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September 21, 2020

Dear Grant Ranch Families,

We are writing to let you know of a concerning viral video some of our middle school students brought to our attention. A 33-year-old Army veteran from Mississippi shot himself in the head live on Facebook last week. In the days since, the horrifying footage has been shared on multiple social media platforms, including TikTok, where it reportedly ended up on the video-sharing app's "For You" trending homepage. TikTok has been working on detecting and flagging these clips.

We encourage you to determine whether your child has witnessed this video. If your child uses social media, inform them to please scroll up immediately if they encounter this footage as it is very gruesome. You may also suggest that they stay away from TikTok for awhile. In a time when social media exposure is constant and present in our children's lives, it is important to talk to them about the dangers of content on the internet.

As a reminder, the terms of service for all social networks prohibit anyone under 13 years of age from using the services. This applies to Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and all other social networks. As an additional resource to learn more about cyber-safety as a parent, we encourage you to visit [Commonsensemedia.org](https://commonsensemedia.org), a partnership we have forged through Denver Public Schools. As a school community, we will continue to work with our students to empower them to understand online safety and cyber-citizenship.

Additionally, if your student has warning signs of depression or suicide, don't be afraid to ask them if they have thought about harming themselves. Raising the issue of suicide does not increase the risk. Instead, it decreases the risk by providing an opportunity for help. Remind your student to tell you and an adult at school if they know of peers that are hurting themselves or talking about suicide.

Denver Public Schools works to provide access to safety programming in all of our schools. Grant Ranch's Social Emotional Learning Team (SEL) will be implementing the District's approved suicide prevention program *Signs of Suicide* for 6th graders later this fall. This program is developmentally appropriate and is presented throughout the schools in the District each year at 6th and 9th grades. Programming will also include Safe2Tell programming. Our school psychologists, school nurses, social workers and counselors are trained in suicide prevention and supports and take **all reports seriously**.

If you have questions, please reach out to our Grant Ranch SEL Team using the contact information below. We are available to meet with you and your students one-on-one to address any concerns. If your child is in need of immediate assistance, please call 911 or access one of the crisis supports shared below.

1. National Crisis Line, 1-800-273-8255, 1-800-273-TALK
2. The Trevor Project (GLBTQ) 1-866-488-7386
3. Safe2Tell 1-877-542-7233

SEL Team Website: <https://sites.google.com/dpsk12.net/grantranchsel/home?authuser=0>

Paige Bressett, School Psychologist Intern - Paige_Bressett@dpsk12.org

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Alexandra Papa, School Counselor - Alexandra_Papa@dpsk12.org

Sincerely,

Dr. Patricia Hurrieta, Principal