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#### PRELIMINARY ALERT

We are receiving numerous calls and emails with questions and concerns regarding the May 18, 2018 release of the second season of the Netflix series *"13 Reasons Why"*. For this season, the producers are attempting to take a more socially responsible approach by providing content warnings ahead of each episode. The series does highlight the consequences of youth who are bystanders to such incidents and do not report them to an adult, and attempts to address a myriad of other topics such as rape, sexual abuse, bullying, substance use and threat related behaviours.

Once again, be mindful of using this as an educational resource as it may contribute as an additional risk enhancer to those who are vulnerable, have a history of trauma, are victims of related content, or are currently struggling with suicidal ideation. With season one, the overall content was very heavy and it is quite likely many of you experienced the impact of these complex traumatic triggers in your school community. We need to be prepared that this is likely to arise after the release of season two with similar content being covered. Season two revolves around the suicide of High School student Hannah Baker, however, it is not focused on the justification but more on the identification of the individual(s) who are threatening classmates to not share their knowledge of the events leading up to Hannah's suicide. There may be an increase in anonymous threat related behaviours after the release of this season. You may also see students in the coming weeks identifying with key elements related to the season, specifically, by marking themselves with a semicolon. The concept of the semicolon is to compare life to a sentence, where an author chooses to continue, rather than a full stop.

We are bringing this to your attention not to interfere with the professional autonomy of our educators, but to ensure the social, emotional and mental well-being of all staff and students. While we are not aware of a single case where a student has said exposure to this series has lowered their risk, we do know of multiple cases (coast to coast) where it has increased their risk. With this in mind, we offer the following recommendations to schools where this series is being considered for use in the classroom:

- District staff and school administrators should work with counselling staff to be available as consultants to any teacher considering portions of the series.
- School administrators should feel confident that any professional inside their school considering the use of this medium is skilled to do so and that the school has adequate counselling contingencies to address any symptom development generated from the series.
- District or school staff may want to issue a communication to parents to inform them about the series and strategies for discussing the content with their children (see "guidance for families" section of the NASP article below).
- District or school staff may want to share the tips in the "guidance to educators" section of the NASP article below with those staff members that play a key role in supporting vulnerable students.

The following recent professional articles provide guidance for educators and parents:

- National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), <http://www.nasponline.org/about-school-psychology/media-room/press-releases/guidance-regarding-13-reasons-why-season-2>
- Suicide Awareness Voices of Education, <https://save.org/blog/netflix-series-13-reasons-toolkit/>

Sincerely,

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