13 REASONS WHY
TALKING POINTS

- 13 Reasons Why is a fictional story based on a widely known novel and is meant to be a cautionary tale.
- You may have similar experiences and thoughts as some of the characters in 13RW. People often identify with characters they see on TV or in movies. However, it is important to remember that there are healthy ways to cope with the topics covered in 13RW and acting on suicidal thoughts is not one of them.
- If you have watched the show and feel like you need support or someone to talk to reach out. Talk with a friend, family member, a counselor, or therapist. There is always someone who will listen.
- Suicide is not a common response to life's challenges or adversity. The vast majority of people who experience bullying, the death of a friend, or any other adversity described in 13RW do not die by suicide. In fact, most reach out, talk to others and seek help or find other productive ways of coping. They go on to lead healthy, normal lives.
- Suicide is never a heroic or romantic act. Hannah's suicide (although fictional) is a cautionary tale, not meant to appear heroic and should be viewed as a tragedy.
- It is important to know that, in spite of the portrayal of a serious treatment failure in 13RW, there are many treatment options for life challenges, distress and mental illness. Treatment works.
- Suicide affects everyone and everyone can do something to help if they see or hear warning signs that someone is at risk of suicide.
- Talking openly and honestly about emotional distress and suicide is ok. It will not make someone more suicidal or put the idea of suicide in their mind. If you are concerned about someone, ask them about it.
- Knowing how to acknowledge and respond to someone who shares their thoughts of emotional distress or suicide with you is important. Don't judge them or their thoughts. Listen. Be caring and kind. Offer to stay with them. Offer to go with them to get help or to contact a crisis line.
- How the guidance counselor in 13RW responds to Hannah's thoughts of suicide is not appropriate and not typical of most counselors. School counselors are professionals and a trustworthy source for help. If your experience with a school counselor is unhelpful, seek other sources of support such as a crisis line.
- While not everyone will know what to say or have a helpful reaction, there are people who do, so keep trying to find someone who will help you. If someone tells you they are suicidal, take them seriously and get help.
- When you die you do not get to make a movie or talk to people any more. Leaving messages from beyond the grave is a dramatization produced in Hollywood and is not possible in real life.
- Memorializing someone who died by suicide is not a recommended practice. Decorating someone's locker who died by suicide and/or taking selfies in front of such a memorial is not appropriate and does not honor the life of the person who died by suicide.
- Hannah's tapes blame others for her suicide. Suicide is never the fault of survivors of suicide loss. There are resources and support groups for suicide loss survivors.

If you're struggling with thoughts of suicide...

- Text "START" to 741741
- Call 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Talking points by:

SAVE
SUICIDE AWARENESS VOICES OF EDUCATION

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