

SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT THE NETFLIX SERIES *13 REASONS WHY*

- 1. A contagion effect:** Graphic depictions and language can actually cause a contagion effect for those who may be at highest risk for a suicide attempt, despite what may be the best of intentions on the part of filmmakers. In the context of the series, the act of suicide is glorified by the main character, and presented as an effective way to get messages across to those left behind. However, in reality, suicide is never a solution.
- 2. There is no single cause of suicide:** Suicide most often occurs when stressors and health issues converge to create feelings of hopelessness and despair for the individual who is struggling. It isn't appropriate or helpful to place blame on any one event or person. Suicide is complex and most often occurs when health, environmental and social factors are all present, and rarely is it as simple as "reasons" one can pin on other people's behavior or life events.
- 3. Learn the risks and warning signs:** While the storyline may showcase real issues such as bullying, assault and shaming, it obscures the fact that 90 percent of people who die by suicide also have an underlying mental health condition at the time of their death. We can all learn to recognize the behaviors that signal deterioration in mental health, as well as the warning signs of suicide risk so we can support each other better.
- 4. Help-seeking behavior:** It's okay for a TV series or movie to showcase a story of tragedy. However, when sharing a story about suicide, which is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States, we have an opportunity to educate the audience about warning signs of risk and encourage help-seeking behavior. Suicide is a leading cause of death, and it's preventable. Most people who actively manage a mental health condition lead healthy, fulfilling lives. It's also important for young people to know that there are caring, trustworthy adults who can help.
- 5. Spotlight stories of hope:** By highlighting success stories of working through life challenges and mental health problems, we model pathways each of us can find to survive and thrive.
- 6. Share resources:** Anytime news media and/or entertainment cover the topic of suicide, critical resources should be provided to those who are most at risk or vulnerable. For those who need immediate help, please text TALK to 741741 to text with a trained crisis counselor from the Crisis Text Line for free, 24/7, or call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

30 YEARS STRONG



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