contact us at (203) 255-7216. Thank you for taking a moment to consider this information.

Sincerely,

FLHS Counseling Center Staff