



# The Parent's Beginner Guide to 13 REASONS WHY

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13 REASONS WHY has taken the teenage world by storm. It's intense. It's graphic. It's emotional. And it's deep. Many teens and even tweens are watching this show without their parent's knowledge. My own daughter, who is 17 years old, watched the whole series before she told me about it. If you haven't heard of it, let me give you the 411.

## What is 13 REASONS WHY?

13 REASONS WHY is a fictional series on Netflix. Through a recording left for her friend, a high school girl reveals a reason per episode as to why she committed suicide.

## Why should parents be concerned?

There are some very intense topics and scenes in this show. At the very end, they show the high school girl committing suicide. On another episode, they show a passed out girl being raped. The girl is also blaming others for her suicide. And obviously mental health issues are front and center. These are big issues that will have a big impact on our teens.

## How do I approach my teen about it?

If you aren't sure if your teen has watched this show, don't panic. **Take a deep breath.** When you have a calm moment in your home, casually say to your teen...

*Hey xxx,*

*There's this show that I've been hearing a lot about called 13 REASONS WHY. It sounds kind of interesting. Have you seen it?*

This casual approach lets them know that you know about it, you think it's interesting not necessarily bad, and you are putting them in the expert seat. What you want to avoid is putting them on the defensive or making them think they are in trouble.

If they say "yes", then follow up with a few questions. For example...

*What did you think about it?*

*I heard it had a scene with a suicide. Is that right?*



[Sheri@TeenWiseSeattle.com](mailto:Sheri@TeenWiseSeattle.com) [Home](#)



Teen Wise

*What were some reasons that she committed suicide?*

*What do your friends think about it?*

*Did you know that there's a hotline for teens who are depressed or thinking about suicide? You can call 1-800-273-8255. And you can, of course, always come talk to me.*

**If they say “no” they haven’t seen it, then follow up with some of these questions...**

*Have you heard about it?*

*Have any of your friends seen it?*

*Are you interested in watching it?*

*I know that it's about a high school girl committing suicide. I want you to know that there's a hotline for teens who are depressed or thinking about suicide. If you ever have a friend who needs help or even yourself, you can call 1-800-273-8255. And you can, of course, always come talk to me.*

**Should I watch it with my teen?**

This is an extremely intense, emotional, and graphic show that deals with very mature content. It is a very personal decision as to whether or not you watch this with your child. Keep in mind, though, that kids are resourceful and if they really want to watch it, they will likely find a way to access it. That means, if they really want to see it, I would recommend watching it with them.

**Who should NOT watch it?**

I would not recommend this to someone who is currently dealing with depression, who has had someone close to them commit suicide or attempt suicide, or who is extremely emotionally reactive. I would also not recommend this to anyone under the age of 15 but again this is a personal decision.

**What is the upside?**

This show has the potential to spark deep conversations with your teen. Remember to minimize lectures and maximize conversations. If they open up to you, really LISTEN to them instead of thinking about what your response is going to be. And let them know that...

**REACHING OUT FOR HELP IS A SIGN OF STRENGTH NOT WEAKNESS.**

Questions or concerns? Feel free to email me at [Sheri@TeenWiseSeattle.com](mailto:Sheri@TeenWiseSeattle.com)