



Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen

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Constance D. Evelyn, Superintendent of Schools

May 9, 2017

Dear Valley Stream District 13 Families and School Community,

Netflix recently released a television series based on a best-selling book titled *13 Reasons Why*. Since its release, it has become an extremely popular show, often binge-watched without parental supervision, by both middle- and high-school children (in some cases, elementary students). The series has been rated TV-MA for mature audiences; however, some children have already shared that they have viewed the series.

It is important for parents to understand that the series graphically depicts a suicide death and addresses, in detail, a number of difficult topics such as bullying, rape and drunk driving. The series also highlights the consequences of teenagers witnessing assaults and bullying (i.e., bystanders) and not taking action to address the situation (e.g., not speaking out against the incident, not telling an adult about the incident).

The National Association for School Psychologists has provided some excellent insight and information for parents and schools regarding the topics mentioned above, particularly focusing on suicide prevention. While not encouraging viewing, we recommend that parents have a conversation with their children regarding this show. This can simply begin by asking if your child has watched the show or heard anyone talking about it.

It is important to note that research shows that talking about suicide does not plant the idea or provide suggestions to individuals. However, it does offer a positive outlet for help.

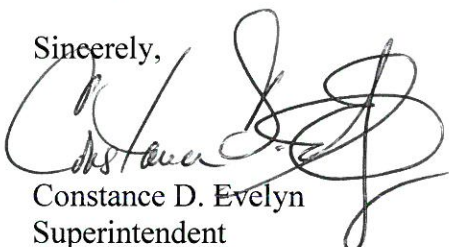
For further information, including some talking points to use in the conversation with your children, please visit the following articles:

<https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/school-safety-and-crisis/preventing-youth-suicide/13-reasons-why-netflix-series-considerations-for-educators>

<https://www.jedfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/13RW-Talking-Points-JED-SAVE-Netflix.pdf>

If you have any immediate questions or concerns, I encourage you to reach out to your child's principal.

Sincerely,



Constance D. Evelyn
Superintendent