

Worry and anxiety are regular parts of life, but they can also be indications that your child needs more support. The recognition of anxiety disorders in young people has increased significantly over the past 10 years. Approximately 30% of children and adolescents will experience an anxiety disorder at some point in their young lives. Knowing the signs and seeking professional help when needed will help to interrupt a progression that can lead to depression, poor school performance, and substance use<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>Child Mind Institute. (2018). 2018 Children's Mental Health Report. [childmind.org/awareness-campaigns/childrens-mental-health-report/2018-childrens-mental-health-report](http://childmind.org/awareness-campaigns/childrens-mental-health-report/2018-childrens-mental-health-report)

## Signs of Stress in Children and Teens

- Complaints of headaches and/or stomach aches
- Chest pain, heart palpitations
- Insomnia or excessive sleeping
- Nightmares
- Bedwetting in younger kids
- Appetite changes
- Anxiety or worry
- Mood swings/Irritability
- Restlessness
- Clingy behavior
- Increased crying, anger, and/or aggression
- Emotional overreactions to minor incidents
- Regressive behaviors (e.g. thumb-sucking)
- Social isolation



## Potential Stressors



Conflict with friends



School changes



Academic problems



Problems at home



Parental divorce/separation



Bullying



Puberty changes



Fear of the future



Dating relationships



Peer pressure



Over involvement in activities



Performance issues

## How Caregivers Can Help

- Create a safe space
- Talk to your child - Listen, don't lecture
- Help your child develop healthy coping skills
- Spend quality/unpressured time with your child
- Manage your own stress and model healthy coping skills
- Encourage your child to take breaks from activities and stressful events (e.g., Mental Health Day)
- Build routines with your child that include work and play



**Seek professional help if your child experiences extreme distress or worries that interfere with daily activities.**