



QUINCE ORCHARD HIGH SCHOOL
15800 Quince Orchard Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20878

Dear Parents/Guardians,

This letter is being sent as a proactive measure and in the interest of ensuring that parents/guardians know about the Netflix series, *13 Reasons Why*, based on the 2007 young adult novel by Jay Asher.

In the past week, there has been increasing media coverage about this series. We know that students may have watched the series and/or read the book. *13 Reasons Why* addresses and graphically depicts mature themes including, but not limited to, suicide, sexual assault, substance use, stalking, and bullying (cyberbullying). *13 Reasons Why* carries a TV-MA rating, indicating that it is designed to be viewed by adults and may be unsuitable for children under 17 years of age. Many adolescents have been watching the series alone and without adult supervision.

Mental health professionals are concerned that adolescents who watch the series without an adult available to process the themes and their feelings may be more likely to imitate these at-risk behaviors. The National Association of School Psychologists (2017) states, "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."

We encourage parents to be aware of the mature content and have thoughtful conversations at home about these serious topics.

The following resources may help you to speak with your children about the serious and sensitive topics covered:

- www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/school-safety-and-crisis/preventing-youth-suicide/13-reasons-why-netflix-series-considerations-for-educators
- www.cnn.com/2017/04/25/health/13-reasons-why-teen-suicide-debate-explainer/
- [13 Reasons Why: Talking Points for Parents](#)

Additional resources may be found at the following sites:

- [**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, 1-800-273-TALK \(8255\)**](#)
- [**American Foundation for Suicide Prevention**](#)
- [**National Association of School Psychologists**](#)
- [**Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration**](#)
- [**Stopbullying.gov**](#)
- [**Rape Abuse and Incest National Network**](#)
- [**The Trevor Project \(for support for LGBTQ students\) +**](#)

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact your child's school administrator, school psychologist, or school counselor.

Thank you,

Carole A. Working