

A Letter from the Monroe County Superintendent's Association about "13 Reasons Why"

- April 28, 2017

Parents of Monroe County students --

On March 31st, NetFlix released a series titled "13 Reasons Why", based on a popular novel of the same name by Jay Asher. The series is about a teenager called Hannah Baker who takes her own life. She leaves behind a set of cassette tapes, each addressed to a different person in her life, detailing how they hurt her and contributed to her death.

This series has generated much talk from school-aged youth about not only suicide, but other sensitive subject matter such as sexual abuse, rape, substance abuse, mental health, and bullying.

Due to the very serious and sensitive topics discussed in the series, the Monroe County Superintendent's Association are asking parents to consider the following:

- Watch the series first and determine if it is suitable for your children (a review of the movie can be found at IMDb.com)
- If you consider it appropriate, watch the series with them
- Watch the series companion piece "13 Reasons Why: Beyond the Reasons" on Netflix for a discussion by cast, producers, and mental health professionals about the series
- If your child wants to talk about the series, take time to discuss without judgment the series and the subject matter
- Reach out to your school counselor for help if you feel your child needs it
- Contact Community Mental Health at 800-886-7340 if you need additional resources

Read these [helpful points](#) from SAVE.org and the JED Foundation to further understand how "13 Reasons Why" dramatizes situations and the realities of suicide. [See Save a Friend: Tips for Teens to Prevent Suicide](#) for additional information.

The safety and wellbeing of all children is paramount. We all have an important role in preventing youth suicide. We urge you to utilize the above information and resources.

Sincerely,

Monroe County Superintendent's Association

- May is Mental Health Awareness Month. End the Stigma and Be in...Informed-Involved-Inspired.
- A couple of websites to help with the "Be Informed" part:
- <http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/our-history>
- <http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/bell>