



"Saving Lives in Tennessee"

## TSPN Recommendations For Parents and Schools Regarding "13 Reasons Why"

Netflix's popular series "13 Reasons Why", based on the novel by Jay Asher, has generated considerable interest in youth suicide among teens, parents/guardians, teachers, and mental health professionals. TSPN would like to offer these suggestions regarding the series, based on the opinions of mental health experts and research on exposure to suicide content in mass media:

- It is not advised that children watch this program due to its graphic portrayal of suicide, sexual assault, and bullying. Teens and adults with a history of suicidal ideation, mental illness, or trauma should also avoid it because of potentially triggering content.
- For the above reason, TSPN recommends against schools screening the series for students. There are other ways for schools to explore the subject of youth suicide.
- School staff should not lead class or school-wide discussions of the series. Staff is encouraged to address questions about the series on a student to student basis utilizing this information as well as the links provided below.
- TSPN recommends that teenagers who are interested in watching the series should watch it with a parent or guardian. In this way, the program can be used to begin a healthy dialogue with teens about suicide, mental illness, and other critical issues they face.
- Keep in mind that the novel and the series on which it is based have somewhat different plot developments that could affect the way readers and viewers experience the show.
- If teens bring up the series in conversations with parents or teachers of their own volition, they should encourage them to talk about what they have seen and their opinions about it. Again, guided one-on-one discussion of the program may be an opportunity for opening up about problems they or others are having.
- Provide resources to faculty/staff as well as parents and students including, but not limited to, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-TALK) and Crisis Text Line (text TN to 741741). For other resources please go to the TSPN website for region-specific resources and directories: <http://tspn.org/regional-information>.

### Helpful Links and Reading Material

**"13 Reasons Why" Talking Points** ([www.save.org/blog/tips-watching-new-netflix-series-13-reasons](http://www.save.org/blog/tips-watching-new-netflix-series-13-reasons))

A set of talking points developed by Suicide Awareness Voices for Education (SAVE), in collaboration with the Jed Foundation, for use by parents and other adults.

**Can "13 Reasons Why" Really Trigger Suicides?** ([www.speakingofsuicide.com/2017/04/30/suicide-contagion](http://www.speakingofsuicide.com/2017/04/30/suicide-contagion))

Analysis of the problem of suicide contagion, a concern expressed by some critics.

**A Parent's Guide to Watching "13 Reasons Why"**

([www.elephantjournal.com/2017/04/a-parents-guide-to-watching-13-reasons-why](http://www.elephantjournal.com/2017/04/a-parents-guide-to-watching-13-reasons-why))

How parents, guardians, and other adults can use the series to begin a healthy dialogue with teens about suicide, mental illness, and other critical issues they face.

**"13 Reasons Why" Netflix Series: Considerations for Educators** (<http://tinyurl.com/13rweducators>)

Recommendations for teachers and other school staff about how to handle inquiries or comments about the series, including what to do if a student expresses suicidal intent or displays warning signs of suicide.

*TSPN is available to provide non-emergency resources about suicide prevention and mental health via presentations and training sessions to educators, as well as exhibits and information at school events. Visit our website at [www.tspn.org](http://www.tspn.org).*

*For more information, contact TSPN directly at (615) 297-1077 or [tspn@tspn.org](mailto:tspn@tspn.org).*

**CRISIS TEXT LINE |**

Text "TN" to  
741741

