

Parent Guide – Spring Awakening

Rating: PG-15

Show Content Details - Please note: the following information contains plot spoilers.

Sexual content: There is a large amount of sexual content in Spring Awakening. The point of these scenes is to illustrate how these teenagers are left with misinformation and guilt about their very normal feelings, and are betrayed and shamed by the silence of the adults around them.

- Moritz briefly describes a dream which was sensual in nature. Melchior responds that other boys have had similar dreams. This leads into a song that describes what it's like to be sexually frustrated, using some examples with lyrics such as *It's the bitch of living, with nothing but your hand* and *And those breasts, I mean, God, please*. Afterward Melchior promises Moritz he will create a booklet with hand drawn pictures to explain sex to him.
- Hanschen has a scene where he is in the bathroom with his hand under his nightshirt, intimating that he is masturbating. During the same song Georg fantasizes about his piano teacher, and she appears with her blouse open (bustier underneath), and she sits on his lap.
- Strongest lyric for the song “Touch Me” - *Touch me, just like that, now lower down, where the sins lie*
- Wendla and Melchior make love. There will be no nudity, of course, but the audience will know what they are doing. There will be touching, and he will lie on top of her between her legs. We plan on a beautiful, rather than graphic, scene.
- Wendla becomes pregnant from her night with Melchior. She has no idea where babies come from because her mother refused to tell her, and so had no idea that what she was doing was wrong in the eyes of her parents and the church.
- Melchior is sent to a reformatory as a result. While there, a group of boys begin to masturbate in a “contest.” This will be depicted with backs to the audience. They stop very quickly when observed by Melchior. They start again later, intending to defile a letter they have stolen from Melchior – but he fights them off.

Language:

- One song is called “The Bitch of Living.” In the song “Totally Fucked” the students rage as they see no way out of terrible situations.
- The show has frequent swearing. These words include: ass, bitch, fuck/ed/ing, shit, Christ (used as a curse, just once), slut (just once)
- Proper terms are used to describe body parts – vulva, penis, breast, vagina, genitalia – they are in the booklet Melchior writes.

Violence:

- Martha admits to the girls that her father beats her. Afterward she sings “The Dark I Know Well” and confesses that there is something she can't tell the other girls, that her father has also been sexually abusing her. During the song it's revealed that her friend Ilse has also been sexually abused.
- Wendla, in wanting to understand what Martha is going through asks Melchior to strike her with a willow stick. She has never been hit and wants to feel something, anything. He refuses at first, but then concedes. He strikes her several times, and goes too far, scaring both of them. He runs off, crying. Later they discuss that they were both at fault for what happened.
- Moritz's father slaps him several times because he failed school. Moritz then writes to Melchior's mother and threatens to take his own life if she can't help him.
- Ilse briefly describes how someone put a gun to her chest one night. She says it gave her goosebumps.
- Moritz puts a gun to his head. Although we don't see him shoot himself, we know that he has.

- Wendla's mother takes her to an illegal abortionist. Wendla begs her mother not to leave her there. Wendla dies as a result of the procedure.
- Melchior fights the boys in the reform school, brandishing a razor to escape them.
- Realizing Wendla is dead, Melchior holds the razor to his throat with the intention of suicide, but he stops himself when he hears the ghost voices of Wendla and Moritz.

Substances:

- Ilse says - *we all got so drunk we passed out in the snow.*

Other:

- The students often question religion and Biblical teachings.
- Two characters are young gay men. They kiss, and Ernst professes his love for Hanschen.
- Two of the teachers are cruel to Moritz, bullying him. They refuse to promote him onto the next grade even though he has passed simply because he isn't the quality of person they want at their school.

A synopsis is available at: www.mtishows.com/spring-awakening

Articles about high schools that have produced Spring Awakening:

<http://theeugenereview.com/edgy-risky-and-truth-telling-spring-awakening-is-onstage/>

<http://observer.com/2012/04/spring-awakening-beacon-school-new-york-04242012/>

<http://www.playbill.com/article/three-years-after-broadway-spring-awakening-rocks-nyc-public-school-com-192970>

http://www.whitefishpilot.com/schools/article_2fb6e18c-07d5-11e6-b5a9-87c3c8

<http://www.palisadesnews.com/index.php/2017/03/09/palihi-to-present-spring-awakening/>

<http://www.denverpost.com/2016/06/01/denver-school-of-arts-spring-awakening/>

Spring Awakening has also been produced by teen casts in the Seattle area several times.