



NORTH HAVEN MIDDLE SCHOOL

55 Bailey Road • North Haven, CT 06473 • Telephone (203) 239-1683 • Fax (203) 234-2846

PHILIP G. PIAZZA
Principal

PAUL CASTIGLIONE
Assistant Principal

MARJORIE R. DOLAN
Assistant Principal

April 26, 2017

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As your child's school administrators, teachers and counselors, it is our job to focus on the social, emotional and academic needs of all students. This is why we felt it necessary to reach out to our community and make you aware of the recent release of the Netflix series ***Thirteen Reasons Why***. This series is based on the book of the same name and it follows a group of high school students as they follow the story that was left behind for them by their classmate who died by suicide. It is already being claimed as the most watched series that Netflix has ever produced.

The trailer and advertisements for the series may be misleading. In watching the series, young people and teenagers could perceive the message that suicide is a viable and/or romanticized option. The content of the series is extremely graphic with troubling scenes throughout each episode, in particular near the end of the series, which may be difficult for the teenage mind to watch and process in an appropriate way.

The series has some of the following shortcomings:

- There is no mention of mental health and treatment options, as it references suicide throughout
- The idea of suicide is romanticized throughout
- There are no examples of help-seeking by the teens impacted
- There are several scenes throughout depicting serious trauma which the teens do not seek help or resources for (i.e. rape, bullying, car accidents, fights, alcoholism, suicide)
- The series does not express what to do in harmful situations in terms of getting help or utilizing healthy coping skills
- The series is not meant to be an educational film, and its message does not comply with the health recommendations for treating mental health, and/or trauma, or preventing suicide

Please find out if your child has read the book, watched the series, or heard of the series; if they have, please talk with them about it. We also suggest that you research the series so you understand what your child may be exposed to. Resources on talking points and the program will be posted on our school web site.

Thank you for your attention to this very important topic. The North Haven Middle School's mental health personnel are available to discuss the matter further if you have questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Philip Piazza

Philip Piazza, Principal