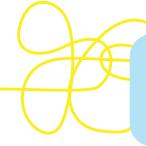


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Since the pandemic, one out of every two young people have experienced symptoms of anxiety or depression according to a study by the University of Sherbrooke. These figures, circulated widely in the media, are cause for concern for many families.



But what really is the situation with anxiety? Is it always a problem or can it be an opportunity in some cases? And when does it become cause for concern?

ADOLESCENCE IS A PERIOD OF GREAT PHYSICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL TRANSITION,

requiring young people to manage many changes that can cause stress, adaptation and vulnerability. As in all periods of significant transition in life (transitioning from primary to secondary school, from secondary school to college or the world of work, having a first child, retiring, etc.), anxiety may be felt. And in adolescence, when teens are exercising their autonomy, they may compare themselves to others in an attempt to define themselves. The more a person compares themself to others, the greater the risk of anxiety, which is exacerbated by the use of social media and the images of perfection it projects.

AS A PARENT, you can have a positive impact on your teen's mental health and help them make it through this important period more smoothly.

IN THIS GUIDE, YOU'LL FIND ALL OUR TIPS FOR



better understanding your teen's anxiety

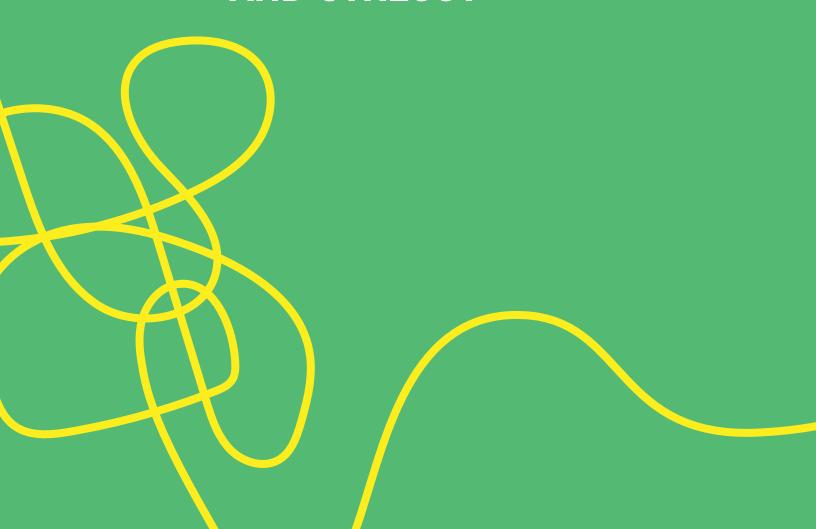


and better managing it when it arises.





PART 1: WHAT ARE ANXIETY AND STRESS?



WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN STRESS AND ANXIETY?

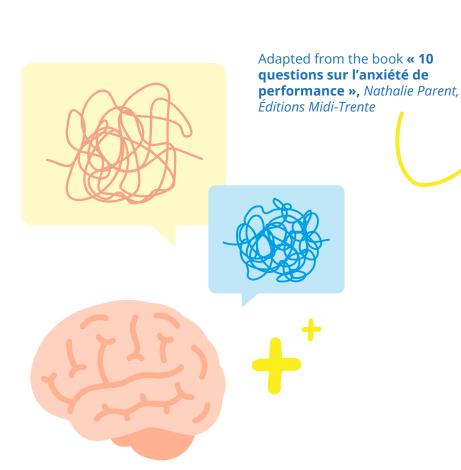
Generally speaking, **STRESS** is related to **ad hoc events** and goes away once the "threat" has passed. Whether we're in the physical presence of the event or not, the body reacts the same way.

ANXIETY is experienced inside a person without the stressor event occurring at the same time.

ANXIETY generally manifests itself on four levels:

- a **feeling of fear** or threat (for example, the fear of failing an exam or the fear of looking ridiculous in front of other people),
- **physical** sensations (stomach ache, hot flashes, etc.),
- irrational **thoughts** (for example, the person sees themself getting a bad grade even though they always do very well, catastrophic scenarios) and
- avoidance **behaviours** (the person avoids what they are afraid of, like going to sleep at friends' houses or they wait until the last minute to study) or attack behaviours (they overstudy, act out or are argumentative).

Anxiety and fear are related—they are both emotions.





PERFORMANCE ANXIETY:

There are different types of anxiety. Some young people are anxious specifically when they are in a situation where they are being evaluated.

This is called performance anxiety.

This could be, for example, a case where a teen will spend many hours preparing for an exam, even staying up late at night to study, all the while convinced that they're going to fail it regardless. Or, in contrast, a young person who procrastinates and delays reviewing until the last minute to avoid dealing with a situation that makes them anxious (and fails their exam due to insufficient preparation).



Note, however, that it is normal to feel anxiety before an **exam.** As long as this anxiety doesn't negatively impact a young person (by exhausting them through overstudying, for example), we're not in the realm of performance anxiety.

DISCOVER TESTIMONIALS BY YOUNG PEOPLE WITH ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE ANXIETY. AS WELL AS THE INTERPRETATION OF OUR EXPERT. NATHALIE PARENT. IN OUR 2 PODCASTS.















GENERALIZED ANXIETY:

Other young people experience anxiety without really understanding why, and may, for example, have trouble falling asleep even without a specific fear. This is what happens with generalized anxiety.

Here's an example:

For a few months now, losy has been having trouble falling asleep at night, especially on Sundays. The hamster wheel keeps turning in her head and her thoughts are all over the place: what school work has to be done, her future, whether her grades are good enough to get into the program she wants, what her life will be like once she's living in an apartment, whether she'll have a boyfriend in the coming year, etc.



SEPARATION ANXIETY:

Take the case of Soli, a young man who is very timid/reserved/shy. He sees a psychologist because he is having episodes of intense panic whenever he leaves his house. All this started slowly and very early in his life. When he was little, his mother had to answer for him if someone asked him a question. When he started school, he had tantrums in the morning because he didn't want to go. When he began secondary school, things got worse: nausea to the point of vomiting in the morning, dizziness, palpitations, sadness and depression. He expects something disastrous to happen every day.



SOCIAL ANXIETY:

Young people with social anxiety are very timid and, most of the time, avoid talking to people they know (teachers, merchants, etc.) or speaking in public (oral presentations, groups of friends, etc.) out of fear of being judged by others. During their anxious phases, they also exhibit physical symptoms such as trembling, sweating, etc.

PANIC ATTACKS/PANIC DISORDERS AND AGORAPHOBIA:

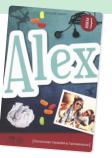
Anthony's example will help you better understand these concepts:

While out for a walk, Anthony suddenly began to feel awful for no apparent reason. For about ten minutes he experienced dizziness, a suffocating feeling and an intense fear that he would faint and die.

Because this wasn't the first occurrence of these sensations, Anthony went to see a health professional, who checked to make sure there were no other medical conditions that could explain these behaviours. These investigations led the health professional to diagnose a panic attack. After that, Anthony began to fear a recurrence of the same experience. This is called a panic disorder. So Anthony tried to avoid places that he couldn't easily escape from or where he couldn't get help if a panic attack occurred, such as buses, crowds, or being alone at home, and he tried to stay near exit doors in public places. **This is called agoraphobia.**



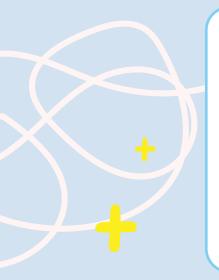
Adapted from the book **« Alex, surmonter l'anxiété à l'adolescence »,**Nathalie Parent. Éditions Midi-Trente



HOW DOES STRESS WORK?

As you get closer to an event that you consider stressful, your body secretes hormones (e.g., cortisol and adrenaline), that send nerve impulses to the right places to allow you to deal with the situation appropriately. Your muscles and senses are thus fully activated to allow you to get ready to face a potential threat. This mechanism is the same, whether it's a situation of anxiety or stress, and it is perfectly normal.

Many years of scientific studies allowed researchers to identify four characteristics which, when present in a situation of any type, will prompt a stress response in anyone, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity or job.



The Centre for Studies on Human Stress uses the acronym to summarize these characteristics.

 $N = NOVELTY \longrightarrow$ The situation is new.

 ${f U} = {f UNPREDICTABILITY} \longrightarrow {f The situation is unexpected or unpredictable.}$

 $T = THREAT TO THE EGO \longrightarrow$ The situation is a threat to the person's ego.

S = SENSE OF CONTROL

You feel you have no control over the situation you are facing.

The presence of even one of these characteristics is sufficient to trigger stress. But they can add up and a situation that involves all four characteristics generates a greater stress response than a situation that involves only one.

Adapted from the book **« 10 questions sur l'anxiété de performance »,** *Nathalie Parent, Éditions Midi-Trente*





FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Think about your daily life and that of your child, and draw up a list of events and situations that contain one or more **N.U.T.S**. elements and that can therefore generate stress to a greater or lesser extent. This will help you better understand your teen's reactions.

To help you do this, you can use **the Stress Deconstruction Table** offered by the Centre for Studies on Human Stress.









Taken from **"Enfants stressés! Tout** ce qu'il faut savoir pour aider votre enfant à grandir sereinement",





ARE STRESS AND ANXIETY ALWAYS BAD?

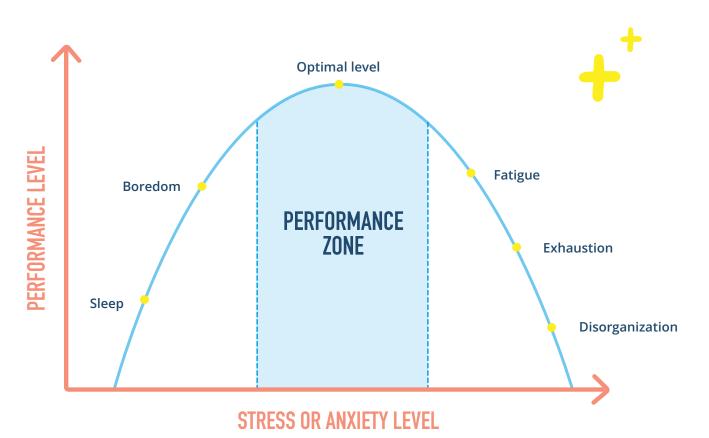
Each teen's perception of a stressful event is based on their personality and background, as well as their own confidence in their abilities.

There are so-called "OPTIMAL" zones of stress and anxiety that allow you to perform or adapt appropriately.

In fact, a minimum of stress or anxiety is needed to get your body's energy flowing and to mobilize you to prepare for what's next. Think back to the days before an important exam: your fear and stress probably motivated you to study. And that has surely been true every time you've done something for the first time.

As you know, stress is part of life, **just like any emotion—even the most disturbing ones**—that informs you of what's happening inside you. Stress and the hormones your body secretes are there to help your body adapt to your environment. And being in contact with stress without being overwhelmed, experiencing little challenges in small doses and at your own pace, allows you to develop the resilience and self-confidence you need to face potential obstacles (I can do it!).

Here's a graph that nicely illustrates how stress levels **can be positive or negative**, depending on the task to be accomplished, its intensity and the individual's personality.



Taken from "**10 questions sur l'anxiété de performance**", Nathalie Parent, Éditions Midi-Trente. When the task to accomplish is not challenging, there is no stress. Boredom and demotivation may even set in.

At the other end of the graph, we see that too much stress, whether in terms of duration or intensity, depending on the individual's perception, may lead to fatigue, exhaustion or hyperactivity.

There is an **optimal zone** where stress stimulates the person and motivates them by giving them challenges to face based on their abilities.

It is important to be attentive to the signs and symptoms of stress so that you can react before getting to the exhaustion phase and developing a physical or psychological illness such as an anxiety disorder.





WHAT ARE THE MANIFESTATIONS OF ANXIETY?

Even though the manifestations of anxiety are unpleasant, anxiety shouldn't be considered as something negative that needs to be completely eliminated. Anxiety varies in intensity and may be an indicator of something that needs to be changed or even embraced. At one end of the spectrum, symptoms may be light, while at the other end, they may be incapacitating and lead to panic attacks.

Here's a list of symptoms that anxiety may manifest as:



EMOTIONAL MANIFESTATIONS

Fear, worry, irritability, a sense of powerlessness

PHYSICAL MANIFESTATIONS (PHYSIOLOGICAL REACTIONS)

- Stomach aches, a lump in your throat or a knot in your stomach
- Hot flashes, chills, shivering
- Suffocating sensation
- Migraine, dizziness
- Urinary and gastrointestinal manifestations (needing to go to the bathroom)
- Dietary changes (eating more or
- Changes in sleep habits: insomnia, nightmares
- ¹Zz Fatigue
- Muscle tension

COGNITIVE IMPACT (ON THOUGHTS)

Irrational thoughts

Catastrophic thinking

BEHAVIOURAL MANIFESTATIONS

- Defiance, seeking attention, regression
- 🤔 Hyperactivity, agitation, trouble concentrating, hypervigilance
- Escapist or avoidant behaviour (into screens, alcohol, drugs, sleep)
- Overinvestment, tendency to "overdo it" (overtraining, tendency to study relentlessly)
- Tics or obsessions
- X Withdrawing behaviour

Taken from the book « 10 questions sur l'anxiété de performance », Nathalie Parent, Éditions Midi-Trente





PART 2:

HOW TO TAKE ACTION TO HELP YOUR CHILD CALMLY NAVIGATE THEIR TEEN YEARS



WHAT BEHAVIOURS SHOULD BE PRIORITIZED TO HELP YOUR TEEN STAY CALM?



Adolescence is a crucial period in the development of humans gradually becoming independent from their parents. This transition is a period of anxiety for young people, which may be intensified if the parent appears to be worried about the young person's future or abilities.

Therefore, it is important to become aware of your thoughts and to act on them to avoid being overprotective of your teen (or doing things for them) and therefore allow them to develop the confidence needed to lower their anxiety.

The ultimate goal is for the young person to become confident in facing the future, and to help them develop the idea that life can be good, that there are many paths they can take and that life contains pleasant and unpleasant emotions, including anxiety and fear, which they have to learn to tolerate (and not avoid).

IN THIS VIDEO.

discover testimonials from parents talking about their teens' anxiety and solutions to help them better manage it.





ATTITUDES TO ADOPT VS. ATTITUDES TO AVOID SO THAT YOU DON'T TRIGGER YOUR CHILD'S ANXIETY

ATTITUDES TO ADOPT



ATTITUDES TO AVOID



Trying to collaborate, asking your child questions so that you can reflect together	Adopting an attitude of authority and affirming that you know everything
Daring to show your weaknesses and vulnerabilities	Never apologizing or admitting your faults
Accepting that there is no such thing as perfection and that mistakes are, in fact, life's lessons	Tending to idealize and demand perfection
Appreciating true effort	Always demanding a better performance
Considering different scenarios	Only seeing a single way of doing things
Validating their fears, trying to understand with your child what they are experiencing and feeling	Trying to convince your child that it's all in their head, and that they have no reason to be afraid
Focusing on what they are, their strengths and challenges	Comparing your child to others
Taking some distance to reflect and understand your child's point of view, putting yourself in their place at that age	Standing your ground, wanting to have the last word
Accepting the limitations that life imposes on us, our physical, temporal and contextual limitations	Always wanting to do more faster, wanting everything right away
Trying, with your child, to understand what's going on and what changes could be made	Making threats when your child gets a lower grade or performance. For example, threatening to put your child in a different academic program
Settling conflicts with your partner, seeing a professional and indicating that you are doing what you can to improve the situation in order to reduce the risk of separating	Allowing conflicts or a lack of unity between parents to persist
Adjusting to the actual abilities of your child at a specific point of time	Expecting too much or having unrealistic expectations of your child
Being at peace with who you are and who your teen is	Projecting your own life onto your child's, wanting your child to do what you would like them to do and not what they are able or want to do
Being present for them, checking that your child has what they need and what they expect of their parent	Leaving the child alone, ignoring them with an abandoning attitude during a time of crisis or, on the contrary, being too present and fuelling the anxiety attack (or the feeling of being unable to do anything)
Putting things into perspective before doling out punishment and trying to understand what they are experiencing	Going overkill with punishments

Adapted from the book « 10 questions sur l'anxiété de performance», Nathalie Parent, Éditions Midi-Trente

Yelling, being irritable

Taking the time to calm down before speaking or

initiating a discussion









TAKE STOCK OF YOUR OWN ANXIETY





You can print out this self-reflection exercise and ask yourself the following questions to take stock of your own behaviour with respect to anxiety as a parent:

WHAT STRESSFUL EVENTS HAVE I EXPERIENCED OVER THE PAST YEAR?

HOW DID MY ANXIETY MANIFEST ITSELF? BEFORE READING THE LIST BELOW, TRY TO ENUMERATE THE SYMPTOMS OF YOUR ANXIETY.	
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	MOTIONAL MANUFFORMIONO	OCCUPING IMPACT (ON THOUGHTO)
EN	MOTIONAL MANIFESTATIONS	COGNITIVE IMPACT (ON THOUGHTS)
	Fear	☐ Irrational thoughts
	Worrying	 Catastrophic thinking
	Irritability	
	Sense of powerlessness	BEHAVIOURAL MANIFESTATIONS
		☐ Defiance
PH	HYSICAL MANIFESTATIONS	Seeking attention
(P	PHYSIOLOGICAL REACTIONS)	Regression
	Nausea, stomach aches, a lump	 Hyperactivity, agitation
	in your throat or knot in your stomach	 Trouble concentrating
	Hot flashes, chills, shivering	☐ Hypervigilance
	Suffocating sensation	Escapist, avoidant behaviour (into
	Migraine, dizziness	screens, alcohol, drugs, sleep)
	Urinary or gastrointestinal	 Overinvestment, tendency to overdo things (overtraining,
	manifestations (needing to go to	tendency to study relentlessly)
	the bathroom)	☐ Tics or obsessions
	Dietary changes (eating more or less)	☐ Withdrawing behaviour
	Changes in sleep habits: insomnia, nightmares	
	Fatigue	
	Muscle tension	
HAT M	MIGHT EXPLAIN MY ANXIETY OR BE RELA	TED TO IT?
		
ow no	O I PERCEIVE MY ABILITIES, MY SELF-C	ONFIDENCE?
OH B	STEEL	

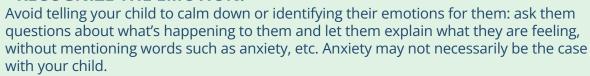
EMBRACING YOUR TEEN'S ANXIETY



RVCRR (RECOGNIZE-VALIDATE-CONTAIN-REFLECT-REVIEW)

Your child hasn't been doing well and decides to confide in you. Here are some helpful attitudes that will help defuse the situation and regulate your anxious teen's emotions:

RECOGNIZE THE EMOTION:



Also, don't hesitate to use humour to downplay the situation. With some people, depending on the relationship and the intensity of the anxiety attack, humour might help. You can play on exaggerating their fears: "That's true. You'll come in last, as always! And you'll look ridiculous. Everyone will make fun of you, for sure!"

• VALIDATE:

Validate what they're feeling: often, we tend to tell an anxious young person that they have no reason to be afraid, but there's no reasoning when it comes to emotions. Instead, say to them, "What are you afraid of?" and then listen without trying to convince them of anything. Validate by saying, "It's true that that can be scary. I understand." The situation will become calmer quickly.

You can also talk about your own fears or those that you had at the same age: your child will feel less alone and "small" in the face of their anxiety.

A TECHNIQUE TO HELP YOUR CHILD THINK **ABOUT THEIR SITUATION:**

Use **the worst that can happen technique** to try to determine whether it's serious or not. Ask your child what the worst thing that can happen is. This alone can already defuse the situation to a certain degree. And, for their "worst thing," check whether it's "serious" or just "sucks" if this event were to occur. For example: "What's the worst that can happen?" "That I come in third." "Okay, and is that serious or does it just suck a little?" "Well, it would suck." "You're right; it would suck a bit. Would you be disappointed, angry, sad or jealous?"





CONTAIN:

Using strategies to contain and regulate your emotions, it's important to keep your cool despite the intensity of a situation and remain fully present to what's happening. Don't hesitate to remind your child of the limits on behaviours that they should or should not use. Avoid fuelling anger with words, admonishments, blame, threats, etc.



• REFLECT:

In your mind, when containing the emotion or sometime when you're alone (later in the day, for example), think about the situation and what could have triggered your child's emotion. Try to see if there's a need or want being expressed behind the emotion or if other emotions are involved. In general, try to be collaborative rather than confrontational. Rather than telling them what to do or how to do it, ask them what they think about it, how they see things.

Some children and teens will prefer to be alone to calm down. It's a good idea to ask your child what they prefer and respect their choice, while still remaining present in thought (staying tuned in even if you're in another room, thinking about the situation to try and understand it better, being aware of the impact their condition has on you, accepting what's happening, going to check on your child's needs after a certain amount of time has passed).

Other young people will need a parent's or adult's presence to calm down. Words, tone of voice, a song, a touch or a silent presence can help calm the situation.



Remember that every teen is different and what works for one person doesn't necessarily work for another. Keep that in mind to prevent feelings of guilt if you don't immediately succeed in calming down your teen.





• REVIEW:

The last step is reviewing the situation with your child once they have calmed down. Take your reflections into consideration and form explanation-seeking questions: "Were you anxious because you thought you didn't have enough time?" or "because you didn't feel up to the task?"

These attitudes are not innate and require a bit of practice. Taking the time to step back and think about a situation or event with your child helps improve their attitude for future occasions.

Also, avoid playing the role of "all-knowing adult" with an anxious young person who tends to belittle themself and value other people's achievements. It will be important to point out this tendency to them and think about the reasons that they put themself down. And, more importantly, count on your teen's ability to pull through and don't try to overprotect them by having them simply avoid situations that distress them.





HELP YOUR CHILD REBUILD THEIR SELF-CONFIDENCE TO BETTER OVERCOME THEIR ANXIETY:

- When your teen is anxious, encourage them and tell them that it will pass. Anxiety can be intense and painful, but it's like a wave—it passes.
- Help them face their fear, at their own pace. Have them view it as a challenge, perhaps by using the image of a mountain to climb, one step at a time. And the more you confront what you're afraid of, the shorter and less intense your wave of anxiety will be.
- Remind them of past successes or of moments of anxiety they have experienced, focusing on the positive aspects of the situation. Be confident in their ability to overcome their anxiety—that will help them calm down.
- Invite them to see their errors differently: they are part of life and allow us to learn. Coach them to ask themself what they can learn from difficult or anxiety-provoking situations.





This section is taken from the book "Enfants stressés! Tout ce qu'il faut savoir pour aider votre enfant à grandir sereinement",

Nathalie Parent, Michel Lafon Canada



When the symptoms of anxiety become all-consuming, when they prevent the young person from functioning properly and when they cause significant suffering or distress that affect different spheres of their life (relationships, family, school) for more than six months, it may be a good idea to see a doctor or psychiatrist to determine whether it would be appropriate to take action, beyond the advice given in this guide.

Points to consider when a diagnosis of anxiety is made:

When your child is diagnosed with anxiety by a health professional, it allows you to formally describe what your child is feeling, but you have to watch out that it doesn't lock your child into the diagnosis or that it isn't used to justify all their behaviours. Some young people end up defining themselves as being their disorder, while others mistakenly believe that they have a "problem" that prevents them from functioning normally.

In any case, it is always preferable to present anxiety as a challenge that is a part of life at **different times and in different ways.** When a young person experiences anxiety, it's more helpful if you show them that they have a certain amount of control over the situation and that they can do something to improve it, especially since there are many potentially stressful events in a young person's life!



Adapted from the book « 10 questions sur l'anxiété de performance », Nathalie Parent, Éditions Midi-Trente

N.B.:

If your child talks about suicide or death, stay with them and let them know that you're there with them and that they are not alone. You can also see if they want to go to the emergency department, where doctors will make an assessment to determine the most appropriate treatment (hospitalization, medication, outpatient





PART 3: TOOLKIT TO BETTER MANAGE ANXIETY

A FEW TOOLS TO HELP YOUR TEEN BETTER MANAGE THEIR ANXIETY ON A DAILY BASIS

Here's a toolkit that you can offer your teen to help them better manage their anxiety.

However, it's important to be aware that a breathing technique that works for one person may not be effective for someone else and its effectiveness may even wane in the same person. By offering your child different tools, you allow them to vary these techniques and to find which one works best for them in a certain situation.

However, it would be good to remind them **that experiencing stress or anxiety isn't bad in itself** and may even prove useful to gather motivation during an exam or to prepare sufficiently for a test. It's therefore important to avoid trying to eliminate anxiety at all costs or to implement these techniques for all young people (who have different needs), but rather to bring your teen to a level where they can manage their own anxiety sufficiently.

HERE ARE A FEW TOOLS THAT YOU CAN PRINT OUT AND SHARE WITH YOUR CHILD.







TAKE STOCK OF THE STRESSFUL EVENTS YOUR TEEN ENCOUNTERS



Go over these different situations with your teen, and work with them to find out what triggers anxiety in them:

- 1 = LIGHT STRESS: like a gentle rainfall—you can stay out in it because it's not too uncomfortable after all
- 3 = MODERATE STRESS: like a decent rain shower that gets you wet and that you run from to avoid soaked
- **5 = INTENSE STRESS:** like a storm—you run from it to hide and take shelter because it's too risky

	WO S	TRESS LIG	AT STRES	ć Vom	JERATE S	iress inten	ISE STRI
IN YOUR FAMILY	0	1	2	3	4	5	
A move							
The birth of a brother or sister, a half-brother or half-sister							
Parents' separation							
Parents' marriage or remarriage							
Sickness or death (in the close family, in the extended family, of a friend, of an animal)							
Medical tests							
Parents' financial problems							
Overloaded schedules that don't take the teen's pace into consideration							
Conflicts, violence							
An unstable environment: discipline that's too strict or too lax							
Hyperstimulation: noise, movement, activities, screens							
Pressure to perform: to be the best, to be older or more mature, etc.							







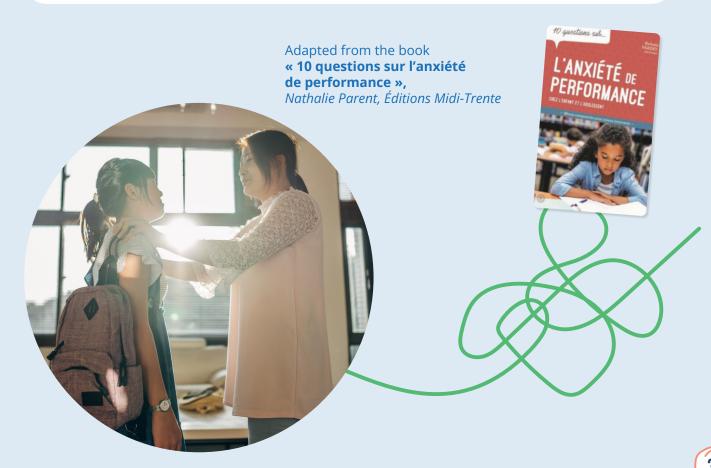


	110	STRESS LIG	AT STRESS	MOL	ERATES	RESS INTENS
AT SCHOOL	0	1	2	3	4	5
The simple state of being separated from parents						
A new teacher						
The transition from primary to secondary school or from secondary school to college (or university)						
A failing grade						
Hyperstimulation (noise, movement, activities, screens)						
Too many organized activities (in and out of school)						
A schedule that interferes with sleep						
A traumatic event: fire alarm, accident, hospitalization or death of a friend or another young person						
Intimidation, rejection						
A misunderstanding with a teacher						
Conflicts						
A first love						
Exams						
Pressure to perform, adults' expectations, etc.						

Remind your teen that these are fears that almost everyone feels at some point in their life and that it is essential to be aware of them in order to avoid trying to avoid them and allowing them to turn into anxiety.

Don't stop at this list. You can take the time to identify and share with your teen the fears you had at the same age and those you have now.

- Fear of going back to school, of changing schools
- Fear of sleeping alone, of the dark, of certain animals or insects
- Fear of physical dangers, of death or disease (yours or that of your parents), fear of losing someone you love
- Worries about your body changing, fear of getting old, fear of differences, fear of the future or of becoming an adult, fear of responsibilities
- Fear of being rejected by others or abandoned, fear of losing your friends, of being judged, fear of being alone
- Fear of disappointing or of being disappointed in yourself, of looking ridiculous
- Fear of becoming close with friends or a boyfriend/girlfriend, fear of not having a boyfriend or girlfriend
- Fear of being a failure in life





BEFORE A STRESSFUL EVENT

EFFECTIVELY MANAGING YOUR ANXIETY

Assessments can be a major source of anxiety for teens. Below you'll find a page containing **15 techniques** for learning in a fun and enjoyable way. In fact, varying learning strategies helps improve your understanding and retention of information. Following that, you'll find two other exercises to better control anxiety and the catastrophic thinking that some teens may develop.

YOU CAN PRINT OUT THE FOLLOWING EXERCISES AND OFFER THEM TO YOUR CHILD OR POST THEM SOMEWHERE AT HOME.

The exercises are taken from books written by our expert, psychologist Nathalie Parent.

"10 questions sur l'anxiété de performance", Nathalie Parent. Éditions Midi-Trente.



"Vic, l'anxiété de performance à l'adolescence". Nathalie Parent. Éditions Midi-Trente.



HERE ARE A FEW TESTIMONIALS FROM YOUNG PEOPLE

talking about their academic performance anxiety. Don't hesitate to show this clip to your teen to help them better control it!









15 STRATEGIES FOR BETTER LEARNING



CREATE MENTAL IMAGES
OF YOUR NOTES

STUDY WITH YOUR FRIENDS

RECORD YOURSELF AND LISTEN TO THE MATERIAL AFTERWARDS

PREPARE NOTE CARDS OR QUIZ QUESTIONS

MANIPULATE MATERIAL, DO OR WATCH DEMONSTRATIONS UNDERLINE, HIGHLIGHT YOUR TEXT USING COLOURED MARKERS

STUDY WHILE MOVING

(you can pedal a stationary bike, manipulate stress balls, do jumping jacks in between two segments!) SHARE, DISCUSS OR HAVE DEBATES ON THE MATERIAL WATCH VIDEOS ON THE MATERIAL OR MOVEMENT TO LEARN

EXPLAIN THE MATERIAL TO SOMEONE

LOOK FOR EXAMPLES
TO UNDERSTAND THE
MATERIAL OR EXPLAIN IT

ASK FOR HELP; ASK QUESTIONS

SUMMARIZE; TAKE NOTES

READ ALOUD

MAKE GRAPHS, TABLES OR DRAWINGS OF WHAT YOU HAVE TO STUDY





STRESSED OUT BEFORE YOUR EXAM? TRY VISUALIZATION



→ Close your eyes



Imagine yourself during the exam, in front of your test sheet for example



Step by step, imagine yourself doing things right and trying to remain relaxed

SOME SITUATION STRESSES YOU? ASK YOURSELF THESE 3 QUESTIONS



Imagine what worse thing could happen to you in the situation that stresses you.



→ Do you think it will happen for sure?



Even in the worst situation, are there still solutions (the famous plan B)?

IDENTIFYING SOLUTIONS FOR EACH SITUATION

Here's another exercise that you can suggest that your students do.

For every situation that stresses them, they identify and write in a notebook:

- **\(\)** their emotions
- their behaviour
- **\(\)** their thoughts

- their physical sensations
- their strategies to better manage their anxiety

Below is an example:



Before a test

EMOTIONS:

anxiety, fear of failing.

BEHAVIOUR

I procrastinate.

THOUGHT:

I'll never succeed.

PHYSICAL SENSATIONS:

I have tension in my neck. I have a headache.

STRATEGIES:

- I establish times for studying. I get started early. I attend make-up periods to make sure I really understand. I use a variety of studying strategies. I take action.
- I tell myself to go one step at a time.
- I set devices and screens aside. I find ways of reducing tension (e.g., physical activity, stretching, massaging my shoulders and neck). I change positions frequently when studying.



For other examples and exercises, feel free to check out Nathalie Parent's book: "Vic, l'anxiété de performance à l'adolescence", Nathalie Parent, Éditions Midi-Trente.





IDENTIFY SOLUTIONS FOR EACH STRESSFUL SITUATION

SITUATION:				
EMOTIONS:		 		
BEHAVIOUR:				
DENAVIOUR:		 		
THOUGHT:				
PHYSICAL SENS	ATIONS:	 		
STRATEGIES:				
STRAIEUIES:				
8			ZZZ	





TEACH YOUR CHILD HOW TO REACT IN A STRESSFUL SITUATION

Because anxiety arises mainly **when a person anticipates a threat or negative event,** in order to calm down, it is essential to come back to the **"here and now."** Your child can then try to work on things that they have control over in the moment.

YOU CAN PRINT OUT THE FOLLOWING EXERCISES AND OFFER THEM TO YOUR TEEN OR POST THEM AT HOME SOMEWHERE.







HOW TO REACT IF YOU'RE FEELING STRESS DURING A TEST



If you feel anxious about a test or another situation, you can:





Place your hands on the table or on your knees



Close your eyes while breathing slowly











Focus on what you feel below your hands: heat or cold, the texture of the table or of your clothing, slight movements, tingling, etc.



Know that just drinking water can help to take your mind off things and help to temporarily ease your stress (anxiety).

Taken from the book "10 questions sur l'anxiété de performance", Nathalie Parent, Éditions Midi-Trente.







WORKING ON YOUR BREATHING:

SLOWING IT DOWN AND LENGTHENING IT BY BRINGING IT TO BELLY LEVEL

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BREATHING EXERCISE





Start by taking a few slow, deep breaths, down into your lower belly.

Then inhale, slowly raising your arms over your head. Hold for two seconds.

Exhale slowly, lowering your arms.

Repeat the same thing for three or four complete breaths.







WORKING ON YOUR THOUGHTS:

LISTEN TO THE LITTLE VOICE INSIDE YOU AND TRY TO CHANGE YOUR NEGATIVE THOUGHTS BY FOCUSING INSTEAD ON YOUR SUCCESSES AND ON THE PRACTICAL THINGS YOU CAN DO TO DEAL WITH THE SITUATION IN A POSITIVE WAY







- → WHAT I SAY
- → WHAT I DECIDE
- → WHAT I LOOK AT
- → MY EFFORT AND PERSEVERANCE → WHO I WANT TO HAVE
- → THE LITTLE VOICE INSIDE ME
- → MY BREATHING
- → MY BEHAVIOUR
- → WHAT I DECIDE TO DO

- THE ABILITY TO ACCEPT AND SET MY BOUNDARIES
- WHAT I LEARN FROM THE SITUATIONS THAT I EXPERIENCE
- WHO I WANT TO HAVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH
- HOW I PLAN MY TIME
- REMINDING MYSELF OF MY SUCCESSES AND CHOICES









WORKING ON YOUR EMOTIONS







If I find myself in a **situation of anxiety**, I take the time to see the bigger picture.

I know that I can be **overwhelmed by emotions** and feel out of balance, as if an earthquake had hit.



I stop and take the time to think about ways I have of **calming down**.





I CAN WORK ON INTERNAL FACTORS

(e.g.: breathing, relaxing, talking to my inner self, acknowledging and stating my emotions).



I CAN ALSO WORK ON EXTERNAL FACTORS

(for example, go talk to someone, listen to music, go outside and get some air).



Taken from the book "Vic, l'anxiété de performance à l'adolescence", Nathalie Parent, Éditions Midi-Trente.



TO FURTHER EXPLORE THE AUTHOR'S IDEAS:





Conferences and training offered on the subject



Facebook page





BOOKS:



10 Questions sur l'anxiété de performance



Nathalie Parent

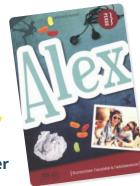






Alex, surmonter l'anxiété à

l'adolescence





DISCOVER ALL OUR TOOLS TO HELP YOUR TEEN DEVELOP GOOD MENTAL HEALTH IN OUR FAMILY TOOLKIT.







IN THIS VIDEO,

discover testimonials from parents talking about their **teens' anxiety** and solutions to better manage it.



HAVE YOUR CHILD DISCOVER OUR VIDEO CLIP

with many testimonials from young people and solutions





OUR 2 PODCASTS:

- Testimonials from teens with academic performance anxiety
- Interpretations offered by our expert, psychologist Nathalie Parent



