

# Tips for Parents Talking with Their Children about **13 Reasons Why** and Suicide

1. Don't be afraid to have a conversation with your children about the Netflix series. The series presents an opportunity to connect with your child and learn about their thoughts and perspectives on some potentially important issues.
2. Educate yourself about suicide prevention ([afsp.org](https://afsp.org)) before talking with your children and before watching the show.
3. Know that your children have likely heard of and have possibly already watched this popular series, based on the novel by the same name, so you'll want to be prepared to respond to any feelings it may have evoked.
4. Ask your children if they've heard about it or seen it. Steady yourself to listen intently. Ask open ended questions without judgment. What do you think of the show? Resist the urge to offer quick fixes or solutions to their potentially tough questions and reactions. Validate and support their feelings. Follow their cues. If your child is talking about any level of distress, do not hesitate to ask them about changes in mental health or suicidal thoughts. It can start with just asking, **"Are you OK?"**
5. You can familiarize yourself with how to have a conversation about mental health at [afsp.org/MentalHealth](https://afsp.org/MentalHealth). Raising the question about thoughts of suicide does not increase the risk or plant the idea. On the contrary, it creates the opportunity for your teen to open up more and to feel supported.
6. If you ask about whether your child is having suicidal thoughts, it's important how you ask. You can say, "Sometimes when things get that tough, some people think about suicide. Has that happened for you?" Don't say, "You're not having suicidal thoughts, are you?" Use a supportive, non-judging tone and try to manage your own worry so that you can support your child. Whatever they are experiencing, let them know that you love them no matter what and you're going to help get them the help they need.
7. Offer to watch the show with your child if your child is in a solid state of mental health. **WARNING:** If your child is currently struggling or has had any level of suicidal thoughts or attempts, we recommend not watching the show. People who have experienced a sexual assault may also be triggered by some of the scenes.
8. Watch one episode at a time. Binge watching is not a good idea. Allow time to talk about each episode.
9. 13 Reasons Why (Season One) has some dangerous potential for contagion. Some teens may take away a disturbing message that presents suicide as a solution. [Click here](#) to read about how to talk with your teen.
10. Ask your child if any of their friends are showing any warning signs. Talk with them about how to seek support and help for their friend. To find more tips about starting peer conversations, visit [SeizeTheAwkward.org](https://SeizeTheAwkward.org).
11. If you fear your child may be at risk, get professional help right away. There are helpful resources available to you 24/7 at [afsp.org/resources](https://afsp.org/resources). For help finding a mental health professional, visit [afsp.org/FindAProfessional](https://afsp.org/FindAProfessional).