

MARYLAND CENTER FOR SCHOOL SAFETY

PREPARE. PREVENT. ACHIEVE.



"13 Reasons Why" Teen Suicide Threat Situational Awareness Bulletin

April 28, 2017 - UNCLASSIFIED #17-03

The below information is being provided to you by the Maryland Center for School Safety (Center) as a Situational Awareness pertaining to a popular Netflix series titled "13 Reasons Why".

According to open source information, "13 Reasons Why" tells the fictional story of 17-year-old Hannah Baker, a troubled and bullied high school student who takes her own life. She leaves behind a series of audio tapes describing the "13 reasons why" she committed suicide. The themes are graphic and intense, tackling not only suicide, but also sexual assault, and underage drinking. Suicide is the third-leading cause of death for people 10 to 24 years old, after murder and accidents, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Many school districts, schools, educators, counselors, psychologists, and parents are concerned the series will glamorize teen suicide and it may have the contagion effect of copycat suicides. Several school districts and schools across the country including schools in Montgomery County, Maryland have sent letters home to parents alerting them to the series and offering strategies as to discussing this critical issue with their children.

Parenting experts and counselors encourage parents/guardians of children who are fans of the series to watch it with them and to engage in honest discussion as to the impact of the issues.

The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) has provided guidance and resource information on their website for educators, parents, and youth to review pertaining to the "13 Reasons Why" series.

Below are links to information about the series:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JebwYGn5Z3E>

<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/netflix-hit-13-reasons-why-faces-tough-criticism-from-teachers-and-parents/>

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

Please share this information with your central office staff, school administrators, student services directors, counselors, school resource officers, and other staff as deemed appropriate. If your school system or schools send letters home to parents about the series please share that information with the Center.

If you have any questions as to this Situational Awareness Bulletin or if the Maryland Center for School Safety can assist in your school safety/security and/or emergency preparedness efforts please contact Ed Clarke or Dino Pignataro at edward.clarke@mcac.maryland.gov or joseph.pignataro@mcac.maryland.gov respectively.

MCFSS "13 Reasons Why" Teen Suicide Threat Situational Awareness Bulletin # 17-03

HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS: While this document contains open source material, it should not be released to the public or media. It should only be shared on a "Need to Know" basis to ensure operational security within your jurisdiction.