



ST HILDA'S SCHOOL
GOLD COAST

30 May 2018

13 Reasons Why - A Special Report - SchoolTV

Dear Parents

I would strongly encourage you to take the opportunity to read this special report on **13 Reasons Why**, which is currently screening on Netflix. Further information from the Welfare Team at St Hilda's follows the SchoolTV special report below. Parents are also advised that a number of 'dare games' involving high risk are continuing to proliferate social media, in particular snap chat which requests photographic proof of the dare. We discuss the harm of these 'dares' with students, but conversations with your daughter will be extremely valuable in helping her to make informed choices.

A Special Report

Welcome to this special edition for SchoolTV. This is an ongoing resource for parents on a range of topics, so that you can be informed with clear, fact-based information on the many challenges faced by today's youth.

Last year we wrote to you expressing our concerns over the television series called *13 Reasons Why* (available through Netflix) that attracted the attention of many young people. Netflix has just released Season 2 of, '13 Reasons Why'. This show is graphic and propagates ideas that could put young viewers at risk. The portrayal of characters is problematic and information is inaccurate and unhelpful. The creators of this show did not adequately consult suicide prevention groups, despite the second series displaying warning signs on the advice of mental illness organisations.

Parents need to be aware of the content of this show and the dangerous implications it can have on young people. Unfortunately, the show romanticises suicide by portraying the main character as living on after death through narration, written notes and recorded messages.

In this Special Report, Dr Carr-Gregg highlights the areas of the show that concern the mental health community. He hopes that parents will have a conversation with their teenagers about the content, should they choose to watch it.

Here is the link to your special report:

http://sthildas.qld.schooltv.me/wellbeing_news/13-reasons-why-special-report



13 REASONS WHY
A Special Report



St Hilda's staff are concerned about the content of this series and the manner in which serious issues such as depression, trauma and suicide are presented. Considering that this show is readily available and accessible to young people, we would suggest that parents be aware that this might be a television series of interest to your daughter. It is up to each family to decide whether it is an appropriate series to be allowed to be viewed by their adolescent. If you choose to allow your daughter to view this series, we would suggest the following to assist with supporting them to process the complex and sensitive material presented:

- Preferably watch the series with them
- Be available to honestly and openly discuss the topics presented
- Give realistic information and messages about mental illness and suicide. For example: that there are many other ways to cope with problems in life, no matter how traumatic and terrible. That there are people who are willing and able to help and support you. That suicide is not glamorous and it is final - it does not resolve problems.

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LOVE COMPASSION FORGIVENESS HOPE GRACE

- Make the focus of discussion suicide prevention, strategies to cope and maintain mental well-being.
- If the series provokes or triggers mental health concerns for yourself or your adolescent, seek mental health support.

The following is a list of online resources that may be useful for further reading:

<https://www.save.org/13-reasons-why/>

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

It is also important to help young people identify people in their support network who they feel they can trust and seek out in times of need. We have sent a reminder to our Middle and Senior School students that the following staff are available to them at school:

- Your daughter's Head of Year
- Head of Senior School (Mrs Brodar), Head of Middle School (Mrs Sanburg), Acting Head of Boarding (Mrs Rigby) during Mrs Boyle's recovery, Head of Junior School Mrs Maynard
- School Psychologists
- Health Centre staff
- Ms Lauman (Deputy Principal)

There are a range of external services also available including:

- Your GP
- Headspace
- Private practice psychologists
- Life Line 24/7
- Kids Helpline 24/7

If you or your child are in immediate danger of self-harm or suicide, please contact emergency services or your closest hospital.

We all have an important role to play in preventing youth suicide, and trust that we can continue to work together to support the mental health of our students. By turning this into an opportunity to discuss mental illness and suicide, then we are helping our young people feel supported.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require discussing this further.

Kind regards



Ms Wendy Lauman - Deputy Principal
On behalf of the St Hilda's School Welfare Team