



SCHOOL DISTRICT 5

S O U T H E A S T K O O T E N A Y

Office of the Director of Student Learning and Safe Schools Coordinator

2017.05.15

Dear Parent/Guardians,

Many of you may be aware of the Netflix series *13 Reasons Why*. This show, which is rated 16+, is based on a book of the same name. The premise behind the series is that a young girl, who takes her own life, leaves messages for the 13 people she feels are responsible for her pain.

The reason we are communicating with you about this series is that while it is fictional, it deals with some very difficult and sensitive issues in extremely graphic ways. As a result, we have concerns about the safety of those who may be watching it - particularly students who may already be emotionally vulnerable, have a history of trauma, are victims of related content, or are currently struggling with suicidal ideation. Some of the issues being portrayed graphically are bullying, rape and sexual shaming.

The Centre for Suicide Prevention (CSP) has stated concern that “the Netflix adaptation of Jay Asher’s *13 Reasons Why* novel does not follow the Canadian Association of Suicide Prevention and the American Association of Suicidology’s media guidelines”. Their website is www.suicideprevention.ca.

Whether your child(ren) are actually watching *13 Reasons Why* or not, they are quite likely to be aware of the series and may be in discussions about it. We are viewing this as an opportunity for parents to check in with your child(ren) about these topics, especially if you know that they are actively viewing this series. As such, we have included a ‘*13 Reasons Why* Talking Points’ Sheet to help support you in those conversations.

There have now been specific examples across North America where student exposure to this series has increased their risk. As the safety of our students and staff will always be our first priority, we did feel that it was important that you were aware of our concerns, and of our willingness to support you in conversations with your child(ren).

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Jason Tichauer,

Director of Student Learning & Aboriginal Education, SD5