



May 18, 2018

Dear NHSSD Community Members,

As I drove to work this morning, I made a mental note to create a listserv to alert parents that Netflix has released the second season of *Thirteen Reasons Why*. You may remember that some time ago we shared information about the first season of this show because of the content, namely suicide. As we know, suicide is a heavy topic, and often the media does not convey its gravity, nor do children and teens understand its seriousness. Below is a list of tips for parents for talking about this important topic.

TIPS FOR PARENTS FOR TALKING WITH THEIR CHILDREN ABOUT **13 REASONS WHY AND SUICIDE**

1. Don't be afraid to have a conversation with your children about the Netflix series and the issues it raises.
2. Educate yourself about suicide prevention before talking with your children and before watching the show.
3. Know that your children have likely heard of and possibly already watched this popular series, based on a book about the same topic, so you'll want to be prepared to respond to any feelings or questions it may have evoked.
4. Ask your children if they've heard about it or seen it. Steady yourself to listen intently. Ask open ended questions without judgment. What do you think of the show? Resist the urge to offer quick fixes or solutions to their potentially tough questions and reactions. Validate and support their feelings. Follow their cues. If your child is talking about any level of distress, do not hesitate to ask them about changes in mental health or suicidal thoughts. It can start with just asking **"Are you ok?"**
5. Learn how to have a conversation about mental health and suicide at afsp.org/mentalhealth. Raising the question about thoughts of suicide does not increase the risk or plant the idea. On the contrary, it creates the opportunity to offer support.
6. Offer to watch the show with your child if your child is in a solid state of mental health. **WARNING:** If your child is currently struggling or has had any level of suicidal thoughts or attempts, I would highly recommend not watching the show. Any child who has experienced a sexual assault should avoid the show as well.
7. Watch one episode at a time. Binge watching is not a good idea. Allow time to talk about each episode.
8. *13 Reasons Why* has some dangerous potential for contagion. Some teens may take away a disturbing message that presents suicide as an acceptable solution. **Click here** to read about how to talk with your teen.
9. Ask your child if they think any of their friends or classmates exhibit warning signs. Talk with them about how to seek help for their friend or classmate.
10. If you fear your child may be at risk, get professional help right away. There are helpful resources available to you 24/7 at afsp.org/resources. For help finding a mental health professional, visit afsp.org/findaprofessional.

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Suicide Prevention

afsp.org

This morning also brought the news of a school shooting in Texas. As we wrap our heads around yet another tragedy, we felt that it was important to share (again) what we are doing in New Hope-Solebury to ensure the safety and well-being of our students and staff.

- ✚ We continue to utilize our staff, namely our counselors and social workers—along with our teachers—to identify students who are in crisis or at risk for negative/harmful behaviors.
- ✚ We have conducted building-level and classroom-level safety audits looking for areas of potential vulnerabilities and have rectified issues that could have compromised safety. Our current safety protocols, which comprise our All Hazards Plan, have been developed in conjunction with local authorities and staff. These internal documents dictate procedures to follow in the event of emergencies.
- ✚ We have strengthened our working relationship with local authorities.
- ✚ All entrances to our buildings are secure, and all exterior doors are locked across all buildings.
- ✚ Drill such as lockdowns, fire and weather practice scenarios are conducted routinely according to state guidelines.
- ✚ All staff members had training in ALICE in February 2018, and we have another more complex level of training scheduled for the end of the school year.
- ✚ We held two informational sessions on ALICE for parents and community members to attend.
- ✚ We have engaged in table-top exercises with local responders to practice and refine protocols for dealing with emergencies.
- ✚ We continue to meet with our Safe Schools Committee to focus on strengthening safety protocols used in the District.
- ✚ We continue to add security cameras across our District.
- ✚ Background clearances are required for all District employees and volunteers.

We have said it before, but it is worth repeating: **The safety and security of our students and staff continue to be of utmost importance to us.** Please be assured that we have worked—and will continue to work—to maintain safe environments across all of our buildings. Should you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to one of our building principals at the numbers listed below. You can also reach out to Chuck Malone, Director of Education, or to me at (215) 862-5372.

Mr. Steve Seier, *HS Principal*
Phone: (215) 862-2028

Mr. Brian Loving, *MS Principal*
Phone: (215) 862-0608

Dr. Mike McKenna, *UES Principal*
Phone: (215) 862-8026

Ms. Jenn Frantz, *LES Principal*
Phone: (215) 297-5438

My best,



Steven M. Gianni, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools