

# LYNN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

James Leo McGuinness Administration Building – 100 Bennett Street, Lynn, MA 01905  
Tel. (781) 593-1680 ~ Fax. (781) 477-7487



*Catherine C. Latham, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools*

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Dear Parents and Guardians:

This letter is to make you aware of the popular Netflix original series, “13 Reasons Why”. The series is based on a young adult novel by Jay Asher originally published in 2011. The miniseries focuses on a high school student, Hannah Baker, who leaves behind 13 tape recordings detailing with why she takes her own life. Her former classmates are left to piece together Hannah’s final weeks. While viewing the series young children and teenagers could interpret the message that suicide is a viable or romanticized option. The content of the show is extremely graphic, with disturbing scenes in each episode which may be difficult for impressionable minds to watch and process in a healthy way. It also addresses issues of cyber-bullying, alcoholism, and depression. The series includes the following shortcomings:

- \* There is no mention of mental and behavioral health treatment options.
- \* The notion of suicide is glamorized.
- \* There are no examples of help-seeking by the teens portrayed in the series.
- \* There are several scenes depicting serious trauma including rape, bullying, alcoholism, fights, and suicide in which the teens do not seek help or resources.
- \* The graphic portrayal of Hannah’s actual suicide was unnecessary and potentially harmful to young people facing challenges.

Please take a moment to find out if your child has read the book or viewed the series. If so, please use the show as an opportunity to talk about some of its complicated issues and open the door to create a safe atmosphere for your child to discuss his or her feelings and emotions. We also urge you as parents or guardians to research the series to fully understand what your child is being exposed to.

Please know that there are resources, support and assistance available to you and your child at our schools through our student support services; Social Workers, School Psychologists, School Adjustment Counselors, School Nurses, School Guidance Counselors, as well as the Principals, Vice Principals and their teachers.

Thank you for your attention to this very important matter.

Additional Resources:

National Suicide Prevention Hotline: 1-800-273- TALK (8255)

[SAMHSA Prevention Suicide: A Toolkit for High Schools](#)

[Massachusetts Suicide Prevention Program: Mass.Gov.](#)

[National Association of School Psychologists: Nasponline.org](#)