

BACK TO SCHOOL: *Recognizing Anxiety*

Being nervous, uneasy, or worried can be summed up as feeling anxious. Everyone feels anxious from time to time, and often for good reason—you may have a big test coming up, be changing schools, have concerns about relationships with friends, feel self-conscious in certain situations, or have a very realistic fear of something. In most cases, anxious feelings pass relatively quickly.

Having anxious feelings is different than having an anxiety disorder. When you have an anxiety disorder, anxious feelings are extreme, can happen without warning or reason, have physical symptoms, and last for extended amounts of time.

31.9%

OF YOUNG PEOPLE AGES 13-18
HAVE AN ANXIETY DISORDER.¹

1/2

OF YOUNG PEOPLE AGES 11-17 WHO TOOK MHA'S ANXIETY
SCREEN SCORED POSITIVE FOR SEVERE ANXIETY.²

Types of Anxiety Disorders

There are many different types of anxiety disorders, but some of the most common are Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Phobias, Social Anxiety Disorder, and Panic Disorder. Here are some of the signs for each.³

GENERALIZED ANXIETY DISORDER

- FEELINGS OF CONSTANT, EXAGGERATED WORRY AND TENSION
- ALWAYS EXPECTING THE WORST
- DIFFICULTY RELAXING OR SLEEPING
- PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS SUCH AS TIREDNESS, TREMBLING, MUSCLE TENSION, HEADACHES, IRRITABILITY OR HOT FLASHES
- TIGHTNESS IN YOUR CHEST OR KNOTS IN YOUR STOMACH

PHOBIAS

- BEING AFRAID OF AN OBJECT OR SITUATION THAT IS ACTUALLY RELATIVELY SAFE, BUT THE THOUGHT OF FACING IT BRINGS ON A PANIC ATTACK OR SEVERE ANXIETY
- INTENSE FEAR OF BEING HUMILIATED OR EMBARRASSED IN FRONT OF OTHER PEOPLE WHICH KEEPS YOU FROM BEING SOCIAL
- HAVING INTENSE ANXIETY ABOUT BEING IN PLACES OR SITUATIONS THAT MIGHT MAKE YOU FEEL HELPLESS OR TRAPPED, OFTEN MAKING IT DIFFICULT TO LEAVE THE HOUSE

PANIC DISORDER

- UNEXPECTED ATTACKS OF EXTREME TERROR WHICH OFTEN HAVE PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS LIKE SHORTNESS OF BREATH OR RAPID BREATHING, SHAKING, CHOKING SENSATION, SWEATING, AND FAST HEART RATE
- FEELING LIKE YOU'RE LOSING CONTROL, GOING CRAZY, OR DYING
- INTENSE FEAR BETWEEN ATTACKS ABOUT WHEN & WHERE THE NEXT ONE WILL HAPPEN

SOCIAL ANXIETY DISORDER

- EXTREME FEAR OF SOCIAL OR COMPETITIVE SITUATIONS
- BEING TERRIFIED OF HUMILIATION, REJECTION, OR BEING JUDGED NEGATIVELY
- PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS SUCH AS RAPID HEART RATE, SWEATING, AND RACING THOUGHTS AT THE IDEA OF INTERACTING WITH PEOPLE OR BEING IN LARGE GROUPS

SCREENING IS AN ANONYMOUS, FREE, AND PRIVATE WAY TO LEARN ABOUT YOUR MENTAL HEALTH AND IF YOU ARE SHOWING WARNING SIGNS OF A CONDITION. A SCREENING IS NOT A DIAGNOSIS, BUT IT CAN BE A HELPFUL TOOL FOR STARTING A CONVERSATION WITH SOMEONE YOU TRUST ABOUT YOUR MENTAL HEALTH.



TAKE THE YOUTH SCREEN
AT MHASCREENING.ORG

If you just don't feel right or notice that someone else is struggling, it's important to get help sooner rather than later. Reach out to a friend or trusted adult and tell them how you feel or that you are worried about someone. If you need help starting a conversation, visit www.mentalhealthamerica.net/timetotalk for tips on how to get started.

TRAINED CRISIS COUNSELORS ARE AVAILABLE 24/7 BY TEXTING "MHA" TO 741-741 OR CALLING 1-800-273-TALK(8255).

YOU CAN ALSO DOWNLOAD THE NOTOK APP ON GOOGLE PLAY OR THE APP STORE. THE NOTOK APP ALLOWS YOU TO IDENTIFY UP TO 5 PEOPLE WHO WILL RECEIVE A NOTIFICATION WHEN YOU PRESS A BUTTON INDICATING THAT YOU'RE NOT OK.

Sources

¹ Kessler RC, Chiu WT, Demler O, Merikangas KR, Walters EE. Prevalence, severity, and comorbidity of 12-month DSM-IV disorders in the National Comorbidity Survey Replication. *Arch Gen Psychiatry*. 2005 Jun;62(6):617-27. PMID: 15939839

² Proprietary data from mhascreening.org.

³ American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders (5th ed.)*. Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Publishing.



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