

Discussion Topics for *In Leah's Wake*

How much control should parents exert over a child's life?

- Do Zoe and Will push Leah too hard?
- Is it necessary for parents to push their children in order for them to succeed?
- How do Zoe and Will's actions protect and in what ways do they fail their children?
- Does their intervention help or does it backfire?
- How might Zoe and Will have better handled Leah's rebellion?
- How do micro-managed children fare later in life?

What might causes a seemingly "perfect" child to rebel?

- Is Leah's anxiety caused by her parents' expectations or is it genetic, part of her personality?
- Is there such a thing as a perfect child? If so, how would you define the perfect child?

Do zero-tolerance policies work? Why or Why not? Are they necessary? Should schools ban adolescents from activities that could keep them out of trouble?

- Did Coach Thomas respond properly to Leah's outburst?
- Should Will and Zoe have exercised greater tolerance? Or were they too lax?

How do parents prevent children from falling under the influence of the wrong people?

- How might Zoe and Will have prevented Leah's relationship with Todd from getting serious?
- Should they have banned Todd from their home? Why or why not?

Are a child's personality and conduct influenced primarily by nature? Nurture? Both?

- How are Justine and Leah's personalities a result of their parents' influence?
- Might part/s of Justine and Leah's personalities be inherent? If so, which?

Hillary Clinton said it takes a community to raise a child. What role does a community play in the lives of its children?

- Is the community responsible for the actions of an ostracized child? Why or why not?
- How do gossip and judgment affect adolescents? Are the effects always negative?