

# YOUTH ADVOCATE NEWSLETTER

MAY 2017



## RECOGNIZING WARNING SIGNS OF MENTAL ILLNESS IN CHILDREN

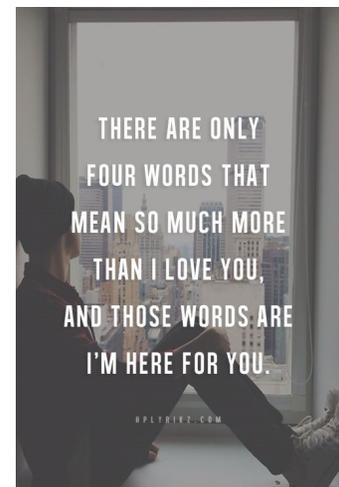
### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Recognizing Warning Signs of Mental Illness in Children.
- Recipes for Kids
- Network Services
- 13 Reasons Why
- Activities for Kids

May is National Mental Health Awareness Month, and you might be surprised to hear how often mental illness impacts youth. The National Alliance on Mental Illness reports that approximately 50% of all lifetime cases of mental illness begin by the age of 14, and 75% by the age of 24. Knowing whether this is something impacting your child can be hard. Children facing every day stresses or changes might temporarily act out. When children do develop a mental illness, the behaviors associated may become their regular behaviors making it hard to see past the initial changes. There are general warning signs to look out for and they indict when a conversation or medical opinion may be needed.



- Problems in more than one setting. (school, home, friends, etc.)
- Changes in appetite or sleep.
- Social withdrawal or fear of things the child wasn't afraid of before.
- Returning to behaviors more common for a younger age, such as bedwetting.
- Signs of self-destruction or harm. Out of control risk taking behavior, etc.
- Severe mood swings.
- Feeling very sad or upset for more than 2 weeks
- Intense worries or fears that get in the way of daily activities.
- Extreme difficulty in concentrating or staying still.
- Repeated thoughts of death or plans to kill oneself.
- Decrease in school performance or giving up interests.



**LOADED TOTCHES (TATER TOT NACHOS) FROM JUST A TASTE**

**Ingredients:**

- 1 bag of frozen tater tots
- 1 can black beans (rinsed and drained)
- 1/4 cup diced red onion
- 1 lb. ground beef or turkey
- 1.5 cups shredded cheese
- 2.5 tsp taco seasoning
- 1/2 diced tomatoes
- Guacamole for serving

**Directions:** Bake or fry tater tots per the package instructions. Then arrange them in a single layer on a foil lined baking sheet.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

Add the ground beef and taco seasoning to a large pan set to med heat. Cook until cooked throughout.

Sprinkle the ground beef atop the tater tots. Then top with the black beans and cheese. Bake 3 to 5 minutes, or until cheese melts.

Remove from oven. top with remaining ingredients, and serve.



**SAFARI DIP FROM FORKLY.COM**

**Ingredients:** Celery sticks cut into little logs. Hummus and diced veggies (red pepper, cucumber, carrots) or peanut butter and raisins. Animal crackers.

**Directions:** Cut the celery sticks into little logs. Fill with hummus or peanut butter whichever your child will eat. If it's hummus, top with diced veggies. If it's peanut butter you can top with raisins. Add an animal cracker to complete the scene.

**AVOCADO BOATS FROM SUPER HEALTHY KIDS**

**Ingredients:** 1 whole avocado, 1 tbsp. salsa, 1 tsp. light sour cream, 1/ tsp lemon juice.

**Directions:**

Slice the avocado length wise. Scoop out the flesh. Put all ingredients into a food processor and whip it up. Return avocado flesh mixture to the scooped out avocado. You can print out a flag online.



## THE NETWORK'S SERVICES

At the Network, we provide a number of free services to promote healthy relationships, prevent domestic violence, and help individuals and families who are experiencing domestic violence or dating violence.

For an emergency, someone to talk to, or assistance with finding a safe house, please call our 24/7 confidential hotline at 860-763-4542.

For general information on the Network, please call our office at 860-763-7430.

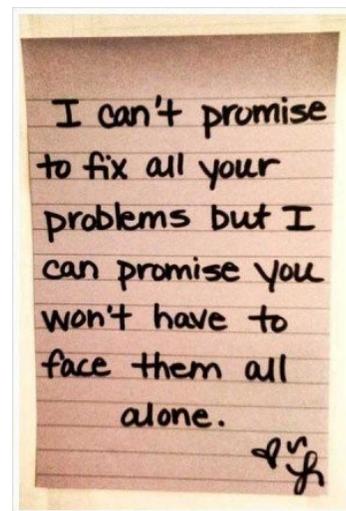
To talk with our adult advocate, Rosanne, about adult services, please call: 860-763-7430 ext. 302.

For information about our youth services or community education program, please contact Annalisa at 860-763-7430 ext. 305.

We have a Facebook page and twitter page as well!

<https://www.facebook.com/thenetworkct>

<https://twitter.com/TheNetwork5>



## 13 REASONS WHY

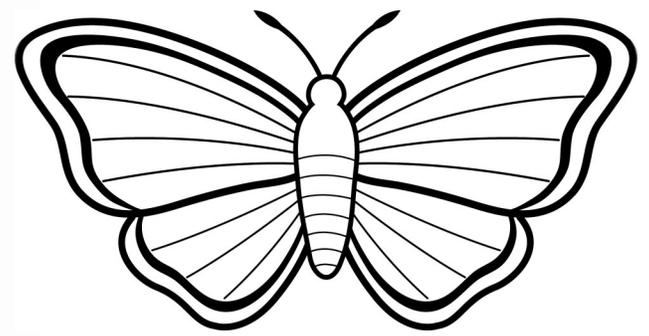
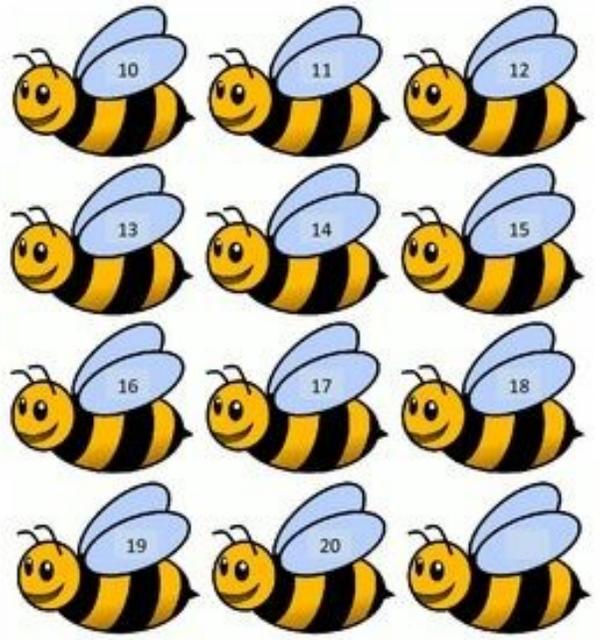
“13 Reasons Why” is becoming a very talked about show on Netflix, both negatively and positively. It follows the reasons why a young girl commits suicide through a series of tapes she leaves behind sharing her story. The story is filled with incidents of bullying, sexual assault/harassment, family struggles, substance abuse, and more. Although these subjects are ones we would never want to be a part of our children’s lives, sadly there is a good chance youth are seeing these play out in their school halls. There are some risks and downsides to watching this show. It can be very triggering and quite possible for youth to have an unhealthy take away. Please view this show on your own before deciding if your teen can watch it. Watch the show with the youth in your life so you can start conversations. Discuss all the reasons there are for living and coping skills for dealing with these situations. It is okay to ask people directly if they have considered suicide. Studies show it does not implant the idea, but it does let you offer hope and find out if they need help. Talk to youth about how actions and words have consequences. Help them think of better choices each character could have made. Please also watch the companion piece on Netflix “Beyond the Reasons.” If you need tips or help having these conversations, let us help. We offer free presentations on these topics.



# Spring

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 snail  
 bee  
 frog  
 caterpillar  
 lamb  
 ladybug  
 butterfly  
 owl  
 sun

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**Help the Butterfly find the Flower!**

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**JOLLY JACK**