



ARCHDIOCESE OF  
**NEW ORLEANS**

Office of Catholic Schools

Dear Parents,

As Catholic educators entrusted with the care of your children, we value each of them and want to support both them and your families as you navigate the serious issues all of us face today. Our lives become more complicated as our children become entranced in media and technology. The many facets of media and technology often influence and become integral parts of the thinking, processing, and decision making of children and young adults. Often decisions are imprudent, potentially harmful, if not dangerous. We see youth making life-altering decisions driven by presentations, apps, and social media rather than by family values, ethical considerations, and the teachings of our faith. Sincere concern for the welfare of the young is the motivation for this correspondence.

Suicide is a critical societal issue. The young are particularly vulnerable. Series and apps on suicide are exposing children and young adults to material that they do not have the necessary emotional maturity to process correctly. In particular, students are currently watching the series “13 Reasons Why” and participating electronically in the “Blue Whale Challenge”. Some students have been profoundly upset by exposure to these programs; some have tried to model viewed behavior.

Please be aware of what media your children are watching and what apps they are using. If your children are watching “13 Reasons Why” or connecting with the “Blue Whale Challenge”, get involved with them directly, keep the lines of communication open, and seek professional help if you view it necessary .

In our various ministries, our goal is to educate the whole child; therefore, we are very concerned with the emotional and spiritual development of the children with whom we work. In the spirit of genuine concern, we strongly encourage you to monitor closely your child’s interaction with the array of technology available today. It is certainly an important parental role to control and limit a child’s involvement in media, apps, and the social interaction available with personal devices. We are committed to having an open dialogue with parents by keeping you informed about phenomenon that we become aware of in our schools.

In Christ,

Jane Baker  
Associate Superintendent

Sr. Mary Ellen Wheelaham, O. Carm.  
Safe Environment Coordinator