

13 REASONS WHY ►

13 Reasons Why Season 4 “Thursday” Discussion Guide

Prior to discussing the episode, it is important to establish guidelines around discussion norms and trust in your family, classroom or community group. It will be essential to provide a place that is physically and emotionally safe, especially for anyone who has experienced trauma in the past. Discussing the episode will be most effective in a circle format to reinforce a sense of connection and support.

Tips for Supporting Young Viewers:

It is important to be mindful that while viewing this episode you, or your children/students may experience a wide range of emotional, physical and behavioral reactions. These experiences are natural, and it is important to view them with kindness, and without judgment.

Prior to viewing, it might be helpful to review strategies for emotional regulation.

- Deep Breathing
- Focus on your senses
 - Feel your feet on the floor, use your senses to notice all the sights, sounds, and smells that surround you to bring you the present.
 - You are surrounded by your peers and caring adults. This can help slow down what’s happening on the inside, if it feels like things are moving too fast or too intensely.

Take a Break: If it feels overwhelming to keep watching or thinking in the moment, get up and walk around, have a drink of water, take a few deep belly breaths if that feels good to you.

Seek support in the moment you notice inner turbulence and take care of yourself instead of “toughing it out.”

Discussion Questions - During the Episode:

- How do the students react when they realize there may be a shooter in their school?
- Is it fair that the students don’t know this is a drill?
- Why do the students think Tyler may be responsible? What are some of the clues that lead them to think that?
- Do you think the students made the right decisions? What did some of them do wrong?

Discussion Questions - After Viewing:

- How are you feeling after watching this episode?
- What is the central message that the episode is trying to convey?
- What do you think of schools doing active shooter drills?
- Should there be a consistent, national standard for active shooter drills?
- How do you think active shooter drills affect mental health?
- How can I support you to ease your concerns and fears about school safety?
- Do you feel empowered to help keep your school safe?
- What can you and/or schools do to help keep your schools safe?
- Who can you go to to ask for help if you feel unsafe?

How to recognize the signs* of someone that may be at-risk to harm themselves or someone else:

- A strong fascination or obsession with firearms
- Excessive study of firearms and mass shootings
- Exhibiting excessive over-reactions or aggressive behavior for a seemingly minor reason can signal someone who cannot self-regulate their emotions or control their anger
- Gestures of violence and low commitment or aspirations toward school or a sudden change in academic performance can be a sign someone needs help
- Perpetrators of self-harm or violence towards others may be victims of long-term bullying and may have real or perceived feelings of being picked on or persecuted by others
- Extreme feelings of isolation or social withdrawal due to real or perceived actions of others can lead to further withdrawal from society
- Unsupervised, illegal, and/or easy access to firearms or bragging about access to firearms can be a warning sign
- Making overt threats of violence (spoken, written, pictures, videos, gestures) are signs that should not be ignored

Other warning signs* that can signal someone may be in crisis and/or need help:

- Suddenly withdrawing from people and activities
- Consistent bullying or intimidating others, or being bullied by others
- Extreme mood or personality changes
- Victim of constant social rejection
- Talking about plans or actively making plans to harm themselves or others
- Bringing a weapon to school - or threatening or talking about doing so
- Bragging about or warning others about an upcoming act of violence
- Recruiting others to join in a planned act of violence
- Warning students to stay away from school or events
- Expressing fascination with guns and/or school shootings
- Expressing hopelessness about the future
- Extreme, prolonged sadness or distress

- Expressing or showing feelings of isolation
- Bragging about access to guns

* NOTE: this list is not a comprehensive list of warning signs nor does exhibiting one of these signs indicate imminent violence. When concerned about seeing troubling behaviors, tell a trusted adult or call 911, if there is an immediate threat.

About Active Shooter Drills:

- By 2016, 95% of American public schools held active shooter drills. And while unannounced active shooter drills are less prevalent, everything that takes place in the episode has taken place in a public school in the U.S.
- Currently, there is little evidence to suggest active shooter drills are effective in preventing school shootings, though there is growing concern that they are traumatising both the students and adults in schools.

Further Reading:

The New York Times: [When Active Shooter Drills Scare the Children they Hope to Protect](#)

NBC News: [Active Shooter Drills are Scaring Kids and May Not Protect Them](#)

NPR: [Experts Worry Active Shooter Drills in Schools Could Be Traumatic for Students](#)

NEA Today: [Unannounced Active Shooter Drills Scaring Students Without Making Them Safer](#)

The Atlantic: [What Are Active Shooter Drills Doing to Kids?](#)

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