



## Responding to 13 Reasons Why: A Discussion

### Discussants

**Dr. Dan Reidenberg**, Executive Director of Suicide Awareness Voices of Education, Managing Director of the National Council for Suicide Prevention and US Representative to the IASP

**Christy Olson**, EdD, LMHC, Mental Health Coordinator, Polk County School Board

**Pat Breux**, BSN, State Coordinator of School and Youth Initiatives, Suicide Prevention Center of NY

### Moderator

**Jennifer Spiegler**, Senior Vice President, Strategic Partnerships, Kognito

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# Welcome!

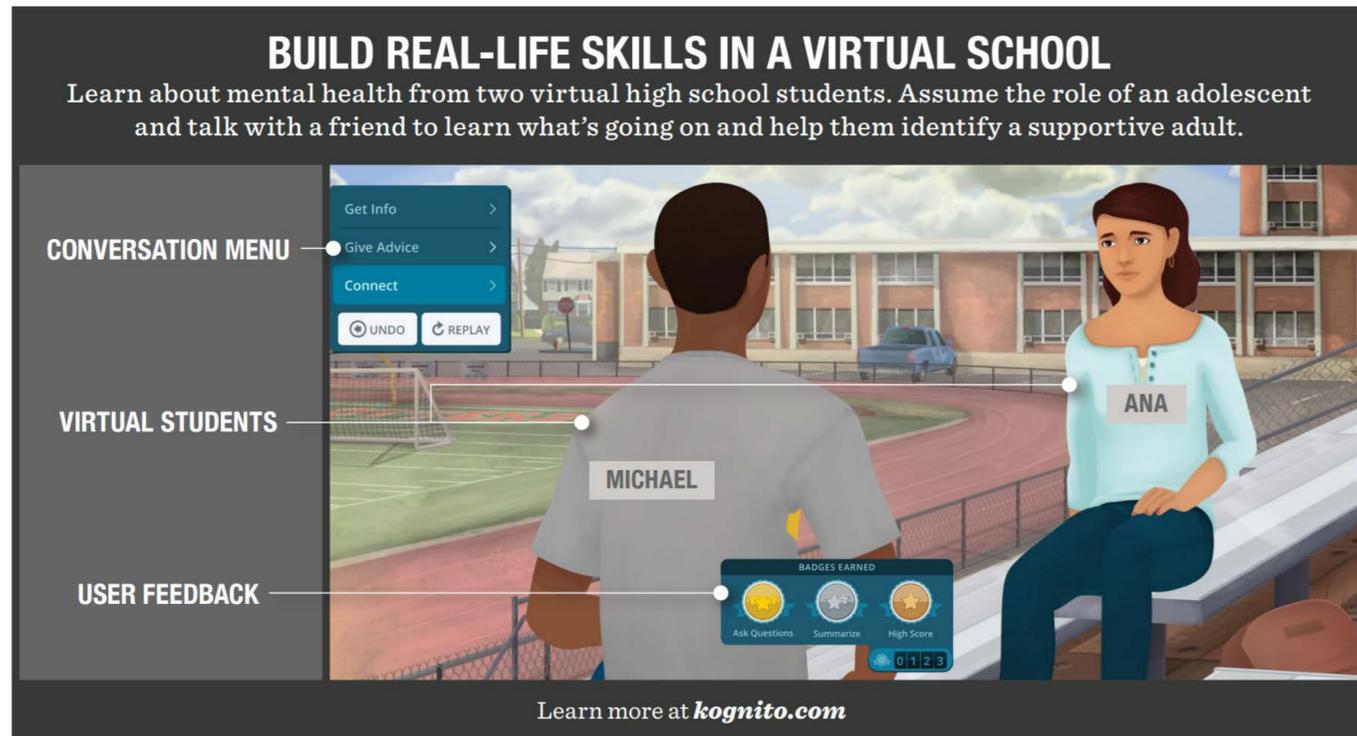
- Presentation will be recorded
- A copy of the recording will be sent after the presentation
- Attendees are in listen-only mode
- Please submit questions on the right side of your screen
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The screenshot shows the GoToWebinar interface. At the top, there is a menu with 'File', 'View', and 'Help'. Below this is the 'Audio' section, which is currently set to 'Mic & Speakers'. It shows a microphone icon with a volume level of 000000000 and a dropdown menu set to 'Microphone (2- Logitech USB Headset)'. Below that is a speaker icon with a volume level of 000000000 and a dropdown menu set to 'Speakers (2- Logitech USB Headset)'. A green status bar indicates 'Connecting to Audio...'. Below the audio section is a 'Handouts - 0' section. The 'Questions' section is highlighted with a red border and contains a text input field with the placeholder text '[Enter a question for staff]' and a 'Send' button. At the bottom of the interface, it displays 'Test' and 'Webinar ID: 113-183-243' above the 'GoToWebinar' logo.



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- Practice conversations to build skills, increase self confidence, take action effectively
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## Today's Panel



**Dan Reidenberg**, PsyD, FAPA, Executive Director of Suicide Awareness Voices of Education, Managing Director of the National Council for Suicide Prevention and the current US Representative to the IASP



**Christy Olson**, EdD, LMHC, Mental Health Coordinator, Polk County School Board



**Pat Breux**, BSN, State Coordinator of School and Youth Initiatives, Suicide Prevention Center New York (SPC-NY)

# Suicide Prevention Community's Concerns about the Netflix Series

- **Graphic depiction of a suicide**
- **Over-identification may result in increased suicides**
- **Not addressing mental illness or alternatives to suicide**
- **Focus on the responsibility of others for the character's suicide**
- **Glamorization of suicide – notoriety of the character who dies, remorse of friends, the ability to tell the story from beyond through the tapes**
- **Example of memorial on student locker – not a recommended practice**
- **Failure of all adults to respond appropriately**

## 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:



# 13 Reasons Why Talking Points

- **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.**
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- **Suicide has multiple causes related to the individual. It is never the fault of survivors.**

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# Discussion



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**Christy Olson**, EdD, LMHC, Mental Health Coordinator, Polk County School Board



**Jennifer Spiegler**, SVP, Strategic Partnerships, Kognito



**Pat Breux**, BSN, State Coordinator of School and Youth Initiatives, Suicide Prevention Center New York (SPC-NY)

## Resources

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: Call 1-800-273-8255
- Crisis Textline: Text CONNECT to 741741
- Suicide in Schools (by Erbacher, et al)
- Preventing Suicide: A Toolkit for High Schools ([Link here.](#))
- Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC.org) and [www.nrepp.samhsa.gov](http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov)
- Kognito simulations – for practice in leading conversations that change lives [At-Risk for PK-12 Educators](#)
- Suicide Awareness Voices of Education: [www.save.org](http://www.save.org)
- The Suicide Prevention Center of New York: [www.preventsuicideny.org](http://www.preventsuicideny.org)
- American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry: <http://www.aacap.org/>
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention: [www.afsp.org](http://www.afsp.org)
- Boys Town National Hotline: 1-800-448-1833 or [www.boystown.org](http://www.boystown.org)
- Active Minds: [www.activeminds.org](http://www.activeminds.org)
- Teen Line Online: [www.teenlineonline.org](http://www.teenlineonline.org)
- The Trevor Project: [www.thetrevorproject.org](http://www.thetrevorproject.org)